

INTERIOR DESIGN YEARBOOK 2016



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Trend: Art and antiques

By *Sandra Espinet*

Founder, **Sandra Espinet**

Sandra Espinet is an allied member of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) and a lifelong traveller who represents the epitome of relaxed luxury and casual international style. Her experience and extensive travel have given Sandra a unique perspective in her design work, which has been published in numerous international publications. Her first book, *The Well Traveled Home*, reveals the soul of luxury homes blending fabulous objects culled from around the globe. Sandra's creativity continues to grow and now extends to product design, most recently seen in her upcoming fabric collection for Guildery and her Tibetan rug line for Aga John Oriental Rugs. Sandra currently resides and works between Los Angeles, CA and in Los Cabos, Mexico, where she owns and operates her design firm S.E. Design Services with managing partner, David Pascual. Here, Sandra lends her international eye for design to the subject of commissioning art and curating antiques for your home.

When thinking about global design influences, I find less and less people asking for gold gilt pieces and more and more people requesting unique one of a kind modern pieces. Basically what my clients often want are pieces that will become the next group of antiques and collectables that represent the times we are living in. A lot of my clients want to live with a few standard usable modern pieces mixed in with art furniture that represents where they are right now.

I love art and I spend a lot of time shopping for and placing the right pieces in the right project. Fabulous, unique art is very personal and the best way to create unique spaces. I love art



*Above: Casa Travis, designed by Sandra Espinet
Headshot photography by Sara Richardson*



Above: Art can be appreciated in any room of the house

galleries and I love seeing visual ideas from around the world. I am currently into all things Damien Hirst and I die for his butterflies. My motto "Earth" without art is just "eh". I think to go shopping for art and sourcing yourself is one of the best ways of achieving your own personal style. Of course, as designers we are here to guide you but trust your won instincts too. Space and light in balanced harmony are essential to any space, whether you are housing art or not. Truth be told...good architecture is the foundation for good interior design. If I am working with a good architect, we can create all kinds of light and all kinds of good ideas are interchanged to create amazing spaces. There is something very

special about creative collaboration and about starting with zero and ending up with an amazing structure that is beautiful and useful both inside and out. If I have a specific unique piece of art that needs a special home, collaboration with an architect to create special lighting or focus is always a good thing.

The biggest mistake I see first time shoppers make, is to think furniture and art will last a lifetime. Like fashion, like cars, like most things in life, there is a season for everything and your taste will change over the years. So buy what you currently love and currently think represents you. Don't buy for the future, it'll always change.

In American art I see the biggest

trends coming from NY and LA street art. Artists like Basquiat set the stage for this genre in the early 80's and it has evolved into a hyper trend. We now have artists like Banksy who command extreme prices at auction and who are changing the face of what art is or isn't. I'm very into street activism.

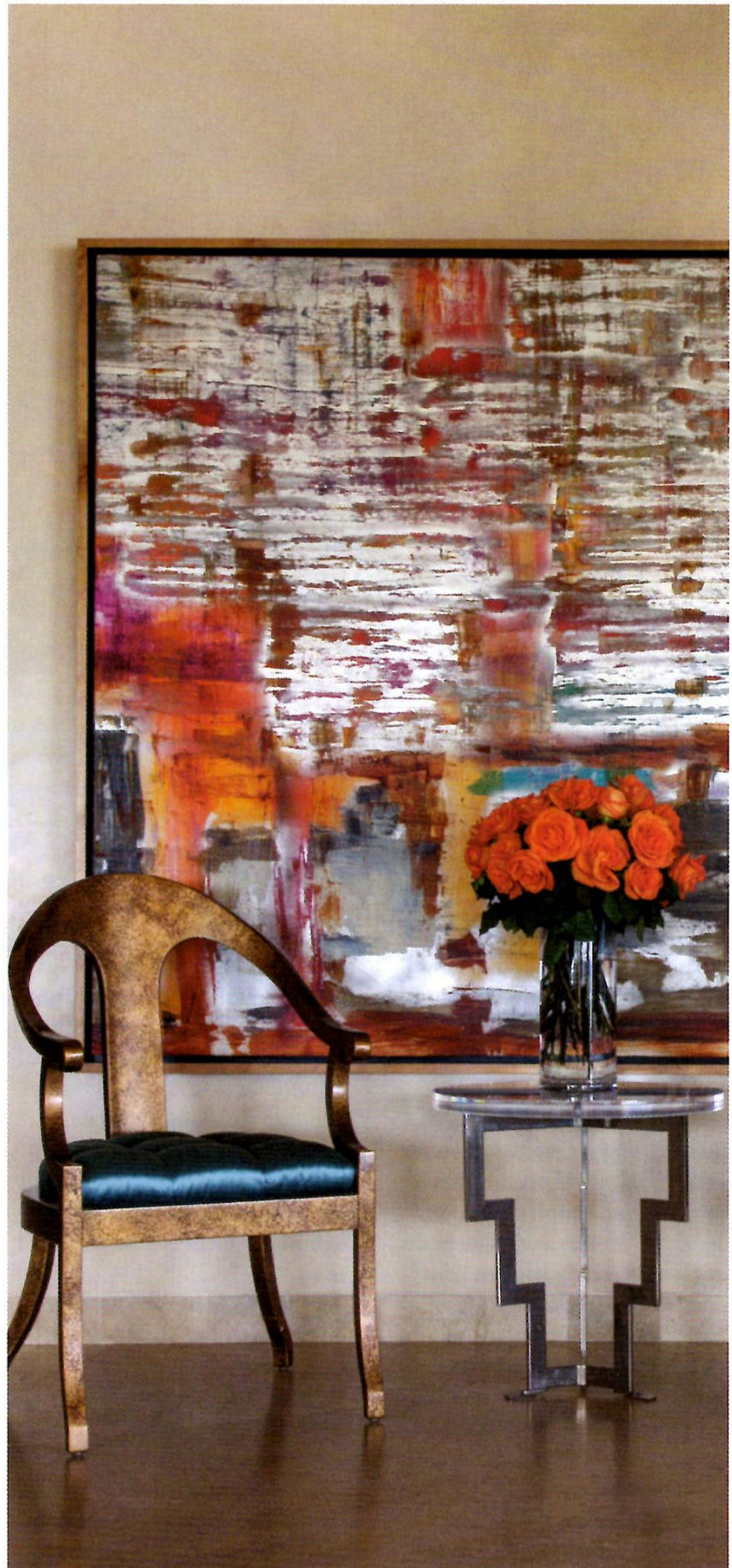
Hospitality is a whole other ball of wax, simply because usually the budgets do not allow for amazing art. Most hotels have only one or two key pieces and everything else is decorative art. But there are many hotels that collaborate with large art galleries and rotate art through their lobbies and hallways in an effort to sell art as well as to show guest the local flavors and talents.

Some examples of great hotels I

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have been to that have used this concept are the Hong Kong Langham as well as the Hanoi Metropol. Next time you're visiting another city and staying in a great hotel, pay attention to your surroundings. You never know when something may strike you and you might be intrigued to discover that the artwork and antique looking accessories don't always come with a hefty price tag. Art can be affordable too. In art, I do feel that going to auctions and seeing what people are bidding on and how much they are bidding for particular pieces, gives you a good idea of what the current luxury market accepts as tasteful. It is useful to pay attention to this but do not be too steered by common trends as often they are not timeless. Art and antiques are an investment, so some wise searching and wondering is in order.

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Above: Invest in pieces you love and then work your interior palette around them