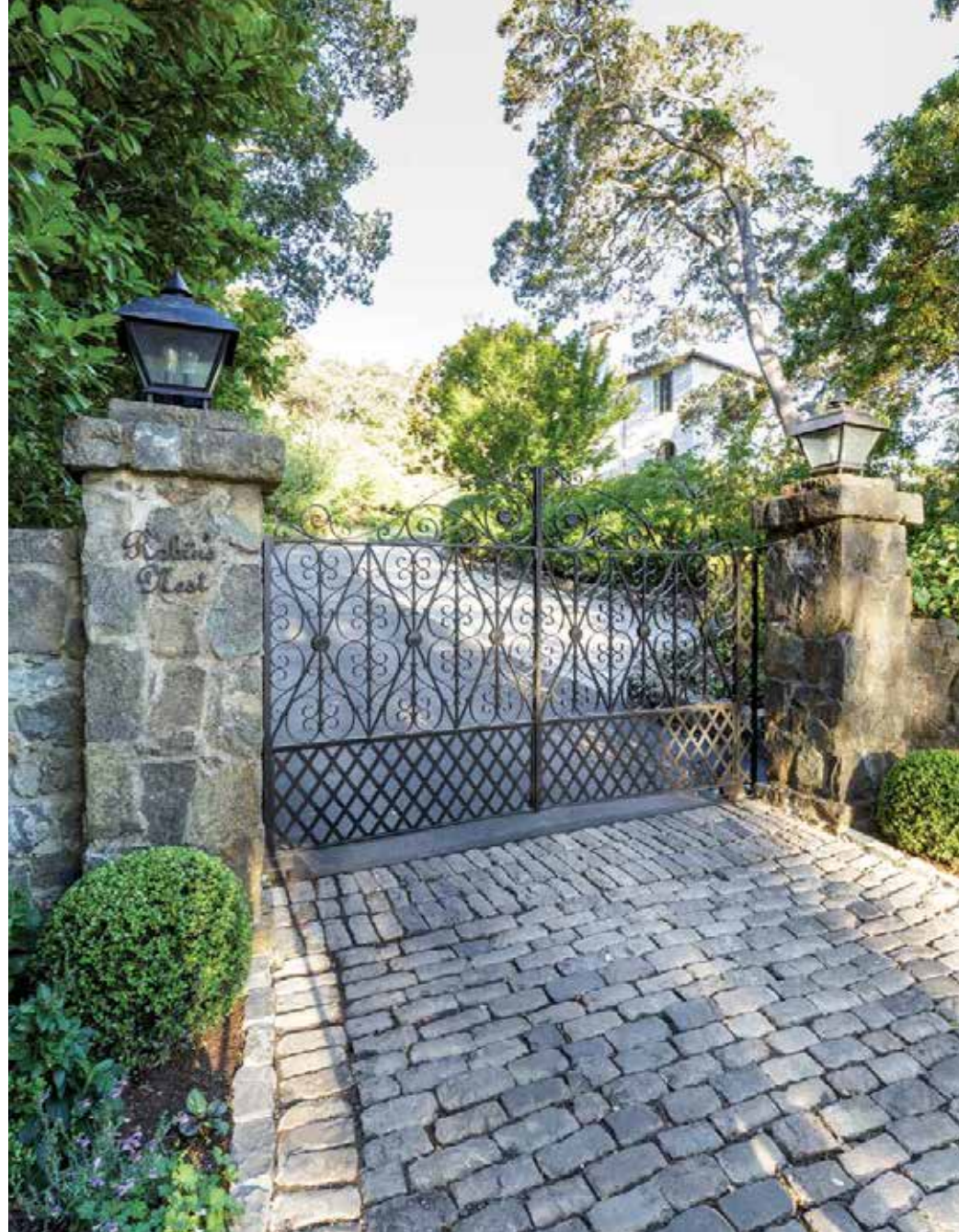


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GLORY DAYS

A 1930S HILLSBOROUGH RESIDENCE IS SENSITIVELY
REVAMPED TO HONOR ITS PAST AND PRESENT.

