



VOL. 10 NO. 4

METRO

# home

## & Entertaining

**THE BEST OF BRIGHT  
NEW DESIGN TRENDS  
AND HOW TO USE THEM**

**TASTEMAKER  
STEPHANIE  
KIENLE-  
GONZALEZ  
TAKES US INTO  
HER MOST  
PERSONAL  
PROJECT**

**DEBENHAMS  
Life Made  
Fabulous**

## THE DESIGN ISSUE

### 10 DESIGN EXPERTS REVEAL THEIR STYLE SECRETS

ANNA SY, AVERY GO, BUDJI LAYUG + ROYAL PINEDA, CONRAD ONGLAO,  
CYNTHIA + IVY ALMARIO, ED CALMA, GIL COSCOLLUELA,  
J. ANTONIO MENDOZA, TESSA ALINDOGAN, TESSA PRIETO-VALDES



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PHOTOGRAPH BY  
PHILIP SISON

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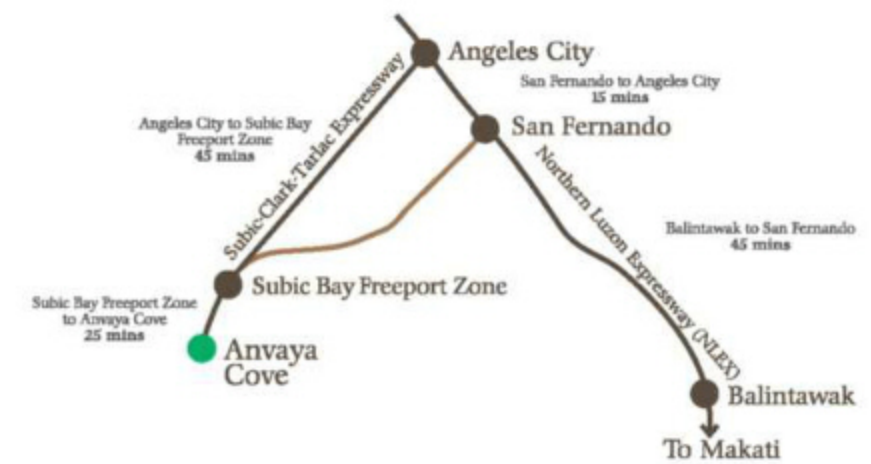


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# First things first

**THE WORD “METRO”** in our masthead refers to the abbreviated form of “metropolitan,” connoting an urban élan and expansiveness of viewpoints. It can also mean a train, specifically the Paris metro. Other meanings include “mother” (metropolitan literally means the mother of the town), “measure” (as in metronome), and yes, even a bishop who oversees other bishops. Such verbal complexity is apt as this magazine embarks on a new chapter. All these meanings have resonance and relevance in our mission to bring you a refreshed and revitalized **Metro Home & Entertaining**.

Of all the permutations of the word “metro,” it is the image of an underground railway that appeals to me the most. The fields of design and architecture unite aesthetic and technical disciplines, and constant evolution and, yes, locomotion are integral to the orchestration of an interesting space. This is the fascinating range of knowledge that we tackle in these pages. We don’t just seek to provide the voyeuristic thrill of seeing the beautiful homes of creative and interesting people, and the lives they live within these rarefied walls, though we are happy to oblige. We want to present the breadth and depth of the design fields, covering architecture, interior design, landscape architecture,

**FROM LEFT:** The Metro Home staff. Art Director, Neil Agonoy, Managing Editor, Anna M. Rosete, Editorial Assistant, Martin Aguilar (seated), Contributing Editor, Marissa Lopa (standing), Associate Editor, Barbie Pardo-Tiangco, and Editor-in-Chief, Anton Barretto.



art and, of course, the art of living well.

At the heart of it all is the home. It’s the biggest, most important word on our masthead. What makes a home? Like a mother, it provides comfort and sustenance, a feeling of being safe and sound. But this doesn’t come instinctively, and that is where the proper measures come in—the sense of space and proportion, the functionality, the precision. And, like a proper bishop, it is a beacon of inspiration and hope.

As we were preparing this issue, we were overwhelmed by the support and cooperation by our friends in “the business”: Ed Calma, J. Antonio Mendoza, sisters Cynthia and Ivy Almario, Anna Sy, Budji Layug and Royal Pineda, Avery Go, Gil Coscolluela, Conrad Onglao, Tessa Alindogan, Tessa Prieto-Valdes, Raffy Palma, Liza Crespo, Patty Eustaquio, Richie Lerma, Chris Yam-Daez, Ana Rocha, Florence Kho of Furnitalia, Jaime Ponce de Leon, Nick de Lange, Eugene Lorenzana, Filaine Tan, Jeanne Wee, Mawen Ong, Ben Chan, Ricky Toledo, Chito Vijandre, Bambie Sy-Gobio, Leah Puyat, Keren Pascual, Arlene Sy, Philip Sison and Carlo Cordaro.

Working with the MH staff—Anna, Barbie, Marissa, Neil, Martin, Ani and Ricci, has shown me how dedication, talent and humor can truly make working the most fun you’ll ever have.

A special shout out goes to our first ever cover girl Stephanie Kienle Gonzalez, who combines Old World grace and charm with a modern sensibility and work ethic. We are truly thankful that she opened her home to us.

This issue is not just about home, it is a real homecoming. Ten years ago, Thelma Sioson San Juan called my friends Marissa Alejandro Lopa, the late Architect Maggie Go and me to be contributing editors of this magazine, and to collaborate with founding EIC Carlo Tadiar. This magazine strengthened and enriched my friendship with my fellow “partners in crime” and allowed me to truly expand my creativity.

Certainly, the creation of this issue was not a walk in the park, but it was both fun and fulfilling. Enjoy the fruits of our labor. Welcome home. 🏠

*anton*



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leah



philip



paul



jovel



raphael



geollette



leah



william

As a writer and entrepreneur, **Leah Puyat** knows that the future can never really be contained by a forecast. But she wants to try anyway. The Filipino stock market will continue to be robust and vigorous. Dresses over pants will be everyone's new uniform. And magazines will never die. Leah explores Florence for **Metro Home and Entertaining** on p. 44.

Investment-banker-turned-high-society-photographer **Philip Sison** shoots for Philippine Tatler, Lifestyle Asia, Metro, and Metro Society. He shot the cover and cover story (p. 52) for this issue.

**Paul del Rosario** has worked on numerous publications, and continues to make a name for himself through his work. For this issue, he took photos of the different Debenhams products (p. 27). Paul also took photos for Leads (p. 10) and the magazine's new section entitled "Room Mates" (p. 34).

Lensman **Jovel Lorenzo** is a long-time photographer who continues to advocate the raw beauty of film photography, taking great pictures as much as he can with his trusted old Nikon FM2. His pictures can be seen in his website, [jovellorenzo.com](http://jovellorenzo.com). He is also a professional dancer with years of training under one of the country's best Jazz crews. For this issue, Jovel took photos of Mike Stilkey's book art (p. 47) and the artist Patty Eustaquio (p. 48). He also shot the young and accomplished contractor Raffy Palma (p. 20) and lastly, Jovel took photos on how to make a dreamy tablescape using paper, lace, and glass (p. 132).

**Raphael Kiefer** is a student of life. He is interested in a broad range of things, which is why he is currently

experimenting on various projects like organizing art festivals, starting a travel blog ([themoonlitroad.tumblr.com](http://themoonlitroad.tumblr.com)), and getting more involved in nature conservation in Mindanao. Writing is his passion, and the preferred avenue for him to document and share his learnings. For this issue, Raphael writes about Arch. Avery Go's design philosophy (p. 70). He also covered the new section of **Metro Home and Entertaining** magazine entitled "Room Mates" where Team **Metro Home** challenges a notable designer (p. 34).

**Geollette Esguerra** is caught between two loves: architecture and publishing. She runs her own architecture atelier, while her other life is dedicated to publishing, whether in print (as features editor of *Metro Magazine* and as contributor to the *Philippine Star*) or online (she blogs in [thestyleanthologist.com](http://thestyleanthologist.com) and is creative director at [atelier.ph](http://atelier.ph)). In this issue, Geollette writes about the different designers and their style in creating and conceptualizing their projects.

**Leah Nemil-San Jose** is the managing editor of *Working Mom*, **Metro Home's** sister magazine. She writes for **Metro Home** in the hope that whatever she sees and learns from these beautiful houses will rub off on her. For this issue, Leah writes about J. Antonio Mendoza's love for modern aesthetics (p. 106).

**William Ong** started out as an in-house photographer for J. Walter Thompson. A colleague introduced him to editorial work years ago, and after some time, he "felt comfortable doing lifestyle shoots." William also photographs for Singapore-based titles *Home & Decor*, *Expat Living* and *Kitchen Culture's Food & Travel*. For this issue, William took photos of the different designer projects.

# VELVET

PRESENTS



## the 65<sup>th</sup> PRIMETIME EMMY AWARDS

LIVE TELECAST

September 23, 2013 (Monday)  
7:00am - Red Carpet  
8:00 - Main Show

PRIMETIME TELECAST

September 23, 2013 (Monday)  
7:00pm - Red Carpet  
8:00pm - Main Show

ENCORE TELECAST

September 24, 2013 (Tuesday)  
7:00pm - Red Carpet  
8:00pm - Main Show

September 28, 2013 (Saturday)  
8:00pm - Red Carpet  
9:00pm - Main Show

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# Classic Contemporary

ICONIC PIECES TAKE CENTER STAGE AT HOME,  
AND ARE GIVEN A TOTALLY UPDATED EDGE AND ATTITUDE

BY BARBIE PARDO-TIANGCO  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

**METRO HOME AND ENTERTAINING** shows you how to harmonize the past and present with the most current objects in the market as examples of how to create interiors that give a nod to tradition in a modern setting.

The Molly Chair by Heima has a classic Mid-Century modern silhouette, but paired with Arts and Crafts-style turned legs, color-blocked upholstery and button tufting, it has been updated into an original creation with references to different time periods of the past. The bureau by Eclectic Living, whose drawers are mismatched in different wood finishes, complements its mix-and-match character. The sampling of cabinet pulls adds to its eclectic appeal.

Following these vignettes are a collection of objects that we have curated to help you define your “traditional modern” moment.



Molly Chair by Heima  
P31,000, Mismatched  
Drawers by Eclectic  
Living, P52,000

1. White desk lamp, Dimensione; 2. Silver  
Rocking Horse, Sifra, P3,895; 3. Pipe Chair  
by Jasper Morrison for Magis, P33,950;  
4. Neon Pink desk lamp, Heima, P7,200;  
5. Wooden house pencil holder, Heima  
P500; 6. Green Sand Hour Glass, Sifra,  
P3,495; 7. Smiling Buddha P2,900 each





Bright colors on classic silhouettes update the ubiquitous. Michelangelo's *David* is transported into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a splash of acid yellow. Chevron motifs that recall tribal patterns are similarly given a facelift with the yellow color-way. Set against the Molly sofa's patterns, a fearless statement is made by mixing print on print.

Neon Yellow Lamps Dimensione P8,995 each; Molly Sofa, Heima P41,000; Yellow chevron print pillows, Heima P2,200; Metal coffee table, Heima. P17,700; Ceramic Neon Yellow David head bust, Sifra, P4,900



1. White floor lamp, Dimensione, P14,195; 2. Crosley Cruiser Turntable, Heima, P8,200; 3. Greyhound Ashtray, Sifra, P3,895; 4. Bubble vase, Eclectic Living, P4,295; 5. Wooden horse, Sifra, P3,500; 6. Silver 2d Silhouette Jar Accessories, Sifra, P1,895, P2,495, P2,495; 7. Slim phone, Heima, P4,500





# Design Updates

FROM FURNITURE TO CONDO DEVELOPMENTS, EVERYTHING NEW IN THE WORLD OF DESIGN



### GERMAN LUXURY FURNITURE BRANDS

Leading German furniture brands Hülsta and Rolf Benz manufacture quality upholstered furnishings used by international celebrities, athletes and European royalty.

Hülsta is the market leader in today's modern living room and bedroom needs. It carries the 'Blue Angel' environmental seal throughout all ranges. Hülsta's furniture are sold worldwide, but are still manufactured at the German sites in Ottenstein and Stadthorn.

Rolf Benz merges functionality and design with the highest level of comfort for its sofa range. It uses up to nine different kinds of foam with different densities for the furniture's interior structure. Not surprisingly, its tag line is "the architecture of seating."

Visit the newly opened Hülsta and Rolf Benz showroom at the 3rd Floor, Fully Booked, Building 6, 11th Avenue, Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City, or call +6327382430.



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### SMART ROBOTIC VACUUM

Neato Vacuum is the smart robotic vacuum that scans, maps, and plans. It's the right kind of vacuum to help you maintain a clean, clutter-free home. Equipped with the most powerful suction in a robotic vacuum, Neato can efficiently pick up everyday debris—dirt, pet hair, etc.—from the floor. It can do path planning through sensors that detect and avoid obstacles (including stairs), and it has an "easy to access and empty" dirt bin.

Exclusively distributed by Focus Global, Inc. For inquiries, call (02) 634-8587.



### MAARTE 2013

From August 23 to 25, the Rockwell Tent transforms into a wonderland of Philippine design for MaARTE 2013, an exhibition and sale of outstanding Filipino artisans. Organized by the Museum Foundation of the Philippines, Inc., MaARTE 2013 brings together artisans from all over the Philippines, each one with distinct aesthetic sensibilities. Discover treasures—clothing, accessories and home décor—including vibrant blankets from the North, and sumptuous handmade paper from the South, jewelry inspired by Filipino traditional designs, accessories made from computer hardware, and even whimsical fans.





# Interior innovation-awarded furniture

BY RHEENA SANTOS / PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

MDF ITALIA'S UMBERTO CASSINA ON BRINGING THEIR SOUGHT-AFTER DESIGNER PIECES TO THE PHILIPPINES



"We are doing some changes. If you look at some of the new products, they are more rounded. Just like cars, if you look at cars, ten years ago the form was square, now they're all rounded [edges]. We are still working with different designers from different countries, with Italian, French, and German designers" -Umberto Cassina (ABOVE). BELOW: Seating and shelving from MDF Italia's The Flow Collection



**NOT MANY KNOW THAT** before business tycoon Ben Chan established the wildly successful clothing brand Bench, he first opened home furniture and furnishings store Dimensione. The venture seemed to be inspired by the interior design course he took in San Francisco, which ignited his passion for arts and design. Years later, this very passion pushed Chan to introduce the impressive product lines of award-winning Milan-based design company MDF Italia to the Philippines.

A significant part of the internationally known brand's success can be traced back to the efforts of its vice-president Umberto Cassina, and general sales director Frederik Billiau, who both recently flew to Manila to celebrate the launch of their Bonifacio Global City showroom. Cassina is no stranger to the design industry as his grandfather Umberto and his grandfather's brother Cesare founded the furniture manufacturing company Cassina in Brianza, Italy.

## Design by icons

Upon opening in 1927, the younger Umberto explains that the company focused on producing furniture for residential clients before eventually customizing pieces for high-end hotels and restaurants and luxury ocean liners. He adds that in the 1950s, his grandfather had the brilliant idea of securing the rights to manufacture the works of acclaimed architect Le Corbusier. Following the overwhelmingly positive response to the Le Corbusier collection, the Cassina Masters Collection with pieces designed by icons such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Charles Rennie Mackintosh was unveiled.

Born on October 20, 1955, Umberto Cassina studied business administration at Bocconi University, and at the School of Business Administration in Turin, Italy. He moved to the United States for a few years before working at the family-run company at 28 years old.

His early exposure to their collaborations with lauded Italian architects Franco Albini, Afra and Tobia Scarpa, Gaetano Pesce and Mario Bellini helped ensure that Cassina would have a more discerning eye and a discriminating taste. These skills, along with his natural charm, helped him seal deals with high-profile clients, including Bally, Frette, Gucci, Sheraton Hotel in Jeddah, Hotel Michelangelo Milan and Four Seasons Milan, among others.

From being the director of the contracts division, Cassina was promoted to vice-chairman of the company, and managing director of the research and development department. The latter position allowed him to work closely with artists that included Piero Lissoni, Philippe Starck, Jean-Marie Massaud, Jorghe Pensi and Jehs+Laub.

## Useful and beautiful

In a one-on-one interview at the MDF Italia opening, Cassina confided that in 2005, 78 years

after brothers Umberto and Cesare started their business, the family decided to sell the company to the Poltrona Frau group, another Italian furniture manufacturing company. Two years later, the Cassina family and Poltrona Frau's Fratus family acquired MDF Italia, a brand established by designer and art director Bruno Fattorini in 1992.

Cassina says he is excited for Filipinos to know more about the MDF Italia brand. He emphasizes that its strength lies in its focus on design, simplicity, research and development. "We always use the best material, and the best technique to produce something that is not only useful but beautiful," says Cassina.

In 2013 alone, MDF Italia won Interior Innovation Awards for three of its products (the In motion modular system by Neuland Industrie design, the Mamba shelf/desk by Victor Vasilev, and the Bend chair by Jehs+Laub). Another notable award is the Compassa D'Oro for the Yale sofa designed by Jean-Marie Massaud.



"We have to make something different. We don't want to talk about a chair, but the chair, not a table but the table. It means that in the market, you find a lot of chairs, a lot of tables, but what is our philosophy? To find the right product for this company to keep our identity very strong" - Umberto Cassina. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: Random book shelves, Le Blanc bench and Le Grande Table by Xavier Lust, Yale armchair by Jean-Marie Massaud.





# True sustainability

GREEN ARCHITECTURE  
COMBINED WITH  
AESTHETICS

BY DAHL BENNETT  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY LILEN UY



A residence in Tagaytay Highlands was designed using local materials. Green roofs for ventilation and reducing run-offs were incorporated while its topmost volume was rotated on the main axis to allow the magnificent view of Taal Lake into the home.

**SETTING UP HER OWN** company in her home country seemed to be destiny's design for green architect Liza Morales-Crespo. The slump in the construction industry in the USA prompted her to seriously consider moving back to the Philippines with her family last year. Backed by two master's degrees from Columbia University and New Jersey Institute of Technology, and more than 10 years of practice at the award winning firm, Brennan Beer Gorman Architects in New York, Liza had more than enough architectural arsenal to put up her own company here. Fresh from New York, she established Liza Crespo Ecotecture (LCE), where she is the Design Director.

What sets her apart from other well-established architectural firms is her expertise that is committed to pursuing 'green architecture' in every sense. Liza is a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-Accredited Professional (LEED-AP). Her vital role in LCE is to help consultants merge their creative ideas with greener alternatives in order to construct a building that is as environmentally efficient as possible in all areas of the LEED certification system. "These include the reduction of CO2 emissions, the implementation of more efficient lighting and water systems, and the overall reduction of energy output," she elaborates.

In reconciling aesthetics



LEED-accredited architect Liza Crespo, mother of two, is keen on teaching clients to lessen their carbon footprints by making sustainable choices in building their structures.

with environmental sustainability in her projects, Liza says she has always been drawn to designs that implement 'Biomimicry,' imitating what she calls the perfect sustainability of nature. She explains, "If you consider a tree in the middle of the forest, it's easy to see how it can exist for centuries without any human intervention. To me, that's true sustainability, and it is that quality that I'm trying to create with each design I undertake."

Liza's presence is literally a breath of fresh air in an industry that needs to be more conscientious of its impact on the planet. In conclusion, she says, "I couldn't think of a better way to contribute to the health of the planet than by addressing the very practices that have been contributing to so many environmental problems."



A penthouse in Ortigas was gutted and reconfigured to maximize available light and ventilation and to give an illusion of space.



Above: The Urban Ashram at the Fort, a 300-sq. m. yoga studio, minimized carbon footprint with the use of sustainable materials and space layouts. Bamboo as well as reclaimed wood was widely used throughout while furniture was up-cycled from their previous existence. (Photo by Juan Mitra)



Bottom: This 700-sq. m. residence was designed to provide natural daylight throughout all the spaces, with passive cooling techniques incorporated and aided with mechanical low energy ceiling fans.



## Go green

How do we live a greener lifestyle? Liza shares these simple tips with great impact.

- 1. Less is more.** Less packaging means less waste. Living within a smaller building footprint usually means lower energy consumption and minimal building materials used.
- 2. Always think life cycle costs.** Buy appliances with longer warranties and that lasts a long time even if they may be more expensive. You wouldn't want to dispose of appliances every so often and add to the "waste-stream."
- 3. Read, read, read.** Read and research about material components, including items we use everyday. "I cannot buy a shampoo without checking if the ingredients have parabens or sulfates. It's the same thing with paints and cleaning materials— look for those with low VOCs (volatile organic compounds)," Liza says.



# Diligent hands build success

BY MARTIN ANGELO AGUILAR / PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

A BIBLICAL PASSAGE GUIDES A YOUNG ARCHITECT TO A PROMINENT PLACE IN CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN



LEFT: Accomplished young contractor, Raffy Palma. Top right: The office of Palma where he constructs and develops his ideas. The drafting table shows that he prefers the manual method of drawing. Below: The contractor's Wall of success—a blueprint collection of his projects.



**THE FIRST THING** you see when you enter the office of the young and accomplished Raffy Palma is his wall of success—a blueprint collection of the different projects that he has done over the seven years he's been in the industry. These major breakthroughs have ushered him into a prominent place in the field of construction and design.

