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**Art and
Architecture**



Home Is Where the Art Is

A creative couple shares a passion
for architecture and fine art

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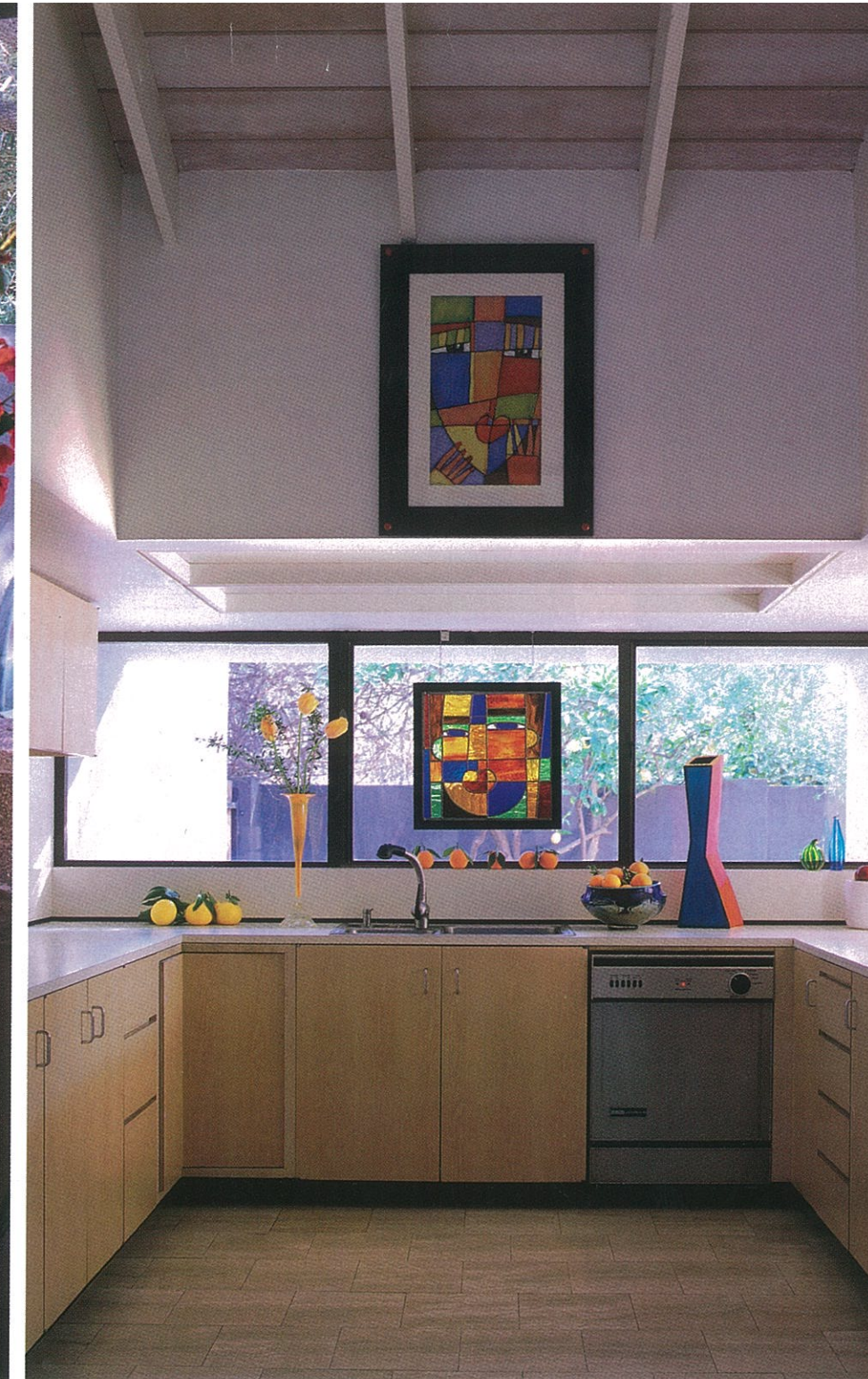
Artwork by homeowner Nancy Pendleton lines the walls of the north central Phoenix home she shares with husband Bob Smith. Pillows she designed adorn a couch in the living room. Here, a glass piece by Newt Grover and sculpture by Otto Rigan are among works of art in the couple's extensive collection.



Like the marriage of art and architecture, the marriage of an artist and an architect would seem to be the ideal union. In this case, it appears to be so. Nancy Pendleton, an artist, and Bob Smith, an architect, met seven years ago at a party in Phoenix. "He commented on my hat, and we talked awhile," Pendleton recalls. "The next day he went to my show at Shemer Art Center. Our first date was at Phoenix Art Museum." These art lovers, having found each other at last, soon set out to find the perfect house to share.



