



Setting the Stage

Merging fresh and nostalgic design elements, a new home offers a tangible sense of comfort.

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Interior Design: Heidi Caillier, Heidi Caillier Design Home Builder: Kurt Brellin, Brellin Company



Designer Heidi Caillier selected Farrow & Ball's Pigeon for both the living room trim and the office. The latter is appointed with a Lawson-Fenning desk and light fixture as well as a Hollywood at Home desk chair and artwork by David Hillegas.

Listening to former professional ballet dancer Alexandra Newman describe the Marin County abode recently completed for her family of four, one can't help but notice the part that stagecraft still plays in her life.

For her, this new residence represents a dramatic change of scene—from a condo in Presidio Heights to a newly built Victorian-inspired farmhouse in idyllic Larkspur—and a shift in her family's storyline as she and her husband, Riley, returned to their home county to raise their two children.

But before they could move with ease in this new setting, she felt they needed a backdrop that would support their evolving roles. "It was a big transition for us," she recalls. "We love the city and that part of our lives, but for this chapter of being parents to little kids, we wanted to set up a real nest for them. We moved home to have this cozy family experience, and I wanted Heidi Caillier to create that for us."

More specifically, the Newmans—who became one of Caillier's first clients when the designer helped furnish their San Francisco residence nearly a decade ago—wanted to match the inside of their new dwelling, which was awash with chilly white finishes, to the charming exterior, "which feels like it has some history and stories to tell," Alexandra says. "I wanted this to feel like a home that's been here for a long time and that *will* be here for a long time as well."

"The house needed an identity," Caillier adds, who collaborated with builder Kurt Brellin to develop the property's character. "The rooms are generally open to one another, and I wanted to make each space feel like it flows and tells a story, but also seems different from the others." She began by choosing a taupe linen wallcovering to warm and unify the abode's main arteries, including the entryway and adjacent living room as well as the stairwell and upstairs hallway. The designer then selected other similarly "muddy" hues, as she describes them, to distinguish different spaces: a quiet blue-gray on the study's new millwork, a shadowy blue-green on the family room's walls and built-in bookshelves, and the palest of silvery blues on the family room and kitchen's box-beam ceilings. "They all have gray-brown undertones, so nothing feels poppy and bright," Caillier says of the palette. "They

function as neutrals, adding depth in a way that can still work with any other color"—even the kitchen's blue-black lower cabinets, which contrast sharply against white subway tile, upper cupboards and marble countertops. "I wanted to create this take on a tuxedo kitchen because it's so emblematic of Alexandra," Caillier says of the eye-catching space. "Everything about her is very classic, but with a modern sensibility."

But not so modern that she wasn't open to a bit of Caillier's hallmark pattern play—or, in the case of the nursery, where the designer swathed the ceiling, walls, lampshades and draperies in the same lighthearted print—a lot. "Years ago, when I was in a more minimalist stage, I asked Heidi to design another home and I remember telling her, 'No patterns please, just textures and solid, natural colors,'" Alexandra recalls. "By the time we were ready to tackle this project, my aesthetic had changed, and I'd watched Heidi's style evolve. I said, 'I want exactly what you're doing, and I trust you.' I asked her to create the type of place you want to raise a family in."

Caillier's knack for bringing elegance to childhood-home comfort is on full display in the family room, where a demure armchair and English antique side table mingle with a laid-back skirted sectional and cozy upholstered ottoman atop a braided jute rug. In the adjacent dining area, the juxtaposition is even more pronounced in the combination of a live-edge wood table, a branch-like chandelier and breezy floral curtains with a decidedly modern, custom floating console wrapped in blue leather and adorned with fanciful brass tassel pulls.

With the support of contemporary artworks—an abstract oil on canvas above the entry hall's antique wood server; ethereal floral paintings dominating the family room wall; and, for contrast, a dark and moody watercolor landscape on raw linen in the dining area—Caillier's composition is complete. "It can be tricky to mix artworks in an open space like this, but these moments feel so balanced and unexpected," the designer notes.

In other words, as Alexandra says, it feels like the rooms have been there forever. "It's grounding," she explains of the reimagined house. "It feels like this partner to me; it's the embodiment of how I want to be a mother to my kids"—and proof of design's inextricable role in life, as in art. ■

The family room is outfitted with a pair of floral artworks by Lourdes Sanchez, a Romo-upholstered sectional and an armchair by John Derian for Cisco Home. Atop the antique English side table is a Natan Moss Design lamp.





Right: In the dining room, a painting by Chelsea Fly hangs above a Soane Britain lamp and a blue console designed by Caillier. Like the adjacent family room, the walls are coated in Farrow & Ball's Skylight.

Opposite: Sabin chairs upholstered in Mokum fabric pull up to a BDDW dining table. Drapery crafted with a floral print by Carolina Irving Textiles covers the windows, and a Lindsey Adelman light fixture is overhead.





The kitchen's upper cabinets are painted in Farrow & Ball's Wimborne White and the lower units are done in Newton's Indigo by Portola Paints & Glazes. Both are adorned with Rejuvenation hardware. The backsplash is Daltile, and the counter stools are by Ann-Morris.

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—HEIDI CAILLIER



Right: Thanks to wallpaper by Gracie, the first-floor powder room serves up a big dose of pattern. The petite vanity is painted with Farrow & Ball's Green Smoke, and a Caillier-designed mirror reflects the new color palette.

Opposite: Rose Tarlow Melrose House fabric drapes frame the views from the primary bedroom. Atop the bed is a Hollywood at Home blanket. A Kravet bench, Stark rug and Currey & Company light fixture complete the room.