Initially, Raffy wanted to be a pilot but because of the dangers associated with the

profession, he gave up his dream of flying around the world. Instead, he earned a degree in architecture from the University of Santo Tomas. As an undergraduate student, his talent in designing and passion for art was a standout. His airbrush project was made the model for all the seven sections during his freshman year in UST, and his name became known in the College of Architecture.

He started doing retail

shops in 2005 before expanding to bigger projects. In mid 2006, his construction company, PALi Dimensions Corporation, started to design and build houses—traditional, modern, and Mediterranean-inspired. Today, his company's main concentration is commercial buildings.

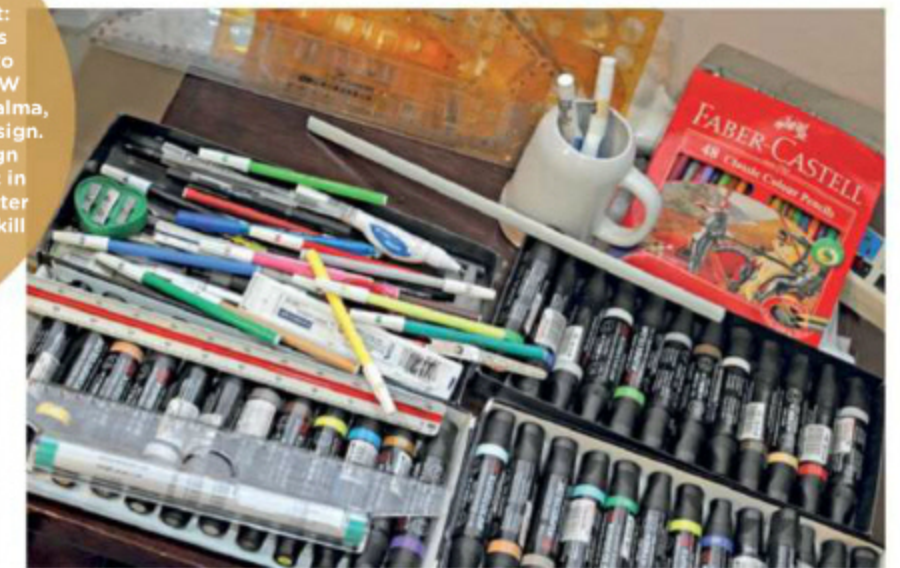
Raffy is guided by a biblical passage from the book of Proverbs: "Diligent hands will prosper; lazy hands will be poor." As a contractor, he lives up to this passage by being hardworking and hands-on with every project. Young as he is, he knows the ins and outs of each project. He is also time-conscious and hates being late. In fact, he sets his watch 30 minutes in advance.

Guided by his vision, principle, and work ethic, Raffy Palma says, "We've always wanted to become big to provide more jobs and share our blessings with other people."

*PALi Dimensions Corporation holds office at 4/F Triumph Building, 1610 Quezon Avenue, South Triangle, Quezon City; tel. no. 351-3169 and email [pali.dimensions@gmail.com](mailto:pali.dimensions@gmail.com)*



TOP: A kitchen shot in one of Raffy Palma's residential projects. Top right: Tools of the trade. Palma uses markers and colored pencils to create his masterpieces. BELOW LEFT: Another project of Raffy Palma, which has a touch of modern design. BELOW RIGHT: Different design plates show Palma's work ethic in designing—manual over computer generated design program, a skill nurtured during his design school days at the UST.





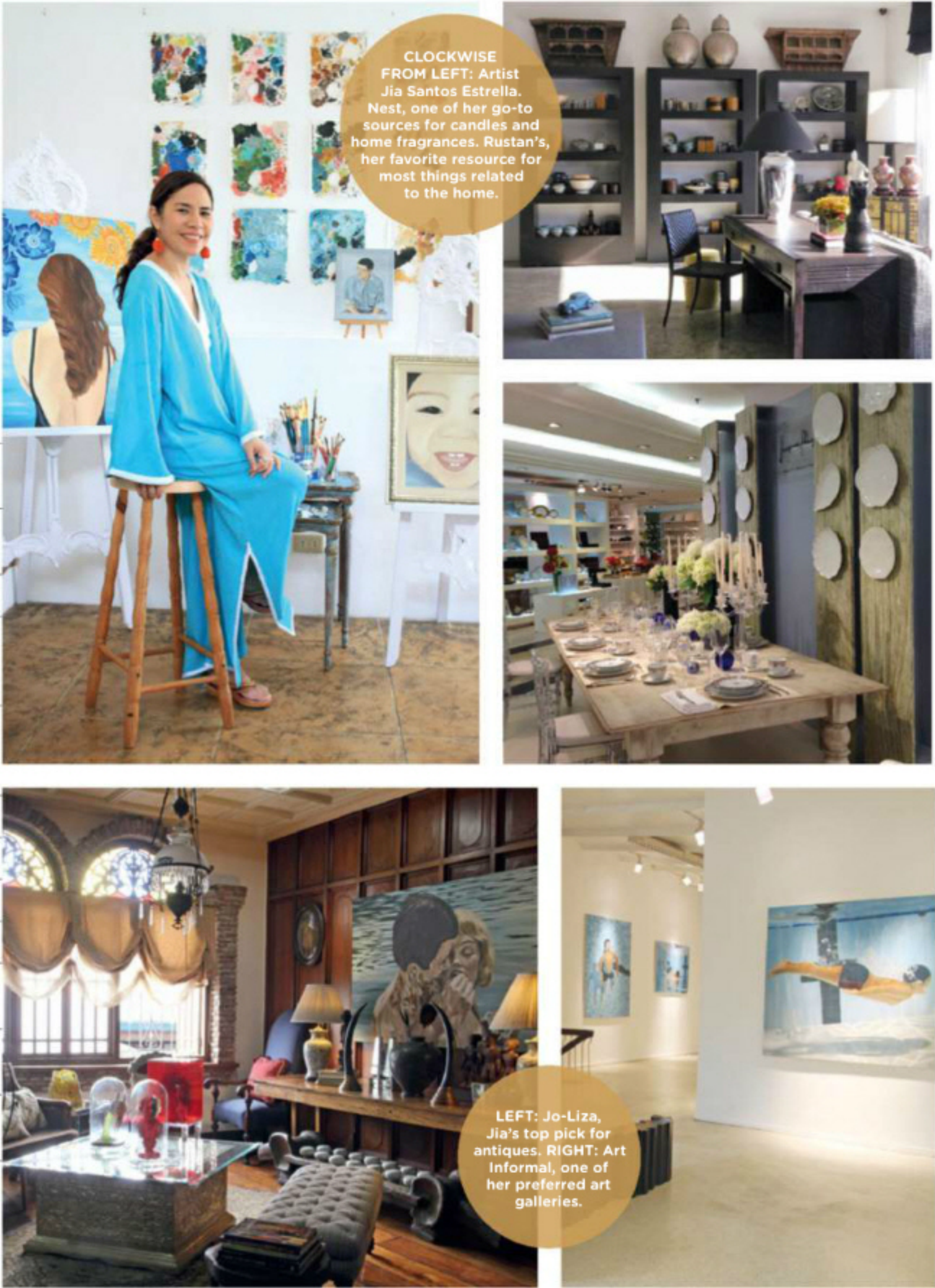
# The Master List

**ARIST JIA SANTOS ESTRELLA** weaves wonderful objects into her colorful life as a painter and importer of furniture from Morocco. “I love mixing traditional style with contemporary, vintage, modern Asian, and European influences,” she says. As an artist, she translates her love for travel into hand-painted furniture and art pieces.

Inspired by the textures and colors of Morocco, she often travels there, and brings to the Philippines these coveted treasures through Majorelle in Rustan’s.

- Furniture:** Dwell, Poliform, Majorelle at Rustan’s
- Fabric (for upholstery):** Townes, KA International
- Antiques:** Jo-Liza
- Art:** Art Informal, West Gallery, Silverlens, Blanc, Pinto Gallery, Boston Gallery, Secret Fresh
- Crafts (wood, shell, native baskets, etc.):** Rustan’s Our Very Own
- Books:** Fully Booked
- Tableware:** Rustan’s
- Glassware:** Rustan’s
- Sheets and Pillows:** Rustan’s
- Candles & Home fragrance:** Cura V, Nest, Rustan’s
- Lamps & Lighting Fixtures:** Pietro, Majorelle at Rustan’s
- Decorative Accents:** Majorelle at Rustan’s

DISCOVER TREASURES OLD AND NEW WITH JIA SANTOS ESTRELLA



# Bright, bold and shiny

A FOCUS ON BRIGHT COLORS, BOLD PRINTS, THICK WEAVES, REFLECTIVE SURFACES AND METALLICS

BY ANTON BARRETTO  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



**A BRIGHT COLOR** on your wall serves as a perfect backdrop for a painting with bold shapes and forms. Add exotic touches to the composition. A Moroccan brass lantern provides a sobering patina to the vignette, while the handpainted motifs on the Tibetan blanket cabinet echo the painting’s recurring hues. A woven leather bench adds interest to the mix. **-AMR**





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Knot chandelier, Pietro Collection. Void by Tom Dixon, Vitra. Pressed glass by Tom Dixon, Vitra. U silver vase, AC+632. Flash circle table by Tom Dixon, Vitra. Mirror ball with tripod stand by Tom Dixon, Vitra. (Selections by Russ Ligas)

### Reflective surfaces

Reflective surfaces employed as finishes for tabletops, accessories or lighting fixtures multiply the pleasures of a room. Use them as accent pieces and focal points. These objects serve to create an illusion, usually making rooms feel larger than they really are.

### Metallics



New metallics come with glint and sheen. Use these to glam up a vignette.

Time-worn objects usually bear a patina. Use these to moderate a bright composition.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Etch candle holder by Tom Dixon, Vitra. EB Orb wrought iron Chandelier, EB Star wrought iron Chandelier, both from the Pietro Collection. Deja vu high bar stool, Dimensione. Silver tray, Cura V. Cabinet hardware, Cu29. Glossy gold puppy, Dimensione. (Selections by Russ Ligas)

### Bright Colors

“Red is the great clarifier—bright and revealing.”  
—Diana Vreeland

All shades from Dunn Edwards available in Wilcon Home Depot. (Selections by Anna M. Rosete)



### Four simple rules to keep in mind when choosing color:

- Using more than one color in a room can look phenomenal, but if you choose to do so, keep to a maximum of three colors. Use two bold and strong colors, and the third, a neutral shade to temper the palette.
- When choosing your colors, pick your boldest color first. Then, choose the other colors that will complement and flatter the first color in mind.
- Don't go from paint chip to an entire wall. Dissect the space, and experiment first with a painted one meter by one meter area on the wall. Step back, and decide if you like it.
- Do not fear. Color enhances your surroundings. After all, we need color to brighten up our lives.





LEFT ROW FROM TOP: Woven abaca wall covering, Simor. Basket, Hacienda Crafts. MIDDLE ROW FROM TOP: Chevron abaca rug in beige and tan, Herringbone rug in black and beige abaca, Herringbone rug in beige and tan abaca, black and tan sisal, all from Simor, RIGHT ROW FROM TOP: Warwick Baxter Fabric, Weaves of Asia and The Fabric Bar. Magazine Rack by S.C. Vizcara, Nest. (Selections by Anna M. Rosete)



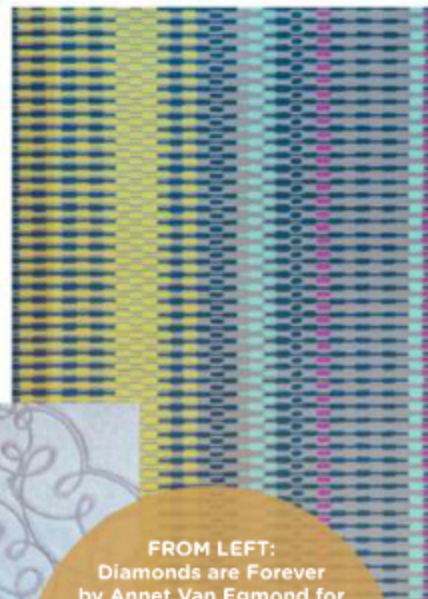
### Thick Weaves

The use of fiber is a standout trend that encapsulates a love for texture and tactile objects, signaling a moment where organics and all things natural come to the fore of interior materials. These come in the form of carpets, wall coverings, storage baskets and fabric. Handmade has arrived and is here to stay!



### Pop Prints

Tell a story by adding drama to your room with bold and eye-catching graphics. "Bold" can take up one wall or it can be an accent that will make you do a double take when you enter a room. These allow you to use simpler color schemes—subtle, neutral and complementary—as patterns on the wall already dominate the room. Feel free to repeat the prevailing patterns in smaller doses.



FROM LEFT: Diamonds are Forever by Annet Van Egmond for BN Wall Coverings. Multi-stem by Orla Kiely for Harlequin. Opening Doors pattern from Gothic House Line by Art House. Carl Robinson Edition 2 for Bancroft. Array from Momentum Vol. 2, all from Wall Crown. (Selections by Martin Aguilar)

# Rooms with character

ESTABLISHING YOUR ROOM'S PERSONALITY WITH DEBENHAMS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



**RUSTIC ROMANCE**  
Recreate nostalgia with John Rocha's soft pastels and white lace appliques. This setting pays homage to such delicate details associated with a bygone era. -AMR



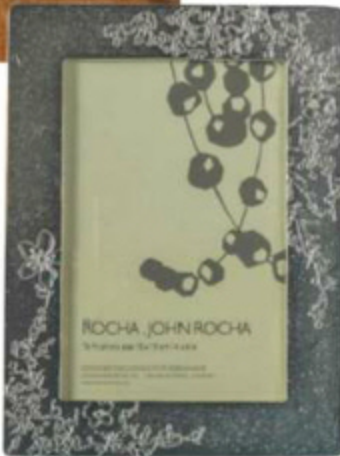
DEBENHAMS HOME offers a wide range of products to suit every personality. Working with designers John Rocha, Matthew Williamson, Ben de Lisi, Julien McDonald and Betty Jackson, their home accessories represent a range of styles, themes and trends to suit every personality.

On the bed: John Rocha duvet cover and pillow cases. Butterfly by Matthew Williamson accent cushions. On night stand: John Rocha silver metal tea light tree. On étagère: ceramic cutout lamp. Silver etch butterfly border photo frame. John Rocha silver floral textured photograph frame.





On the bed: Ivory British Affair floral bedding. Turquoise peacock embroidered cushion, all by Matthew Williamson. On bench: Peacock-printed cushion, turquoise peacock embroidered cushion, all by Matthew Williamson. On side table: HS square vintage clock. On dresser: Peacock mirror, red metal platter, square votive with peacock design, all by Matthew Williamson. FROM LEFT: Silver floral textured photo frame. Matthew Williamson birdcage lamp. Silver etch butterfly border photo frame.



**BOTANICAL BRAVURA**

Display a fearless love for floral motifs inspired by the colors of exotic destinations. Matthew Williamson's oversized prints featured in his British Affair bedsheets for the Butterfly collection represents an enduring flourish suitable for those who prefer the charm of bold prints matched with punchy colors. Photo frames with butterfly motifs complete the look. -AMR



**ORIENTAL SOPHISTICATION**

A nod to the Orient, this setting makes use of a John Rocha duvet cover with cherry blossom print. These are paired with accessories by Julien McDonald whose sleek details recall the sheen of eastern lacquerware. -AMR



On the bed: Debenhams cherry blossom duvet cover and sheets. Debenhams pillowcases. On night table: Gold wavy striped vases by Julien McDonald. Hammered tealight holders by John Rocha. Mirrored box. Objects from top: Hammered votive candle holder. Metal bowls and black two-tiered glass frame by Jasper Conran. On console table: Star by Julien McDonald silver diamante table lamp. Metal bowls and hammered tealight holders.







On bench: Red price till shape money box. On armchair: Record accent cushion. On rug: Priceless accent cushion. Gray camera lamp, Percent sign figurine, all by Ben de Lisi.



On desk: Terracotta large orange can-shaped pot, terracotta small blue can-shaped pot, black Eiffel Tower shaped table lamp, all by Ben de Lisi. Bookend. On bed: White desk printed bedding set by Ben de Lisi. Pillow cases and shams by Debenhams. RIGHT: Photo frame.



**ECLECTIC POP**  
Youthful exuberance is conveyed in this setting, with bedsheets from the Ben de Lisi collection, printed with painterly graphics. Paired with colorful accent cushions and accessories from the same line, it is a setting fit for the young urbanite. -AMR

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# Reinterpreted Classics

TIMELESS SILHOUETTES  
RECREATED

BY ANTON BARRETTO  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



TOP LEFT-RIGHT:  
Hillcreek Wing  
Chair, P26,800, Nest.  
Proust Geometrica,  
P750,000, Capellini.  
Smoke Chair by Maarten  
Baas for MOI, Price  
upon request, B  
& B Italia.

LEFT: Queen  
Armchair, P171,648,  
Natuzzi. RIGHT:  
Ghost Filled Chair,  
Price upon request,  
Furnitalia.

LEFT: Florian  
Arm Chair,  
P261,000, Roche  
Bobois. RIGHT:  
French Tete-A-Tete,  
P49,500, KISH.

# The Back Story

MUCH LIKE DRESSES, CHAIRS REVEAL  
REFERENCES TO PERIODS, STYLES AND  
TASTES BASED ON HOW THEIR BACKS  
ARE DESIGNED. HERE ARE A FEW TERMS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANNA M. ROSETE



**BARREL  
BACK**  
A chair or sofa  
with the arms and  
back forming a  
continuous curve.

**CAMEL BACK**  
Usually found in  
sofas, these are  
double curved or  
shield shaped.

**FIDDLEBACK  
CHAIR**  
Referencing the  
Queen Anne period,  
this chair back's splat  
looks like a violin.  
Some also call this  
the "York chair."

**COMB BACK  
CHAIR**  
A Windsor chair with  
an extension at the back  
above the arm rail that  
consists of five or more  
spindles and a curved  
top rail that resembles  
a comb.

**BOW BACK  
CHAIR**  
A chair back formed  
by a bent piece of  
wood fitted with vertical  
spindles. The bow  
or hoop continues  
down to the arms  
or the seat.

**SHIELD BACK**  
A chair back  
popularized by 18<sup>th</sup>  
century English furniture  
makers Hepplewhite and  
Sheraton that resembles a  
shield, the outlines of which  
are formed by a double  
curved top rail with a  
half ellipse below.

**OVAL  
BACK CHAIR**  
Now an ubiquitous  
form, and most  
commonly used in dining  
rooms, this is a chair with  
oval back, in recent  
times associated with  
American designer,  
Barbara Barry.

**WING  
BACK CHAIR**  
A comfortable,  
oftentimes over-stuffed  
chair with a high solid  
back. Side pieces,  
called "wings" or  
"ears" are attached  
to the back.



# Room Mates

ONE ROOM, ONE THEME, TWO TEAMS—  
DESIGNING FOR A BACHELOR URBAN NOMAD

BY RAPHA KIEFER / PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

**TAILOR FIT**

**WHAT THEY DID:**  
The living room designed by Team Metro Home responds to a minimalist aesthetic. Rendered in black and white, it makes for maximal visual impact with strong geometry as the primary design tool used to fulfill the design brief.

**ACHIEVE IT ON YOUR OWN:**

- To keep the vibe urbane and sleek, add graphic elements to the room's composition. Here, this is achieved by hanging black and white photographs on the wall, visually held together by their white matting and black frames.
- Mixing up the geometry by contrasting a linear sofa with a round coffee table and lamp breaks the room's formality, and lends it an inviting appeal.
- Don't forget the floor treatment. The graphic theme continues to the contrasting Beni Ouarain Moroccan rug and the cow hide. The former's diamond patterns are a counterpart to the latter's organic texture.



**WE USHER IN A NEW ERA** with this maiden issue of our new Editor-in-Chief. **METRO HOME** proudly introduces a first. Every issue, Team MH will test themselves head to head with Manila's finest designers. Both sides will be given the same space, same theme and equal amount of time to execute a design theme as they see fit. MH readers will be allowed to comment on their favorite through our social media pages.

In this issue, Team MH takes on esteemed designer Ana Rocha in the space-challenged unit of a Makati high-rise condominium. The home belongs to a successful bachelor, an Urban Nomad who likes to travel and loves art.

**Home Team: Relaxed Black & White**

The MH foursome is headed by none other than EIC Anton Barretto and his accomplished team, which includes Anna Ro-

sete, Barbie Pardo-Tiangco and Marissa Lopa, who earned their design chops from the Rhode Island School of Design, PSID (Philippine School of Interior Design), and the London's KLC School of Design, respectively.

Responding to this month's brief, Team MH opted for a masculine relaxed black and white, eclectic feel with metallic textures, which is the season's trend.

