



FINE LINES

THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AN ARCHITECT AND HIS CLIENT RESULTS IN A GLAMOROUS HOUSTON RESIDENCE WITH RAZOR-SHARP REFINEMENT.

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ARCHITECTURE Reagan Miller, Miller Dahlstrand Architects | HOME BUILDER Scott Frasier, Scott Frasier Homes
BEDROOMS 4 | BATHROOMS 6 | SQUARE FEET 7,200

Sophisticated. Well-mannered. Youthful. Serene. The words Reagan Miller uses to describe the architectural style of Holly and Jeremy Taylor's River Oaks home also fittingly describe the couple themselves. "They didn't come with any preconceived ideas about style," explains the architect. "Both had a sensitivity to fitting within the historic eclecticism of the neighborhood, but they also wanted to express their own personalities."

That said, it was perhaps yet another word that had the most influence on the home's ultimate modern Regency design. "We wanted it to be crisp," says Holly. "Not too formal and with clean, classic lines." Architecturally, the concept translates into a symmetrical exterior typical of the Regency style with light-colored and hand-troweled stucco walls, a slate tile roof, a straightforward window fenestration and a petite pair of dormers. Oversize windowpanes and steel doors infuse a more modern feel. "We tried to be respectful of scale with simple devices and surrounds," says Miller. "The dormers were more or less obligatory," he adds with a laugh.

Inside, meticulous attention was paid to the profiling of the millwork, such as baseboards, crown molding and doorframes. "I don't think there's a curve anywhere inside the house," asserts Miller. "Everything was reduced to a fine line, a 90-degree right angle with a very defined edge." Achieving that look was up to builder Scott Frasier, who brought in a team of carpenters, painters and other finishing pros early on. "It was important to plan ahead and consider the end result," he says. "The workmanship needed to be very precise."



The gleaming Trosby table is the centerpiece of the dining room. It is surrounded by Thomas Pheasant Collection chairs and a Duchamp Demitune buffet by Hickory Chair, all from Meredith O'Donnell. The 19th- century chandelier is from M. Naeve, while the decorative antique Venetian mirror is from House of Glass.

The large scale of the home's elegant arched entryway provides a dramatic first impression of luxury and space. The view through the glass doors to the backyard fountain is one of the owners' favorites.



Above: The crisp profiling of the home's interior millwork is reflected in the kitchen island, at which LEM Piston stools from Design Within Reach are set. *Left:* A casual dining area offers views to the outdoors.

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Softening the effect was Holly's attention to furnishings and finishes, which she meticulously researched and procured through local design centers and shops. It began with the predominantly gray, black and white color scheme. "I have enough stimulation in my outside life," says Holly. "When I come home I want my surroundings to be very serene, calm and Zen-like; I don't want to see a lot of shocking color or clutter."

A perfect example is her study/office, a true respite with glamorous and girly furnishings from Shabby Slips and Custom Creations, and views out to a magnolia tree. "It's my favorite room to hang out in and eat lunch or read e-mails," she says. More communal spaces include the kitchen, which features a sleek Calacatta marble island and stainless-steel Dacor, Sub-Zero and Miele appliances. "My husband is a trader, and we entertain



Right: A vintage chandelier from Boxwood is glimpsed beyond the master suite's glossy black doors. Below: A custom cube pouf from Kirby Antiques complements the master bath's clean lines.



Her office is a prime example of the meticulous attention to detail the owner demonstrated throughout the home. Furnishings, including a fanciful chandelier, desk and striped chair—all from Shabby Slips—add a glamorous air. The patterned rug is from Custom Flooring.



The home's ample backyard extends dining and entertaining options. The glass-topped table and chairs are from the Janus et Cie Azimuth Cross collection. The oversized panes in the doors are a modern detail and help ease the connection between indoors and out.

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a lot," Holly says. "People always end up in the kitchen, so it had to be functional and attractive, too." Positioned within the inside corner of the L-shaped house, the kitchen offers views to adjoining rooms as well as to the backyard, where the couple's two pre-teen daughters often entertain their friends in the heated saltwater pool.

While an ample table in the kitchen is used for casual family meals, more formal events are hosted in an elegantly appointed dining room. There, Farrow & Ball's The Lotus Papers wallpaper (hung upside down for visual effect) provides an Arts and Crafts-influenced backdrop for the highly polished Trosby table. "One day we'll allow our children to eat in there," Holly jokes.



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Even in winter, the heated saltwater pool is put to good use for lap swimming and children's birthday parties. A sheltered seating area and well-trimmed lawn extend the possibilities. Poolside lounges and patio furniture by Janus et Cie.



Complete with wool pinstripe curtains and an upholstered ceiling, a seating area off the billiards room has a distinctly masculine feel. Furnishings include a pair of custom tufted leather chairs and a striped upholstered ottoman, both from Nest & Cot. The ceiling fixture is from Circa Lighting.



Above: Sculptural horn sconces with custom black linen shades from Ellouise Abbott flank an inset bar in the space outside the billiards room. Beyond, a custom table from Adler Pool Tables in Los Angeles awaits a game. Left: Custom shelves light up the bar.



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Before dinner or for cocktails, guests commonly gather in the bar hall, which is complete with a grand piano and a recessed wet bar. Jeremy's billiards room, a manly space with wool pinstripe curtains, tufted leather chairs from Nest & Cot and a pony hair rug from Custom Flooring, is another popular spot.

Clearly, the success of the home is the result of a seamless—and respectful—client-architect relationship. “I can’t say enough good things about Reagan,” Holly says. “He’s a pleasure to work with, and being able to interpret my ideas and make them beautiful is a real talent.” In turn, Miller notes: “Holly has a terrific eye and was great at responding to what the house was telling us it should be. Working with folks like her and Jeremy is joyful. It makes me realize what a wonderful job I have.” **L**