This photo: Smith transformed the atrium into a meditative retreat with decking, color and a stone water feature by Alan Hochman. **Opposite top:** The home's original yellow pivot door features a pull by Gary Slater, a 2003 *Phoenix Home & Garden* Master of the Southwest. • **Opposite bottom:** Architect Ned Sawyer says clerestory windows in the living room extend the volume of the space yet maintain privacy from the street and front entry.



"The house was built for an artist, so it's

"When we got married, neither of us were spring chickens," Pendleton says. "And we wanted the house we wanted. We looked for six months, and when we saw this house we were wowed."

Both were so wowed, in fact, that they were married at the house and have done very little to it since moving in six years ago. They both liked the home's contemporary design, travertine floors, maple cabinetry and abundance of natural light. And it

even had an art studio flooded with northern light. "The house was built for an artist, so it's designed from an artist's point of view," Pendleton says.

"We've made some subtle changes, but the basic architecture still stands today, 23 years after it was built," Smith adds. "I like to say that the great-grandfather of this house is Le Corbusier, the grandfather is Al Beadle, and the father is Ned Sawyer."

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Local architect Sawyer, who designed the house, chuckles at the remark, but admits there is truth to it. "It is an International-style home," he says. "There is a play of forms, a juxtaposition of masses and voids. And the open plan, the extension of space and perspective, comes from my experience working with Al."

Located in a quiet neighborhood in north central Phoenix, the house was built on land that once was part of a 10-acre

Above left: Large windows facing an enclosed side yard allow natural light to flood the living room. The triangular conversation pit at the far end is a draw for guests, the homeowners say. The large circular sculpture is by Gary Slater. Smith fashioned the piece on the hearth from slats of glass and a piece of scrap metal. • **Above:** Sandy Pendleton crafted the stained-glass window in the kitchen based on a painting by her sister Nancy. The homeowners purchased the vase while on a trip to Laguna Beach, Calif. The kitchen's travertine flooring, wood plank ceiling and maple cabinetry are original to the house.



“ranchette,” according to Smith, who adds that the original residence from that property still stands just blocks away. Over the years, the property was divided, and, in 1981 this 4,000-square-foot home was built.

The H-shape floor plan was designed to accommodate both the long, narrow lot and its existing trees. Although some are now gone, several remain on the property, including an olive tree estimated to be 70 years old, and two backyard citrus varieties that are still lined up as if in their original grove. The white tones used

inside and out were chosen to accommodate the original owner’s aesthetic. To this day, the chalk-white exterior encases interiors marked by light-toned flooring and white walls.

“We were playing off the subtle, neutral tones of the first owner’s artwork,” Sawyer recalls.

Pendleton and Smith did add color to a wall or two, but the subtlety of the home’s palette and its design provide a gallerylike setting for the couple’s extensive art collection.

“The house has a lot of windows and gets a lot of natural light,”

Smith says. “But we still have privacy, and there’s wall space for art.”

In addition to many of Pendleton’s works and a few by Smith, most pieces are by local artists, including Newt Grover, Roberta Hancock, Alan Hochman, Rose Johnson, Otto Rigan, Gary Slater, Joe Willie Smith and Frank Ybarra.

“Art is a huge part of our lives,” Pendleton says. “I’ve shown with a lot of these artists, and bought pieces from some of them before they hit it big. We give art to each other as gifts, and we acquire some on trips. We look for what we both like, and we buy the pieces that speak to us.”

“The house is a lab in a way,” she adds. “I’m working on some landscapes, which are new for me, and I’ve hung one to sort of live with for a while.”

The couple’s creativity shines through in other areas of the house as well. Pillows designed by Pendleton perch on chairs, and Smith fashioned a low sculptural piece from slats of glass stacked on a piece of scrap metal. He also renovated the atrium with paint, decking, smooth black pebbles, and a travertine sculpture by Hochman. From this space, Smith removed a tall sculpture left behind by the previous owner and placed it in the back yard, where it straddles the shallow end of the pool.

The piece is now visible from the family room through an angled window wall with a fireplace at its center. This same angled wall is mirrored at the front of the house in the living room’s triangular conversation pit, complete with carpeted built-in seating.

“In those years we were doing pits all the time,” Sawyer recalls. “They’re casual and not as formal as sitting in chairs. They’re for lounging around. I don’t know why they went away.”

Pendleton agrees, saying, “People gravitate to it. It really is a conversation pit.”

“When we were looking for a house, we didn’t really know what we were looking for,” she concludes. “But we found this, and we’re staying here for life.”

See Resource Guide.

This photo: In the family room, a fireplace wall surrounded by glass faces the pool area. Straddling the shallow end is a sculpture the home’s previous owner left in the atrium. Coffee table is by Otto Rigan. • **Below:** The homeowners added a wall of color in the master bedroom. In the foreground are two small paintings from Pendleton’s *Rouge* series, as well as a larger work titled *Revolution*. In the far corner is a sculpture by Rick Lussier. A piece by Otto Rigan hangs over the fireplace.