WRITTEN BY JORGE S. ARANGO / PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON



INTERIOR DESIGN / DAVID TODD OLDROYD, ODADA
HOME BUILDER / GREG MARRONE, MARRONE & MARRONE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / BRIAN KOCH,
TERRA FERMA LANDSCAPES



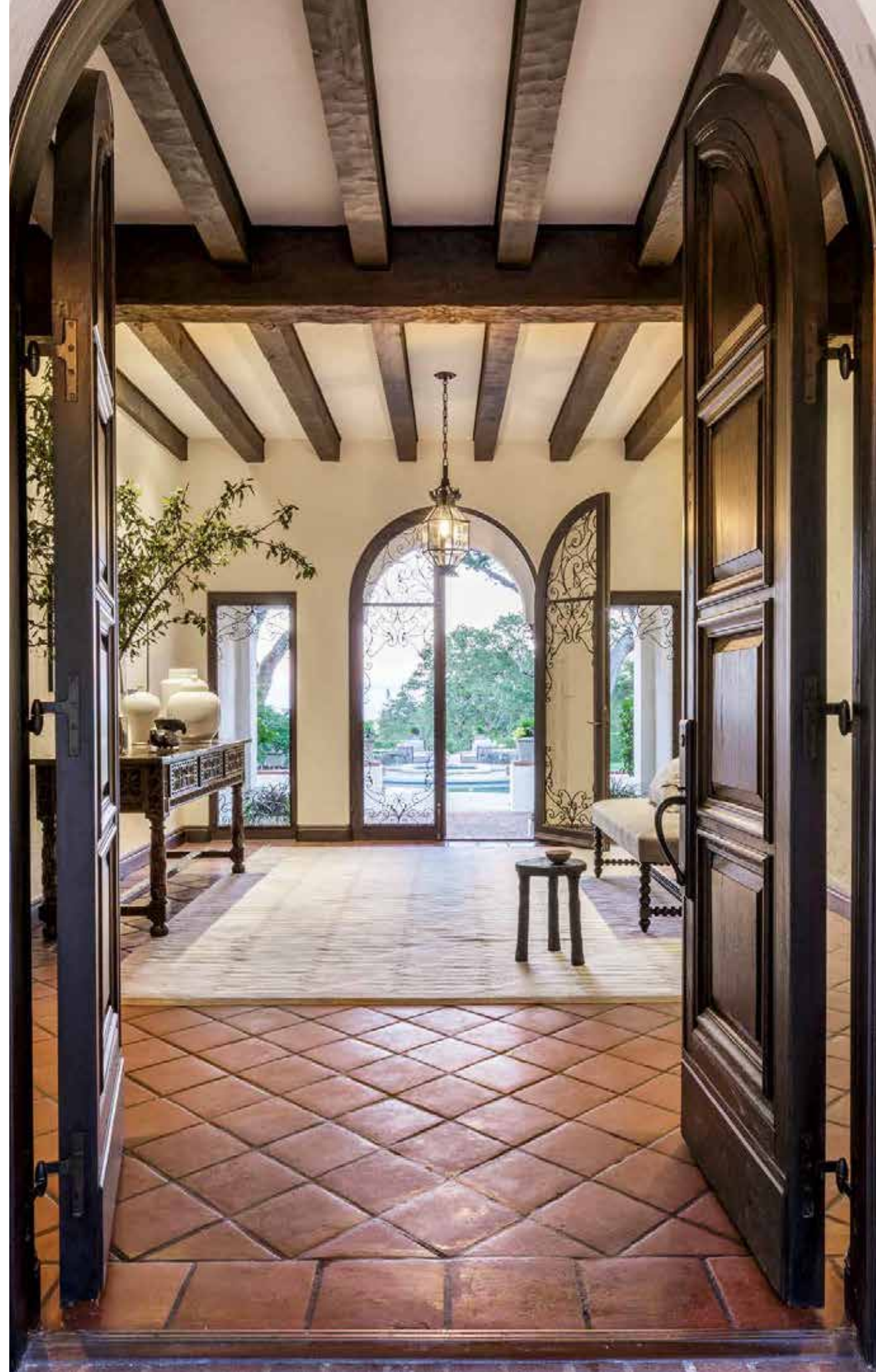
Liana Goh Brady, whose parents used to be ballroom dancers in India, remembers growing up listening to them reminisce about those times and the big-band music that accompanied them. Later, when she met her future husband, Jeff, she discovered they shared a nostalgia for old American standards and the style of that era. “We love Nat King Cole and Frank Sinatra,” she says. So even though they weren’t necessarily looking for a historic property when they began house hunting, a 1931 Spanish Colonial Revival-style residence in Hillsborough beguiled the couple instantly. “When we found out that Bing Crosby used to live close by,” says Jeff, only half in jest, “it sealed the deal.”

