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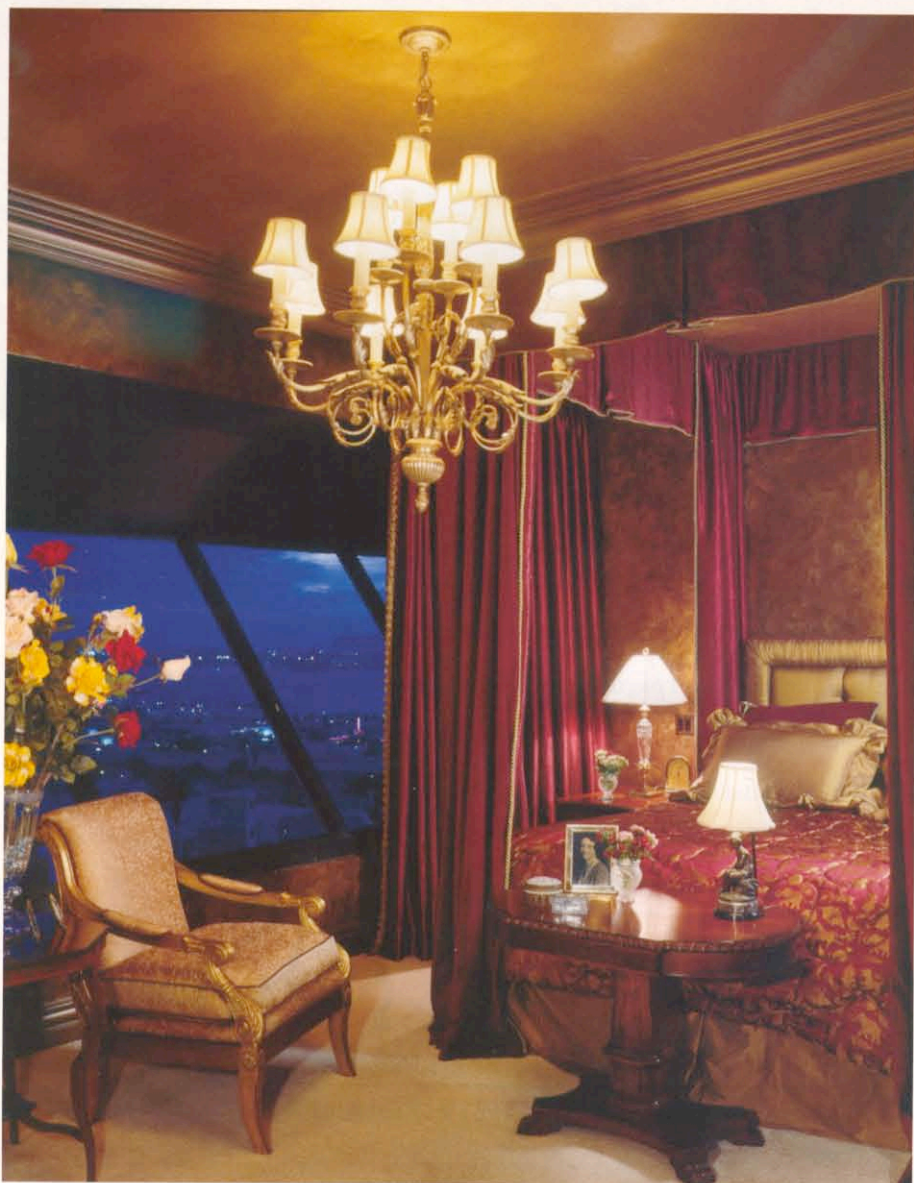
M A G A Z I N E

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The View from Banker's Hill

by Miriam Raftery



The drama and warmth of colors makes the master bedroom a wonderful retreat.



Buying a penthouse on Banker's Hill proved a golden opportunity for a retired developer and his wife.

