

FALL 2020

# DEPARTURES



**HOME +  
DESIGN**

# My Blue-Chip Heaven

A pair of collectors turned to designer David Scott to create an art-friendly family oasis in Miami. *by Rima Suqi*  
*Photographs by Stephen Kent Johnson. Styled by Michael Reynolds*



The terrace off the primary bedroom has a concrete table from Mecox Gardens, armchairs by Kettal, a sectional by Dedon, and side tables by B&B Italia. *For details, see page 114.*

**MOST PEOPLE WHO BUY** residences in starchitect-designed towers might never have the courage to question floor plans devised by the world-famous talents who created them. But the couple who bought this four-bedroom penthouse in the buzzy Richard Meier-designed Residences at the Four Seasons Hotel at the Surf Club in Miami did just that. “They wanted two primary baths, but there was only one; they wanted a breakfast room, and there was none; and they wanted to stand in the kitchen and look out onto the ocean, but there was no way to do that without

taking down a wall,” says interior designer David Scott.

The New York-based Scott has had a relationship with the couple that goes back almost 25 years to when he first launched his business. They bought the Miami aerie before the building went up, having only seen the plans. (The apartment spans across 5,500 square feet, with an additional 2,200 square feet of outdoor space.) This meant that reconfiguring the place happened on paper, rather than by tearing down walls in a space that already existed, and gave them the financial and

logistical leverage to make the changes they wanted with the approval of the Pritzker Prize-winning architect.

Scott, whose first project for the couple, in New York City, incorporated more traditional European pieces, has become known for contemporary spaces, layered with vintage, antique, and commissioned pieces from international artisans and designers, for a roster of affluent clients. And for some, he also helps curate world-class art collections. He started amassing works for this couple about 15 years ago with a focus on Color Field and Abstract

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Expressionist artists. Today their collection includes works by Helen Frankenthaler, Ad Reinhardt, Hans Hofmann, and John Chamberlain, among others.

Furnishings, however, required diplomacy. “The fact of the matter is my husband and I have very different tastes,” explained the wife. “He’s much more of a modernist and I am much more of a traditionalist in terms of our living spaces.” She describes Scott’s role as that of “a translator, so we could find things we could both live with.” This is the seventh

home he has decorated for the couple; he refers to them as “patron clients who see your talent and embark on a decorative arts journey with you. We’d shop at the finest antique shows and shops, we’d go to auction houses, we’d buy things of provenance and history. Over the years it just got better and better.”

The collection is quite colorful, so setting a palette that didn’t compete with the art and worked for both parties—he’s a fan of color, she prefers more serene spaces—was a priority. The couple had lived with

many of these pieces for decades, but their experience of what they lovingly refer to as “old friends” is different in this space. “This is an open-plan white-wall apartment, so you see the art together, as opposed to being in separate rooms,” she explained. “It’s more of a gallery experience.” Another priority: finding furnishings that hit a happy medium, with nothing too slick, shiny, or industrial, and incorporating the wife’s desire to infuse craft and other organic elements to “warm up the otherwise very white background.”



In the living room, a chandelier by Andrea Claire, a painting by Ad Reinhardt (1949), a suede sofa by the Bright Group, and a vintage velvet chair by Fritz Neth (left) as well as an armchair by Ralph Lauren Home (right); the custom rug is from Stark Carpet.



Clockwise from left: The dining room's painting, *Mysteries: Lumina Blue* (1999), is by Kenneth Noland; the sculpture is from Sentimento Antiques in New York and sits on a credenza by Kelly Wearstler. In the entry hallway, a mirror by Fernando Mastrangelo is next to a sculpture by Mira Nakashima. The primary bedroom features a Chatfield bed from Sedgwick & Brattle in Perennials fabric; the painting above the bed, *Taurus* (1963), is by Helen Frankenthaler; the ceiling light is by Ayala Serfaty from Galerie BSL.

"Everywhere I could inject wood, I did," said Scott of his strategy. Upon entering, visitors are greeted by a Mira Nakashima walnut-and-rosewood sculpture and a Danish cord bench placed in front of Frankenthaler's *By Wind and Water*. A pair of French bentwood chairs in the style of Jean Royère are set in front of a custom-designed wall unit that shows off the owners' collection of Japanese baskets and Beppu bamboo vases. Reeded-oak walls in the living room slide to reveal the TV and the entrance to an office; Scott repeated this textural wall treatment in the bedroom to "ground and create a niche for the bed."

Colors throughout take their cues from the bright pinks, yellows, and blues of the living room rug. It was the "jumping-off point" for the home, said Scott, although he used more muted tones to ensure that the art was the star. Despite all the boldface names, the piece that is perhaps the most appreciated is a surprising take on a functional piece: a mixed-media ping-pong table by Tad Lauritzen Wright (the husband is an avid player). The couple used it daily while sheltering in place with their two grown kids—albeit with distinctly noncollectible, standard-issue paddles.