We begin the examination with the biggest piece of furniture in the room—the two-seater





black sectional sofa with daybed (Black & White) on one side with a matching leather armchair (Black & White) on the opposite side. The wall behind the sofa is an asymmetrical arrangement of framed photographs and artworks from Arturo Luz, Rachel Rillo, Isa Lorenzo, Pep Manalang and Joanne Zapanta-Andrada. The designers placed a wool carpet from Nest to lie in the middle of the room. A black round table (Roche Bobois) with an illuminating feature solidifies the modern manly ambiance of

the room. Rather than placing a TV in the room of the artistically inclined unit owner, the team chose a grey metallic fiberglass bookshelf (Roche Bobois), where each stacked box shelf rotates, in the adjacent corner. For a comfortable reading corner, there is a matching grey armchair (Roche Bobois) with blanket stitch detail. The corner wall is decorated with framed art from Thea Jacinto while a cow hide balances the metallic colors. Consistent to the disci-

plined palette of the unit is a round and sleek black table (Black & White) with a pair of exquisite Louis Ghost Chairs (Kartell), where our bachelor can enjoy his cup of coffee. It's a cozy nook for a twosome coffee date, with the natural light emanating from the balcony. On the ground a cow hide (Nest) adds character to the set-up while the wall features a pair of Arturo Luz paintings, which are also consistent with the color choice. The balcony contains a couple of oversized planters with live

plants to give natural hues to the condo. The entire room is lit by a single black metallic floor lamp (Roche Bobois), which radiates a warm golden yellow light. Next to it, a console table (Nest) displays some of the resident's personal collection, and just in case he wishes to use the table as a study, a wooden stool (Black & White) is conveniently placed there. That concludes the home interpretation of our Urban Nomad condominium set-up.

**BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE**

**WHAT THEY DID:** Opposite the dining nook, a reading corner was established by Team Metro Home.

**ACHIEVE IT ON YOUR OWN:**

- It is increasingly common not to have matching sets of furniture in your space.
- Choose pieces that have a common element. Here, the bookshelf and the club chair both have angular profiles that make them work together.
- Form, as much as color and texture can hold an aesthetic together.



**CASUAL CORNER**

**WHAT THEY DID:** Because the living room has an open plan, Team Metro Home was able to zone the area according to function. Across from the main arrangement (p. 44), a dining nook located by the balcony was created.

**ACHIEVE IT ON YOUR OWN:**

- In carving out a separate function for a corner of a room with an open plan, stay in the general color scheme of the room.
- Give the corner its own identity by employing furnishing and accessories that use a different material. In this example, the juxtaposition of metal and glass, acrylic and animal hide is subversive yet subtle.





LAYERED AESTHETIC

**WHAT SHE DID:**  
Much like putting an outfit together, Ana Rocha employed the design principle of layering to her scheme.

ACHIEVE IT ON YOUR OWN:

- What may seem to be opposing design elements may work well together when they are both given pride of place. Here, an ancestral painting and a very modern leather sofa are given prominence in the living room.
- Feel free to use mismatched elements, but keep them against a background of a neutral color scheme to prevent visual chaos from overwhelming the room.
- Make the old new. Here, recycled wood is used as bold striped veneers for the accent chair.



VISUAL BALANCE

Instead of one massive coffee table the slim nesting tables counteract the bulk of the sofa. The concept of layering tables extend to the side tables. The tall glass lamps are a light touch to balance the mostly opaque surfaces. The feeling of transparency of the Kisimi acrylic side table also lightens the orchestration of furniture.

Ana Rocha:  
Modern Luxe

The versatile and dynamic, one-woman design powerhouse Ana Rocha brings her genius into the face-off. This lively personality, who believes that “design is when reality and illusion merge,” goes for a modern-luxe bachelor’s apartment that seamlessly combines the mundane and the luxurious with a European palate balanced with Filipino aesthetics.

We begin the tour of the challenger’s arrangement with the two-seater Flexform leather sofa (Furnitalia) paired with Flexform black marquita finished marble-top side tables (Furnitalia). The symmetry is maintained by a pair of antique Jardinière tables (designer’s own) matched with Poltrona Frau “Dido table lamps” (Furnitalia) with a glass base.

On the wall hangs an ancestral portrait by Fernando Amorsolo from the private collection of Jaime Ponce de Leon. An antique Turtuga lamp (private collection) and a pair of accent pieces (ostrich egg and coral) from Ana Rocha’s accessory line balance out the back of the sofa. The ostrich eggs sit on a base, which features an Ana Rocha signature Gigi finish on top of hand hammered brass on wood.

In the middle of the room, a Flexform white fabric carpet (Furnitalia) and the Will & Tom center table form the designer’s recently launched collaboration effort called Ana Rocha for Designs Ligna please the eye. From the same collection is the three-legged accent chair called Fernando that, like the rest of the Designs Ligna furniture, features versatile upcycled veneer



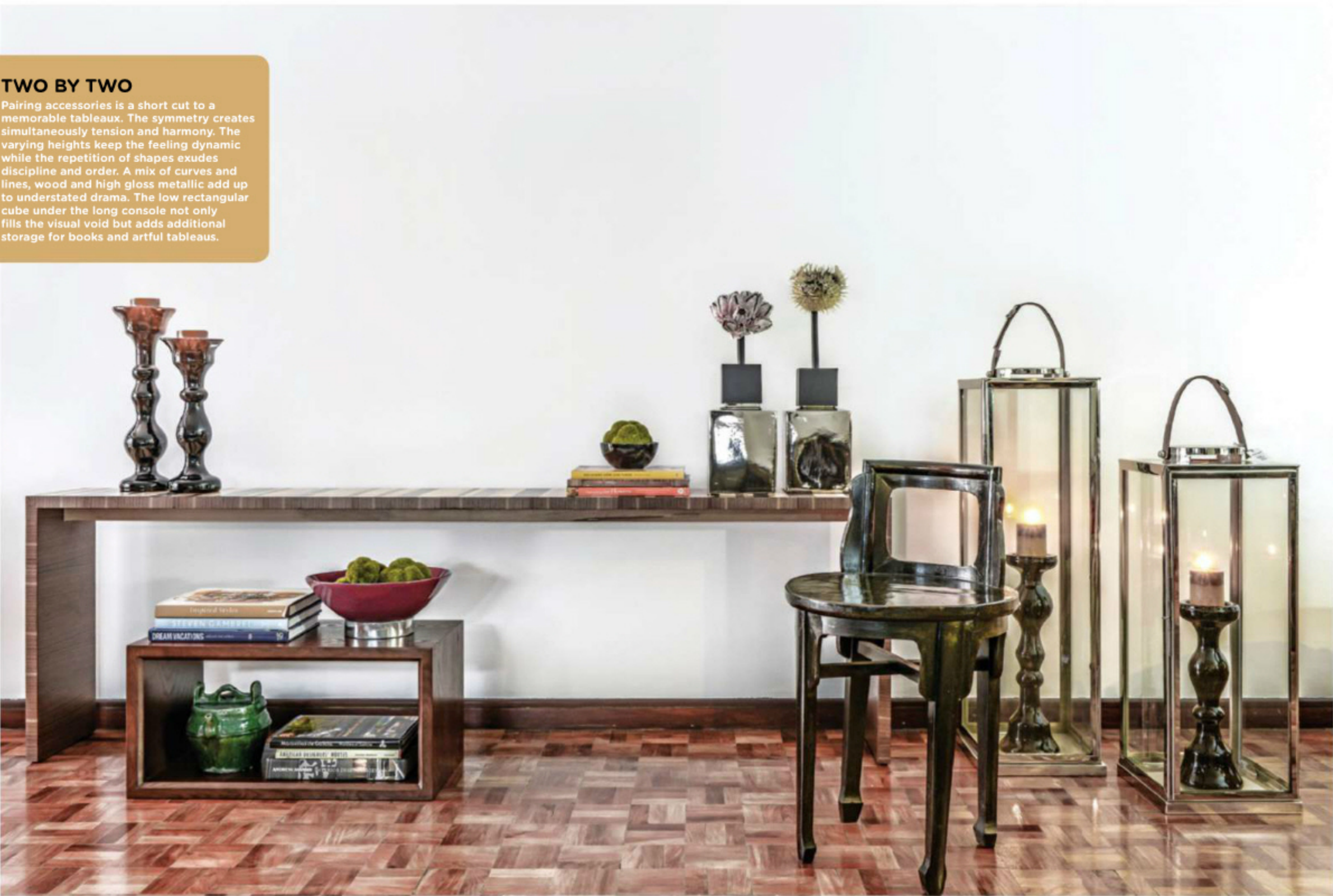
Ana Rocha

MAKE UP BY AMANDA PADILLA / HAIR BY RICKY DIOKNO



TWO BY TWO

Pairing accessories is a short cut to a memorable tableaux. The symmetry creates simultaneously tension and harmony. The varying heights keep the feeling dynamic while the repetition of shapes exudes discipline and order. A mix of curves and lines, wood and high gloss metallic add up to understated drama. The low rectangular cube under the long console not only fills the visual void but adds additional storage for books and artful tableaux.



finishes. It is paired in this set-up with an acrylic Kisimi table by Bleu (Furnitalia) that match the modern lines of the chair. Ana Rocha says that the apartment's limited space must be used for multiple purposes, the very reason that a functional workspace is integrated. The desk from the designer's Antorcha series is inspired by the changeability and multi-purpose function of European

campaign furniture. This particular piece has an artisan feel characterized by the crocodile leather finish and details such as walnut, hand hammered brass and tinted Capiz. The desk is transformed easily into a box for easier transportation and can function for work, storage of personal items or just for display. The counter is matched with another Designs Ligna chair called the Yvonne.

The opposite side of the room is set aside for artistic purpose rather than for watching TV. The Katya table (Designs Ligna) supports proud displays of Philippine seashells and a petrified puffer fish. Next to it, a pair of hurricane lamps (Designs Ligna) containing black oversized candle holders round out the unit's 'inside corner.' We end the tour on the balcony side, where a driftwood art piece sits

next to another beautiful ancestral portrait by National Artist Fernando Amorsolo (private collection of Jaime Ponce de Leon). And that completes the historical first **METRO HOME** design face-off. Both schemes unleashed the designers' creative potentials. Now, we ask you, readers, which room suits your style?   
*Please log on to [www.facebook.com/metrohome.magazine.com](http://www.facebook.com/metrohome.magazine.com)*



DECKED OUT DESK

A desk based on a traditional secretary, rendered in fine wood with crocodile skin accents, is both practical and a covert design statement. It serves as a self-contained home office that's practical and stylish.



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# folio

ART / DESIGN / PLACES / INSPIRATION

'Resolving to Give Himself  
Up,' by Mike Stilkey, p. 47





FLAIR AND FLOURISH:

# The City of Florence

MAKE A PERSONAL PILGRIMAGE TO THE CRADLE OF THE RENAISSANCE

BY LEAH PUYAT  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTON BARRETTO



The view of Florence from the Piazzale Michelangelo, a square situated across the Arno River from the city center. BELOW: Portrait of famous Florentine poet, Dante Alighieri, by another Florentine luminary, painter Sandro Botticelli.

ANY PERSON WITH CREATIVE inclinations, whether in science, art or literature, will understand that any of their creations done within the city of Florence must have to be in the shadow of the giants who once called this city their home.

Florence is, after all, the Cradle of the Renaissance, and a personal place of pilgrimage of English writers from the time of John Milton (who famously met Galileo when he arrived in this citadel of civilization). In fact, what the Western world labels “the Renaissance” is referred to by other historians as “The Florentine Renaissance.”

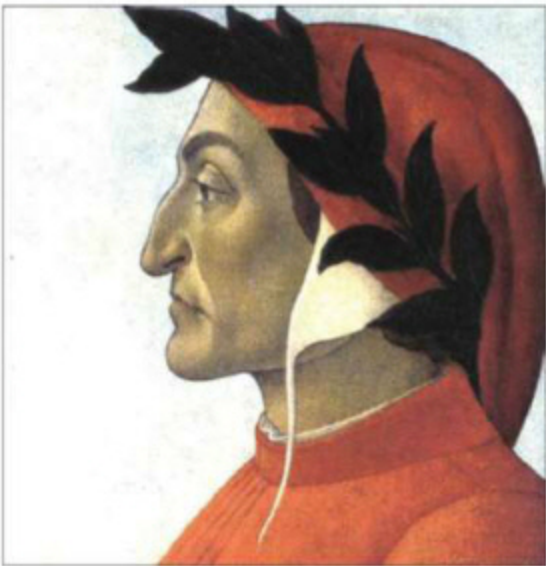
A quick roll call: Galileo, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Donatello, Fra Angelico, Dante, Machiavelli, and Lorenzo di Medici

(often called *Il Magnifico* or “The Magnificent,” a statesman, businessman and published poet, often cited as the very model of the Renaissance man) all toiled in Florence, and these are just the native Italians.

Following in Milton’s footsteps came the English Romantics, Victorians and early Moderns: Percy Bysshe Shelley, Sir William Scott, Emily and Robert Browning, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Henry James, EM Forster and D.H. Lawrence.

If you have the great good fortune of setting foot on the well-worn streets of Florence, you must do your share to spread the word. It is part of tradition.

When in Florence, you could very easily just wander the streets and find a lovely



CLOCKWISE: Brunelleschi’s famed Baptistery in the foreground, in the shadow of the Santa Maria del Fiore, also called “The Florence Cathedral.” In the background, Brunelleschi’s majestic *duomo*, the structure that looms over this Renaissance city. A replica of Michelangelo’s *David* in the Piazzale Michelangelo. The *Annunciation* by Fra Angelico in the San Marco Monastery.



piazza. It would be helpful to have a theme or a motif to your sojourn. You could choose art, and troll the Uffizi, the Accademia dell Arte, or venture into the city’s churches in search of frescoes and obscure masterpieces. You could narrow your search and have a theme. For example, you chose the Annunciation, or the Announcement, an essential moment in Christianity when the Angel Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary that she was chosen to be the Mother of God, and she gave her *fiat*, her surrender to God’s will.

Start in the Chiesa della Santissima Annunziata with a miraculous image of this scene. The artist, Fra Bartolomeo, despaired of ever capturing Our Lady’s beauty, and so one day, he slept in utter exhaustion and

found that an “angelic hand” had completed the painting. You could then see another masterful Annunciation in the Uffizi, by Simone Martini. And then head out to the Duomo to see the bronze Annunciation by the Baptistery, by Lorenzo Ghiberti, who also designed the doors, beating his rival Brunelleschi. Go on to the Chiesa Santa Felicità’s Capponi Chapel to find the Annunciation fresco by Pontormo, described by art experts as “heartbreakingly beautiful.”

In the Galleria dell’Accademia is a luminous *Annunciation of the Saints* by Lorenzo Monaco. In the Convento di San Marco, Fra Angelico’s magnificent *Annunciaton* is a seminal piece in art history for the way the light and perspective have an almost 3D



One of the many arcades in this Renaissance city where numerous motorini (scooters) are parked. BELOW: The Gallery Hotel Art lobby.



effect. This piece reminds you not to leave before reciting a "Hail Mary."

Lest you are already exhausted, there are three big guns still left: Leonardo da Vinci's *Annunciation*, also in the Uffizi; Fra Filippo Lippi's *Annunciation* in the San Lorenzo's Martelli chapel, and Sandro Botticelli's *Cestello Annunciation*, done in tempera, mercifully also in the Uffizi.

If you are of a more secular persuasion, why not try a culinary theme? After all, Florence is the capital of Tuscany, and Tuscan cuisine has conquered the hearts of foodies the world over. Trattoria Gargani is a local institution, and you must have the *Insalata Garga*, and the specialty pasta, the *Tagliatelle del Magnifico*. For traditional Florentine fare, try *Buca dell'Orafo*. I Barberi is acknowledged as the purveyor of the best coffee in Florence. A chic stop is the restaurant of the Ferragamo hotel, as it is the perfect perch from which to spy on the city's beautiful people.

Before you set out for Florence, try and get your hand on some books that will impart the richness and flavor of the city. Find a biography of Dante, or a fictional account such as *In the Company of the Courtesan* by Sarah Dunant. A standard *History of Art* text should also fill you with the breadth and depth of the Renaissance. For those who would like to indulge in some Renaissance art history specifically, Frederick Hartt's *History of Italian Renaissance Art* is the apt volume to read.

*Il Magnifico* is famously quoted as saying, "Too much knowing is misery." But when it comes to learning about Florence, there is no such thing as too much knowing. ❶

## Other stellar sights you shouldn't miss

- Piazza della Signoria
- Palazzo Vecchio
- Ponte Vecchio
- Santa Croce
- Palazzo Medici
- Basilica of Santa Maria Novella and Farmacia de Santa Maria Novella
- The National Museum of the Bargello
- Boboli Gardens
- Pitti Palace
- Piazzalle Michelangelo
- Fiesole

# Perfection in imperfection

AMERICAN ARTIST MIKE STILKEY had a problem with his Hong Kong exhibit. "There's this 24-foot high thing, and we don't know where to put it," he says. Just then, his gallerist recommended a solution in the person of Jaime Daez, managing director of Fully Booked.

Mike has since reconstructed the artwork for the "Discarded Romance" exhibit (June 4-9). The 24-foot high artwork is now a permanent installation—an excellent addition to the three-story atrium—of the Fully Booked store in Bonifacio High Street, Taguig City.

## Large-scale artwork

Mike Stilkey creates small to large-scale artwork made of books, which are stacked up like bricks and painted on the covers or spines. His works are whimsical, emotional, playful, and ironic, with a cast of fantasy characters from animals playing musical instruments to people conveying a lingering feeling of loss and longing.

Large-scale art breaks the typical image of the artist with a brush in hand, standing in front of a small white canvas. Artists of large-scale art are like architects, taking structural materials and stability into consideration and how it connects with the surrounding building or, in many cases, landscapes.

"I really don't like painting on plain canvas," says Mike. "My favorite is the old books with the yellowish colored pages. That's where I started to paint on book covers." Mike approached libraries for discarded books, and it was a thrill for the book-loving library people that Mike has given these books a second life.

## A woman and a pink cat

His installation in Fully Booked has over 3,000 books depicting a woman and a pink cat. "I don't really think about what I'm doing when I'm painting, so every time I finished painting a woman, it ends up tending to look like my wife. I have four cats at home but, unfortunately, none of them is pink," Mike says, laughing.

When commissioned by clients to make an artwork for their house or business, Mike asks two things: "What do they want?" and "Do I want to do it?" He adds, "I got to do this to do what I want—the freedom of painting. Ninety-nine percent of the time, clients let



ABOVE: Mike Stilkey's subjects come from his experiences of daily life. RIGHT: The artist at the installation of "Discarded Romance" in Fully Booked, The Fort.



LEFT: Mike Stilkey paints on the spines of books after they have been stacked. RIGHT: Whimsical characters populate Stilkey's art.

me do what I want because they want my interpretation."

Fully Booked supplied Mike with books to replace those damaged during the trip. "It's easier when you really love what you do," he says while repainting. "Besides, it doesn't look good if it's too perfect." ❷



# Objects of consumption

PATRICIA EUSTAQUIO'S WORKS ARE KNOWN FOR SUBVERTING MATERIALS AND FORM IN AN EFFORT TO BRIDGE ART, DESIGN, FASHION, AND CRAFTS

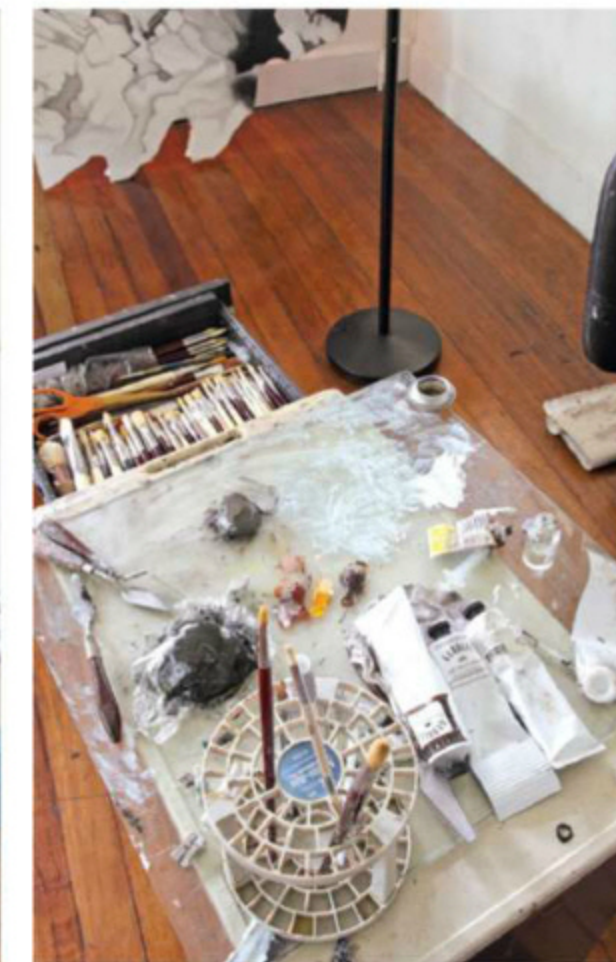
BY PATRICIA TUMANG  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

**THE RECEIVING ROOM** in Patricia Eustaquio's white-walled studio in San Lorenzo, Makati City functions as a home office-cum-gallery. Here, the artist and her energetic Boston terriers Matisse and Pablo welcome curators from the region and even as far as New York, who come to view her latest works. They are spread throughout the space: a finished oil painting rests against the hallway corridor, and figurative sculptures intermingle with furniture. A collage of objects, it represents Eustaquio's artistic process: assembling a variety of materials and experimenting "with smashing pieces together, *parang* Frankensteining stuff," she says.

**Mixed-media artist**  
The 36-year-old mixed-media artist—a recipient of the 13 Artists Award and Ateneo

"The driving idea in my work is to bridge art, design, and craft. My works translate certain materials into different forms and make a commentary on how we design things, what informs it, and then how we consume the things through our aspirations and our appetites," says artist Patty Eustaquio.