Although the charm and provenance of the home won the couple over, it would require some work to reach its full potential. To make this happen, the Bradys turned to designer David Todd Oldroyd, who is often associated with a clean, modern aesthetic. On the surface, this may have

seemed a surprising choice for the renovation of a home originally designed under the firm established by Willis Polk, one of the Bay Area’s most famed architects and known for a more classical style. The structure’s property boasted equally pedigreed grounds—a back garden laid out by pioneering landscape architect Thomas Church and a front garden by John Hays McLaren, the longtime superintendent of Golden Gate Park. “It’s true,” admits Oldroyd. “We’re modern at heart, but we love all beautiful things.” Which is why, upon entering the house he remembers thinking, “This is the house that every other house in the neighborhood was modeled after. I was ecstatic about restoring it and bringing it into the next century.” It would prove a tall order, but Oldroyd was up to the task.

Structurally, portions of the house were not in good shape. “We had to support a lot of things on one side of the house,” says builder Greg Marrone, noting that the foundation had to be partially shored up. A leaky roof and gutters were also

A 1931 Hillsborough home was revived with new interiors by designer David Todd Oldroyd. Outside, the front garden, originally designed by John Hays McLaren, was updated by landscape architect Brian Koch to include new low stone walls, cobble detailing and lavender. Many of the home’s balconies were rebuilt by Ironstone Metal Works.



In the entry, Oldroyd set the home’s aesthetic tone with a mix of furnishings, including a 1940s Swedish rug from Doris Leslie Blau in New York and an Ironies bench from Kneedler-Fauchère; the stool is by Maarten Baas.



For the spacious living room, Oldroyd paired a tufted sofa with two A. Rudin chairs covered with a Joseph Noble velvet and a custom pen shell coffee table by C. Mariani Antiques, Restoration & Custom. The Atollo lamps are by Vico Magistretti for Oluce, and the artwork is by Roy Lichtenstein. Closer to the fireplace, sofas upholstered with a Scalamandré jacquard face a cluster of brushed stainless-steel tables from Propeller.

replaced, and “many of the balconies had to be redone in their entirety,” he adds. Former owners had also enclosed a belvedere with glass, so Oldroyd worked with Marrone to restore it to its former alfresco splendor. Positioned in the back of the house, the volume overlooks the backyard, where the couple kept much of Church’s original design while making updates for their family. After having landscape architect Frederic Warnecke of Warnecke and Associates Landscape Architecture draw up a plan for the property and handle the permitting, the Bradys worked closely with landscape architect Brian Koch on further enhancing the grounds and designing the planting palette. “It was critical for the plantings to embrace the architecture and setting as appropriately as possible,” says Koch, who also installed the landscape. “But we still needed to comply with California’s new water ordinance.” To that end, Koch selected drought-resistance specimens, such as lavender, for the front and back yards.

