

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL DESIGN AUTHORITY

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The Lush Life

GREAT STYLE INDOORS+OUT

BETTE MIDLER'S
PENTHOUSE PARADISE



EXCLUSIVE:
THE PRIVATE WORLD OF
BUNNY MELLON



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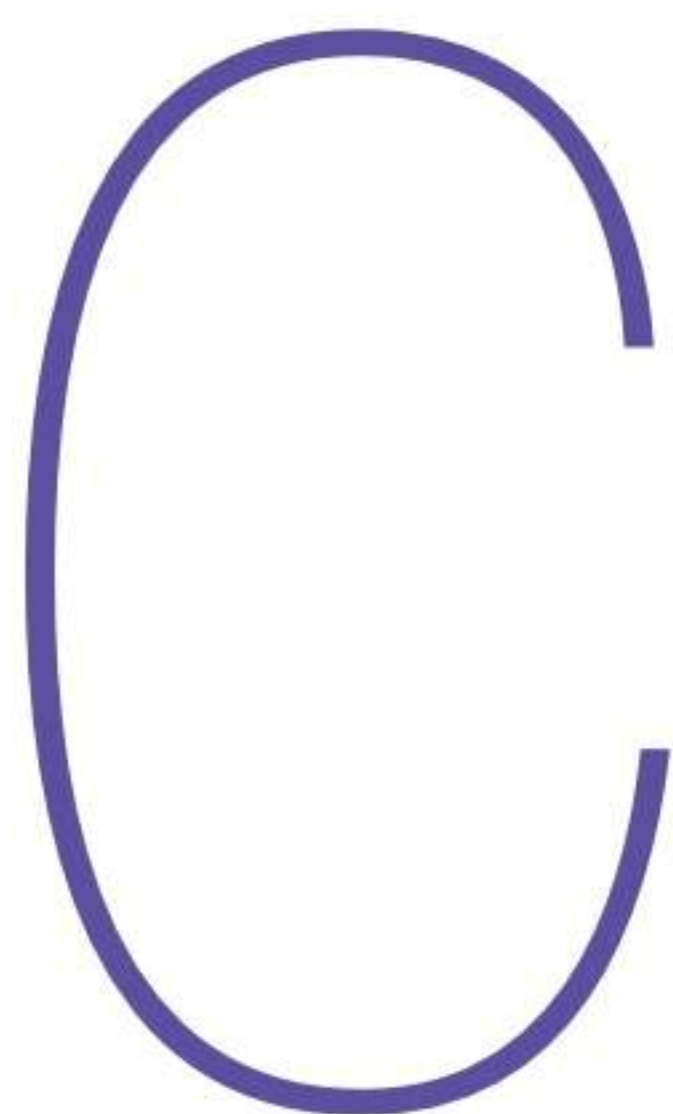


MALIBU MODERN

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY MAYER RUS — PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT FRANCES — STYLED BY HOWARD CHRISTIAN



Just off the Pacific Coast Highway, architectural designer Scott Mitchell devises a strikingly streamlined oceanside showplace for real-estate maven Kurt Rappaport



onsidering the impact of the film industry on the economy and psyche of Los Angeles, it's only natural that denizens of this glittering town tend to view just about everything through a cinematic lens. Even houses have their analogous counterparts in the movies—there are edgy independent projects, lavish period pieces, high-minded foreign productions, and so on. As for the Malibu home of real-estate czar Kurt Rappaport and his fiancée, model Sarah Mutch, there's only one word to describe it: blockbuster.

Spread out over six acres on a majestic bluff overlooking the ocean, this extraordinary residence occupies a world of its own, far removed from the humble beach shacks and stately manses packed cheek by jowl along other stretches of the Pacific Coast Highway. After turning off that celebrated thoroughfare, toward the water, one descends a gently sloping drive through a landscape dotted with freestanding concrete pillars that ease the transition from exhaust fumes to Eden. The pageantry of the entry procession makes it feel as if one has arrived at a modernist Luxor—think Cecil B. DeMille by way of Louis Kahn.



Rappaport and his fiancée, model Sarah Mutch, stand on the six-acre property's back lawn.

