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SPRING 2024

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IT'S A WIN-WIN FOR ONE COUPLE WHO SCORED BIG
ON THE FIELD AND IN THEIR ATLANTA HOME

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The replay tells only part of the story. It was the bottom of the ninth inning in Game 6 of the 2021 World Series. Up three games to two over the Houston Astros, the Atlanta Braves needed one more out to win. The final hit went to shortstop, the throw to first base, and the Braves clinched the pennant and the title of World Series Champions.

For a baseball fan, capping the season with a World Series win would be enough of a thrill to last quite some time. But for one Braves executive and his wife, the night was a double-header of joy. After flying back to Atlanta after the game, their personal trophy was their new Buckhead home that had been finished during the multigame contest.

“It was one night to remember for them,” says Atlanta-based design legend Suzanne Kasler who, with the help of project manager Wright McCurdy, created winning interiors that steeped elegance and beauty in a flood of natural light.

A grand home requires a team of players to pull off aesthetic success. Architects Rick Spitzmiller and Robert Norris were first in the lineup for this project. Their goal was to create a structure that could accommodate large groups of people for gatherings, whether it was family time with children and grandchildren or ministry groups and sporting events.

“The house was destined to be big, but we didn’t want it to appear *too* big,” Spitzmiller says. “It was important that our design was a good architectural neighbor and look like it belonged. It needed to hold hands with the others in the neighborhood.”

Foyer The painted blue door teases the primary color that permeates the interiors. French white oak floors and beams extend throughout the house. **Landing** A niche on the landing surprises with one patterned fabric used for window panels and to cover a French armchair. **Dining room** Brown stain on the dining table and walnut buffet imbue warmth into the room that leads to the kitchen. **Previous pages** Architects Rick Spitzmiller and Robert Norris designed the home in the Buckhead neighborhood of Atlanta with stone that gives it a veil of country charm.



In the family room, the architects had panes of glass on some windows turn a corner for unobstructed views outside. Designer Suzanne Kasler created an edited valance-and-panel treatment that is less voluminous than those in the living room. A wide tape edges the treatment and balances the patterned chairs. Natural textural accents from the fireplace stone and ceiling beams ensure the room isn't too feminine.



The pair turned to their playbook for the fundamentals. But they developed their own strategy to make the house sing. Dormer windows, for instance, are hugged by a double pitch roof. Understated Doric columns visually support a second story, and schist stone anchors both the facade of the house and the great-room, where it stacks to form an arresting fireplace. Especially noteworthy was the use of an elliptical curve. Above the front door, the shape greets guests and is highlighted by beams on the vaulted ceiling of the soaring great-room.

“We weren’t trying to be avant-garde in our appointments,” Norris says. “Our approach was to use a lot of humble materials that would provide a graceful contrast to high-style furniture and fixtures. But we also wanted a plan that offered unexpected moments of surprise.”

While the owners wanted rooms to have their own voices, each space needed to adhere to the home’s team colors: blue and white. The designers delivered a plethora of patterns that delicately satisfied the palette request without being overly matched. Geometrics and florals keep spaces light and inviting.

“It’s not uncommon for my clients to love blue,” Kasler says. “But this client was pleasantly involved in the project and asked for literal elements. It was an interesting challenge. I wanted the design to be charmingly blue but not come off as cutesy. Our plan required the right doses of color to achieve that look of sophistication and timelessness.”

Kasler’s game plan to bathe the interiors in blue centered on statement fabrics that load the house with color and turn heads without overwhelming. In the living room, for example, she established decorative confidence with a botanical textile that was used on a pair of matching armchairs, toss pillows, and an old-school panel-and-valance drapery treatment that Kasler executed with a contemporary interpretation.

Kitchen Light blue punctuates the white kitchen. A pair of botanicals hangs near the sink, while a geometric saturates the banquette that is upholstered in a vinyl-coated fabric that can repel spills. **Study** “We wrapped the study with a modern version of woodwork that made an architectural pattern,” Spitzmiller says. Solid-color appointments such as a sofa, ottoman, leather accent chair, and limestone fireplace are contrasted by a blue-and-yellow botanical print.



The ottoman sneaks a modern moment into the mix with a blue velvet geometric, while the accordion screen that covers the TV taps into tradition with a hand-painted golf mural.

In the all-white kitchen, textiles pivot to playfulness. A Roman shade in a happy circular geometric descends over a banquette upholstered in the same motif. The pattern also repeats on throw pillows in the adjoining family room, where a pair of slipper chairs introduces a graphic floral that injects a whimsical moment against other upholstery that reads more formal in its solid, ivory-tone fabrics.

Maximalism played a role in the bedrooms, which were loaded with floral motifs. Kasler was delighted to see the variety of artful patterns in blue colorways available that she could present to the clients. And while the patterns may have depicted delicate florals, Kasler's execution was anything but

Living room Tones of brown in the living room's main fabric invite an old chest of drawers and a natural-tone fireplace topped with blue-and-white porcelain to coordinate seamlessly. Baseball and golf—top priorities in the house—require many televisions. A hand-painted folding screen over a graceful settee depicts a golf course, disguising one of the sets.



WE LOOKED AT THE FABRICS
AND EVERYTHING YOU
COULD DO WITH THEM."

—designer Suzanne Kasler



Guest bedroom Kasler used one statement pattern per bedroom to create impact. The guest room features a niche where the bed nestles against a matching wall. The floral repeats on the draperies and slipper chairs. **Primary bedroom** The all-over blue floral pattern reads as a neutral, especially against the contrast of a pink bouquet.





dainty. Her approach was to blanket the rooms in significant ways that had prominence and heft.

“We looked at the fabrics and everything you could do with them,” Kasler says. “If we let the pattern play the role of accent instead of a primary element, it wouldn’t be significant and modern enough. Using it en masse gives it a current voice.”

A similar en masse approach was employed to draw the eyes out the windows to the stands of gorgeous blooms that color the landscape. While a border garden lends formality, the flat backyard has a casual ease and is a perfect play space (or make-shift baseball diamond) for the owners’ 16 grandchildren.

The stats of the World Series win are now in the books, but for the family in this home, there will be more to come before the game of life in this house is over.

Interior design: Suzanne Kasler with Wright McCurdy

Architecture: Rick Spitzmiller and Robert Norris, Spitzmiller & Norris

Landscape A border garden of hedges and purple foxglove lines the side of the house near the putting green. The top of the gate follows the elliptical curve that dabbles throughout the house. “We used it sparingly,” Norris says of the shape. “Otherwise, you run the risk of the design becoming dated.”



Pool house The gambrel roof of the pool house has Dutch Colonial influences and plants a sculptural element on the grounds of the home. **Veranda** The tile backsplash behind the grill references the blue theme that streams throughout the interiors. An ensemble of outdoor wicker chairs around the table provides a spot for the adults to engage in conversations over a meal. **Backyard** Small sitting areas offer restful spots for proud grandparents to watch their grandkids play. The landscape was designed by the late Carson McElheney. 

