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# L.A. STORY

A WRITER/PRODUCER'S DATED RANCH HOUSE IS RETOLD WITH A LOFT-LIKE INTERIOR THAT'S STYLISHLY LAYERED WITH EARTHY TEXTURES AND UNIQUE VINTAGE FINDS.

WRITTEN BY **JORGE S. ARANGO** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KARYN MILLET**

**INTERIOR DESIGN** Amy Kehoe and Todd Nickey, Nickey · Kehoe, Inc.

**ARCHITECTURE** Amelia Stephenson, Kingsley Stephenson Architecture

**HOME BUILDER** Rod Hahn, Roha Construction

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE** Nancy Heller, Nancy Heller Designs

**BEDROOMS** 4 | **BATHROOMS** 3 | **SQUARE FEET** 3,300





Designers Todd Nickey and Amy Kehoe gave the living area of a Los Angeles home a warm and approachable look with a chesterfield sofa from HD Buttercup, reupholstered vintage chairs and a 1970s root table from Hollywood at Home. *Right:* Workstead's reading lamp illuminates a built-in bench in the space.





It's like writing," says the owner of a newly remodeled Los Angeles home on his take of the design process. "You start with an idea, then you turn it into a logline, then an outline, then a first draft and then a second." And the owner, a producer/writer of feature films and a popular Emmy-winning television show, speaks from experience. But as he discovered in his own career, where he frequently collaborates with a writing partner, working with others can spark the creative chemistry that makes for a successful outcome. "Left to my own devices," he admits, "everything would have been rectangular and camel-colored."

So when he found a 1971 house just off Mulholland Drive, he called architect Amelia Stephenson and the design team of Todd Nickey and Amy Kehoe to help him create a storyline with all the personality he builds into his scripts. Initially, however, there were challenges to face. "It was a ranch house that was divided into a lot of little rooms," recalls Nickey, and builder Rod Hahn also remembers a lot of "1980s finishes with yellow/orange oak."





But, says Stephenson, “It was clear that what was needed was some strategic editing—a lot of simplification and subtraction.” For one thing, she says, “it was incredible how the house didn’t capitalize on the view.” The panoramic, classic L.A. vista of the San Fernando Valley had to be glimpsed through “undersized and frame-heavy” openings.

The team removed interior walls to create a loft-like main space—with kitchen, dining, living and family areas—and exposed the back of the house to the landscape with continuous glass sliders. Of course, notes Hahn, “Opening up the house involved a lot of structural work, especially with our earthquake issues. We had to put in extra footings and sheer walls, which meant we had to support the house while we excavated underneath.”

Within the newly opened space, the designers layered on what Kehoe describes as “earthy elegance.” (A look not dissimilar to the artful selection of covetable items the designers handpick for their local

In the family area, a streamlined custom sofa is offset by a vintage chaise, which the designers re-covered with a fabric from Lee Jofa. A circular 1960s coffee table centers the space, and the vintage Milo Baughman tub chairs are upholstered with Ikat by Peter Dunham Textiles.





store, NK Shop.) They started with custom and vintage furnishings, including a French zinc factory table in the dining area and a 1970s coffee table in the living area, to establish a unique base and then deployed a textured palette with accents of color.

“Because of how large the open area was, we needed to root each space,” says Kehoe, “and also be mindful that patterns complemented one another.” The duo, who worked with project designer Linnéa Saine, chose a zigzag by Peter Dunham Textiles to enliven 1970s tub chairs in the family area and mud cloth pillows to rest on a built-in bench in the living area. They brought in a tactile jute rug, and then anchored the kitchen with a green Heath Ceramics tile for the backsplash. “Some open-plan living areas can feel cold, but this one exudes warmth,” says Nickey. “The use of fabrics and the rich layering of furnishings help it maintain an approachable vibe.” The artwork found throughout provides

The new outdoor dining terrace features a custom Douglas fir table and benches from Mortise & Tenon, and a rattan globe pendant from Inner Gardens lights the alfresco space. Two vintage Bertoia chairs, found at Amsterdam Modern and powder-coated, offer additional seating.









*Above:* Pratt & Lambert's New Moon blue lends a vibrant backdrop for the custom bed in the master bedroom. The Coyuchi duvet cover and shams are from NK Shop, as is the vintage Dutch chair. *Right:* Flowers perch on a side table from Restoration Hardware.

a finishing touch. "I love the city," adds the client, who worked with art adviser Sarah Jane Bruce on procuring paintings by local artists Friedrich Kunath and Mark Hagen, "so I wanted art that represents it or is made by artists who live here."

Finally, designer Nancy Heller transformed the landscape into lush tropical havens. Just outside the kitchen, she created a dining pergola and terrace, and down the steps toward the view, a concrete-surrounded pool became a perfect cliffhanger of another sort. Heller resurfaced the pool, put in "as much greenery as possible" and added a fireside seating area, all perched dramatically on the edge of the Valley. It's not unlike the denouement of a good plotline, which resolves what came before, but looks to more intriguing episodes ahead. **L**

