

LANGUAGE OF LOVE

Amy Sklar designs a picture-perfect home for two Hollywood executives

By ABIGAIL STONE
Photos by LAURA HULL



In the open-plan kitchen, Lambert & Fils delicate Dot Suspension light illuminates Commune Design's sophisticated Navajo Collection tile in Python 1, which sprawls across the backsplash. Roll & Hill's Halo Oval pendant dangles over a custom kitchen table and CB2's Sidera chairs in black.

WHEN IT CAME TO WORKING WITH AN A-LIST film-industry couple with a long list of box-office successes, Los Angeles designer Amy Sklar's first presentation fell flat. "I thought I'd nailed it and then crickets," Sklar shares. "Finally, the wife said to me, 'I don't know what I like but I know what I don't like.'" That's when Sklar realized that "what it came down to was that we weren't sharing the same language of design."

But they were fast learners, as Sklar discovered when they homed in on Commune Design's sophisticated Navajo Collection tile in Python 1 as their pick for the kitchen's backsplash. "It's definitely a bold choice," Sklar explains. And it was that pattern that set the mood for the rest of the home.

The new house, a modern structure designed by Amelia Stephenson of Kingsley-Stephenson Architecture, sits on a lot adjacent to a Spanish-style home the clients were previously occupying. The open concept plan with sight lines that stretch from room-to-room pivots around a double-volume kitchen that is the conduit between the indoor and outdoor spaces.

"There's a huge swath of this tile," Sklar says, "so the home's color, its palette, even the way we designed the staircase railings, came about because of that tile." Its thin, strong lines informed the choice of the CB2 chairs that cluster around the custom kitchen table, the design of the kitchen's cabinets, the selection of the Armadillo & Co. rug in the living room, the geometrics of the bespoke bookcase in the den, even the windows' frames. The soft shades of cream and brown find an echo in the Phillip Jeffries ombré grasscloth that adorns the front hallway, the bedroom drapes, the kitchen's eco outdoor limestone floor, and the



hues in the upholstery, rugs and wood finishes throughout the house.

A delphinium blue that captured the clients' interest was used throughout the den to provide balance, appearing on a custom ottoman swathed in Holland & Sherry's Papillon in teal blue. The shade also appears in the drapes created from Donghia's Glace in Hyacinth and the front door. "There was enough contrast so that it didn't feel matchy-matchy but the tones felt right," Sklar notes.

Although the home's framework has a muscular and modern edge to it, when it came to choosing furniture, the pieces that the clients gravitated toward had softer, more classic lines. "They almost have an art moderne feel, which is so interesting," says Sklar. That style, which arose in the 1930s, marks the beginning of a more streamlined and

industrial era in design, and its curves and rounded edges offer the ideal foil for the home's angularity.

Despite the clients' lack of formal design training, their creative background unknowingly provided them a firm foundation in many of its principles. Or it could be due to the fact that Sklar's a careful listener who's exceptional at translating a client's thoughts into the visual vernacular of shape, form, style, material, color and space. "I ask a lot of questions," she admits, adding, "I'm not going to tell you to buy that precious veneered coffee table if you like to put your feet up because, after I leave, you're going to be mad that you own it." Not these clients. In fact, they're so happy with the result that they want her to work on updating their old house. No surprises there. Clearly, Sklar's fluency in the language of design puts her at the head of the class.

ABOVE, LEFT: The entry walls are covered in Phillip Jeffries Juicy Jute II, an ombré grasscloth. Lee Broom's Crescent Light hangs above a mirror from CB2.

RIGHT: Comfortable seating from Restoration Hardware's Aviana Collection clusters around a custom-built fire pit. **OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP:** In the master bathroom, a custom vanity is illuminated by Cedar and Moss pendants and Mini Glo-ball sconces.

BELOW: In the master bedroom, custom drapes and shades created from Kravet's Visionary fabric in Vapor are paired with a headboard crafted from Kravet's Chenille Basket.