The house itself—a long, linear expanse nestled discreetly into the hillside and facing the sea—barely reveals itself to the street. (Sodded green roofs further that mission.) A masterful composition of intersecting planes and volumes, the structure marries the gravitas of concrete piers and walls with the lightness of glass. Floors and ceilings of white oak coupled with antique granite pavers in outdoor areas lend texture and warmth to the starkly modern scheme.

“I’m obsessed with the ways that buildings express the subtle qualities of the materials used in their construction,” says architectural designer Scott

Mitchell, who began working on the project shortly after Rappaport acquired the land in 2006. “This house is all about honoring the integrity of concrete and glass while creating a rhythmic interplay between those materials and the landscape.”

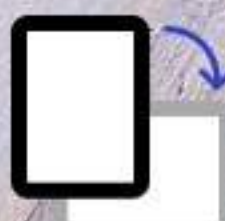
The architectural language of the 15,000-square-foot residence, which encompasses a sweeping living room, a master suite with a luxurious bathroom worthy of Hollywood royalty, a wing of bedrooms for Rappaport’s children, and a basement with a game room and a home theater, is reiterated in an adjacent pavilion



Concrete monoliths dot the gravel entrance drive.



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master suite with a luxurious bathroom worthy of Hollywood royalty, a wing of bedrooms for Rappaport's children, and a basement with a game room and a home theater, is reiterated in an adjacent pavilion containing two guest suites. Outside, the 168-foot-long infinity pool is said to be the longest residential swimming pool in California. Set into the lush lawn and sheathed in black granite tile, it resembles the monolith from *2001: A Space Odyssey* tipped onto its side and stretched—it's a knockout. "Considering the breadth of the site and the linearity of the house, the pool had to be a big gesture," Mitchell says.

The sprawling estate represents the most ambitious solo commission to date for Mitchell, a longtime collaborator of talent manager turned residential designer Sandy Gallin's on projects for such high-powered clients as studio chief Jeffrey Katzenberg and music mogul Jimmy

Antique granite pavers line the terrace and steps leading from the living room to the back lawn.