For years, G.E. and his wife, Margaux (who asked that their last name not be published) had remodeled homes, then sold them and moved on. But after retiring, the couple



Using a wood panel look on walls and antiquing all the metal of the windows gives this living room the charm of an old European hotel.

decided it was time to create a dream home in which to spend their golden years. The couple hired Allied ASID designer Cleo Wood to dramatically reconfigure the interior of their penthouse suite—and then went on the shopping spree of a lifetime.

"We gave everything away to our kids and gave Cleo a fresh start," Margaux recalls, eyes

sparkling as she glances around an antique-filled room. "Then we spent six months traveling to collect all of these things."

Wood drew up plans to gut the unit's interior and create a more open floor plan designed to maximize views. In addition, the designer incorporated architectural embellishments to complement Old World furnishings,

art and accessories collected by the homeowners in their travels.

"I wanted it to look like an old European hotel," recalls Wood, who created an opulent entry to the remodeled home.

The designer raised the ceiling to add volume in the entry area, crowning the raised ceiling with a stained glass skylight. She also



Walls were moved to enlarge the home's entrance. Mirrors were also added to the existing entrance doors for a look of grandeur.



Designer Cleo Wood gave the penthouse a spacious feeling by removing walls, allowing for the dining area to open up into the music room, bar area and living room. Beautiful details are everywhere. "We wanted an over-the-top look," says Wood.

removed a wall, giving the entry a view through picture windows in the living room beyond.

Floors of contrasting creamy-gold marble and dark granite tiles set an elegant undertone to the remodeled entry. Red walls papered to resemble lacquer-finished European walls are enhanced by antiqued white base and crown

moldings and niches displaying classical-style statuary.

A library tucked off the main entry exudes coziness and charm. A hand-woven wool rug in rich burgundy; black and gold accents in a chenille sofa; chairs and silk draperies; an elephant-print armchair; and a leopard-print foot-

stool add exotic touches to the room.

"This room had no fireplace," recalls Wood, who created a focal point by adding an electric fireplace with an Old World-style marble surround. To provide warmth instead of a high-tech appearance in the room, the designer framed a flat-panel TV screen in fluted

woodwork.

A cabinet in the library showcases a collection of elephants in wood, brass and porcelain—mementos symbolizing the homeowner's activities in the Republican Party.

The designer carved out a home office for G.E. in a niche off the library, adding a window to give the new office a view of San Diego's sky-

line. High-tech gear is hidden inside cabinetry, giving the office a timeless, traditional appeal.