"I think the auction market now is interesting because when my generation of artists started practicing in the early 2000s, there was not a lot of money in the art scene and very few collectors. All of us had odd jobs to augment our income, which is why I got into fashion. Hardly anyone was buying our work. But with the auction market, Asia is getting wealthier and at least artists now are able to eke out a living," says Eustaquio.



Art Award in 2009—has been honing her craft since graduating with a BFA in Painting from UP Diliman in 2001, and in recent years her work has garnered international attention.

Reputable auction house Christie's sold her first-ever auction entry in 2011, a two-part jagged oil painting entitled "A Bird in Cloud Country," for nearly three times its estimated price. The following year, another two-part oil painting entitled "Reprise III & IV" was sold at Christie's.

The recent attention has humbled Eustaquio, who came of age as an artist in the early 2000s when she and her contemporaries struggled to make ends meet. Though trained as a painter, she had taken on a variety of odd jobs throughout the years—production designer for theater and film projects, costume designer for the Philippine Ballet Theater in 2005, and fashion designer from 2005 to 2007—before becoming Silverlens Galleries' first signed artist in 2008.

## 'Ukay' clothing

Learning how to sew on her own and having taken a workshop with notable Filipino fashion designer Jojie Lloren at his house in San Miguel Village taught her basic skills in pattern-making. Mastering these techniques enabled her to construct her first dress made of around 100 pieces of *ukay* clothing, which was also exhibited at the Ayala Museum show, and is currently part of a new permanent exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila called "The Philippine Contemporary: To Scale the Past and the Possible," which opened in February this year.

Eustaquio is preparing for two upcoming solo exhibitions, the first at the Jorge B. Vargas Museum in July, and the second at the Tyler Collins Fine Art Gallery in New York City in September. Her continued obsession with themes of consumption and memory translates into materials such as *yantok* (or rattan), steel, and wood chips to create metal armatures of ladies in rattan *ternos*.

According to Eustaquio, the concept is "an idea of the outdoors and because there's an overt human figure, there's a narrative of a woman amidst this forest or quarry of forms and materials, reflecting how obsessed we are with fashion and design." That the figures may be interpreted as Imelda-esque harks back to the 1960s when the Philippine fashion icon became known not only for popularizing the traditional *terno*, but also, as the artist relays, as a big "consumer of objects." 📌

For more information on Patricia Eustaquio, please visit [www.silverlensgalleries.com](http://www.silverlensgalleries.com).



# Art auction superstars

FILIPINO ARTISTS ARE NOW SETTING RECORD-BREAKING SALES AT INTERNATIONAL ART MARKETS

BY PATRICIA TUMANG



"Enraptured" by Geraldine Javier, 2007. Mixed media (triptych), 24 x 52 in. Sold for P 1,752,000 at Salcedo Auctions, Important Philippine Art, 9 March 2013.

**THE PHILIPPINE ART SCENE** today is as vibrant as ever. The demand for Philippine art is veering away from the art gallery model and into the domain of the international art market, including prestigious art fairs like Art Basel in Hong Kong and auction houses like Christie's and Sotheby's.

Sales in Southeast Asian contemporary art, most notably Philippine contemporary art, are going through the roof, with works by Filipino artists often fetching more than triple their estimated prices at local and international auctions. Also, the works of Filipino contemporary artists are being sold alongside Filipino masters like National Artists Fernando Amorsolo and Vicente Manansala—indicating a ravenous global appetite for Philippine art.

While there is no specific formula for buyers at auction, many Philippine art collectors generally look at the artist's credentials and achievements. They review auction catalogues, and assess the work and its ability to appreciate over time. Some hire art consultants to do the research and make recommendations for them. Others rely on personal taste or even nostalgia, particularly local collectors who identify with certain themes or issues.

According to Ramon Lerma, advisor at Salcedo Auctions in the Philippines, "The market right now is certainly more sophisticated, more worldly, more globalized. When a country starts to progress, the art of that country also rises. Right now, we're Asia's fastest growing economy so it only stands to reason that we're also Asia's fast growing art market."

## Geraldine Javier

Mentored by the late Roberto Chabet, Javier initially took up Nursing before getting her BFA in Painting from UP Diliman in 1997.

Her works, recently consisting of crochet or lace soft sculptures and an assemblage of curios, may be read as gothic or even macabre for its evocation of taxidermied animals, but this particular aesthetic makes her a unique standout in the international market. Her works command high prices at auction houses such as Christie's, which sold her "Chopsticks on a Saturday Fun Machine Morning" for HK\$920,000 (almost P 5.2 million), three times the estimated price in 2011. Her mixed media triptych entitled "Enraptured," sold locally through Salcedo Auctions, fetched P 1,752,000 this year.

## Ronald Ventura

Ventura shot to international fame when his graphite, oil and acrylic painting entitled "Greyhound" was sold to a phone bidder for a record-breaking US\$1.1 million (P47 million) at Sotheby's in 2011, the highest auction price paid for a Southeast Asian contemporary painting at the time. His works sell for premium prices at auctions and are usually bought quickly.

The local and international art market appreciates his signature style of multi-layered surrealist paintings evoking grim images like skulls and gas masks, and sculptures that explore the human form, anime aesthetics, and the sacred *bulol*.

"Til the Morning Comes" by Ronald Ventura, 2001. Oil on door panel, 79 x 36 in. Sold for P 12,848,000 at Salcedo Auctions, Important Philippine Art, 9 March 2013.



"Looking Up" by Jose John Santos III, 2007. Oil on canvas, 72 x 24 in. Sold for P 5,022,400, at Salcedo Auctions, Important Philippine Art, 9 March 2013.

## José John Santos III

Known for his figurative, narrative style that plays on themes of presence and absence, he juxtaposes historical Filipiniana images with contemporary, dream-like settings, which are the defining characteristics of his work that are well received at international auctions. Husband of fellow Filipino artist Pam Yan-Santos and a founder of Art Informal Gallery in Greenhills, Santos was also a member of the renowned Antipolo artist group Salingpusa.

His oil-on-canvas painting entitled *Paper Dolls* sold for HK\$1.1 million (around P 6 million) at Christie's Hong Kong in 2011, and his oil-on-canvas painting entitled "Conversations" sold for P 3,036,800 at Salcedo Auctions last year. His work has been included in Christie's auctions since 2005. ①

## Large-scale artwork

TIPS ON HOW TO INSTALL THEM IN YOUR HOME

Before you splurge on a collection, here are some tips on what to consider when deciding to purchase a large-scale artwork—whether it's a painting, sculpture, or mixed-media installation—and installing it in your home.

**Handle all artwork with care.** Artwork can be damaged easily during the handling process, so if you're installing the piece yourself or hiring a professional technician to do it, always use gloves.

**Think of dimensions and weight, and measure properly.** Make sure that the dimensions of a large artwork can be accommodated through doors or hallways, depending on where you'd like to place the piece. If hung, make sure that the hanging hardware is strong enough to support the art piece. So first things first: measure and weigh everything. Eliminate obstacles to be as careful as possible when bringing in the work, especially if it's a solid piece. Also, consider if you're placing the work in an area that is accessed by stairs.

**Relate the artwork to your space and the size of walls and furniture.** When deciding where to place your artwork, think of scale and impact. Rule of thumb is that bigger paintings look better on bigger walls with no obstructions. For big sculptures or installations, think of the function of the room and if there will be a lot of traffic. Keep big pieces out of harm's way and make sure that there is enough space around them. Don't overdo by putting several big art pieces in one room; they will drown your furniture out. A large piece can stand alone, whereas smaller pieces look nicer when grouped together.

**Color and focus.** Bright colors pop, so if your artwork has vivid colors or patterns, consider how the colors can enhance or detract from the space, furniture, and your design aesthetic. Paintings that are hung at eye level will call more attention. If a work is hung above a couch, for example, make sure that the piece isn't longer in width than your couch.

**Cleaning.** Depending on the type of installation, there may be dust and debris from drilling or hammering. Have a vacuum and dust cloths on hand to clean up properly.

—Patricia Tumang





# THE STORY OF US

STEPHANIE KIENTLE-GONZALEZ TALKS ABOUT HOW SHE AND HER HUSBAND CHRISTIAN DESIGNED THEIR HOME USING THE LANGUAGE OF PAINT, WOOD AND STONE

BY AURELIO ICASIANO III / PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP SISON  
MAKEUP BY PONG NIU OF MAC COSMETICS



**ABOVE:** Young multitasker Stephanie Kientle-Gonzalez balances running her family business and being a home maker with effortless elegance and charm. She exudes genuine warmth and youthful energy. **LEFT:** The large scale pieces and eclectic accessories prove to be an inviting mix.

**FROM THE MOMENT YOU WALK** into the home of Stephanie Kientle-Gonzalez, you get the idea that this is a place with history. Not the kind of history that you read about in books, but the kind that tells the story of two people. Stephanie and her husband, Christian, personally designed their home and then chose pieces specifically to remember a certain point of their lives.

The unit is more than 30 stories above the street, but there are more than 30 stories to tell inside this three-room space. The walls are covered in artwork and lined with photographs. On the shelves lie stacks of books about art and travel, a small sculpture from Africa here, a stone that Stephanie found in France there. The entire place speaks of their life together, told in the language of paint and wood and stone.

## Choosing pieces with a story

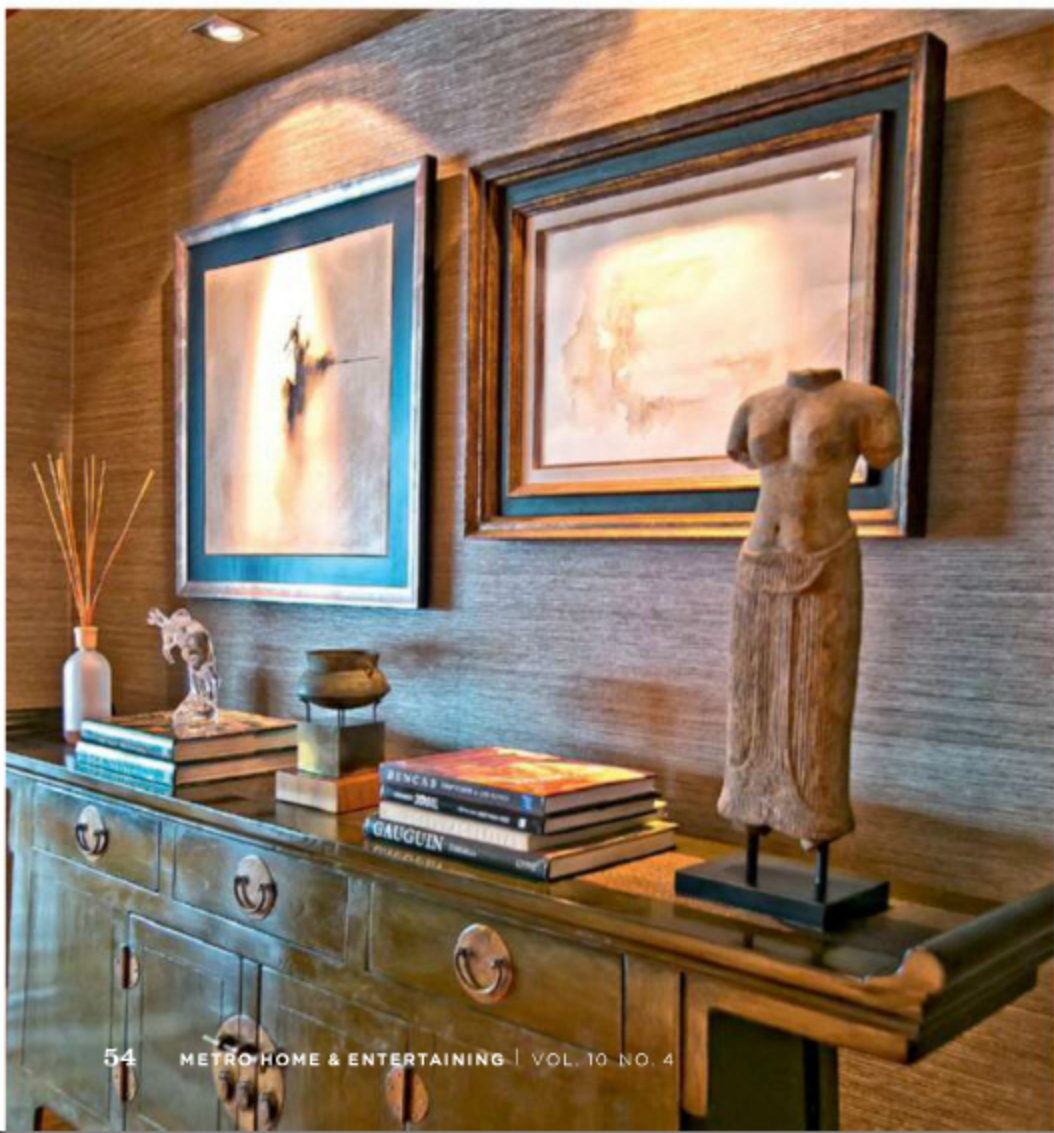
"It's more of collecting pieces that we have a certain affinity for," Stephanie says. "I enjoy the pieces because I remember the story, the memories, behind them, and that's very important."

Stephanie and Christian bought the unit in the year that they were to get married, and designed the place over the months leading to the wedding. It was a slow, exacting process, but one that ultimately paid off.





Textured and painted walls in dramatic earth tones layered with art and treasures from all over the world evoke a worldly point of view with an intriguing composition. BELOW LEFT: An Asian affair; a graceful temple figurine atop an oriental console matches the lyrical strokes of the modern paintings. The guided frames and the brass hardware enliven the wooden textures. BELOW RIGHT: Porta Romana duck lamp is a whimsical point of interest in the living room.



The Mason Wing Back chair by Philux, a Burmese drum, the cowhide carpet, and an unexpected lighting fixture add up to a modern cosmopolitan composition.





ABOVE: Wood grain on cabinetry panels and stainless steel accents for the backsplash and hardware make a sleek kitchen palette. Overhead, the dropped ceiling on the periphery creates opportunity for fine detailing with millwork as a focal point. OPPOSITE PAGE: The deep jewel tones of the Madagascar dining chairs by Philux are a modern way of injecting luxury into everyday modern life. The custom butler cabinet designed by Stephanie clad in shagreen is an embodiment of her edited yet distinctive interpretation of contemporary style.

"We shared a passion for interiors, and we took it one step at a time, not rushing, so it would really represent us," she remembers.

That decision resulted in an organic, cohesive mix of things that they've acquired over the years.

"I always like a home that's very warm," Stephanie explains. "Our style is a bit contemporary, but we mix it with antiques and pieces that exude a lot of warmth and coziness—beautiful fabrics with textures and beautiful organic materials like abaca for the wallpaper.

"We're not professionals, but we knew what we wanted for the place and worked with other interior designers."

That's the essence of designing your own home. You might have to consider craft and style and the interplay of things but, in the end, it's about finding the things you like, surrounding yourself with them, and making them work together.

Much like her home, Stephanie's journey into the design world has its own story. Having parents who built and ran the local furniture manufacturer and exporter, Philux, she has quite a background when it comes to interiors.

#### Growing up in the furniture business

Established by Stephanie's father, Max, in 1980, Philux is one of the most renowned furniture brands in the country. It has a reputation for creating pieces in the traditional way—with dowels and clamps and wood glue. Paired with high-end technology, these tech-



Dreamscape: the couple's love for travel is reflected in the bold yet refined way they composed their bedroom. A red armchair, the tufted bench, and the graphic design on the Debenhams bed sheets are timeless chic. The old world landscapes and an abstract with strong colors on the moire covered walls show the masterful mix of a couple confident in their taste.







**ABOVE:** True romance: Stephanie's dressing room is richly detailed with an inlaid chair, an antique vanity mirror, brocade wall paper on the ceiling, and a contemporary chandelier. **RIGHT:** Mother knows best: Stephanie takes particular pride in her baby Andrea's bedroom, decorated in the French provincial style. The nursery furniture was customized by Philux. The grey and pink palette is feminine and pretty, and still somehow, contemporary and fresh.

niques result in pieces that have a contemporary appeal but also retain a certain sense of the classic.

"Luckily, we were very involved with the business at a young age," Stephanie recalls, "My parents would take us along when they traveled."

As a child, Stephanie and her family made the rounds of stores here and abroad, and thus, developed more than a passing fascination for furniture and the way it could change the way people feel about their homes. She has since joined Philux to handle its sales and marketing, oversee its operations, and contribute her own designs.

She explains, "Even though I veered towards the business side, being exposed to the industry at such a young age has made me very interested in interiors."

Asked about her design philosophy, Stephanie says, "I can't say I have one particular style. It's really about putting things together one piece at a time. Once it's put together, it doesn't necessarily mean it's done and that will be its spot forever. For me, my home is a work in progress, and it evolves the way my life evolves, so one day you may see this lamp here, next year it may be somewhere else."

As Stephanie and Christian's life evolves, and as they continue to travel and collect art and other pieces that hold meaning for them, their home might be something else entirely the next time we visit. 📍







LET HUNGER TAKE YOU PLACES.

# FOOD PRINTS

with *SANDY DAZA*

Premieres Sept. 7, 8:30 pm

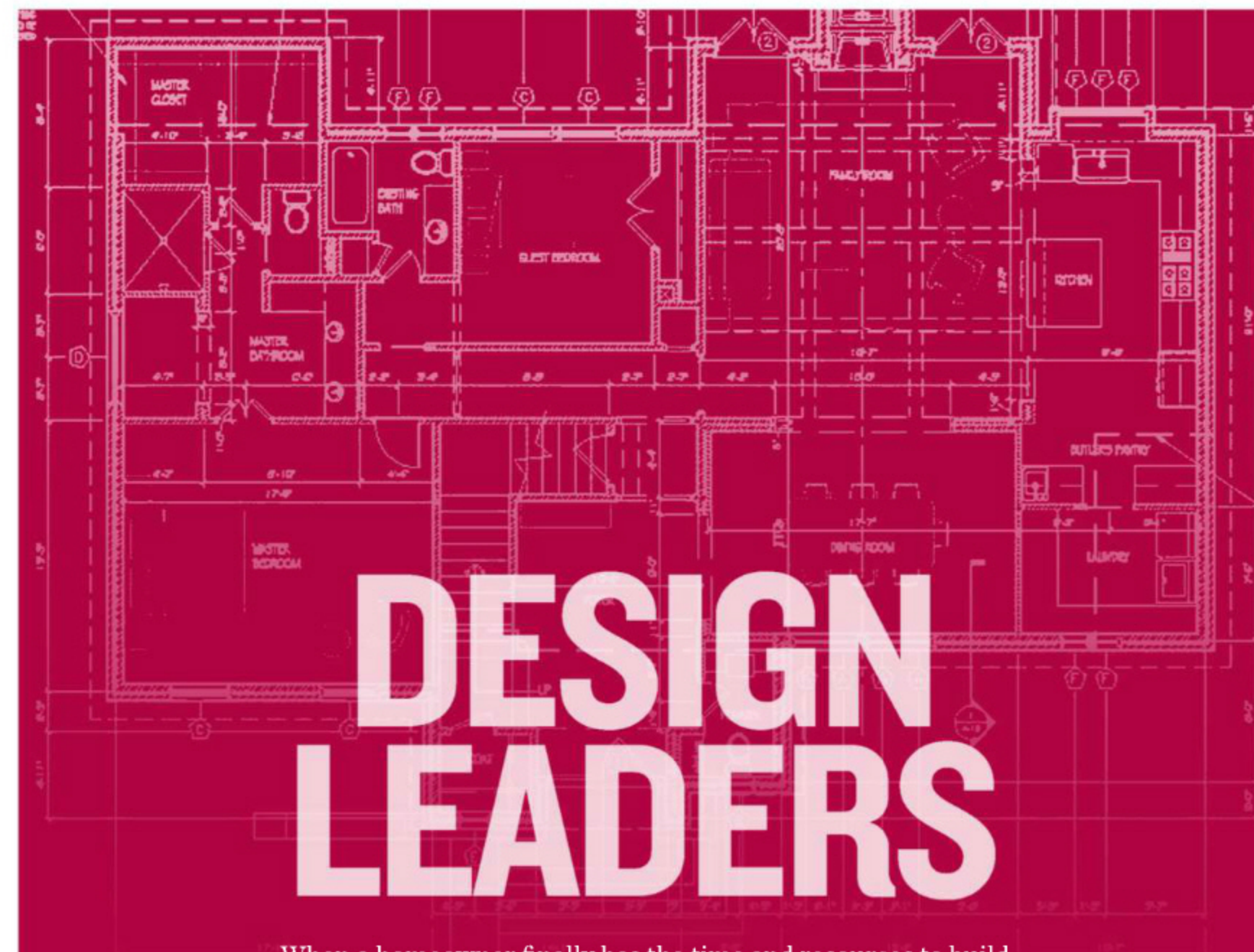
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## DESIGN LEADERS

When a homeowner finally has the time and resources to build a dream home, he also wants a dream team to help bring the vision to completion. As the centerpiece of **METRO HOME's** Design Issue, we present such a brilliant list of design stars that they can aptly be designated a "dream team." The designers we have deemed leaders in their field have not only honed their aesthetic identities, but have become ambassadors of Philippine artistry's excellence. These architects and interior designers fly the flag for our archipelago, proving our dominance in this creative realm, broadly captured by the word "design."



