

# Set *in* Stone

Cheerfully nodding to England's Arts and Crafts movement, a Santa Monica Canyon home's Old World masonry flirts with colorful, contemporary interiors for a one-of-a-kind statement.

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Architecture: Jeffrey Dungan, Jeffrey Dungan Architects Interior Design: Joe Lucas, Lucas Studio, Inc.  
Home Builder: Jay Bruder, Bruder Construction Inc. Landscape Architecture: Patricia Benner, Benner Landscape Design



Architect Jeffrey Dungan crafted a European-style home nestled into a wooded canyon. Elliptical openings in the exterior walls capture engaging views of the verdant property. The large planters are from Big Daddy's Antiques and the lantern is a custom Dungan design.

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hese are happy people, who possess a wonderful sense of *joie de vivre*," architect Jeffrey Dungan says of his clients, a pair of young creatives with two children. The couple has different aesthetic tastes—his lean "castle," hers a bit more

Cape Cod—but they found common ground as Dungan and designer Joe Lucas, their longtime friend and collaborator, envisioned a home that took its architectural cues from the Arts and Crafts movement while offering interiors befitting for modern life. For them, that meant personality-driven work-from-home spaces and refined yet colorful, easygoing rooms that could withstand a cast of kids and canines.

"The architectural planning—or the 'dreaming it up' stage—that was the best part," the wife recalls. "We sat down with Jeffrey and he asked how we lived and what we loved. It was wonderful to have someone ask us just what we needed." This project marks the first time that the Alabama-based architect has ever worked in California and that, too, added inspiration. "It's always exciting to do something new, and these clients wanted to build a type of home not often seen in Los Angeles," Dungan explains. To wit, his stylistic reference points included 20<sup>th</sup>-century British architects like Edwin Lutyens and C.F.A. Voysey. "You want a house to fit into its neighborhood, but you still want it to wink at you from the street—and this residence is a little playful and slightly mischievous," he says with a smile, noting that its success is due to his firm's project architect, Ed Montano, and designer Michelle Cone as well.

"Most of what we build in L.A. is contemporary homes," general contractor Jay Bruder adds. "This abode steps back in time, which was really refreshing." The residence's striking stonework, overseen by masonry master Steven Leatherbarrow, is another surprising element rarely found in Southern California. "It's an effort to build a stone house in this area, but it's worth it. It creates a sense of permanence," the husband explains. There's also a feeling of openness due to the presence of an oculus and large steel windows. As a result, natural light fills the space, bouncing off plaster walls by Erin

Leigh of Erin Leigh Paints and Textures that bring in "a more modern California vibe," Lucas notes.

Combining traditional with modern soon became a through line. "This house has a lot of Jeffrey's signatures: chamfered corners, curves and a soft, mellow feel," Lucas comments. "His material palette allowed me to mix shapes and textures to make things more interesting." There are, of course, the classics—formal living spaces and rooms for entertaining—and a kitchen designed for a family that enjoys cooking. But it's the deeply personal areas that make this house truly function for its owners. A secret bookcase door leads to the husband's office, ("I love the fantasy realm, Dungeons & Dragons and ancient castles," he shares.) while the wife's is tucked away and soundproof, replete with a recording booth for her voice-over work. A little room, or "snug," off the main living space provides a cozy den to gather "for reading, playing games or doing puzzles," says Lucas, who also enlisted his firm's design director, Jessica Spink, and senior designer Kana Liu to realize the home's aesthetics. "It's also a great spot for cocktails," he says, especially thanks to a bespoke Charles Dudouyt-style table which adjusts to different heights. "Our clients brought a few sentimental pieces, but this was a fresh start," Lucas continues, explaining that he helped them build an art collection that includes works by Edward Ruscha and Andrew Salgado. Meanwhile, the primary bedroom was designed to be an oasis, with a cashmere-flokati rug, white-washed ceiling, and soothing garden views. "It's light and bright, a really special place," Lucas reflects.

Exteriors were given equal consideration, with Dungan designing entertaining areas such as the "grotto" between the lower level of the house and the pool. There, on summer evenings, the couple can enjoy dinner while watching their kids swim. And landscape architect Patricia Benner's design harmonizes a nod toward English style with canyon life. "We didn't want it too manicured, just a beautiful wilderness," the wife remembers. "Our homes say a lot about us, whether we like it or not," Dungan concludes. "And if you hire an architect, it's this architect's job to find out what's wonderful about you." Here, the result is an abode that, as Dungan believes, "is just fun"—which was exactly the point. ■



Designer Joe Lucas outfitted the living room with a coffee table from his shop, Harbinger, a concave mirror from The Gallery at 200 Lex, and a chaise upholstered in Zak+Fox's Esgii felt. The lamps are by Roy Hamilton Studios and the chandelier is from Lucca Antiques.



**Left:** A Thomas Hayes Studio Jantar dining table and bespoke Pepe chair in a Claremont stripe are joined by a Danish-style sofa from Harbinger in the keeping room. An urn by RF. Alvarez and Sheldon Ceramics sits atop an antique plinth from Blackman Cruz.

**Opposite:** The family's dog, Josh, presides over the kitchen, which is enveloped by zellige tile from Mosaic House. A pendant by The Urban Electric Co., Allied Maker sconces and Thomas Hayes Studio barstools nod to a custom Ann-Morris pot rack.





**Above:** The wife's office is equipped with a kitchenette featuring cabinetry painted Farrow & Ball's De Nimes, Rejuvenation shelves and hardware, and a Waterworks faucet. Above the sink is a vintage sea-glass-framed mirror from JF Chen.

**Right:** The same room's banquette is topped with bouclé cushions from The Isle Mill. A 1950s French wicker bar cart found on 1stdibs and Lawson-Fenning coffee table round out the scheme. The rug is Marc Phillips.

In a sunken entertaining area between the house and pool, a vintage French dining table from Harbinger is surrounded by Knot chairs from Janus et Cie. Designed by Patricia Benner, the home's landscape strikes a balance between English style and California cool.