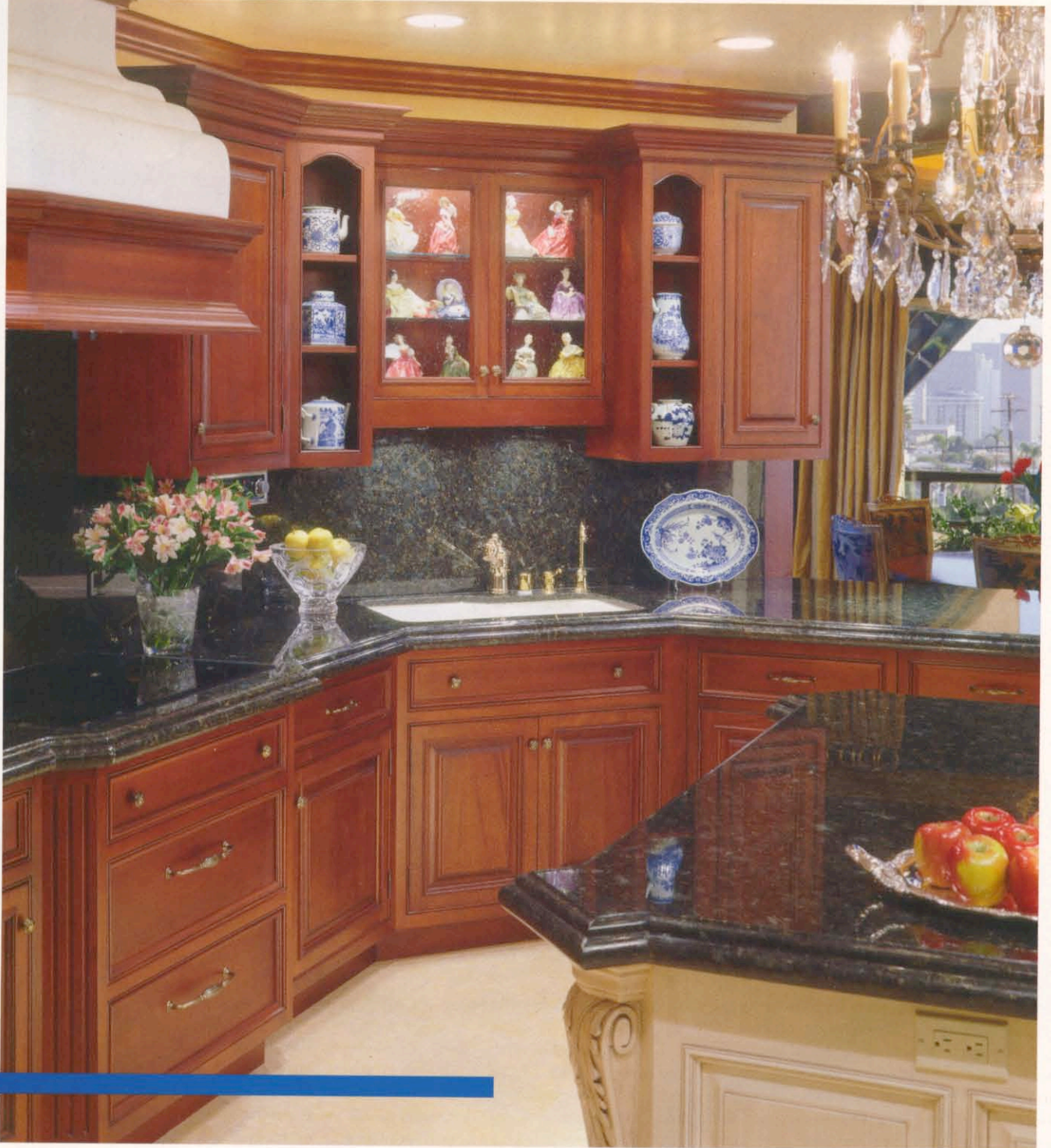
A hall leads visitors from the home's entry to a bar and music room, separated by a soffit from the living room beyond.

In London, the homeowners discovered a 200-year-old burl wood bar—and then commissioned an artisan to create a back section to

match. "The man who refurbished the Orient Express built this cabinet," says G.E., standing behind the ornately carved bar embellished with gold.

A 24-karat gilded ceiling crowns the adjacent music room, which resembles a setting from a bygone era. Marble floors along with gold and red silk draperies provide an opulent

The rich color of the mahogany cabinets compliments the old European decor. A wall was removed to open up the kitchen to a formal dining room with a city view.





This cozy library was created from a very ordinary room. Beautiful paneling was added, along with an electric fireplace. A recessed television was installed over the mantle.

backdrop to the music room's focal point: a turn-of-the-century rosewood grand piano with original ivory keys. No need to hire a musician to entertain guests, however, since this instrument has been converted into a player grand piano.

Champagne hues with gold accents set a sophisticated backdrop in the living room, where two picture windows frame views of the harbor, downtown, Point Loma, and Coronado. As twilight descends, city lights cast a glittering backdrop framed by sloping windows.

The designer applied an antique finish to camouflage black metal window frames, adding half-round wood panels to disguise plaster above. "We love these views even more than the ocean," says Margaux, recalling former homes in La Jolla and Hilton Head.

Wood designed a sofa and crescent-shaped settees in Scalandre fabric to provide comfortable seating to savor views or snug-

gle in front of a roaring fire on a chilly evening.

An original fireplace with plain wooden mantel has been replaced by an 1836 marble fixture acquired by the homeowners in London—complete with regal hand-carved lion's head and paws. Cherub andirons acquired in Paris date from 1723. The living room also features a 200-year-old Italian armoire with foldout secretary desk, Spanish lamps and a sumptuous area rug.