# EVERYTHING IN ITS RIGHT PLACE

ARCHITECTURE CONSULTANT  
ANNA SY MOLDS HER ORDERLY  
AND STRAIGHTFORWARD  
WORLD WITH A TOUCH  
OF FILIPINO GRACE

BY GEOLETTE ESGUERRA  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

**IN THE UNIVERSE** of Anna Marie Sy-Lawrence, the walls are grey, taupe, and white; the lines are straight, the floors are slate grey, and the forms possess a certain symmetry reminiscent of furniture that cannot function if a leg is amiss.

Though this house offers but a peek in the orderly world of the other half and managing director of C/S Architecture LLC, a firm poised between its branches in the Philippines and the United States, it is still a microcosm of how she commands space, shaping it like a watchmaker who relies on precision and impeccable detail.

## Design aesthetic

"The space is very simple, there's not much to talk about. We don't know how long we're staying here, so I approached this apartment in a very practical way," she says, opting to keep the flooring but opening up the wall to make it a family area.

"When Anton [Barretto] asked me if he could shoot here, I told him you're welcome to see it, but it's very straightforward," she says. Barretto would later admit that he would have been very surprised if her apartment wasn't straightforward—as this was how he remembers her to be.

Temperance, precision, and subtlety in concept are the keys to understanding the designer that Anna Sy has always been *vis-à-vis* her design aesthetic.



Gray walls envelope well-studied proportions of furniture and groupings of objects in Anna Sy-Lawrence's condo.





She explains, “I think more of our work is about different experiences along the way, meaning we usually don’t do projects that scream ‘wow,’ and when you enter, there’s nothing there. I think we like to design projects so that your journey through the house happens in steps, and experiences unfold, rather than something that’s in your face.”

In terms of elements, she seeks natural light and ventilation, and prefers a strong relationship to the interior and exterior. In terms of form, you would be hard pressed to find a typical Anna Sy house from the onset. It is actually in the deliberate process of her design and decision-making that you can view elements that are uniquely Sy’s.

Global outlook

Her firm then tries to look at each space as a new experience, with the form shaped by what’s appropriate for the client. “It’s a process,” she explains. “We don’t like each of our houses, our projects, to look the same. That’s the only way it can continue to be interesting for us. If not, it’ll just be cookie-cutter stuff, and we don’t want that.”

Her outlook has always been global, shaped by her education—university for two years at Sarah Lawrence and then Barnard College of Columbia University, where she finished her Bachelor of Arts, followed by Graduate School of Design in Harvard University. Establishing C/S Design Consultancy with Jason Chai in 1992 shaped her aesthetic, but her practice in Manila was a chance encounter—she opened the branch in 1999 to facilitate their regional projects and had only intended to stay for two years. Two years turned to five, and pretty soon, Manila was home.



Order and calm rule in Anna Sy's home. A mix of orientalia and contemporary furniture co-exist.





Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** I think of context and relationship to the site first and foremost. Once a strong architectural idea or diagram is formed, I consciously try to carry it through down to the details. Delete the superfluous gestures and elements that only detract from the main idea. With restraint one maintains the strength and purity of the idea.

**Signature style:** Calm and restrained

**Dream project:** Starts with a dream client.

**One important thing people should consider before building or renovating their home:** Be open minded.

**What material do you like working with and how did you develop an affinity with this material?** Poured in place Terrazzo flooring. I love the flexibility of being able to create your own palette and patterns using different stones and marble chips. It was popular in the '60s and has seen a resurgence since. We tried to source a company that could do terrazzo flooring back in 2005, when we first set up our Manila office, but were told that these companies had gone out of business. There is now an abundance of terrazzo tile from China, but it is not quite the same as the poured in place option. There are now one or two local companies that offer the flooring but something seems to have gotten lost through the years as the final product is not as durable and resistant as the flooring done in the '60s and '70s. Am still searching for the perfect alternative.



LEFT: A 10-seater contemporary dining set in wood and metal is paired with accents of yellow, creating a serene scene. RIGHT: The study similarly enjoys a disciplined palette of textures and grays.

Through the years, and over projects that include the Net One Center, iBank and UCPB branches, restaurants La Regalade and Kai, and many residences, she has, little by little, learned to adapt her design aesthetic to the Filipino psyche.

"I like things that are very restrained and controlled, but culturally, we're not like that. It's something that always comes as a difference, but you have to respect that. In a way, you also get transformed," she explains, with her house now full of objects she would have considered, in earlier times, excessive, even unnecessary.

The Filipino cultural trait of *horror vacui*, or fear of empty spaces, will certainly not rub off on her, but her house is a far cry from the minimalist bent of her previous apartment.

Clearly, Anna Sy deftly designs the universe of her clients and molds them into relatable, and highly experiential spaces that conform to their needs. ❶



Stone and wood are the architect's preferred material to make any space, including a small kitchen, look like a work of art. RIGHT: Avery Go poses in front of his home/showroom. In the background is one of his "green" initiatives—the bamboo spout that delivers air-con water into a clay jar for recycling.



# THE POETRY OF DESIGN

THIS SEEMINGLY ELUSIVE ARCHITECT DESIGNS WITH THE SIMPLICITY AND BALANCE OF NATURE IN MIND

BY RAPHAEL KIEFER  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

**TO THE UNINITIATED,** Avery Go is a mystery. A search on Google reveals nothing more about the man but a couple of listings and a blog entry by a friend on water conservation ideas. Is it really possible that a man, who has imagined and completed homes and buildings numbering in the three-digit zone over a 14-year career, can remain so elusive? Is it true that this young and successful architect does not carry around a calling card? Perhaps it is this conundrum that best defines the man.

His home (and showroom) clearly stands out in the neighborhood and yet it is not pretentious or overpowering, just like the architect's personality. You have to get inside to see the true extent of his design prowess. The property is an oasis in the heart of the city. Its layout gives the corner residence more space than it actually has. The intent to work with nature in mind is undeniable, as large windows welcome sunlight and the gentle hues from the garden while the gentle sound of water rolling down a cascade complete the ambiance of the place.

## Sustainable alternatives

This passionate mountain climber has always found his greatest inspiration in the harmony of nature and how it all blends perfectly. Stone and wood are some of the most obvious materials found in his creations.

He says that while he prefers working with natural materials, he urges his clients to work with sustainable alternatives to coveted endangered wood and rare stone blocks. His genuine concern for the future of the planet is apparent in his own home, which uses clever innovation to merge aesthetics and function. For example, the wastewater from the air-conditioning system is collected in a clay pot, which is then recycled for various applications every three days. Strategically placed and cleverly concealed air ducts line the ceiling while hidden ventilation fans powered by a solar panel on the roof blow out hot air





Spaces flow freely in Architect Avery Go's home. The living room opens to the dining area. The garden and reflecting pool in the exterior are visible from inside, owing to the architect's use of large windows in the living room and sliding glass doors that open the interior spaces to the exterior.





Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** My philosophy has always been to work with nature, that means you have to respect its forces and understand how it can improve your structure. Natural lighting. Natural ventilation. Understanding the movement of the sun at different times of the day (and year) and how to use this information to bring in light while keeping out the heat. Working with the natural terrain of the land instead of against it. Saving and recycling water. For me, this is responsible architecture.

**Signature style:** I try not to stick to any signature style. Specially when it comes to houses, I try to assess the personality of the client and his family, their immediate surroundings and personal/cultural preferences, and let these dictate the style. However, observant friends and clients usually call out similarities in my work—large windows, airy free-flowing interiors, efficient layouts, high-ceilinged living rooms, indoor and outdoor space that blends into each other. If that can be considered a style, then I do have one after all.

**Dream project:** A common hindrance in designing are the limitations imposed on us by village/code restrictions, cultural restrictions (like feng shui), narrow-minded clients not willing to think outside the box (who I rarely get, thankfully), limited space or terrain (which sometimes actually enhances the outcome), and, of course, the client's budget. My dream project would probably be one without any of these hindrances... that project has yet to come though.

**An important thing people should consider before building or renovating their home:** One thing I feel clients should consider is timing. If you plan on building or renovating, do it while the kids are young. Let them have at least 10 years to enjoy their home before they start going off to college and moving out.

**What material do you like working with and how did you develop an affinity with this material?** I've always felt a close affinity with nature. I love the raw coldness of stone and metals, tempered with the warmth of distressed wood, texture from various fibers and weaves. Of course, these materials also come with maintenance and sustainability issues. Synthetic is one way to go, and technology is helping to bridge that gap. In the end, it is all about balance.

Natural materials such as wood and stone are signature elements for Architect Avery Go's style. The railing for the stairs is wrapped in abaca as a reference to local materials. RIGHT: The architect makes the best of the available space. Near UST, a recently completed 22-story building built on a 225-sq.m. lot stands out.

that collects inside the home. Rainwater is stored, and wastewater from the outdoor bathtub is collected and recycled as well.

As a child, his fathers' brief stint as an architect indirectly influenced the pursuit of the profession, which eventually led him to earn a degree in architecture from the University of the Philippines. A cousin hired the company that Avery had joined three years earlier to design and build a house for the high end build-and-sell market. The catch was that Avery would personally manage and oversee the account—this was his break, and he never looked back. Eleven years later, his designs are turning heads in residential villages, high-rise sectors and weekend home hotspots around the country.

Versatility and precision

Avery is as versatile as he is precise, switching from Japanese to Mediterranean, from traditional to modern, from a one-story house to a 22-story building in a heartbeat. This diversity blends artistic taste with functional detail and the confidence to think outside of the box.

On average, Avery Go works on 20+ projects at the same time. Rather than working out of a big office, he works with just five people, which is consistent with his elusive nature. He works in the study of his home, but only at night after his three children have gone to bed.

During the day, he balances his time between visiting the job sites and being an involved family man. In fact, during this interview, his three children playfully mingle with the guests while his wife Kit is the gracious hostess. This is indicative of a man who seems to have found the perfect balance in life.

Architect Avery Go is a mystery, but only because of the intricacy in his simplicity, and of the balance in life that he is fortunate to have found. It is this equilibrium that defines the man and his work. Never boring and never over the top, just the right blend of exquisite, it is the poetry of design. ■





# THE NATURALISTS

FROM RESIDENTIAL TO COMMERCIAL PROJECTS, THE BUDJI LAYUG AND ROYAL PINEDA PARTNERSHIP LOOKS TOWARDS NATURE FOR INSPIRATION

BY ANNA M. ROSETE  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEAL OSHIMA

**“HOW DO YOU CONVERSE WITH NATURE?”** Architect Royal Pineda muses. He continues the thought, “You should listen to its whispers,” he says with a smile. The delight he exudes in this statement is akin to that of a boy who takes pleasure in the simplest of things. For this duo, half of whom is the architect, and the other half, Budji Layug, who has evolved from hair stylist to interior designer to visual artist, nature is the ultimate muse. Royal continues, “I just love being with natural things. Put me under a tree and I’ll be happy.”

It’s a late afternoon, and the conversation is taking place in one of Budji Layug and Royal Pineda’s residential projects, designed for a couple, their three children and their dogs. It is situated in a hilly Quezon City subdivision, overlooking the Rizal mountain ranges. To get to the house’s main entrance is a literal ascent through the topography that offered the architect the opportunity to design the house in multiple elevations that commune with nature. On the last step of the climb through exterior stairs that usher you to the home’s main floor, you are greeted by the house’s entrances, rendered in large sliding and pivoting glass doors that open to one of the home’s many conversations with nature: the swimming pool, which cascades into a water fall, flowing down to a collecting pool, adjacent to a bar and lounge area on one of the lower floors.

“We were able to create gardens on top, and we were able to create an amphitheater hill, which overlooks the mountains,” Royal says, highlighting the fact that nature envelops this home. In the main areas, pockets of greenery surround the living spaces, resulting in rooms that seem to breathe in the outdoors, in a constant conversation with its verdant setting.



Budji Layug and Royal Pineda look to nature for inspiration. TOP RIGHT: A home designed by the duo capitalizes on its topography for its multiple elevations. Oriented towards the east, its large glass windows and pivoting, sliding doors allow its residents to enjoy majestic views of the Rizal mountain ranges. BELOW RIGHT: Strong lines and natural surfaces are hallmarks of the duo’s designs, as seen in the staircase, the wooden floors, and treads.







The living room is one of the many spaces in the home that enjoy the feeling of openness to nature. The selection of furniture and accessories follow the same interest in letting natural elements into the home. The coffee table, of solid *dau* wood, is an original design by the team. A painting by Budji, dominated by green tones, is the centerpiece of the room. Arc floor lamp was sourced from Flos, while the rug is from Soumak. In the foreground, a Pigalle chair and Chiquita stool by Kenneth Cobonpue.

Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** Nature, architecture and design should co-exist harmoniously to bring soul to our creations. We believe in a total approach to design, where the demands of architecture, interior design, furniture, home accessories and landscaping are brought together to complement one another and create an integrated whole.

**Signature style:** "Organic Modern." It is the offshoot of our "Tropical Modern" sensibility that Budji+Royal espouses.

**Dream project:** Projects that uplift the country's image, like the NAIA Terminal 1. We're also excited working on a current one on a much bigger scale: a community built on Filipino sensibilities; a statement of Modern Philippine Architecture and Design, which we all can proudly present to the world as our own.

**One important thing people should consider before building or renovating their home:** Aside from budgets and their main purpose for building, it's the choice of who to entrust their money with to make them a building or home that's perfectly suited to their needs, improve the quality of their lives, and add more value to their investment. Needless to say, that is the architect.

**What material do you like working with and how did you develop an affinity with this material?** Nature is our bountiful, rich source of inspiration. We derive endless concepts in its forms, textures, colors, and compositions. We love natural, indigenous and organic materials for their intrinsic beauty and quality. We like our architecture and design to blend seamlessly well with the environment. Bring the outdoors in, and the indoors out.





The inspiration from nature extends to the outfitting of the dining room with furniture made from wood. The 12-seater, made of iron wood, was designed by the firm. The buffet table is of *gilsan* wood. Overhead, glass pendant lights were from Fios. In the background is a painting by Olazo and Kenneth Cobonpue's Dragnet chair. The stairs are railed by glass to one side, affording uninterrupted views from the kitchen and dining room, of the pocket garden beyond. BELOW: The master bathroom is a pristine sanctuary.



Another ascent, this time, through the interior stairs that are rooted on a bed or river stones, and constructed to echo the airy, weightless quality of the rest of the interiors, bring you into the private areas. The master suite, oriented towards the East, commands uninterrupted views of the mountain ranges beyond through large glass windows. In this room, Budji and Royal made one simple, yet resounding design gesture—a tent ceiling clad in narra, and illuminated by the soft glow of lights from its periphery, reminiscent of a lustrous canopy overhead. In this space, the bed floats, unanchored by walls, save for a headboard of metal rods woven with rattan in a wooden frame, which also forms the partition between the bed and the workstation behind it. In the master bathroom, clean lines are the rule, and a sea of gray tiles portrays a serene atmosphere. The vanity area enjoys the site of the lush greenery in the exterior, alternating with views of the interior through interplay of glass windows and mirrors. In this bathroom, as in the rest of the home, Royal's statement, "nature softens architecture," is palpable.

"I can't [just] plan on paper," Royal says. "It's too superficial for me to make something that doesn't relate to the site," he continues. In this house that "scoops the wind," Budji and Royal collaborated on everything. Architecture and interiors were designed hand in hand. "The beauty of [our] collaboration is that when I start to create the spaces, we also start to realize the pieces that go with it. It is a balance of art and science," Royal perfectly sums up the ethos of their brand and partnership. 11



One of the children's bedrooms has a cantilevered balcony looking East. Kenneth Cobonpue's Yoda chairs are poised here, while one of his Chiquita stools is used indoors. ABOVE: The master bedroom, also oriented towards the east, is capped with a tent ceiling that is finished with narra planks. A soft glow emanates from the periphery lighting. The floating bed's headboard was also designed by the Budji & Royal team, employing rattan, metal and wood. The side table, desk and chair are also made of narra and are by Budji.





Just like many of his designs, Onglao's residence showcases an east-meets-west play: Western design softened by oriental pieces. RIGHT: Conrad Onglao at home in his own design.



# THE MASTERMIND

WITH HIS ESTEEMED EXPERTISE IN ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN, CONRAD ONGLAO EASILY TRANSFORMS A HOUSE INTO A HOME

BY BARRY VILORIA  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY UY

**"NOTHING WAS EVER PLANNED,"** says Conrad Onglao, one of the country's most esteemed names in the design industry, on how his career in architecture and interior design started.

We are chatting in the dining area of his four-story residence in an exclusive village in Makati. Behind us is the kitchen and before us is a line of glass walls sharing a peek of the second living room and the lounge outdoors.

The rest of the **Metro Home** team is taking photographs of the other parts of the house—one that's poetically suffused with Onglao's key motifs of white against taupe, traditional against modern. It's approaching dusk, but every inch of natural light gleams through the house. It feels homey, serene, yet alive.

Comparing the interiors of this house with those of his other projects, it's clear that this hominess has become Onglao's trademark simply because it's his personality.

## Humble beginnings

Calm and composed, Onglao bears a story of hard work. The third of eight children, he originally took up chemistry at the University of Santo Tomas because his mother wanted him to be a doctor.

But, following his true inclination, he left after two years and enrolled in architecture. A working student, he graduated after another five years, passed the board, and followed his girlfriend to Los Angeles to get married and start a family.





From the architecture to the furniture, a combination of white, taupe, and black are common themes employed by Onglao.

Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** Timeless design executed through clean lines, and minimize conflicting design movements.

**Signature style:** Structures with high ceilings and huge windows.

**Dream project:** Every architect dreams of doing landmark projects. Budget constraint is not a primary issue.

**Important things to consider before building or renovating:** Plan its usage for the next 10 years or so and identify the lifestyle you wish to live and go on from there.

**What is a material you like working with, and how did you develop an affinity for this material?** I like working with lots of glass, if possible, for obvious reasons, and metal panels for its flexible use.



Onglao used glass as walls for his home, letting natural light pass through and giving it a sense of coziness.

There, Onglao, now an architect, and his then-wife, teamed up as a design duo and put up a firm. He worked mostly on buildings and restaurants and eventually forayed into interior design, working with Harold Thompson and Associates, and Concepts 4. (Among his projects were the Chanel boutique on Rodeo Drive, the first in the US, and other hotels.)

Later, Onglao met Japanese clients, who encouraged him to build an office in Asia. So he came back to the Philippines in 1995, took his interior design licensure exam, and founded C.T. Onglao Architects.

**Oriental vision, European flair**

Working on the tagline “Oriental vision, European flair,” Onglao, managing director and principal designer of C.T. Onglao Architects, seeks to fuse his “Asian sensibilities with a Western mind.” He explains, “It’s the combination and sense that, maybe (my clients) are most comfortable just talking to me,” he says.

Onglao is nothing but professional. He meets the client, and gets a clear picture of his personality, lifestyle, and preferences in terms of style and architecture. He comes up with pegs, and offers a lot of options. It is this kind of competence and the push for quality while strictly keeping in mind the value of time that he likes to impart to the 35 creative minds currently employed at C.T. Onglao Architects. “When asked about my secret in the job, there’s none, really, but those two things,” he says.

Right now, Onglao, whose clientele usually numbers hotel developers, is most busy with Sedan Hotels by Ayala Land and a 3,500-sq.m. house. “I don’t take any project lightly. It’s always a commitment. Whether big or small in scale, it deserves the same attention,” he stresses. “I think any kind of architect or artist loves to be challenged. For me, as long as challenge is involved, I’ll always take the project.”

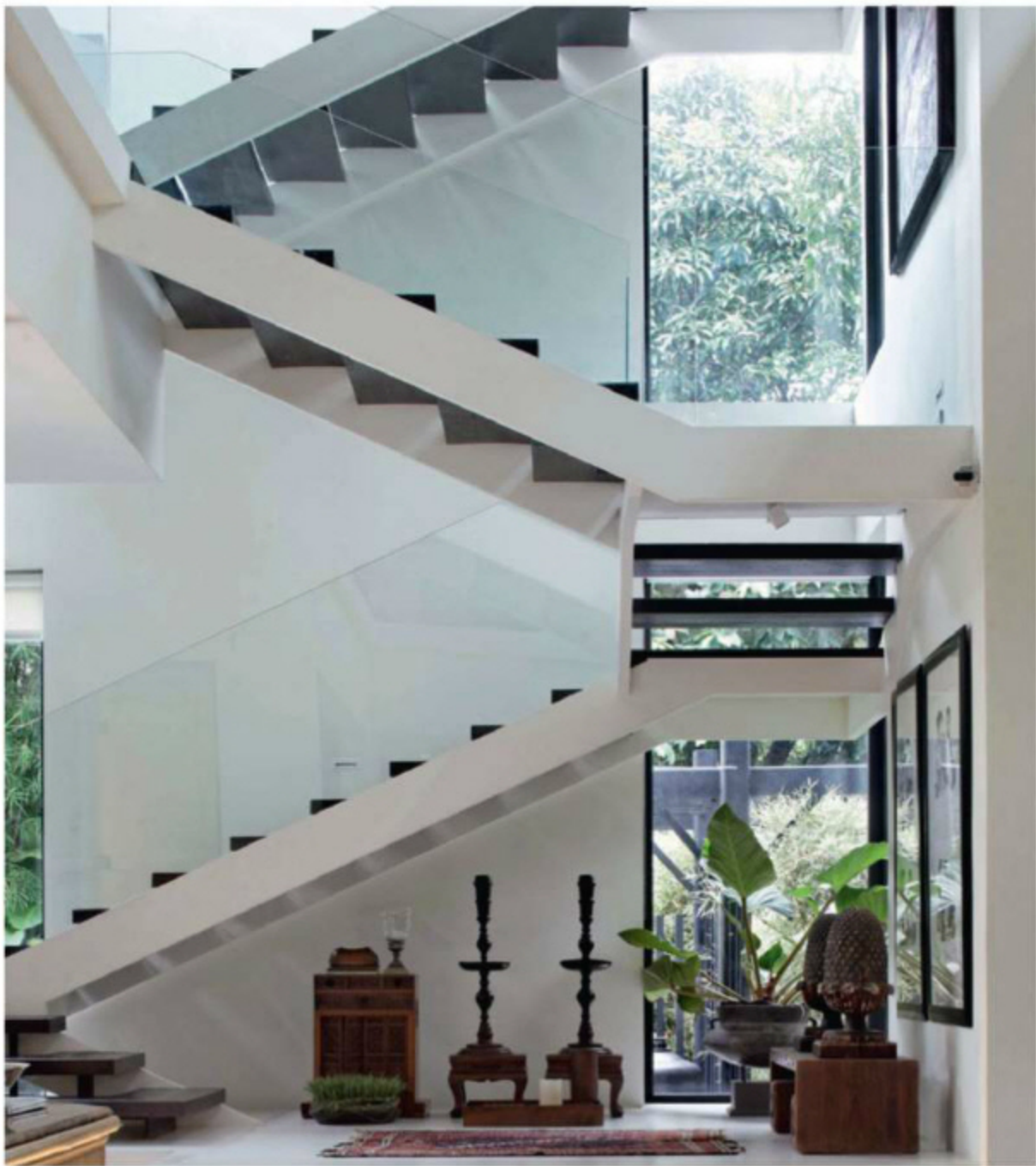
**Putting things together**

In every project, Onglao always tries to infuse a hint of hominess—his house (which he calls a “hodgepodge”) is his best example.

