





A STUDY IN CONTRASTS: A print from Richard Serra's Jazz series gazes down on the dining room created by interior designer Patti Skouras for Trevor Traina.

Wurster With a Wink

Trevor Traina's pedigreed Pacific Heights house gets a dramatic, eclectic overhaul.

BY MARTIN HOLDEN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CESAR RUBIO

A fine home, like a family name, is something to be preserved and enhanced as it is passed from one owner to the next. On returning to San Francisco from Seattle a few years ago after selling his start-up, Compare.net, to Microsoft, native son Trevor Traina was fortunate to find just such a worthy place tucked away in the most desirable part of Pacific Heights. Designed in 1962 by William Wurster, it was a small masterpiece of California modernism—if less imposing than the mansions nearby.

Traina already had the name, of course. His family has been a fixture of San Francisco society since the gold rush. He is a son of Napa vintner John Traina and superphilanthropist Dede Wilsey and a stepson of Danielle Steel. Now he's put his mark on his



HOME → own home, and, like a hip downtown club, it's a study in stealth glamour. What might appear from the street to be a neighbor's garage gradually reveals itself inside as a luxurious and dramatic urban cliff dwelling. Wurster fan Mark Thomas of Hood Thomas Architects preserved and replicated the architect's original designs, such as half-round baseboard moldings, throughout the house. Meanwhile, Patti Skouras's sophisticated interiors build on the home's strong Art Deco elements while always taking the inescapable motif of the Golden Gate Bridge into account.

Raised in homes decorated by leading designers, Traina wanted to be surprised. So he sought some honest advice from old family friend Skouras, who has offices in Santa

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Monica and the Napa Valley and normally stays busy catering to a rarefied list of corporate titans. She decided to take on the job herself. Says Traina, "Patti already had a sense of my lifestyle and my tastes. And we could be...*crisp* with each other." Skouras's daughter-in-law and former partner Laura Blumenfeld oversaw the project.

For the main floor, they chose a formal palette of black and white. What was originally an open-air courtyard became an atrium lush with orchids and palms, set against black absolute granite and white Thásos marble. The kitchen, fitted with custom Bulthaup cabinets from Germany, is more an efficient working space than a gathering place. In the perfectly proportioned living room, a mirrored wall reflecting the dramatic view is relieved by mullions based on Wurster designs. "It really doesn't look like it has been redone," says Skouras. A long Skouras-designed banquette and some surprisingly comfortable egg-shaped ottomans beckon to guests. Says Traina, "We tried to put in



ABOVE: Architect Mark Thomas created a glass-roofed atrium, holding back the elements from Wurster's original open courtyard.

LEFT: Orchids nod in an antique Buddhist shrine in the main hallway. The hall on the left holds a small gallery of unusual Fabergé objects.



HOME → things with a wink."

The cool formality yields to a more intimate, masculine look in the bedroom suite upstairs, the downstairs guest room, and Traina's unexpected office space, where woods and leather replace black and white to create a cozy hideout for an urban cowboy who spent his boyhood "picking up arrowheads" in the fields of Napa. The room is designed around Traina's Western art. "When I'm home alone, I spend most of my time in here," Traina admits.

The eclectic interiors—Remington bronze and Fabergé, Greek-island-inspired roof garden and zebra-skin rugs—might seem at first blush to

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push the boundaries of good taste. But then taste is often a self-imposed straitjacket covering a lack of imagination. A friend of Traina's, seeing the house for the first time, marveled, "It's Miami meets Montana meets Mykonos!" Surprisingly, here it works, coalescing in a spirit of bohemian fun.

"I love this house during the day, with the views and the light," Traina says. "But at night, when the mahogany floors glow and the chrome shines, it becomes very sexy." At last count, Traina sits on nine charity boards, so his home gets put through its paces when he hosts events for everything from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco to the Maybeck Foundation. "It doesn't matter if there are a hundred people here or eight," says Traina. "Even when you're here alone, you don't feel like you're swimming in space."

"Every project is a story," Skouras says. "The great joy is sharing a vision and going there together." "Trevor was the perfect client," Thomas concurs. "He could go there, and he never flinched." ●

Martin Holden is San Francisco's architecture writer.

Turn page for resources.



TOP: Brazilian rosewood and Persian red travertine warm the upstairs library. A Remington bronze and a Joseph Henry Sharp canvas (*The Drummer in Firelight*) are part of Traina's important collection of Western art. **LEFT:** Motorized curtains in the bedroom part at the touch of a button to reveal the heart-stopping view.



ABOVE: The rooftop garden Skouras designed was inspired by the Greek islands. As a teenager, Traina visited the designer at her home on Corfu with his family.

LEFT: In the living room, the creative team (from left): Blumenfeld, Thomas, Skouras, and Traina. "It's like making a movie," says Skouras. "You spend every day with these people, then they go off to make a movie with other people."

RESOURCES

Hood Thomas Architects, (415) 543-5005.
Patti Skouras, Inc., (707) 963-0699.
Cello & Maudru Construction, (707) 257-0454.

DINING ROOM: Granite table by Skouras. Chairs by Michael Berman Limited, (323) 933-0220. Carpet from Aga John Oriental Rugs, (415) 553-8504. Mirrored consoles from J.F. Chen, (323) 655-6310. Sconces by Boyd Lighting, (415) 778-4300. Chandelier is 1930s Venetian Murano glass.

ATRIUM/HALL: Sofa, chairs, and coffee table by Skouras. Bench from Randolph & Hein, (415) 864-3550. Chess set from redenvelope.com.

LIBRARY: Club chairs by Jenson Custom Furniture, (714) 634-8145. Ottoman and tray by Todd Hase, (415) 318-8105.

BEDROOM: Daybed and club chair by Holly Hunt, (415) 861-1011. Coffee table by Jonkendall, (310) 581-1667.

ROOF DECK: Table from Sue Fisher King, (415) 922-7276. Heltzer lounge chairs at Randolph & Hein.

LIVING ROOM: Christian Liaigre chairs for Holly Hunt. Table from Shapes Collection, (310) 839-7400. Photographs of Golden Gate Bridge construction by Peter Stackpole.