Selves to hold a unique display of Asian artworks flank an Old World-style archway leading to the dining room. "We went into China with Nixon," says G.E., who acquired antique Chinese plates, urns, and jade carvings during his travels with the Presidential entourage.

"This is my favorite room," Margaux says, stepping into a dining room crowned by a gilded domed ceiling and a Parisian gold chandelier so heavy it took four men to hang it.

Initially, Wood recalls, "The dining room was atrocious." The designer lowered the ceiling and created the dome, adding a faux-finish to walls that gives the appearance of burnished bronze. "This gives glamour to the space," she says.

A 300-year-old buffet from Spain features gold-leafed base, Rococo elements and marble top. Chairs with Asian fabric encircle a round, glass-topped dining table. Gold sconces, bronze candelabras and a gold-framed mirror provide added touches of elegance. A balcony off the dining room has also been dressed up with flower-filled planters and a cherubic garden statue.

Originally, a hallway and laundry room separated the dining room from a viewless, boxed-in kitchen. "The minute we took those walls down, we all clapped," recalls Wood, who tucked a stacked washer and dryer into a hall closet.

Wood designed a layout for a new



Custom eight-inch mahogany doors were used throughout the penthouse. This door opens into a charming guest bedroom.

kitchen, then asked Margaret Dean, ASID, of Design Studio West in La Jolla, to assist with cabinetry and other details customized to fit the homeowners' love of Old World architecture.

"They wanted the kitchen not to look like a kitchen," recalls Dean, who designed cabinetry to resemble freestanding furniture, camouflaging a full-sized Sub-Zero refrigerator/freezer. In addition, pullout refrigerator/freezer drawers are hidden beneath an island.

"We wanted the island to feel like a separate piece of furniture completely, as if it came in from their travels in Europe," Dean adds, "so it is a painted material with a rich glaze over the top." Carved corbels and acanthus leaf scrolls embellish the island.

A coffered ceiling adds height to the space, embellished by a grapevine frieze. "We took advantage of this opportunity to install a crystal chandelier, providing a stunning focal point for the kitchen," says Dean.

Deep green granite flecked with gold accents gold plumbing fixtures. An antiqued

mirrored backsplash and hutch were chosen "to be reminiscent of the client's antique furniture," according to Dean. Kitchen shelving displays a collection of porcelain Royal Dalton ladies in historic costumes. The well-appointed kitchen also includes a wine storage unit, warming drawer, Miele steam oven, and pantry with appliance garages inside.

A collection of roosters in the kitchen and family room reflects the homeowner's rural roots. "I was raised on a farm and had to take care of the chickens and roosters," recalls G.E., standing beside a silver rooster from Milan. Other roosters are displayed in a burl wood case.

The family room also features a swivel-down, flat panel television atop an antique English chest converted to hold sound equipment. Cut velour chairs and ottoman provide a comfortable viewing area. The family room is also home to Frankie, a German warbler housed in an English birdcage.

Tucked off a hall between the family room and entry foyer is a small but elegant

powder room lined with walls of Empress green marble and upholstered brocade. English sconces illuminate a Bombay chest, a gold sink, and antique gold fixtures.

A guest room is appointed with forged iron bed, Spanish demi-lune table inlaid with musical instruments, and an Italian-style chest with bronzed sink. Roja marble adds rich red hues to the guest bath, which also features limestone tile with a mosaic classical-style fountain scene.

Wood reserved the most sumptuous treatment for the master bedroom and bath. "We designed the master suite around this piece," says Wood, standing beside an antique English armoire inlaid with Renaissance figures. Opening the armoire doors, she reveals a walk-in closet cleverly hidden in a wall behind the vintage furnishing.