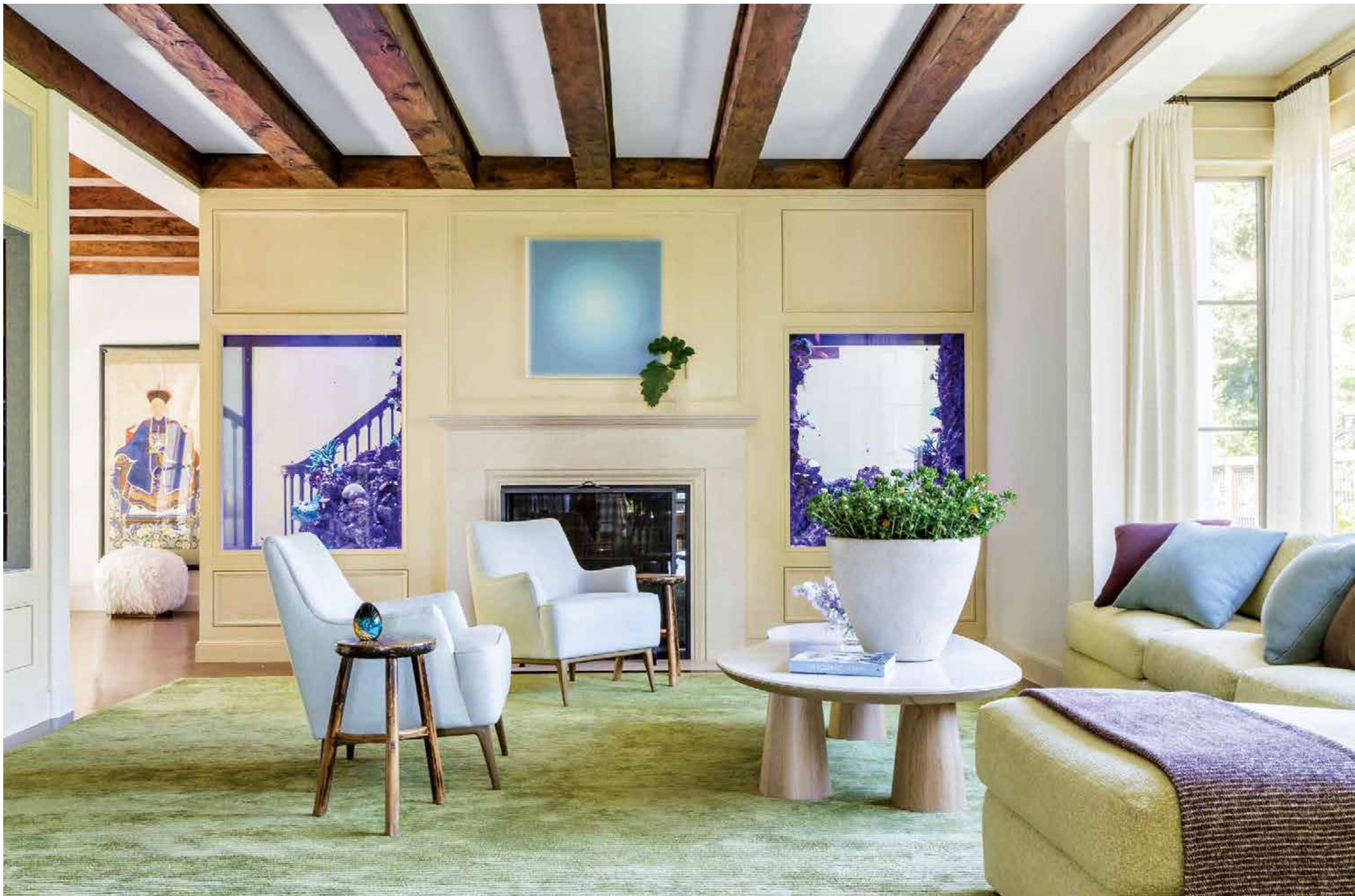
Just as with the grounds and the structure itself, the interiors needed some attention, so Oldroyd decided to, as Bing crooned in 1944, accentuate the positive. “There were good bones in the entry and down a corridor leading to the living room,” recalls the designer. “But the second floor and the old servants’ quarters were completely reconfigured.” Oldroyd, who worked with architect Craig O’Connell of Craig O’Connell Architecture to handle the necessary permits, converted the staff quarters into a spacious family room and connected it to the kitchen through the servery. A guest suite was carved out off the former staff bedrooms and the upstairs family bedrooms were reconfigured as well. In the middle of this undertaking, further changes became necessary when Liana and Jeff,



Above: Oldroyd left much of the entry in its original state, including the antique lantern hanging from the beamed ceiling. He then hung works from Ronnie Genotti's *99 Views of an Elephant* series above a Formations console from Shears & Window. A Swedish rug rests on the original floor tiles.

Opposite: The designer brightened the kitchen by painting the ceiling white and the cabinetry a pale shade of blue. Rattan stools from the 1960s pull up to the stone countertop supplied and installed by Fox Marble, and a custom fixture fabricated by Dogfork Lamp Arts with Moroccan globes by Tazi Designs hangs above. The clients' chairs were reupholstered with a fabric by Mokum for the adjacent breakfast room.





