



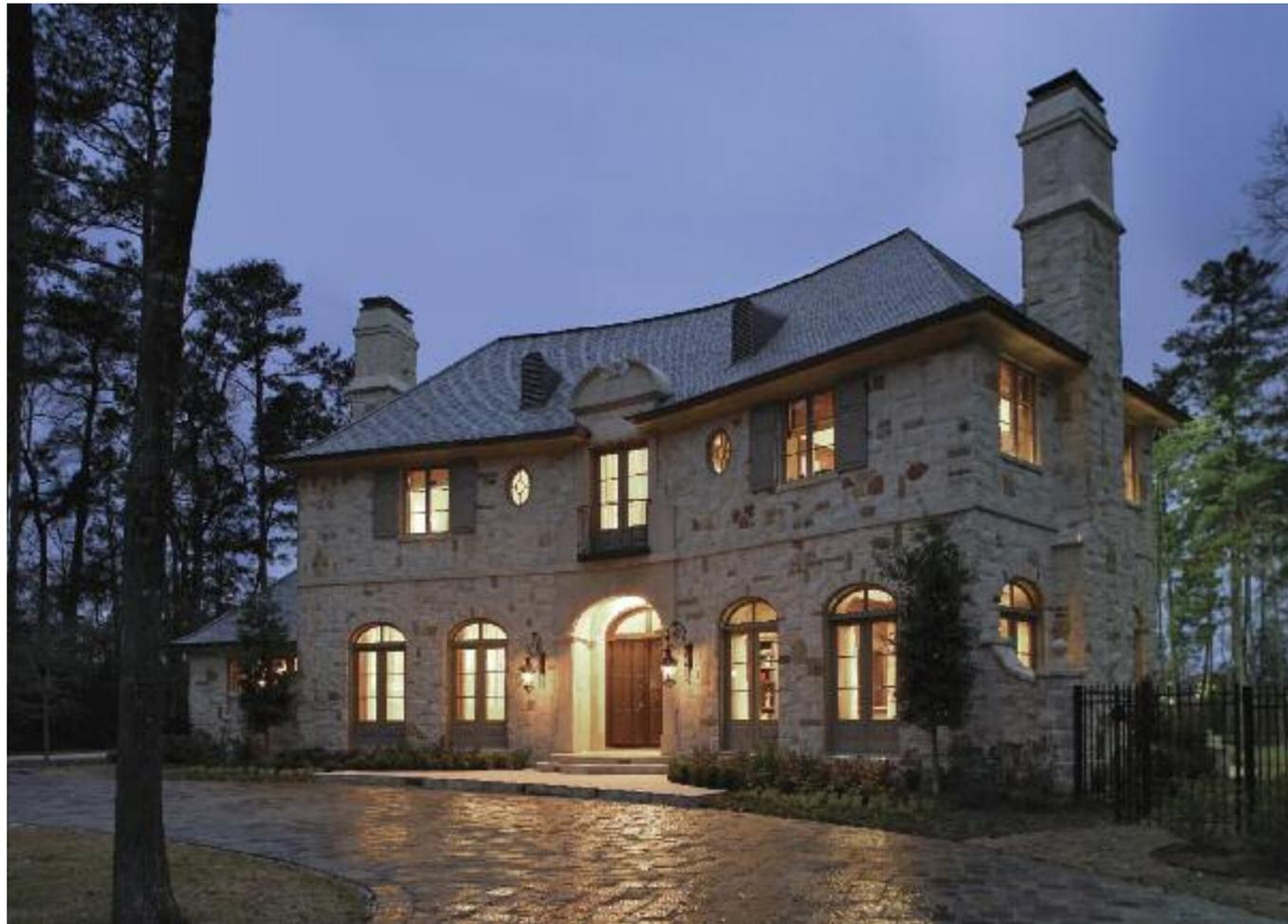
## BUTTERFLY EFFECT

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHILLIP ENNIS

TRY AS THEY MIGHT, THE COUPLE JUST COULDN'T PUT A FINGER ON WHAT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR. After walking through what seemed like every existing home and build site on the market, "what we found was that we had very definite ideas about what we didn't want," laughs the wife. That changed the day her husband toured an under-construction residence that felt like, well, home. But, still, "it was the flow of the house that I liked," he recalls, "rather than the design." A conversation with the architect, Reagan Miller, a principal of Houston-based Miller Dahlstrand Architects, ensued. "He spent a lot of time listening to the kind of house we imagined with regard to the way we wanted to live," says the husband. "That let us know that, with him, we'd get what we wanted."

Selecting their interior designer, however, required no effort—she was there all along. Marjorie Slovack, principal of Slovack-Bass Design in Houston, was already a familiar face, having worked on their previous home. "Her personal tastes are very much like our own," says the wife. "Muted colors, nothing ostentatious, very organic. The relationship we have with her is great."