In the master bedroom, waxed walls shimmer with burnished copper hues. The designer draped the bed in Renaissance-style burgundy velvet trimmed with gold roping. Bedding fabric evokes Colonial India with a pattern featuring elephants, peacocks, and

Lights beneath the amber onyx stone top of the dressing table give this master bath its glow. Mirrors were layered to open up the space.

fabled creatures.

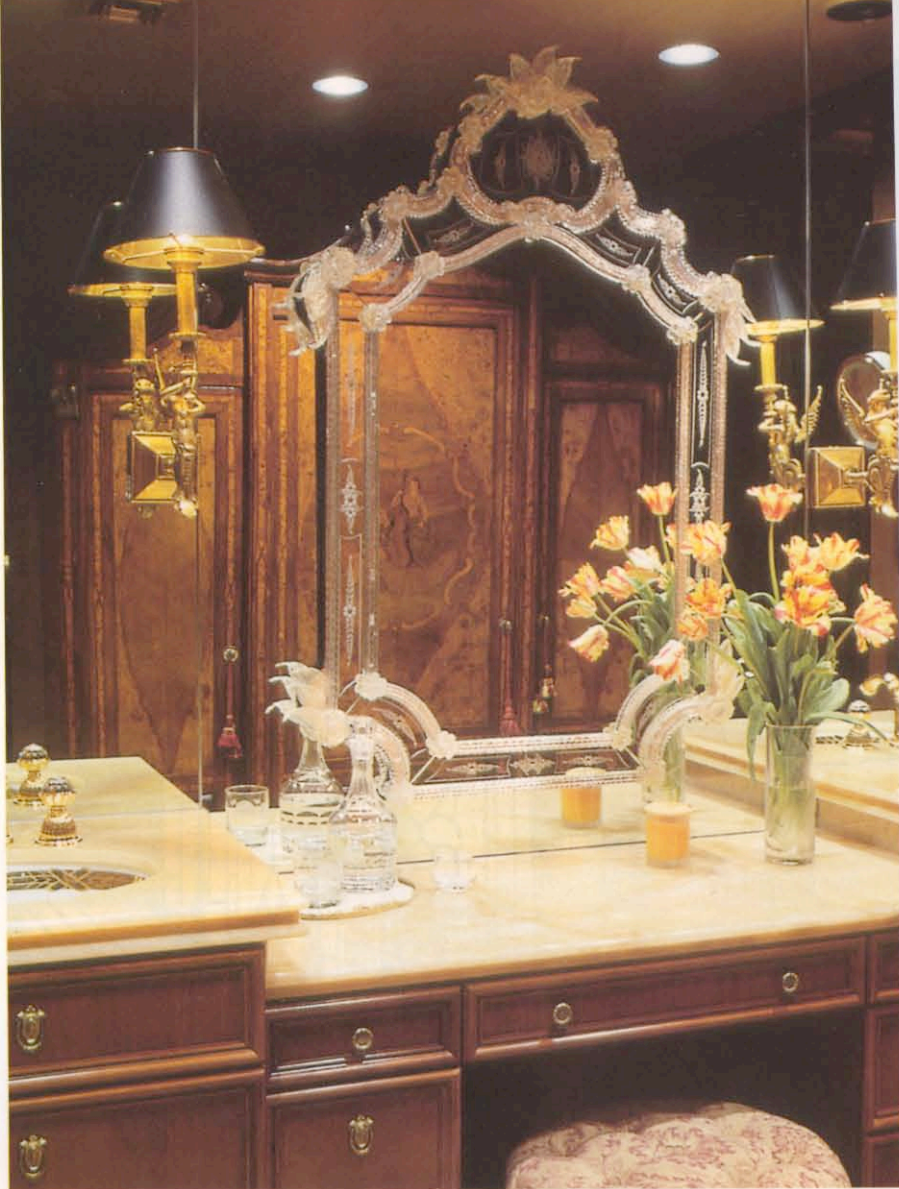
"This onyx floor is amazing—it's warm on your feet, not cold like marble," says Margaux, stepping into a master bath suitable for a European chateau. Honey onyx countertops exude a translucent, jewel-like glow from lighting underneath. Above, a European mirror has been embellished with crystal flowers and winged seraph sconces. His-and-her gold sinks and fixtures enhance the master bath's opulent effect.