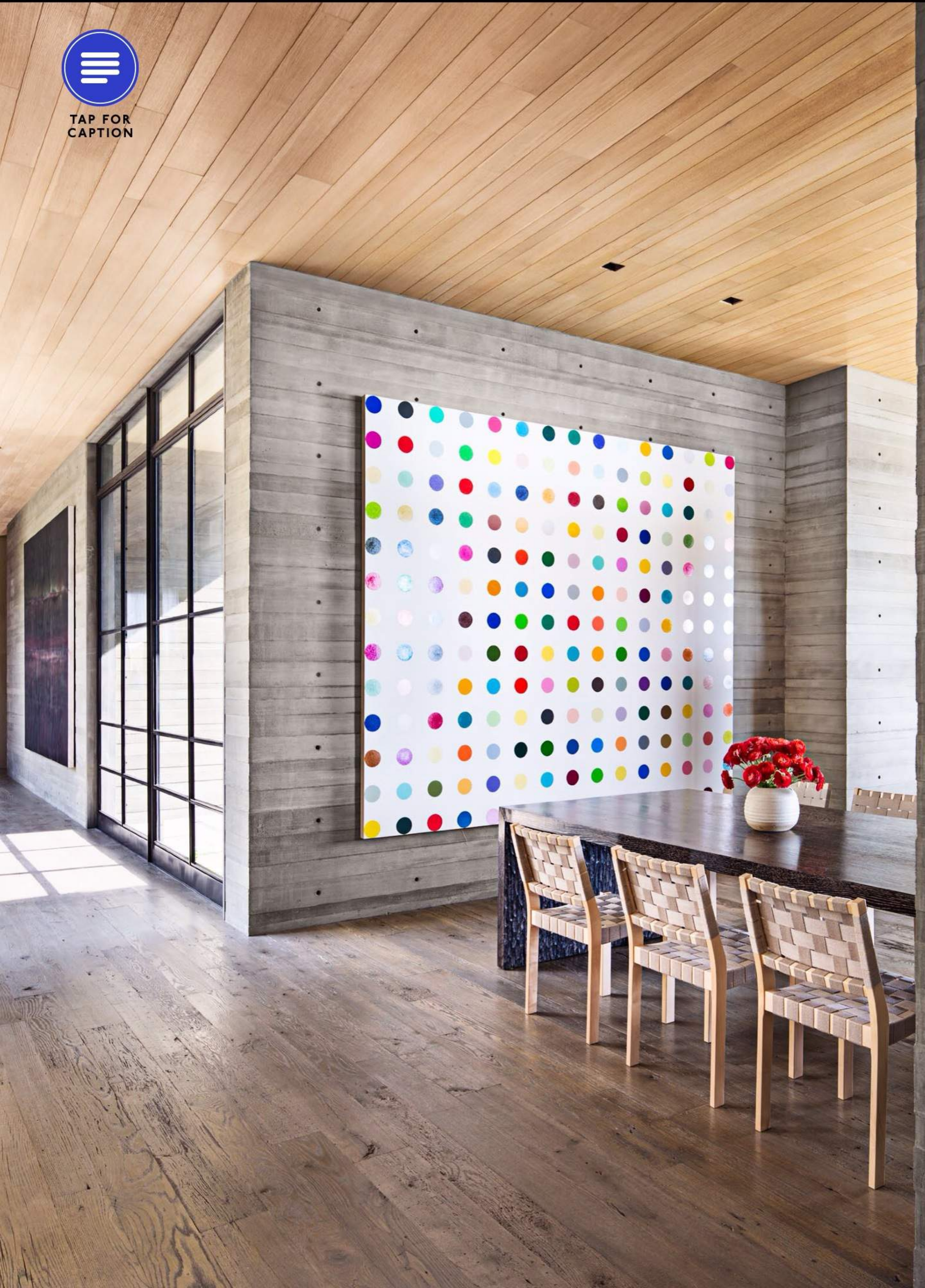
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