“That’s always been my approach. It’s always been a fusion for me. If you look through my house, it’s a bit modern and I throw in traditional pieces. It’s how you put everything together,” he says. “Even my office is very homey.”

To achieve this, at least for the interiors, Onglao does not follow any rule. He can pick up pieces from a flea market and furnish a luxury hotel with them.

“It’s never pegged on price, as long as it complements whatever we’re doing,” he says. “If you put all of the stuff in one garage, you’d think that they’re not related. But it’s the way you put everything together that makes it interesting, and makes it work.”



Onglao’s best example of his principle on interior design: his home. He bought the pieces from “everywhere,” he reveals. “There’s no right or wrong in interior design. As long as it complements each other. Look at this house, it’s all a hodgepodge.”



# OUT-OF-THE-BOX DESIGN

ED CALMA CONSTANTLY CHALLENGES THE NORM ONE PROJECT AT A TIME

BY GEOLETTE ESGUERRA  
PORTRAIT BY WILLIAM ONG

**ED CALMA IS NEVER ONE** to do anything conventionally. With him, a car display garage can be a racetrack that loops to the third floor; a museum roof can slope to different cardinalities to conform to the site; a pedestrian bridge can be an interactive display.

His designs take on a sculptural quality, just as he is known in the industry as an innovator, preferring to experiment with new forms to broaden the discourse of architecture.

## Bloodline of modernism

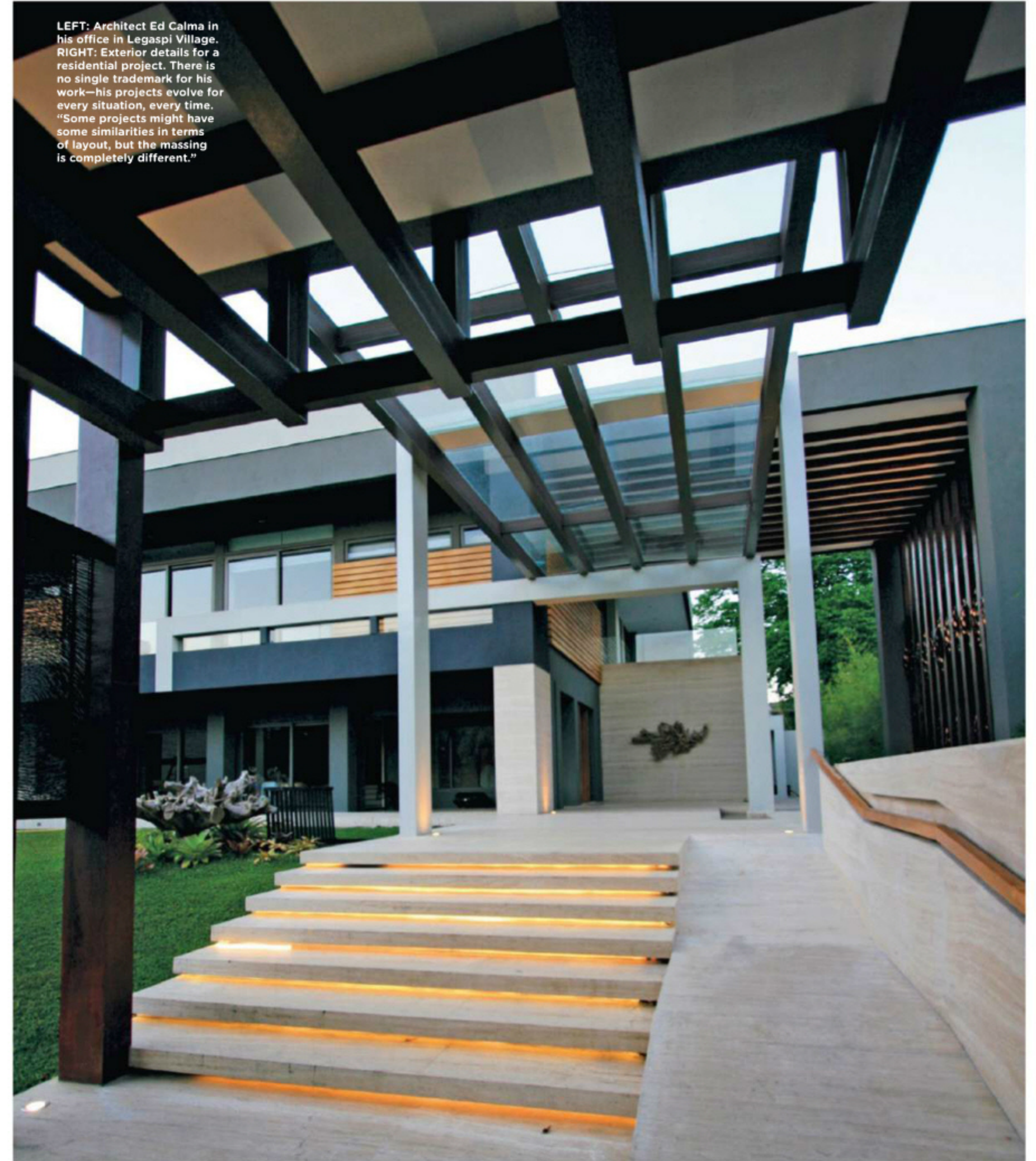
"Architecture is about reinventing things—creating new typologies, new spaces, new types of construction, and other ways of innovating," he explains. This is why he has eschewed the typical process of working orthogonally, opting to jump straight to three-dimensional form. He adds, "Even the production of architecture is different, you can get that digital file and get someone to fabricate the panels and assemble it on site."

He carries the bloodline of modernism, taking a cue from his father, architect Lor Calma, who is hailed as one of the pioneers of modern Filipino design. With an undergraduate degree from the Pratt Institute in New York City that included a year in University of Rome in Italy, he graduated from Columbia University, and worked in the United States before returning to Manila to join Lor Calma and Partners.

He came back to Manila in 1995, and reached prominence in 2002, when he was given a TOYM (Ten Outstanding Young Men) award in the field of architecture. In the beginning, he was known more for his exhibit installations like the Philippine Pavilion in Japan and Spain. His recent projects include the Mind Museum, the Clipp Center, and the Serendra Bridge, an interactive bridge that people can walk through, where movement activates different types of light.



LEFT: Architect Ed Calma in his office in Legaspi Village. RIGHT: Exterior details for a residential project. There is no single trademark for his work—his projects evolve for every situation, every time. "Some projects might have some similarities in terms of layout, but the massing is completely different."







The Calma-designed Univers boutique in One Rockwell, commissioned by Jappy Gonzalez of the Homme et Femme Retail Concepts group. "I'll only do retail [projects] if I control everything, and it's fun working with Jappy [Gonzalez] because he's very specific to what he wants," he said.



Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** Architecture is all about reinventing things, creating new typologies, new spaces, new types of construction.

**Signature style:** Now it's harder to distinguish my work. I always want to make something different, to challenge the client's aesthetic a little bit.

**Dream project:** Previously, it was the Mind Museum, but now that it's complete, I want to design an airport.

**Important things to consider before building or renovating:** Know your needs before the initial meeting. I give clients a wish list to fill in as well as visual pegs. Thus, I'm able to see how they perceive architecture.

**Material I like to work with:** Metal (which I used in the Mind Museum), like laser-cut metal fabrications, since you can make use of the characteristics of metal as a big surface, like skin.

The interiors of the Mind Museum, his most ambitious project as of late. RIGHT: Another residential project. Of his design process, he says, "[The process of designing] is more organic now. It's never the same thing exactly, but just in the same style. When you build something—it should last a lifetime. The process has to be intact. It's not a whim."



The houses he designs, on the other hand, often push the definitions of dwelling. "Houses are the most different to break, in terms of type—everyone has an idea as to what the house is," he says. Some of the iconic houses he designed include the beach house in Punta Fuego, a modern interpretation of modern Italian Mediterranean, the Santa-maria and Concepcion residences, and his own house, the Slice House, which explores the spatial possibilities of the cube.

In all of his works, the input of the client is very important—it shapes the discussion of how space flows. "Space can't be a generic thing, you need someone to have a dialogue with. The client is someone who can change the direction of your practice," he says.

No design template

It is this dialogue that propels the discussion, giving him leeway to try to go beyond the typology of the house. "All my clients have different perspectives on space and how they should live, and I would challenge this, posing a new idea to them," he adds. Some would not go for his out-of-the-box ideas because they can't relate to it. But others, like his most successful clients, understand the method to his madness, and give him leeway to shape space and express his thoughts.

One thing is for sure—there is no such entity as a typical Ed Calma house. "It evolves for every situation, every time. Some projects might have some similarities in terms of layout, but the massing is completely different," he says. Absent from his work is a template, where you would be able to say which design is his.

Though he has worked on almost every building type (save for the airport, which is his dream project), he is often faced with issues that question his relevance in the country.

"This debate always comes up—how am I relevant here," he says. On his own, he wishes to change the discourse of how local architecture is perceived, relating more to the context of the site than to the derivative forms of indigenous structures. Instead, he would rather turn the discussion to the process of creating rather than the image.

"We want to change the current design tendency out there," he mentioned once in another interview. "Design can't just be a box with people around it. This would alienate people, and wouldn't identify the city."

He strongly believes in the power of architecture to change, and says, "Architecture defines a city. If you don't have good architecture, the city will have nothing—it will have no identity." 11



The exterior elevation of this home by Architect Gil Coscolluela clues one into the interplay of the various ground floor areas. RIGHT: For Gil Coscolluela, the edict "form follows function" holds true.



# A MAN WITH A PLAN

ARCHITECT GIL COSCOLLUELA COMES INTO HIS OWN AESTHETIC, DESIGNING SPACES THAT FLOW SEAMLESSLY WHILE MAINTAINING FUNCTIONALITY

BY GEOLETTE ESGUERRA  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

**"FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION."** This edict has guided many architects, including Gil Coscolluela, who chose to allow functionality to govern as he designs. It may be easy to surmise that design is a natural progression for Gil, being the son of architecture mogul Willy Coscolluela of W.V. Coscolluela & Associates.

Yet it wasn't an easy choice for him, as business was his first inclination. "I just wanted to be a plain businessman, but I guess being exposed to what my father was doing and seeing the sensibility to it and, at the same time, the business side of things, architecture [turned out to be a likely choice]," Gil says. His exposure to his dad's work proved to be a big factor to pursue architecture in U.P. Diliman. Before graduation, he worked in the United States to gain more experience.

## Double-edged sword

Being his father's son was a double-edged sword, so to speak, as majority of his professors and colleagues knew of his father. But there were also many benefits; as a young architect, he worked with international companies like Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM), among others. "Working with them was like taking your master's," Gil says, acknowledging the advantage that this exposure gave him.

Over the years, he has refined his aesthetic by taking on a variety of projects, some of which are large-scale under his father's firm, like the recently built Zuellig Building in Paseo de Roxas, which is currently in the running for LEED Platinum accreditation. The others are special projects under his smaller company. Aside from houses, he has worked





ABOVE: An interplay of materials, wood, glass and tile at the stair area.  
RIGHT: The dining room opens to an outdoor entertaining area.

on retail stores like the Art of Scent, the Le Temps store for Rolex, and for Havaianas, Planet Sports, Onitsuka Tiger, and more.

"It's fun to do retail, since they give you a bit of a free hand, but at the same time there are also parameters because you have to take into consideration the time constraint," he says.

Yet, it is in building houses where he shapes space to intrude and extrude. "I look at things as more of a square cube shape, and from there I just chop things up. I see how I can push and pull that box and create various facets in that particular box," he explains. "I don't play with too much of the elaborate curves; again it works well for properties that don't have much space to work with, so maximum usage is always key. And the box always works well in such cases."

He did the same thing when working on this particular house in Hillsborough Alabang. First, he came up with a cube, then he divided the area into the private wing tucked in the second floor, and the public wing on the first floor. "What I did was to make the areas flow and complement each other," he says, referring to the living room that opens to the foyer, which also relates to the lanai, and the living room that flows into the dining area that flows back to the lanai.

### Interplay of areas

The interplay of the various areas on the ground floor acts as one big space should the family wish to entertain. In this house, the spaces flow into each other by way of the divisions that give a sense of





Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** I am still guided by the design philosophy of “form follows function.”

**Signature style:** I would like to think that the designs that I do are not defined by a particular style but follow certain principals of functionality, efficiency and practicality.

**Dream project:** Every new project is a dream project since it has its own unique requirements and challenges.

**What is the one important thing people should consider before building or renovating their home?** How much do you want to spend?

**What material do you like working with, and how did you develop an affinity with this material?** Leather because of its visual and tactile quality.



The kitchen is configured around a central island. ABOVE RIGHT: The orange living room sofas are arranged against a background of wood.



transparency. Thus, the indoor space of the kitchen flows out to the semi-outdoor space of the foyer, which is closed off, but also surrounded by the trees that line the property.

The spaces upstairs are more straightforward, but Gil still makes use of the blending of spaces as the work area overlooks the lanai. Here, he divided the area into four bedroom wings that converge in the family room-work area. Viewable from the second floor are the ledges—the element he used to wrap around the house—that also protect it from heat and rain.

The entire lot spans 750 sq.m., roughly 300 sq. m. on the first floor and 300 sq. m. on the second. Yet the space looks and feels bigger due to the generous ceiling heights. Also, the doors are as high as the sliding doors, reaching almost three meters high. “They open up so there is a continuous flow of space from one area to the other,” he says. The staircase is also an important element, to which he gave more emphasis.

Enjoying every bit of the process, Gil spends time designing at almost every opportunity. “I still spend time designing, in the car, sometimes just sitting down. I do it the old-fashioned way. I draw manually, whenever I get an idea. Sometimes, I just draw on the napkin,” he adds, explaining how the hand-drawn model helps you interpret his ideas in a quicker sense.

This transition from paper to the real thing is actually what fascinates him the most—one of the things that he loves about being an architect. “The creative part is always good, seeing what you decided before it comes up in full form. It’s always different to look at things scale-wise on paper and at the actual thing in front of your eyes.” In the end, as long as the clients are happy, he finds cognition and happiness as well.

Other architects prefer to have a look or a trademark, but Gil cautions against this by keeping true to his clients. “At the end of the day, it’s really about giving them what they want. I’m just the interpreter,” he says. “It’s their house, not mine. They should be comfortable in it, and their personality should be reflected in their home.”



# SISTER ACT

IVY AND CYNTHIA ALMARIO'S COMPLEMENTARY WORK STYLE HAS GIVEN THEM A SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL CAREER IN DESIGN

BY AURELIO ICASIANO  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

**LOOKING FOR SOME DRAMA**, journalists keep asking interior designers Ivy and Cynthia Almario what's the most difficult thing about sisters working together. The answer is nothing. They are completely in sync. Sometimes they even finish each other's sentences.

Their partnership is complementary, which is one reason it has always worked. In Atelier Almario, there is no such thing as too many designers working on the same space. Having come from the US, each with storied careers in the design industry, the sisters returned to the Philippines and built their own design firm.

One fine Friday morning, the sisters visit one of their latest projects—the model unit for Arya Residences, an upscale condominium at McKinley Parkway in Fort Bonifacio. Inside the three-room space, the two sit closely on the couch.

## Interior architecture

"Our dynamic is this," Ivy begins. "I take care of interior architecture, everything that's attached to the wall. Cynthia furnishes it. If this were a box and you turned it over, everything that falls..."

"...is mine," Cynthia continues. "I take care of everything else, the paint, the furniture."

It's a clearly defined line—each one takes her cue from the other. This is how they never get in each other's way.

They take us around the unit, showing us what it's like when they put their minds to work on a single project.

"They wanted it very international-looking," Cynthia says, "like you're in New York, Paris, London and, of course, Manila."

The target market of Arya wants something that speaks of prestige, something both modern and classic, and that was what the sisters worked on.



The Almario sisters used a large mirror to open up the space in the dining room, which is then complemented by a tray ceiling and twin chandeliers to create an elegant, uncramped setup.







Throughout the unit, each space is utilized carefully, with tactile furnishings providing a textured, harmonious look. The vanilla color for the walls is a complex mix of several tones, matched with drapery and select pieces.







Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** Atelier Almario believes in creating spaces that are the best version of a client's dream. We are generally open to client's ideas and integrate our years of knowledge and depth of experience to create interiors that are warm, cozy, sophisticated, unique and impactful—interiors that our client will love and enjoy for a very long time.

**Signature style:** We are not afraid of color and when the color palette is monotone, the interiors are still layered and rich. Atelier Almario interiors are recognizable for their masterful combination of colors and textures, well selected furniture and accessories against a backdrop that's dynamic in scale and proportion.

**Dream project:** We love doing boats and we shall soon be off to complete another boat in Italy for a client in Hong Kong. We would not mind doing the interiors of a private plane or designing the nursery for the baby of Prince William and Kate the Duchess of Cambridge for starters, and work our way to doing different areas of their house. Now that's a dream!

**One important thing people should consider before building or renovating their home:** Clients should consider professional fees for architects, interior designers, landscapers, and project managers as part of their investment for their new home. It is a necessary "forward spending" that guarantees them, given the professionals' depth of experience and talent, a home that not only looks like more money was spent on it, but gives them years of pride and enjoyment.

**What material do you like working with, and how did you develop an affinity with this material?** We love working with any material that gives translucency. It may be an onyx or a fabric inserted between two pieces of glass or a cut-out material that allows the diffusion of light. We love creating "lantern effects" because of our desire to expand the perceived dimension of space in a room.

While the unit has three rooms, each one was designed with a specific use in mind. All of them reflect the same aesthetic used across the condominium—classic yet modern, without being overbearing.

"It's a traditional design," Ivy says, "but because the color we chose is fresh and young, it's a very light, transitional, classic type of architecture. Warmer, still traditional but not heavy handed."

The color, as it happens, is vanilla. But it isn't the vanilla of ice cream or of cake. It's many different kinds of vanilla, carefully chosen to produce a certain color, a certain effect.

"We had to get 10 paint swatches," Cynthia explains. "Once we got the right vanilla, we had to get the right drapery, so it's very tricky. It looks simple and seamless, but it's a lot of work, a layering of all the beiges, one vanilla color after the other."

But the color isn't the only thing that's complex about their work. The unit is a mix of concepts and ideas, checks and balances. By using cased openings, Ivy established the end of the foyer, the region of the living room, the area for the dining room—a clever way of introducing each new space. A large mirror on the wall expands the dining room while a tray ceiling adds to the user's experience.

With the modern traditional theme, Ivy never used any curves, choosing instead to use straight lines and chamfers. Over to the left side of the front door, the wall conceals an extensive storage space, built for coats, golf bags, shoes, maybe even newspapers. Cynthia, in turn, matched everything with her color scheme, and used furniture to introduce a more modern feel, made with a lot of tactile materials and tufting.

Unique renderings

Ivy began her design career when she moved to the US after only six months of working in a design studio in the Philippines. She designed for some of the top firms in America. After taking a break, she went freelance, making renderings for other designers. Ivy has a deep fascination for fashion, and this made its way into her renderings. She would draw women in gowns as she rendered a ballroom, women dressed casually as they walked across lobbies, and so on. Her unique approach had created an entirely new style. Soon she was illustrating for some of the biggest names in interior design : Hirsch Bedner, James Northcutt, Louis Cataffo.

She recalls doing 40 drawings a month and felt herself burning out. So, when she received an offer to work on the Manila Hotel, she took it as a sign and moved back to the Philippines. Soon her design studio in the Philippines had more work than she could handle. That was when she made the call to Cynthia.

