WHERE EXCEPTIONAL TASTE LIVES

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ROOM *for* REFLECTION

SERENE SUMMER RETREATS

For a Naples, Florida, rebuild, **Bobby McAlpine** and **Susan Ferrier** join forces to create a sublime study in theatrical elegance.

INTERIOR DESIGN BY **SUSAN FERRIER**
ARCHITECTURE BY **BOBBY McALPINE**
LANDSCAPE DESIGN BY **MIKE KAISER**
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BEST NEW DRAMA

BLAME IT

ON THE MOLD. AND PERHAPS THE COUTURE.

Several years ago Elizabeth and Stanley Star decided to demolish their home of two decades in the Port Royal neighborhood of Naples, Florida, and rebuild on the same bayfront site. "It was a great family house, but we're in a different time and place in our lives, and it really needed some serious refreshing," Elizabeth says of the Mediterranean-style residence where she and Stanley—founder of the private-label juice producer Cliffstar Corporation—raised their now-adult son from the time he was a teen.

They first considered renovating rather than rebuilding, but ultimately, says architect Bobby McAlpine, whom they hired for the project, "mold issues kind of pushed her over the edge. Or most likely gave her an excuse."

Call it an opportunity.

The property is on the widest section of Naples Bay, with enviable views across the water to mangroves beyond. And starting over meant they could create a more distinctively designed home, one tailored to how their tastes and needs and lifestyle have evolved. For Elizabeth, who was the driving force behind the project, that meant having areas for both intimate gatherings and large-scale entertaining (she and Stanley are active in philanthropy), lots of multifunctional kitchen space, and a primary bedroom suite with generous walk-in closets. Hers especially.

"Elizabeth might tell you that the whole reason for the house was the closets," jokes interior designer Susan Ferrier. "She has such a beautiful collection of clothing, and a great deal of consideration went into those spaces."

In fact every detail of the five-bedroom residence was meticulously thought-out, beginning with the decision to move it closer to the water than the previous home had been. The shift allowed McAlpine to give the entry more space and "pageantry," as he puts it, projecting "a glamour that can transport you, like you've gone from Naples to Paris just by stepping out of your car."

Using an architectural language he describes as "kind of a 1930s abstracted classicism," McAlpine created an entry court enclosed by stately wings that project

PHOTOGRAPHS, INTERIOR ARCHIVE; STYLING BY RICHARD ROBBS AND BLAKE WELKES.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: A tropical grisaille mural (Ananbō) headlines the living room. Sofa, Promemoria

ABOVE: A pair of late-19th-century sphinxes greets guests beneath twin "rippled" plaster staircases. Hanging lantern, Paul Ferrante

forward. "I wanted it to almost feel like an embassy," he says, "to elevate the feeling and make you want to hold your back straight as you approach it."

Adding to the effect, landscape designer Mike Kaiser bordered the limestone walkway to the steel-and-glass French doors with crisply sculpted hedges and topiaries that stand like sentries atop chevron-pattern "carpets" of slate tiles. The tiles are the same ones used on the roof. "Much was driven by Elizabeth's desire for the cleanest, simplest palette," Kaiser says.

What modest detailing there is on the white stucco exterior, McAlpine notes, is all in negative relief rather than applied. Door and window casings are recessed; the quoin blocks that embellish the facade's corners are cut out. "That way," he says, "it becomes a cleaner garment."

The couture-like detailing continues throughout the interior, from the elegantly fluted and stepped ceilings that crown multiple rooms to the exquisite porcelain-front cabinetry with brass and steel strapping in the kitchen. The tone is set in the entrance hall, where visitors pass beneath twin staircases that ascend from opposite sides of the room and meet in the center. McAlpine likens their sculpted, scrolling forms to ripples on water. The stairs' hovering presence also creates a sense of compression—"a little bit of an embrace," the architect calls it—before the space opens up to the living and dining areas and views out to the bay.

The furnishings and finishes, meanwhile, reflect the same spirit of refinement, consciously hewing to "a narrow color palette and detail package," says Ferrier. Floors are either oak, marble, or limestone (except in the knockout caterer's kitchen, where white porcelain tiles offset dark walls and stainless-steel cabinetry). Fabrics and carpets are almost exclusively monochrome neutrals and earth tones. "It's emotionally clean and uncluttered—it's elevated," says Ferrier, who amicably left McAlpine's

ABOVE: In an open dining area, skirted and upholstered seating (Gregorius|Pineo and Michael Taylor Designs, respectively) with a custom table by Hudson Furniture

OPPOSITE: Blackened steel balustrades conjure exquisite drapery.

"THE MATERIALS THROUGHOUT ARE **CONSISTENT AND CLASSIC.** ELEGANT AND ELEVATED."

—INTERIOR DESIGNER SUSAN FERRIER

LEFT: A titanium-coated steel wall sculpture (John Franzen) illuminates the family room. Ceiling light, Formations

BELOW: The kitchen island's porcelain finish and metal strapping mirror the detailing of the La Cornue range. Lighting, Jonathan Browning

OPPOSITE: A glassy white-lacquered entry to the owners' suite reflects the watery vista beyond.

STEPPING INTO THE COUPLE'S BEDROOM SUITE IS "LIKE **WALKING INTO A SEASHELL.**"

—ARCHITECT BOBBY McALPINE

firm to launch her own around the time this project got underway. "And there is a great deal of consistency."

Lots of symmetry too. In the formal living room, Ferrier divided the space into two nearly identical seating areas, the only variations in the mix of custom and antique furnishings being a few chairs and small tables. Twin cloud-like crystal chandeliers hover overhead while matching antiqued mirrors are mounted atop hand-painted grisaille scenic wallpaper by Ananbô—one of Elizabeth's must-haves—on opposite walls, bookending the room.

Extending off the back of the house and overlooking the mosaic glass-tile pool and palm-shaded terraces are the solarium and family room, identically proportioned spaces designed for casual entertaining and relaxing. Other spots for quiet retreat include Stanley's study, a handsome haven with walls and ceiling clad in stained oak reeding. "It is completely tamboured like a wood box," McAlpine says of the office. Ferrier furnished the space with a leather-wrapped desk and a mohair-upholstered sofa more than long enough for taking naps, she notes.

For Elizabeth, the couple's bedroom suite is special, starting with the hallway leading into it, a vaulted corridor finished in unadorned white lacquer. "It's like you're walking into a seashell," says McAlpine.

Inside the suite, between his and hers baths at either end, there is a sitting area along the windows with a desk where Elizabeth often writes letters and talks on the phone. To one side is her multichambered closet, customized with dedicated storage for shoes and handbags, long drawers for knit dresses, and locked cabinets for jewelry. On the other side is Stanley's smaller closet and the couple's bedchamber, a cozy, fully upholstered space that can be curtained off and completely blacked out.

"You can go to bed and close yourself up in a fabric box," says McAlpine. "Press a button and you're sealed in for the night. It's like having a sleep mask on." An intimately scaled bedroom is just fine with Elizabeth. "Ideal for good rest," she says. And, hey, more room for closets. ✦

ABOVE: The owners' bed is flanked by antiqued bronze nightstands reverse hand-painted with Diana at the hunt (Jean de Merry). Wall upholstery, Nobilis

OPPOSITE: A fluted vanity along marble walls and flooring (Marmi) in the primary bath