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OPPOSITES ATTRACT

An architect and his husband hit on an innovative solution to merge their differing aesthetics.

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Architecture and Interior Design: Richard Landry, Landry Design Group Home Builder: Robie Miulli, Gordon Gibson Construction



Concrete, plaster and oak from Perfect Floors and custom steel-and-glass railings define the stairway architect Richard Landry created for the Los Angeles home he shares with his husband, Chris Drugan. Landry turned to ADG Lighting to make the custom fixture twinkling from above. Hanging on the walls are pieces by Jimi Gleason and Casper Brindle.

W

e agreed going into this project that we were not going to fight,” declares architect Richard Landry of the home he designed, built, decorated and landscaped with his husband, Chris Drugan.

“We each had veto rights for the other’s ideas.” That verbal contract was, in many ways, a tall order. The celebrated architect, known for creating residential masterpieces that range from French provincial to California contemporary with equal verve, skews modern in his personal taste. His husband grew up in La Cañada and Pasadena, both notable for their stately historic homes, and is drawn to traditional settings. However, the compromise they hit on for their new place in Brentwood would earn even a marriage counselor’s stamp of approval: Landry fully embraced both styles. And he gave them pretty equal play, too.

Call the result transitional, hybrid, fusion, but its cleverness rests in the unapologetically bold blend. Like an optical illusion, you see what speaks to you in this house, Landry believes. “Chris looks at it and sees the more traditional details; I look at it and see the contemporary moments, and we’re both happy,” he says.

As a blueprint for merging the two styles, Landry envisioned their home as a simple, old, square, brick English-style house that he and Chris were updating with contemporary features. Quite dramatic contemporary features, that is. It’s a study in opposites right from first sight, as the garage door Landry dreamed up is what his husband describes as “this stainless-steel cube that bites right into a traditional brick house.” It’s topped by a wide band of Italian plaster covered in metallic paint from which spills greenery and reads like a modern sculpture. The marked dissociation between these contemporary and traditional elements—which has attracted plenty of commentary from neighbors and even sparked a nearby imitator—is exactly what Landry intended. “Just look at what I.M. Pei did at the Louvre when he built the pyramid,” he muses. “The cube is a real statement in total contrast with everything else.”

Inside, the contrasting factors ratchet up in complexity. For example, the home’s spectacular central two-story atrium, topped by a vaulted skylight crisscrossed with black steel beams, has

an unmistakably contemporary vibe. But Landry’s decision to extend the skylight windows across the length of the foyer, with all the main spaces surrounding and open to it, gives the layout the look and feel of a classic courtyard home. Similarly, the library pairs antique tin ceiling tiles with contemporary cove lighting, backlit shelves and a simple Palissandro marble fireplace slab. Old-world-style white-washed bricks on some of the interior walls emphasize an aged look but contrast with expanses of glass, such as the 41-foot span that opens the great room to the backyard. A similar idea repeats in the couple’s bedroom, where two walls pocket away to allow seamless access to a private wraparound terrace with a fire pit. And off their bathroom lies a “green roof” in the form of a manicured English-inspired garden—another traditional-meets-modern moment, thanks to a stainless-steel sculpture by Éric Racine smack in the center.

While the couple collaborated on every space, in a few cases, one or the other took the lead. The home’s well-equipped gym is Landry’s alone—Chris prefers running outdoors and jokes that he never sets foot inside. Instead, the kitchen is his domain. He loves to cook and was highly involved in the spacious, dual-island design. Chris also advocated for the inclusion of a formal dining room, a space that Landry initially felt was unnecessary for their laid-back lifestyle. But they collaborated easily overall, especially on a hip lower-level game room and bar with a turn-of-the-20th-century London Tube station vibe. The architect also conceived many of the furnishings throughout the home and tapped interior designer Laurie Haefele of Haefele Design for the kitchen, custom closets and a coffee bar outside the second-floor bedrooms. General contractor Robie Miulli, a trusted friend and associate of Landry’s, acted as the supervisor and executor of the project.

The house continues to evolve as the couple welcomes a newborn son. Landry has turned a guest bedroom into a nursery and is shifting a space off the great room into a playroom. But no matter what other changes lie ahead, he loves the fact that his home defies an easy design definition. That, he explains, is what made the project fun. “‘Fun’ is a keyword in my life, and that was the whole point,” Landry says. “We enjoyed this process. And we’ve created something together that neither of us could have imagined alone.” ■



The sleek Palissandro marble from Stoneland USA on the library's fireplace contrasts with the antique tin tiled ceiling. For comfortable seating, Landry selected an A. Rudin sofa and Magni Home Collection club chairs and arranged them around a coffee table from Blackman Cruz. The print is by Salvador Dalí.



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—RICHARD LANDRY



Above: Landry and his husband worked closely with interior designer Laurie Haefele of Haefele Design to craft the kitchen. A pair of islands covered with quartzite from Stoneland USA anchors the space, while the cabinets sport a brass inlay that evokes a more traditional look with contemporary detailing. ADG Lighting fabricated the hanging fixture.

Opposite: The couple's labradoodle, Po, lounges in the kitchen. Beyond, the brass accents on the entry's custom Steelworks Etc. double doors echo those on the cabinetry. Snyder Diamond supplied the Dornbracht faucets and Wolf range.







Above: Visible beyond the primary bath is a garden with an *Éric Racine* stainless steel sculpture at its heart. The freestanding *Blu Bathworks* tub is finished with unlacquered brass *Kallista* fixtures, all purchased at *Snyder Diamond*. Beside it stands a glass-and-brass table from *Blackman Cruz*.

Left: Sliding steel doors blur the transition between the primary bedroom and an adjoining terrace, which is furnished with a pair of *Janus et Cie* lounge chairs and an antique dining table and chairs. Landry chose a custom *Magni Home* Collection bed and nightstands, which are topped with stone-and-bronze *Timothy Oulton* lamps. The chaise is the architect's own design.

Landry's vision of a "hybrid" home that encompasses traditional and contemporary elements is on vivid display from the rear, where metallic paint over Venetian plaster plays off brick walls. The lanterns are by Fourteenth Colony Lighting. A generous loggia with an outdoor dining area and built-in barbecue leads to a custom pool and spa by Ventura Pools. The architect also handled the landscape design, which Pierre Landscape installed.