Cynthia had a successful career in America working with Dennis Reedy Design Consultants, taking in projects like the Peabody Hotel in Memphis and Orlando, Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington DC, Shangri-la Hotels in Surabaya, Tanjung Aru, Dalian, Edsa and Cebu. But she couldn't say no to Ivy.

Atelier Almario is now one of the most recognized names in the Philippine design scene. Its list of clients includes luxury hotels, premium restaurants, model units for upscale condominiums, and residences, including those of high-profile names such as Charo Santos and Kris Aquino.

"Everything that we learned in the States, we're able to execute here," Cynthia says.

Ivy adds that there's much more to design than fine taste, much more to the craft than mere style. She says, "It's a fine art that's also a science."





Hanging on the wall is one of Mendoza's favorite pieces, a Dominican altar frontal that dates back to 1612. He lent it to UST when it celebrated its 400th anniversary. On the pedestals are woodcarvings of his patron saints, San Antonio and San Gregorio. The Corinthian columns are a recent addition from his parents' house. At the foot of the dining table is the first dining chair, the Vol Au Vent from B&B Italia. RIGHT: The designer and a 17th century baul.



# THE CURATOR

NOTHING GIVES J. ANTONIO MENDOZA MORE JOY THAN USING HIS MODERN AESTHETICS TO SHINE A LIGHT ON THE BEAUTY AND CRAFTSMANSHIP OF PHILIPPINE ART

BY LEAH NEMIL-SAN JOSE  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY UY

**AS YOU ENTER A DESIGNER'S HOME**, you hold your breath in anticipation and a tinge of intimidation. Then you discover that the majestic images you've imagined pale in comparison to the real thing.

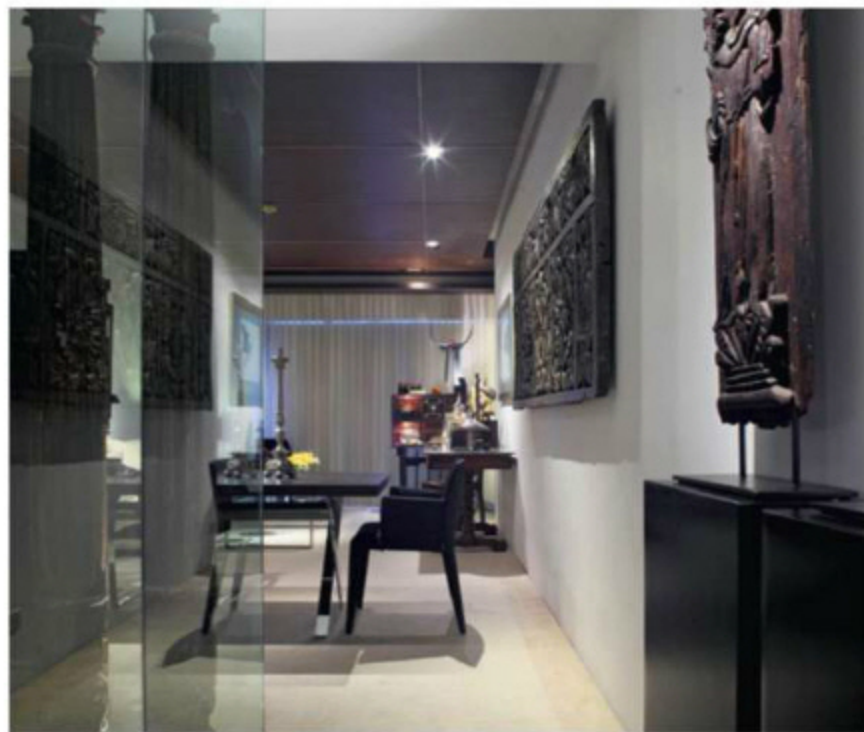
Two Corinthian columns are in J. Antonio Mendoza's German-designed kitchen. They're not daunting but rather make you smile—they're the last thing you'd expect to see in the home of someone who describes his style as modern.

In Mendoza's skilled hands, however, those pillars as well as the massive altar frontal (dated 1612) that dominate the wall opposite the dining area don't look out of place. Or the ivory carvings of saints that, Mendoza says with much laughter, had been on top of the mini bar, disconcerting his guests. These relics and other heirloom pieces feel right at home beside his contemporary steel and glass furniture.

## A fusion of past and present

Melding the past and present is effortless for Mendoza. He is a modernist, but he looks to the past, particularly his Hispano-Filipino heritage, to inform his decisions and shape his aesthetics. He has become a better designer because of it.





**RIGHT:** Mendoza is known for his restraint in design, and his living room is a testament to this. He lets the modern furniture (all from B&B Italia) function as vessels to show off the beauty and excellent craftsmanship of his antiques. The painting is a Zobel. **TOP:** The view when you enter.

"I think the secret of being a good modernist is you must have a good command of the classic orders. Everything starts from there, and then it evolves," he explains.

Early in his career, Mendoza leaned towards Zen-inspired spaces until he came upon a home filled with sculptures of saints. He was surprised that he was attracted to them, and started reading on the subject that extended to books on Philippine history. He rediscovered a culture so unique and rich that he proclaims, "We are really the Latins of Asia."

Mendoza didn't have to look far to acquire objects that reflect the beauty of what he was reading. Many were actually gathering dust in storage in his parents' house. His collection began with two crucifixes, an original Isabelo Tampinco and another from the family's ancestral house in General Solano near Malacañang.

Tucked between his collections of books in his living room is a Don Quixote sculpture that, he says, is inexpensive, but nevertheless is his most prized possession. "It reminds me so much of my grandparents, who were lovers of Cervantes and Spanish poetry, theater, dance and song. I'll probably get rid of everything except that."

### The art of restraint

Mendoza's show of restraint is an art in itself, including the way he skillfully arranges contrasting materials and textures together. He's very precise, but the effect is not cold or pretentious.

His living room, for example, has pared down furnishing that shows off his modern side, but also highlights the beauty of his antiques. On the glass coffee table alongside the fresh flowers, he arranges two *gaddur* brass work that the Maranao is known for. The surface carving has a rich arabesque motif that adds to the elegance of the space.

Mendoza has a desk fashioned after a Spanish *varguero* (a traveling desk) that holds more precious collections: boxes made from tortoise shell, his favorite drink, cognac, a photo of his grandparents before setting off to a costume party in the 1930s, and a silver salver that contains three of his grandfather's old Spanish prayer books.





Mendoza says, “I have a rule. If the piece will not enhance my collection, then I don’t buy it. Whatever I buy has to be always much better.” In his bedroom is a family heirloom, a 17th century Spanish *varguena* that was restored by Osmundo Esguerra, whom Mendoza greatly admires. RIGHT: He had a desk fashioned in his living room that carries sentimental pieces like a photograph of his grandparents and his grandfather’s Spanish prayer books. The chair is an Isabelo Tampinco.



Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** I design instinctively, never arbitrarily, nor do I leave anything to chance.

**Signature style:** Eclectic. Modern and contemporary with Hispano-Philippine arts and antiques.

**Dream project:** The architecture of an ultra-modern hotel in the Philippines infused with Hispano-Philippine arts and antiques. We have a phenomenal culture. We are the Latins of Asia, and I choose to capitalize on this. A staggering number of hotels in the country are devoid of our cultural style. You could be in Guam or in some hotel in Hong Kong’s New Territories.

**Important thing people should consider before building or renovating their home.** Get a good architect and interior designer. Make sure you’re on the same page. There is a difference in the style of a good architect and/or interior designer. It will be pesos saved and well spent. Always remember that there are no “right or wrong” clients and designers, only mismatches.

**What material do you like working with and how did you develop an affinity with this material?** I am fascinated working with *kamagong* veneer. Osmundo Esguerra is by far the best restorer, artisan and craftsman there is in the Philippines. Seeing Mr. Esguerra’s works of art taught me how to love this material. His creations are remarkable and are timeless antiques of the future.



“Many people are making references to foreign design and culture. But famous designers constantly refer to their past. At the Milan trade fair last April, I met Marcel Wanders (art director of design studio, Moooi), and he spoke about how his design is influenced by his culture and the Dutch masters. Another great designer, Antonio Citterio, does a lot of modern work, but his influences are classic,” Mendoza says.

He believes that people will eventually re-embrace Philippine design and influence. After all, he asks, how can you move forward when you can’t reconcile with your past?

“You go out of this world to search and find new ideas. And then, at one point, you ask yourself what is still out there. You can’t find anything else. You go back where you started but, of course, via a different route, a different perspective. That’s when the design becomes instinctive. And when you read foreign magazines, you’ll be surprised to learn that your designs are still in sync with whatever’s happening in the world,” he explains.

Mendoza doesn’t force his philosophy on clients, of course. But he enjoys witnessing their growth and how often they’re led back to the past. He sees the changes, from favoring Pottery Barn pieces to Mediterranean-inspired décor. Eventually, they give their heirloom pieces a second look.

A house has to grow, after all, and with it comes maturity, wisdom and greater appreciation of what you’ve always had. ■





# JUST A LITTLE OFF- CENTER

TESSA ALINDOGAN'S ART  
AND INTERIOR DESIGN GIVE  
A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE  
ON HOW TO SHAPE SPACES

BY AURELIO ICASIANO III  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

**THE FIRST THING YOU NOTICE** is the light from the mid-afternoon sun that is reflected on the mirrors and the wooden floor, along the little pots and figures and carvings from China, Burma, Thailand, Indonesia. Then you see Tessa Alindogan, sitting on a wooden chair in the corner, two rooms away from the foyer.

As the subject of these photographs, as an artist and interior designer, Tessa never stops until everything fits properly. Until everything makes sense. Then she throws it off a bit. Gives it a little kick.

We're in the house of one of her clients, a vast, sprawling property in Alabang that looms from a corner lot and well into the street. Here, inside the living room, there's a sense of the deliberate. A sense of something that's well put together.

"I had to work closely with the architect and my client," Tessa says of the design. "I was here every week while it was being built."

**Cohesive design**

The owners had moved from their old house and into this new one. The furniture—the elephant chair, the opium pipes, the tiny Buddhas, the hundreds of pieces of Orientalia—had to move with them. The challenge for Tessa was to design the space with existing



Having moved from a smaller residence, Tessa's clients wanted a roomy, sprawling house for a change. With the use of symmetry and a clean approach to design, Tessa opened up the space while retaining a modern oriental aesthetic.





While most of the pieces used in the house came from the collection of her clients, Tessa had to order custom-built furniture to fill in the gaps, such as this 14-seater dining table.

furniture, none of which she had chosen herself. She spent weeks taking photographs of the collection, numbering each one and assigning them places in the floor plan.

The furniture she decided to keep included a Burmese door that was fashioned into a table, a cut-down opium bed from China now turned into a display case, and a screen embellished in jade. In the end, she'd accomplished exactly what her client had wanted. She had taken all the bits and pieces, and made a cohesive, organic design out of them, with a few accents here and there, to keep it from being too linear.

But Tessa wasn't always an interior designer. Interested in interior architecture, she studied psychology in college instead. She spent another two years earning a master's degree in education, and when she finally came back to Manila, she founded a school and put all that learning to use. But she never forgot her initial fascination for interior design, so she decided to put up a firm and began taking on clients.

Her first clients asked her to design a restaurant in Mile-Long Island. After that, it was a townhouse in Balet. Sometimes, Tessa had to do things manually. When she couldn't find the right color of furniture, she would paint one by hand herself. If she couldn't find any art that matched her design, she would come up with her own pieces instead.

Over the next few years, her interest in the art, as well as her clientele, grew considerably. Still hungry for more knowledge, she moved to London for the next two years, studying at the Inchbald School of Design, one of the first interior design schools in Europe.

She finished her Architectural Interior Design degree with the second highest award.

### Symmetry and structure


Now, as the head of the Alindogan Design Group, Tessa works constantly, having designed interiors in Ayala Alabang and San Antonio Village, and numerous ongoing residential projects in Punta Fuego, San Juan, and other locations. She has also collaborated with other designers, including Tessa Prieto-Valdes, with whom she is working on the Y2 Residence Hotel. The hotel's concept revolves around high art and, being a visual artist herself, the project falls right into Tessa's strengths.

"I guess painting goes hand in hand since I do interiors. Sometimes, it's so frustrating that I can't find the right painting, so I put my own," she says.

Tessa's paintings were featured in an exhibit last year, with another one launching in the near future. Currently, her paintings are available to select clients, and some have even asked for her art to be included in her designs.

"I like symmetry. I like neat. I like designing on a simple structure and putting in more of the furniture, accessories, paintings. I like a simple shell, because you can easily change the furniture when you get tired of it," Tessa describes her design philosophy. "I also think paintings are very important, as well as unique pieces of furniture. It could be new, it could be classic, like a mid-century piece. Of course I take into consideration function and what the client wants.

"Then I always want an element of surprise. Something off. A conversational piece that attracts people."

And this edge that breaks the evenness is what keeps Tessa's designs the most interesting subjects of conversation. 





Each space in the house is filled with Orientalia, drawn from a collection of hundreds of pieces that were acquired by Tessa's clients throughout their years of traveling in Asia.



Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** The best designs should be based on purpose and function. Keep it simple. A space has to fit you. Consider lifestyle and tasks. I always try to create harmonious, well-planned, efficient and streamlined interiors for my clients. I like the timeless and classical. However, I also enjoy adding fun elements or something dramatic to leave a lasting impression.

**Signature style:** My signature style is really a mix of the mid-century movement: modern with a hint of neo-baroque. Symmetry and balance are visible in my designs. A contemporary house has to incorporate some vestiges of the past even if it expresses a purely modern philosophy. This gives a space more character and adds to its charm. I prefer to stick to a monochromatic color palette and then layer textures to excite the senses.

**Dream project:** My dream project would be to build another dream house for myself, up on a hill, isolated, with a fantastic view of the city and the sea reflecting the many facets of the sky. It will have a huge masters' suite and several rooms for guests and a large entertainment area with state-of-the-art sound system. It

will also have a nice library filled with books of art, interior design, architecture, fashion, and a theater room, a mini spa/massage room with an outdoor shower, and a meditation room.

**One important thing people should consider before building or renovating their home:** One important thing people should consider before building or renovating their home is that the interior has to seamlessly integrate with the architecture. So from the onset, it is ideal to already involve the interior designer during the preliminary stages of planning. Have a vision of what you want and explain this well to both the architect and interior designer in order for them to be able to take your vision to fruition.

**What material do you like working with and how did you develop an affinity with this material?** I like working with glass because it has many uses and because of its transparency. It is used on windows, doors, tables, decorative art, traditional objects such as vessels, lighting fixtures, bottles, bowls, plates, paper weights, beads and an endless range of sculptures and art installations as well. Stained or back painted glass also has many applications. I developed an affinity with glass because I like a mix of the classical and modern. Glass is always present in both yet expressed in different forms.





The living room loft of Tessa Prieto-Valdes decked in baroque, neoclassical, and oriental details. She often rearranges furniture and artworks in this area, depending on her mood. This time she added accessories from SM Home. RIGHT: Prieto-Valdes wearing a gown by Philipp Tampus.



## PRISMATIC WONDERLAND

THE AESTHETIC OF COLUMNIST/PHILANTHROPIST/SOCIALITE TESSA PRIETO-VALDES IS AS VARIABLE AS HER HATS, HER GOWNS, AND HER ART—WHICH ALL COME TOGETHER IN A FORM OF ORGANIZED CLUTTER

BY GEOLETTE ESGUERRA  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

**IF YOU CAN JUDGE A PERSON** based on their clothes, then you can also judge a designer by her personal style. This, from experience, is true, but even truer for Tessa Prieto-Valdes whose attire is always a showstopper. In a crowded hall, she is impossible to miss—a woman wearing a big, feathered fascinator and a beaded gown with a train that reflects light in various colors and angles.

Prieto-Valdes explains her personal style: “It is print on print, color on color, texture on texture—it’s something that’s really out of the norm. As an interior designer, I don’t necessarily put my seal of style on my projects because my clients would just freak out if I did,” she says.

### A love for space planning

While her personal style uses heavy embellishment and texture, for interior design, she’s keen on making sure that the spaces have harmony, luxury, and elegance—with lots of color. “I love space planning, lighting, and composing different design elements and putting them all together. Rather than imposing a style on the client, I’m just there to help them discover what they need,” she says.

Her strength lies in her ability to create different themes for each client, thus, there is no repetition, but rather intelligent space planning, with a touch of feng shui, if the clients are so inclined.





Prieto-Valdes began her design education in UP, then she moved to California to finish her BA in Interior Design from the College of Notre Dame, where her design aesthetic was fully shaped. Her projects show both her planning sensibilities and her flair for color. For example, Salon Privat at the Fort mixes French boudoir elements with bright pops of colors in the murals and the faux stained glass skylight, along with an Eiffel Tower-turned-mirror installation that is part of the salon service area. Her projects with her husband Dennis' e-Games casino resting areas, on the other hand, are more thematic.

One project she's quite excited about is the Y2 Hotel, where she worked side by side with another Tessa (Alindogan, featured on p. 86), who has an entirely different aesthetic altogether. "There's a different sense of dynamic—she likes working with a palette of black and white, and tries to streamline everything. Then I come in and like to mess things up. If she's not in the meeting, I'll tell everyone to change everything—make it all pink," she says jokingly.

#### Design instinct

Prieto-Valdes likes to describe her work as organized clutter, where she creates energy in the space by allowing for flexibility, moving the furniture around and changing the fabrics and accessories often. Instead of relying on trends, she uses her design instinct and



LEFT: Her entry dome foyer with a trompe l'oeil window view. RIGHT: The sitting room where she likes to mix textures of animal skin, prints, and velvet upholstery. The room also features some of her travel accouterments and keepsakes.





Designer Notes:

**Design philosophy:** My work is all about harmony, luxury, and elegance. You can get cues from my personal style on my love of color and texture, but space planning really governs most of my work.

**Signature style:** I like having a lot of elements, colors, and details. It's a form of organized clutter. But space planning and proportions are very important, so you have to deal with those first before working on the details.

**Dream project:** When the sky's the limit, you can be very creative and not worry about the end price. Also, I'd like to work on something challenging, like a yacht.

**Important things to consider before building or renovating:** It's always cheaper to change things on paper, which is why the initial design stages are very important. When the design is finalized, clients should do a walk-through with the designer, so that all the spaces are accounted for.

**Material I like to work with:** Wood. I'd like everything to use wood, but I do know that the material can be difficult to use sometimes.


The dining room marked by two columns from a temple, and a massive dining table meant for entertaining. RIGHT: The gilded walls and ceiling complement the navy baroque prints. "This house is a showcase of my personal style, but it's always different, always transforming. It's a party house," she says.

the functional relationship of spaces. She admits how much of her joy rests not in the shopping stage (although that can be fun as well), but in the space planning part, where she is free to dream up details, and play with the proportions of the house.

Like the social butterfly that she is, she gets her inspiration from a kaleidoscope of sources, and is most enthusiastic about all of them. That includes travel ("Seeing new places inspires me"), plants ("I'm really into rain plants right now"), Cebu furniture ("So inspiring, they have everything"), artists ("I'm currently loving Charlie Co and Leeroy New"), digitally enhanced art and, of course, fashion. The effect is dizzying, exciting, and uniquely hers.

At one point, she wanted a semblance of order and perfection in her life: "Sometimes I wake up and have interior design envy. I envy spaces that are perfect, where everything is neat, symmetrical. Sometimes you want to live like that, where everything has its place," she says of this kind of space that is vastly different from her eclectic, multi-themed, and multi-cultural home. "But then, for those people, they don't have an identity, you won't know who they are from their homes," she counters.

She looks around her place, taking note of how she would shift the furniture pieces again once this photoshoot ends, even thinking of how she would transform her study into something else, or how she will convert a room into another walk-in-closet to fit her many outfits. She shrugs at the thought of having a perfectly orderly house, where nothing is added and nothing is taken away.