"This was going to be a nice, big steam room," says G.E., who settled for a steam shower with red granite walls and cast glass door instead.

At 2,800 square feet, the remodeled penthouse is significantly smaller than previous homes that the couple has owned, including a 7,000 square foot residence in Hilton Head and a 4,000 home in La Jolla. But G.E. insists, "This reads bigger."

He and his wife are delighted with the changes to their retirement haven. "The transformation made a big difference in the livability," says G.E. "We just love it here."

In their golden years, the homeowners have no more plans to sell or relocate. "I'm done moving," G.E. concludes. "Cleo really knocked herself out on this home, because she knew it would be our last one." ■



resources

Interior Design: Cleo J. Wood, ASID Allied, CCID
Cleo Wood Interiors, Del Mar

Kitchen Design: Margaret Dean (BA, BFA, Allied Member, ASID),
Design Studio West

Contractor: Heartwood Construction, Encinitas

■ ENTRANCE

Wallpaper: Silk Dynasty, San Jose
Chandelier and picture lighting: Decorative Crafts, Greenwich, CT
Dome: Michael's Art Glass, San Marcos

■ LIBRARY

Custom chairs: Cleo Wood
Fabric: Past Perfect, San Diego
Sofa: Beacon Hill, Los Angeles
Cocktail Table: Emerson et Cie, High Point, North Carolina
Fireplace: Electric-Heat n Glow, Anaheim
Wood chair: Century Furniture, Hickory, North Carolina
Drapery fabric: S. Harris, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Custom area rug: Davis & Davis, Chattanooga, Tennessee
Woodwork: Pacific Coast Cabinets, Vista

■ MUSIC ROOM

Chandelier: Kneedler-Fauchere, San Diego
Drapery Fabric: Travers, Mt. Vernon, New York
Arch: Pacific Coast Cabinets, Vista
Faux painting: Carmen, San Diego

■ LIVING ROOM

Custom love seats and sofa: Cleo Wood
Fabric: Scalmandre, Laguna Niguel
Chairs: Century Furniture, Hickory, North Carolina
Fabric: Rodolph, Sonoma, California
Faux painting: Alana Feldman, San Diego

■ DINING ROOM

Table: Century Furniture, Hickory, North Carolina
Chairs: Decorative Crafts, Greenwich, Connecticut
Fabrics: Kravet-Bethpage, New York
Faux painting: Alana Feldman, San Diego

■ KITCHEN

Cabinetry and Appliance Selection: Design Studio West, La Jolla
Countertops: Uba Tuba granite
Appliances: Dacor cooktop, oven, microwave and warming drawer;
custom hood, Miele steam oven and dishwasher,
Sub-Zero refrigerators and freezers, Sub-Zero wine storage

Bar Stools: Artifacts, San Diego
Fabric: Rodolph, Sonoma
Chandelier: Fine Art Lamps, Miami Lakes, Florida
Faux painting: Heather Short, San Diego

■ MASTER BEDROOM

Drapery and bed fabric: Beacon Hill, Los Angeles, Travers, Mt. Vernon, New York, and S. Harris, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Chandelier: Fine Art Lamps, Miami Lakes, Florida
Chair: Century Furniture, Hickory, North Carolina
Faux painting: Alana Feldman, San Diego

■ MASTER BATH

Cabinets: Phase Nine Cabinetry, San Diego

■ GUEST BEDROOM

Bed: Artifacts, San Diego
Wallpaper: F. Schumacher, Richburg, South Carolina
Drapery fabric: Archives Textiles, Seabeck, Washington
Sconces: Fine Art Lamps, Miami Lakes, Florida

Drapery Workroom: Draperies by Picazo, San Diego
Slab Fabrication: Sistone, Los Angeles
Floors: John Barbour, Carlsbad
Mirror work: Sorrento Glass, San Diego