<b>INTERIOR DESIGN</b>	Marjorie Slovack, ASID, Slovack-Bass Design
<b>ARCHITECTURE</b>	Reagan Miller, AIA, Miller Dahlstrand Architects
<b>HOME BUILDER</b>	Michael Sanvido, Omnillevel Custom Homes
<b>BEDROOMS</b> 6	<b>BATHROOMS</b> 9
<b>SQUARE FEET</b> 11,800	



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The high comfort level the couple shared with the designer and architect—always critical in a project of this size and scope—was even more keenly felt in this instance: The family’s former residence was destroyed in a fire. “Restoring their home for them, physically, mentally and emotionally, was very important to me,” says Slovack.

The team’s first task was identifying what the home would actually look like. Acknowledging the architectural details the clients were drawn to, Miller designed a graceful home with a gently bowed front façade, inspired in part by British architect Edwin Lutyens’ famed Greywalls estate. “They wanted a casual house with some formality,” says Miller. “That led to a French Normandy style, with a nod to Lutyens as well as to the work of American architect Robert McGoodwin.”

**TAKE A BOW**

The exterior of the home is clad in an Oklahoma limestone from Alamo Stone Company; the roof is a Vermont slate. Metal-covered windows are from Pella; the fence is from Metal Railing of America in Houston. The 18<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish front doors were salvaged from the owners’ previous residence.



**ALL NIGHTER**

The kitchen cabinetry is from Anything But Plain in Houston, and the countertops were found at McVey Marble & Tile in Spring. The breakfast chairs are from Baker; the table is by Woodland Furniture, purchased at Robert Allen | Beacon Hill, and the barstools are from Design House, all in Houston. The Vaughan chandelier is from George Cameron Nash, and the appliances are from K & N Kitchen Appliances.



**ASSIGNED SEATING**

The antique painted Swedish chandelier in the living room is from Watkins Culver Antiques; the cocktail table is from Iron Accents; and the sofa is from Shabby Slips, all in Houston. The Louis XVI painted cabinet is from Brian Stringer Antiques. The custom-designed round ottoman and the quartet of cream chairs, upholstered in a Henry Calvin fabric, were fabricated by Custom Creations Furniture.



**WORLD TRAVELERS**  
 The dining room table and chairs, reupholstered in a Rose Tarlow fabric, were from the homeowners' collection. The drapes are David Sutherland from Donghia, and the fireplace surround is from Materials Marketing, both in Houston. The Italian wood-and-iron chandelier was found at Area. The Russian icons are among the items saved from the home the couple lost to fire; they were sent back to Russia to be restored.



**STYLE SELECTION**  
 With inspiration from the Paris Flea Market, the Currey & Company design team crafted this chandelier using wrought iron and carved wood. *Small Mansion Chandelier*, \$1,490; [curreyandcompany.com](http://curreyandcompany.com)

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"We used limestone on the exterior, in addition to half timbering, stucco infill, a slate roof and copper gutters," continues builder Michael Sanvido, of Omnilevel Custom Homes in The Woodlands. "The cast stone used on the front entrance was a major focal point." The design is a perfect complement to the home's site in The Woodlands. "Much of the concept came from the lot," says Miller. "It's somewhat of a peninsula, with a narrow throat that suddenly opens up to a pie-shaped parcel. The challenge was capturing the views while creating a welcoming entrance. The solution was a butterfly plan with wings on each side and a body in the center. The idea was that of embracing the front elevation."



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Slovak, with design associates Julie Veselka and Lauren Grumbles, continued that theme with thoughtful interiors that embrace the couple's need for down-to-earth elegance with an emphasis on livability. "They are genuine, family-oriented people who wanted their home to reflect that," says Slovak. "So we incorporated things they're seriously interested in, like significant art and antique volumes. Nothing was done solely for the sake of décor." And it works. Thoroughly enchanted with their new home, the couple has regained a sense of peace, security and contentment. "It is a retreat and a place for our family to gather," says the husband. "It's exactly what we didn't know we always wanted." **L**

**WATER FEATURE**

The bathroom floors are Walker Zanger, and the tub is by Kohler, found at ABT Plumbing, both in Houston. The nesting tables are from Muse Interiors in Dallas; the window treatment fabric is from Samuel & Sons Passementerie in New York.



**SEPIA PRINT**

The bedroom chandelier was found at Culp Associates; the painted chests used as nightstands are from Alyson Jon Interiors; and the bedding is from Longoria Collection, all in Houston. The plaster, faux-finished walls are by Anything But Plain, and the carpet is from Stark.