"Nah, this is home. It should be your own thing. There's no correct or wrong interior design. What's important is that it's always personal—it's all about you." 





the queen of all media is now on **Lifestyle Network**



# The *Kris* Kitchen

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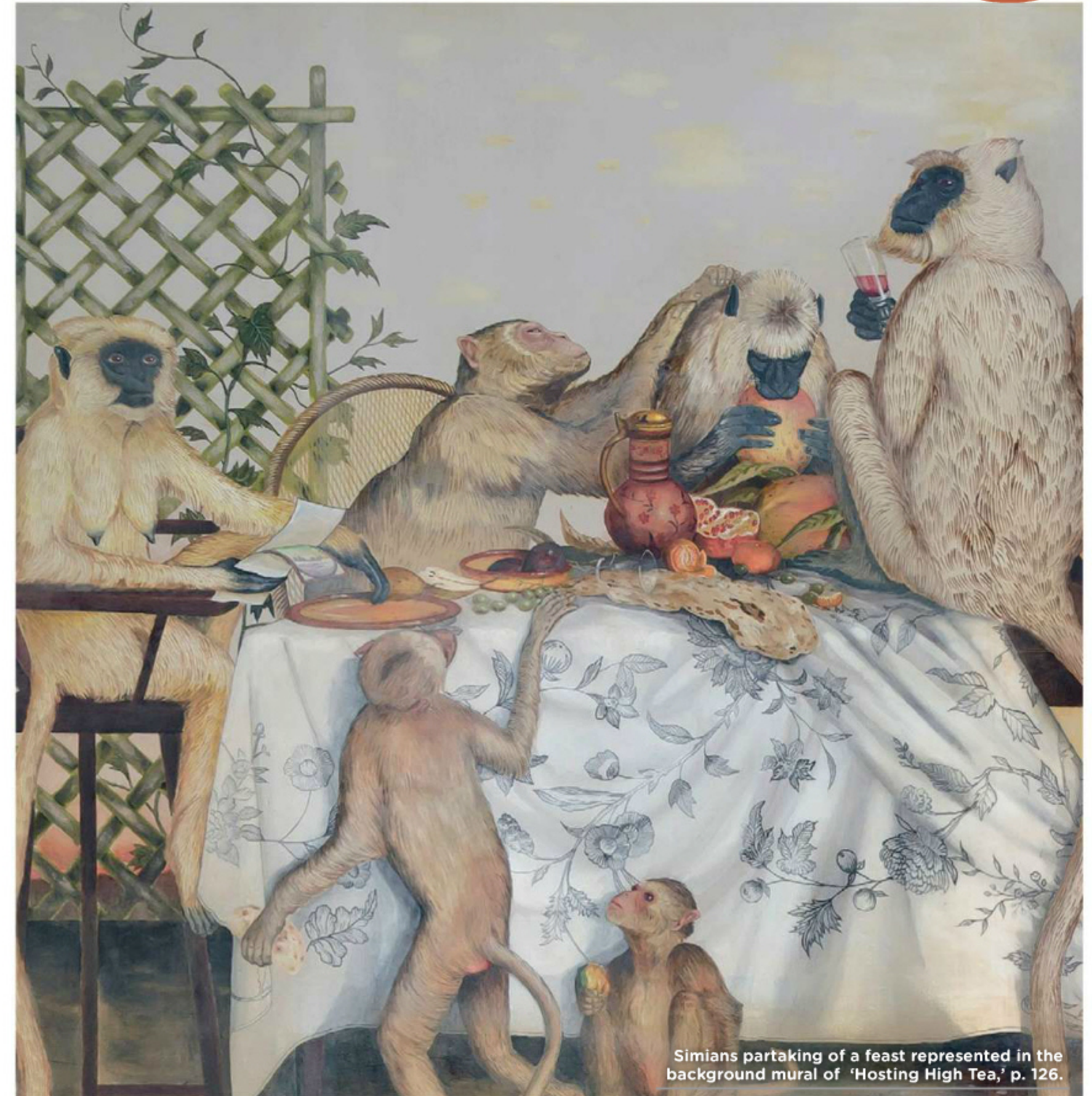
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# entertaining



Simians partaking of a feast represented in the background mural of 'Hosting High Tea,' p. 126.





A handpainted mural of mischievous simians raiding a dining table provides a whimsical backdrop to a tea party buffet setting.

# Hosting high tea

THIS BRITISH CUSTOM, USING VINTAGE CHINA AND TEA CAKES, CAN TAKE YOU BACK TO A WORLD OF CHARM AND CONVIVIALITY

BY MARISSA ALEJANDRO LOPA  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

**FOR MANY OF US**, tea parties often evoke images of the British afternoon tea, not unlike what the Mad Hatter laid out for Alice in Wonderland.

As the custom evolved over time, tea parties have come to mean a more elegant meal held between mid- to late afternoon to celebrate many occasions. If you want to host a party that's not as fussy or involved as a dinner party, then this is the way to go.

The star of the show is, of course, a good pot of tea! The rest of the fare is best laid out buffet style if you have more than a couple of guests. You can serve a mix of savory, bite-sized sandwiches, scones (with clotted cream and jam, if you have it) or biscuits and sweets. Today, fresh fruit, along with iced treat, is a welcome addition.

An impressive tea party buffet coupled with great company, of course, makes the occasion more memorable.

Purveyors of impeccable style and taste, Chito Vijandre and Ricky Toledo, have many years of experience in elegant entertaining, as many of their friends and business associates attest. Friends look forward to this duo's parties, from their famous weekend cocktail parties to the themed Christmas party. This creative tandem never disappoints.

Collaborating with Chito and Ricky is their friend, Bambi Sy Gobio, restaurateur (Damaso, Greenbelt 5) and excellent chef, who adds her magic skills to this very elegant tea party buffet table.





Classic tea party sandwiches of cucumber, egg and smoked salmon are served in a domed Victorian silver chafing dish.





A mid-1800s English silver salver, egg-shaped food warmer and ivory handled bread forks are used to present scrumptious scones and cookies amid hydrangeas, daffodils, moss balls and cherries.



Now that Chito and Ricky's parties have become more intimate, they find that tea parties suit their needs. It's a nice way to catch up with friends, talk about a trip or discuss business projects in a less formal setting.

All the right elements are present in this joyous and lavish buffet. An array of age-old traditional tea time fare such as tiny sandwiches of egg, smoked salmon and cream cheese and chives, smoked ham biscuits scones, lemon and cranberry shortbread, luscious chocolate eclairs, mouth-watering financiers and other sweets are served in antique Victorian (1860-1890) silver serving dishes. Antique ivory and mother-of-pearl handled silver bread forks and knives with prewar Japanese eggshell porcelain set in a blue dragon design add polish and grace to the table.

Italian Majolica urn (circa 1800s) with satyr heads gives an old world feel when laden with another important detail, flowers: daffodils, purple hydrangeas, purple agapanthus, gloriosas and roses.

Proper linen is used, from local and handmade napkins, snowy, starched and lace-edged, to the beautiful antique embroidered tablecloth. Remember that guests appreciate a well-appointed and decorated table while partaking of the scrumptious cakes and sandwiches, so working on all these details will be worth it.

Chito and Ricky give their guests the highest priority. Preferences such as decaffeinated teas or sugar substitutes are made available. They strongly believe that collectively, the care and importance you, the host, give to the whole ritual show and affect the party's outcome. ☛





Silhouettes, as represented in the form of glass cloches, confectionary jars, candle holders and acrylic cupcake stands convey a strong design statement in Barbie Pardo-Tiangco's tablescape for tea. RIGHT: Paper lace doilies in various shapes and sizes form the table runner. Flowers held by teacups add color to the table.

# Revelry in paper, lace and glass

CHOICE ELEMENTS MAKE A DREAMY TABLESCAPE

BY ANNA M. ROSETE  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

**METRO HOME AND ENTERTAINING'S** Associate Editor, Barbie Pardo-Tiangco's many talents extend to event styling. Her Instagram posts are chockfull of cheery images of her party styling work. Through her direction, paper is morphed into pom-poms, castles and gigantic flowers, creating a world of magic and whimsy for the revelers. For Manila, this is a welcome change in the roster of many choices for party planners because Barbie rarely ever does the token character party. Her touch has elevated the children's party genre into one that is marked by style and sophistication, precious details and meticulous planning. Elements from her most memorable work is a life size doll house with all its details, down to the furniture, on a lawn and inhabited by little girls playing; another is a gigantic paper teacup centerpiece made by the prisoners of Malabon, cradling blooms of various pastel shades for a tea party-themed baptism.

For this issue, Barbie puts together an elegant last minute tea party for friends. A six-seater dining table is the setting for the event. Its black glass tabletop is the backdrop and take-off point for all the other elements in her setting. For a table runner, she put together a sea of pristine white doilies and cake liners of different sizes and shapes.







LEFT: The giant paper tea cup used to hold the centerpiece blooms provides a conversation piece. ABOVE RIGHT: Bold color is incorporated in the place settings. CENTER RIGHT: Dye cut invitations make charming details for the occasion. BELOW RIGHT: White tea cups and memorabilia are added to the table for interest. Cupcakes add color to the table.



Their cutouts are reminiscent of delicate lacework, the composition and texture a perfect foil for the gleaming black background. On these, she positions a menagerie of objects made of glass: cloches, apothecary bottles, candle holders and confectionary jars, creating another layer of texture and visual interest to her composition. These echo the glint of the chandelier overhead, making a sparkling table composition. To this, she adds a peppering of charming white objects—a bird figurine here, a bust there. With just a few simple gestures, the setting already speaks of her signature flair. With the addition of the oversized paper teacup, and the assortment of white porcelain teacups to hold flowers, the table is set with just the right amount of color to complement her studied tablescape. Multicolored cupcakes finish her setting with a little flamboyance to counteract the restraint expressed in the black and white backdrop. Parties are ephemeral. The memory of them, through photos, small mementoes and the stories about them outlive the event itself. With gracious details, these memories serve to last a lifetime. 11

# The seating plan

THIS ARRANGEMENT CAN MAKE OR BREAK A PARTY. PLAN IT WELL

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ARLENE SY

**CATRINE:** I was brushing up on my readings in social history when I came upon this lovely piece written by etiquette doyenne Emily Post. In the last century, when Mrs. Worldly held a dinner party, her first invites would be to the Oldworlds, the Eminent, the Learned, the Wellborns, the Highbrows, and the Onceweres.

**MISS DE MEANOUR:** It's a good thing we don't have to invite only couples these days. Now we have a mix of personalities and inclinations, such as Political Paul, Bubbly Becca and Charming Charlie.

**CATRINE:** Formerly, it was also very strictly observed that married couples sit at separate tables, and men and women must be alternately positioned.

**MISS DE MEANOUR:** But if the couple is newly married and the bride barely knows the other guests, it is basic human kindness to let her sit at the same table as her husband.

**CATRINE:** Well, at the very least, she must sit across from her husband.

**MISS DE MEANOUR:** I do feel strongly that the most talkative guests should not be at the center of the table or else the other guests begin to feel like the unwilling audience of a horrid reality show.

**CATRINE:** The host and hostess must not let chatty guests hog the spotlight and steer the course of conversation, so that all guests feel important and are included in the festivities.

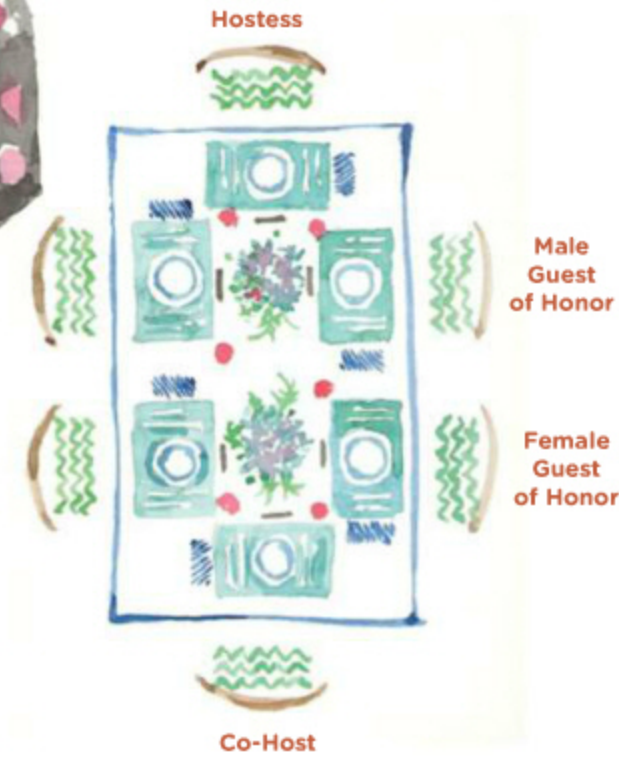
**MISS DE MEANOUR:** It matters little to me if I sit next to a man or a woman, so long as they come with plenty of juicy stories! 12





## Gentle Reminders

- It is best to position men and women alternately. Such a plan balances the flow of conversation.
- For gatherings of more than six, it is recommended to have simple place cards.
- A female guest of honor sits to the right of the host; the male guest of honor sits at the left of the hostess.
- The hostess and co-host usually "anchor" the table by sitting opposite each other. This way, they have a good view of the table and can attend to any needs or requests that may arise.





elements / LEADS

Classic Contemporary

ICONIC PIECES TAKE CENTER STAGE AT HOME, AND ARE GIVEN A TOTALLY UPDATED EDGE AND ATTITUDE

BY BARBIE PARDIO-TIANGCO  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

METRO HOME AND ENTERTAINING shows you how to turn inside the past and present with the most current objects in the market as examples of how to create late 20th-century interiors that give a nod to tradition in a modern setting.

The Mid-Century Modern style is a classic. Mid-Century modern furniture, that peaked in the 1950s and 1960s, is a blend of modern design and traditional craftsmanship. It has been updated with modern materials and techniques to create a new look that is both classic and contemporary.

Following these vignettes are a collection of objects that we have selected to help you define your "modern classic" aesthetic.

**Leads**  
**Sifra Interiors & Objects**, 3/F Greenbelt 5, 3/F Home Zone Glorietta 4, 2/F LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 501-3220 / 752-7174. Email: [Sifra.Interiors@yahoo.com](mailto:Sifra.Interiors@yahoo.com).  
**com. Conradadamos@yahoo.com**.  
**Dimensione**, Lower G/F, Greenbelt 5, Makati City. Tel. (632) 501-3740. **Heima**, Unit 103, Three Brixton Bldg., #3 Brixton Street, Brgy. Kapitolyo, Pasig City, 2/F LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. (632) 501-7588 / (632) 798-0027. **Eclectic Living**, 2/F LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. (632) 519-2938.

**Trends**  
**ac+632**, 2/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati City. Tel. 758-2564, Fax: 758-2597. Email: [ac632@pldtdsl.net](mailto:ac632@pldtdsl.net). **Cu29 Architectural Hardware**, 107 Perea St. Legaspi Village, Makati City. Tel. 817-7818, Fax 892-8531. **Pietro Collection**, La Fuerza Compound, 2241 Don Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City. Tel. 310-5164. **Living Space**, 2/F LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 403-1345. **The Fabric Bar**, 3/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St.,

Ayala Center, Makati City. Tel. 501-3164/65. **Hacienda Crafts**, Hacienda Sta. Rosalia, Manapla, Negros Occidental. Email: [info@haciendacrafts.com](mailto:info@haciendacrafts.com). Website: [www.haciendacrafts.com](http://www.haciendacrafts.com). **Roomscape**, 237, N. Garcia (Reposo), Makati City. Tel. 890-7246, Fax: 897-5809. Email: [rmscape@gmail.com](mailto:rmscape@gmail.com). **S.C. Vizcarra**, 737 Roxas Boulevard, Parañaque. Tel. 854-6755. Email: [info@vizcarra1925.com](mailto:info@vizcarra1925.com). Website: [www.vizcarra1925.com](http://www.vizcarra1925.com). **Simor Wall Coverings** Corporate Address: 2/F Corinthian Plaza, 121 Paseo de Roxas, Makati. Tel. 8113211/3080. Email: [simor@pldtdsl.net](mailto:simor@pldtdsl.net). Website: [www.simorabacaproducts.com](http://www.simorabacaproducts.com). **Vitra**, 3/F, MOs Design, Bonifacio High Street, Taguig City. Tel. 403-6620. **Wall Crown**, Lot 7 Greenview Compound, 295 B. Serrano Avenue Quezon City, Philippines, Unit CS 242 MC Home Depot Fort Bonifacio 32nd St. cor. Bonifacio Blvd., Global City, Taguig City. Tel. 725-5088/412-2707. Fax: 414-5254. Email: [sales@wallcrownphilippines.com](mailto:sales@wallcrownphilippines.com). **Weaves of Asia**, 132 Jupiter St., Makati. Tel. 897.6405-06. Email: [sales@weavesofasia.com](mailto:sales@weavesofasia.com).

**Best of 7 Chairs**  
**Roche Bobois**, 2100 Don Chino Roces Avenue Extension, Makati

elements / BEST OF 7

Reinterpreted Classics

TIMELESS SILHOUETTES RECREATED

BY ANTON BARRETTO  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

City. Tel. 519-8240. Email: [manila@roche-boboys.com](mailto:manila@roche-boboys.com). **Capellini**, G/F, One Parkade, 28th St., Bonifacio High Street, Taguig City. Tel. 736-3728. **Furnitalia**, Crescent Park West, 30th St. cor. Rizal Drive, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City. Tel. 819-1887. **KISH**, 233 N. Garcia St., Bel-Air, Makati City. Tel. 896-8366, Fax: 896-8367. Email: [info@kish.ph](mailto:info@kish.ph). **Nest**, 40 Jupiter St., Bel-Air 3, Makati City. Tel. 818-8811/403-3062. **Natuzzi**, 2/F, MOs Design, B2 Bonifacio High Street, Taguig City. Tel. 856-2748, Fax: 856-7915. **B&B Italia**, Abitare Internazionale Crown Tower, 107 H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Tel. 892-1887/892-1890. Email: [bbitalia@skyinet.net](mailto:bbitalia@skyinet.net).

**The Master List**  
**Dwell**, G/F Eastwood City Walk 1, 188-E E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City. Tel: 667-1226. **Poliform**, 219 N. Garcia St., Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel: 804-2776/804-2778, email: [design@poliform.ph](mailto:design@poliform.ph). **Towne's Fabrics**, 916 A. Arnaiz Avenue, Makati City. Tel: 844-5086. **KA International**, G/F The Manansala Condominium, Hidalgo corner Estrella St., Makati City. Tel: 403-0013. Email: [kamnsala@pldtdsl.net](mailto:kamnsala@pldtdsl.net).

net. **Jo-Liza Thrift and Antique Shop**, 664 Jose Abad Santos St., Little Bagio, San Juan City. Tel: 725-8303/724-1944/725-3324, Fax: 725-2980. Email: [jo\\_lizaph@yahoo.com](mailto:jo_lizaph@yahoo.com). **Art Informal**, 227 Connecticut St., Greenhills East, Mandaluyong City. Tel: 725-8515. **West Gallery**, 48 West Avenue, Quezon City. Tel: 411-0336. Email: [info@westgallery.org](mailto:info@westgallery.org). **Silverlens**, 2/F YMC Bldg. 2320 Don Chino Rocas Avenue Extension, Makati City. Tel: 816-0044. Email: [info@silverlensgalleries.com](mailto:info@silverlensgalleries.com). Website: [www.silverlensgalleries.com](http://www.silverlensgalleries.com). **Blanc**, 145 Katipunan Avenue, St. Ignatius Village, Quezon City. Tel: 442-5262. Email: [info@blanc.ph](mailto:info@blanc.ph). **Pinto Art Gallery**, 1 Sierra Madre St., Grand Heights, Antipolo City. Tel: 697-1015. Email: [info@pintoartgallery.com](mailto:info@pintoartgallery.com). **Boston Gallery**, 2-A Boston St. corner Lantana St., Cubao, Quezon City. Tel: 722-9205. **Secret Fresh**, G/F RONAC Art Center, Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills, Manila. Tel: 5709815 local 7. Email: [secretfreshinfo@gmail.com](mailto:secretfreshinfo@gmail.com). **Cura V**, 2/F, Adora Greenbelt 5, Paseo de Roxas cor. Legaspi St., Makati City. Tel: 217-4030. **Rustan's**, Shangrila-la Plaza Mall, EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City. Tel: 633-4636.

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# Values education

ATELIER A'S CARLO CORDARO AIMS TO REINFORCE SIMPLICITY AND FUNCTIONALITY

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ATELIER A



Cebu-based Italian furniture designer Carlo Cordaro in his showroom.



ABOVE: Gazelle chair in rattan, from Atelier A's Avant Garde collection. BELOW: Sideboard by Atelier A from Fifties Collection.



**WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT INSPIRATION (SOMETHING THAT HAS A PARTICULARLY STRONG INFLUENCE ON YOU AT THE MOMENT)?** The new generation has the buying power to acquire the latest hi-tech gadgets but cannot distinguish a nice sofa from another, or good leather from plastic. I'm looking to transfer "values" through the products I design, which are affordable yet elegant and contemporary.

**WHO OR WHAT WAS THE DESIGN INFLUENCE OF YOUR CHILDHOOD?** As a child I loved to design and fabricate houses and buildings, using not only Lego but also wood or carton. I was always doing something different—let's call it

"improvised free creativity"—and I never knew how my house would end!

**WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST COMMONLY REPEATED DESIGN MISTAKE?** That would be trying to improve or emulate someone else's design.

**IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANY PART OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF METRO MANILA, WHAT WOULD IT BE?** I will recreate the iconic look of a charming city, circa 1930s-1950s. Intramuros will be like Soho in New York. Our already reclaimed areas need a law on "green" gardens and covered lot area. For example, on a 5,000-sq.m. lot, you can build only on 1/3 or 3,250 sq.m.

**WHAT IS YOUR DESIGN INDULGENCE?** Young designers in the Philippines now have an important opportunity—people are open to innovation and new ideas! So there should be a free spirit to reinterpret this fast-moving society, where "to be" is more important than "to have."

**WHAT, FOR YOU, WOULD REPRESENT AN IDEALLY DESIGNED SPACE?** The space where we live and work is important more than we can imagine. It can completely change the output in a work environment, and the balance in your home life.

**WHAT IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED, BUT IS ACTUALLY A FINE DESIGN?** Simplicity and

functionality are the most forgotten issues. Use simple lines with great materials and always with functionality, which should be the No. 1 priority!

**APART FROM HIRING AN INTERIOR DESIGNER, WHAT PIECE OF ADVICE CAN YOU GIVE HOMEOWNERS DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR CURRENT SPACE? HOW CAN THEY REIMAGINE IT?** Sometimes changing a boring curtain or repainting with another color can transform the look of your space. ①

Visit [www.atelier-a.it](http://www.atelier-a.it). Email [cordaro@fil veneer.com](mailto:cordaro@fil veneer.com) or [sales@fil veneer.com](mailto:sales@fil veneer.com). Call +63(917) 320-2109. +63(2)340-0301. Collection available in Manila through Nest.