Saltwater fish tanks flank the family room's fireplace, above which hangs a work by Lisa Bartleson. Oldroyd grounded the room with a silk-and-wool rug by Tai Ping and paired A. Rudin chairs with a custom sectional upholstered with a Glant fabric. The custom white-oak-and-Corian coffee table was crafted by Julian Giuntoli Custom Furniture.



In the dining room, Oldroyd recovered the clients' existing chairs with a white textured textile by JAB Anstoetz Fabrics, and he gave the frames a new soft gray finish; the original antique chandelier was also given an update with linen shades. Fox Marble stripped and refurbished the tile floors, and Morgan's Fine Finishes refinished the original paneling.

“WE WANTED THE HOUSE TO HAVE A YOUTHFUL SPIRIT APPROPRIATE FOR THIS FAMILY WHILE CELEBRATING ITS GRACEFULLY AGED ELEGANCE.”

-DAVID TODD OLDROYD



Oldroyd wrapped the master bedroom walls with de Gournay's Earlham silk wallcovering in emerald green. Draperies made with a Rogers & Goffigon linen, along with a silk-and-wool Tai Ping rug, provide additional soothing texture. A walnut bed, upholstered with a Giant textile, by C. Mariani Antiques, Restoration & Custom faces a pair of 1940s Maurizio Tempestini chairs; a custom chaise upholstered with a JAB Anstoetz Fabrics velvet rounds out the space.

who already had two sons (Eli and Ben) found out they'd be having a third, Gus. So another bedroom was added. Sam, the fourth son, came along after they'd moved in.

When it came to the design elements, Oldroyd made the thesis for the scheme clear immediately upon crossing the threshold. "It's relaxed and informal," he says of the entry, "and it introduces you to a mix of pieces." Those pieces include a 1940s Swedish rug, a carved Spanish-style console and a Maarten Baas stool, which the designer played off an antique lantern original to the house. In the adjacent living room, Oldroyd says, "I wanted to acknowledge, in bold, the traditional influence of the room." He did so by designing custom sofas featuring curvaceous profiles reminiscent of the 1930s and side tables that harken to an Art Deco style to complement the room's original beamed ceiling and arched French doors. Yet he wasn't interested in creating a period interior. Oldroyd also mixed in Italian lamps designed in the 1970s and modern hexagonal stainless-steel tables. "The combination speaks to the dance we used throughout the house," he says.

That dance picks up in the kitchen, where sculptural rattan stools from the 1960s pair with a custom pendant fabricated with globes from Morocco. The couple's existing table and chairs—refinished and re-covered—stand out against the original paneling of the dining room, while Oldroyd added dual saltwater fish tanks to flank the new fireplace of the updated family room. "We wanted the house to have a youthful spirit appropriate for this family while respecting and celebrating its gracefully aged elegance," the designer says.

A 1930s Seguso chandelier from Fred Silberman in New York establishes a luxurious sensibility in the wife's dressing room, which features custom cabinetry designed by ODADA. Twin ottomans wear a custom velvet by Sabina Fay Braxton.



And as the furniture styles find a healthy balance, so too does the color palette used throughout. “The family loves color,” says Oldroyd. “So, I chose to give them a color direction in each room and riff off it rather than have five different colors in a room.” As such, a violet-colored velvet upholsters two curved barrel chairs in the living room and a custom sectional in the family room is covered with a textured pistachio-hued fabric. Typical of Oldroyd’s work, pattern was also kept to a minimum, expressed only “in small, plain gestures like pillows,” he adds. An exception is the florid, emerald green de Gournay wallpaper enveloping the master bedroom, something Oldroyd countered with restrained furniture silhouettes wearing solid-color velvets.

With the nearly three-year renovation complete, the home feels poised for modern-day life. And though the Bradys knew little about Polk, Church or McLaren when they first laid eye’s on their future home—which they’ve since dubbed Robin’s Nest—they now feel like stewards of a piece of Northern California history. “You don’t get homes like this very often,” says Jeff. “We really wanted to do the right thing and bring it back to its original glory.”

Mirrors in the master bath feature an églomisé pattern by Villafranca Studio; the 1940s Barovier & Toso Murano glass sconce is from Thomas Gallery in New York. Fox Marble supplied and installed the black-and-white floor tiles in a custom pattern by ODADA, and a Waterworks tub is set within a custom marble surround.

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