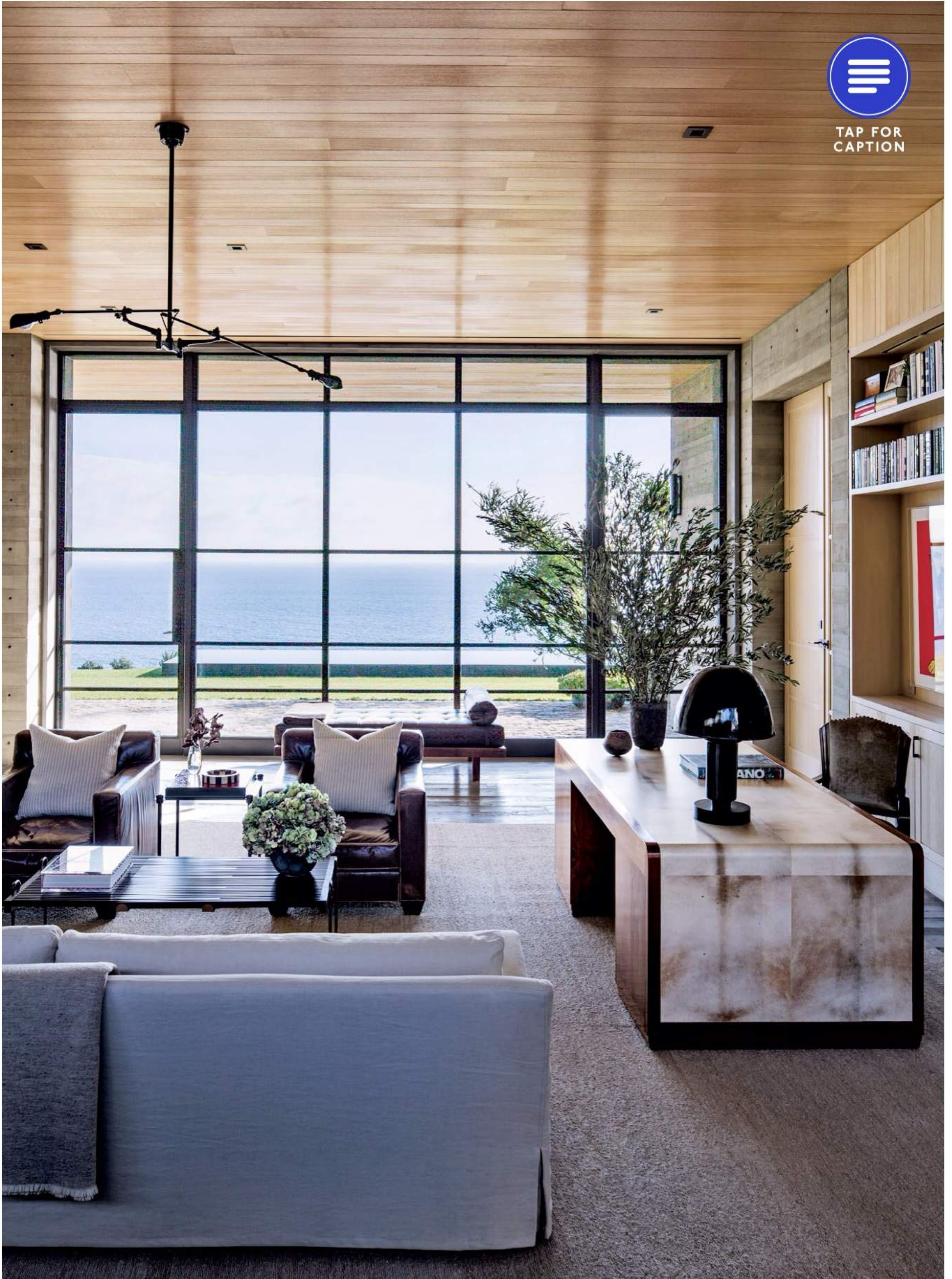


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Iovine. Mitchell first teamed with Rappaport more than a decade ago, when he renovated a historic Beverly Hills dwelling that Rappaport then sold to Tom Cruise. But it was the crisp, beach-friendly scheme Mitchell conceived for the Nobu restaurant in Malibu (later completed by two other firms) that convinced the entrepreneur to hire him for his own home.

“Scott has a vision attuned to contemporary life in L.A.,” Rappaport attests. “Originally I wanted a two-story Shingle Style house with a Hamptons vibe. Scott talked me out of it . . . mercifully.”

As construction on the home progressed, Mitchell brought in New York interior designer Denise Kuriger, with whom he had worked on previous assignments. The two came up with a decor that was not only sympathetic to the architecture but also tailored to the Southern

Large ink drawings by Thomas Hammer are an arresting presence in the home theater.



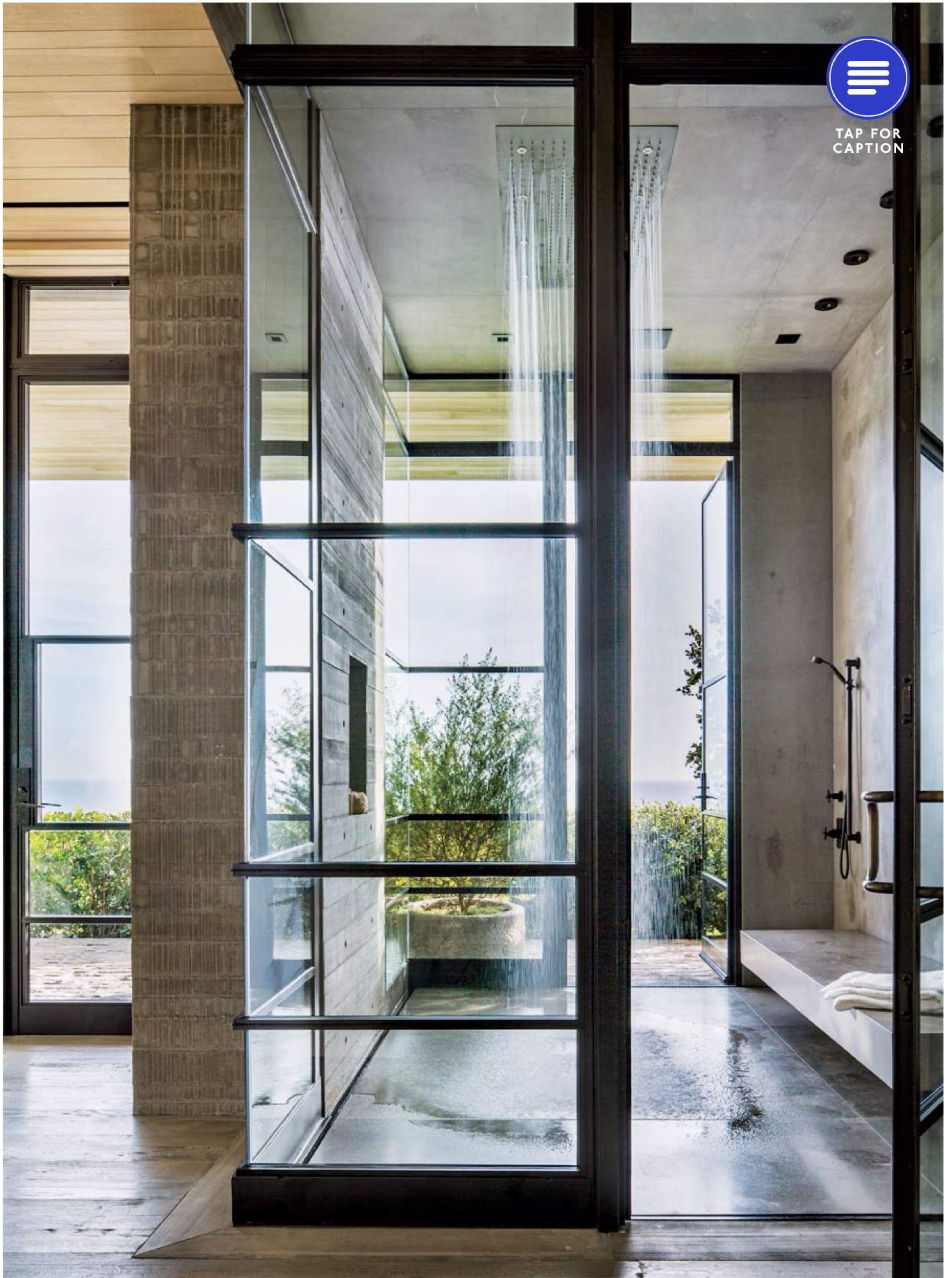
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California climate and the personalities of the convivial owners. “That was the first thing I told Kurt: It has to be a house for young people,” recalls Kuriger, an alumna of the offices of Victoria Hagan and the late Naomi Leff. “Yes, it’s a grand house and an important house, but ultimately it needed to reflect the spirit and energy of this incredible young couple.”

In practical terms Kuriger interpreted that mandate with a broad array of midcentury classics, Art Deco pieces, quirky vintage finds, furnishings with an industrial edge, and a few complementary 18th-century antiques, all united by their emphasis on clean lines and understated forms. One leitmotif of the decor is homages to Jean-Michel Frank, a 1920s and ’30s designer renowned for melding historical and modern styles in dashing fashion. Kuriger and Mitchell’s tributes to the French maestro

The master bath’s tub, which has Dornbracht fittings, was designed by Mitchell and fabricated by Zeolla Marble Co.; the pillow on the lounge chair is by Hermès.



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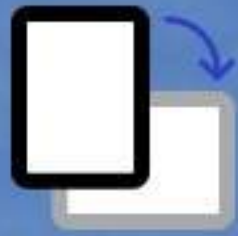


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include a parchment-and-walnut waterfall-edge desk in the study, an oak center table in the entry, and, most amusingly, a pool table outfitted with a variation on Frank's signature pineapple legs in the lower-level game room. Accenting this largely monochromatic assortment—"It runs the gamut from beige to beige," Kuriger jokes—is a collection of vivid contemporary artworks by the likes of Damien Hirst, Ed Ruscha, Richard Prince, Sterling Ruby, and KAWS.

Rappaport downplays his contributions to the creation of so much gorgeousness, insisting that he, like any good movie director, assembled a talented team and simply demanded the best. "I compare the making of this house to the filming of *Titanic*," he says. "We didn't know how long it would take or how much it would cost, but we were certain it was going to be great." □

A daytime view of the rear façade and pool, which is lined in black granite tile and extends a showstopping 168 feet.



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“THIS HOUSE,” SAYS SCOTT MITCHELL, “IS ALL ABOUT HONORING THE INTEGRITY OF CONCRETE AND GLASS WHILE CREATING A RHYTHMIC INTERPLAY BETWEEN THOSE MATERIALS AND THE LANDSCAPE.”



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