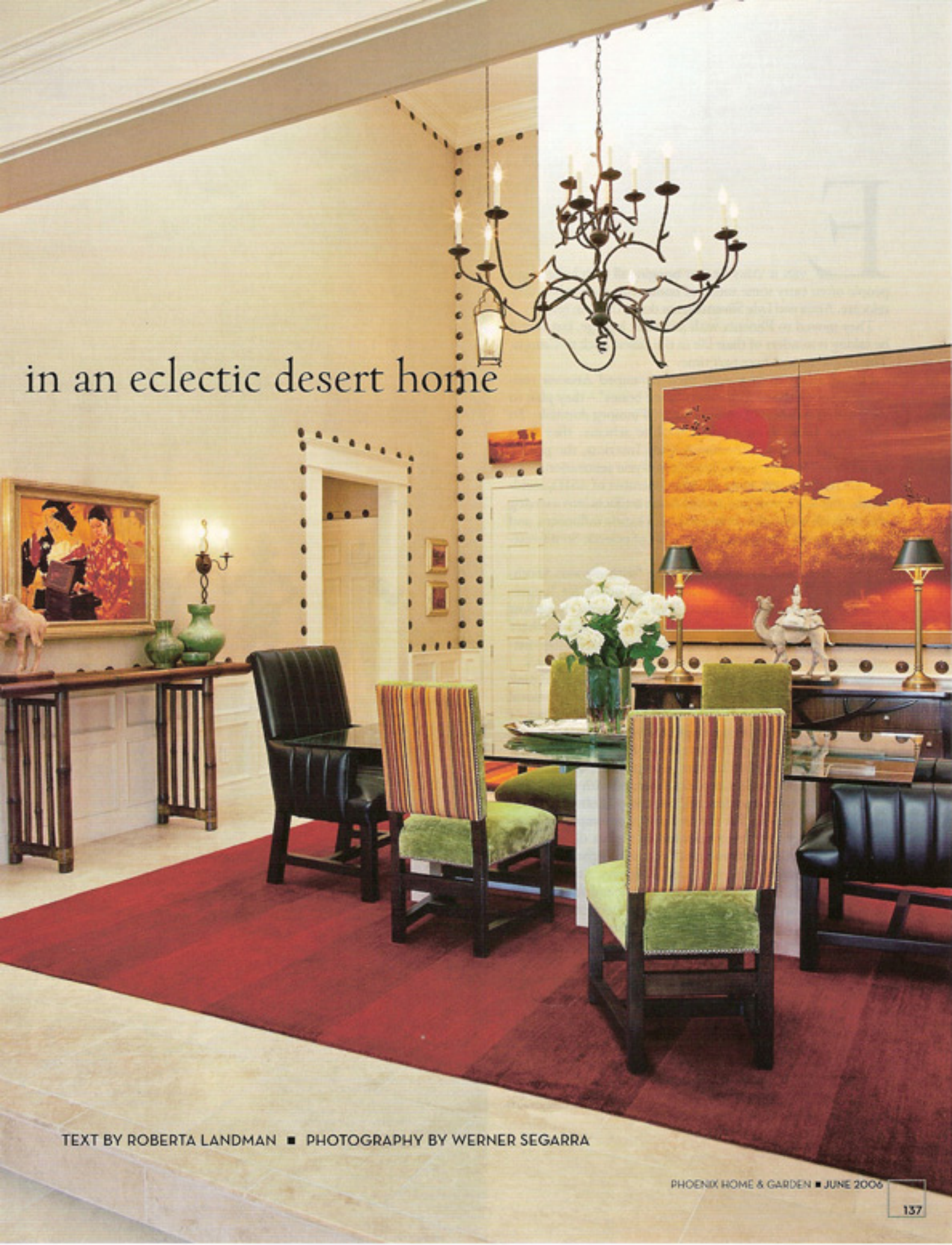


HOUSE BLEND

The Southwest greets the Far East

This page: "The powder room is a blend of fine and rugged," says interior designer Jill Keig. Its painted wall treatment was inspired by a Donghia textile. The copper vanity, hammered-copper vessel sink, wood-framed mirror, and iron sconces lend a rustic feel.

Opposite: Set against entry and dining room walls covered in clavos-dotted burlap, furnishings, art and accessories are a mix of Asian, Southwestern and Contemporary styles.



in an eclectic desert home

TEXT BY ROBERTA LANDMAN ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY WERNER SEGARRA

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VEN IF THEY'RE NOT bringing all their belongings, people often carry some touch of home with them when they relocate. Anna and Lyle Silverman are doing this—in reverse.

They moved to Phoenix with just their luggage, but they'll be taking reminders of their life in the desert back to Canada. The couple resides here part time.

Having fallen in love with their revamped Arizona residence—once a dated resale with “good bones”—they plan to replicate its richness of color in their Winnipeg domicile. To add some spice to its black-and-white scheme, they have engaged Jill Keig of Wiseman & Gale Interiors, the person responsible for their Valley home's two-year renovation.

Here in the desert, Keig, an Allied member of ASID, melded the couple's love of fine art and Asian artifacts into a setting that is lavish with color, brimming with exotic influences, and welcoming—an eye-appealing example of eclectic Southwestern style.

The Silvermans didn't want a home “with obvious Southwest decor,” Keig explains. Rather, they opted for “unpredictable” reminders of the region. This is immediately evident in the high-ceilinged entry and adjacent dining room, where walls are upholstered in burlap and accented with outsize rusted clavos, both “honest Southwestern elements,” Keig says.

She had considered burlap as a way to cover patterned pink wallpaper original to the home, and avoid a costly removal process. The ultimate decorative merits surprised even her. “I thought it would be a success, but it turned out better than I had imagined,” Keig says. “The clavos provide graphic interest, and the burlap gives texture, neutral color and absorbs sound.” The homeowners, too, are delighted with the result.

Against this rustic and dramatic backdrop, dining room furnishings are a mix of Far Eastern and Contemporary trappings; the latter style is represented by a glass dining table, chosen for its uniqueness and also because its light, airy quality does not overpower the snug area, Keig says. An iron chandelier, however, is large, suitably proportioned for the high ceiling, and “curvy because everything in the room is so linear,” she states. Interestingly, a serene antique Japanese screen above the buffet does not look out of place in the midst of rough-textured burlap.

Mixing the screen, Japanese tansu furniture or other Oriental niceties with items of a rugged Southwestern sensibility is best done with a sense of balance, according to the designer. “Limiting these items to a few fab-

Native American-inspired and geometric-themed textiles, abstract art, and antique Asian and African artifacts meld boldly and harmoniously in the living room. Above the fireplace is a painting by Ryan Reynolds.







This page and opposite: The kitchen gained sophisticated oomph with new granite countertops and backsplash. Cabinetry painted a deep ebony hue contrasts with red kitchenware. The painting is by Karen Fisher.





Above and opposite: The master bathroom was refurbished with newly painted cabinets and countertop and tub surrounds of granite. A vanity mirror with scalloped frame is utilitarian and decorative, reflecting both natural light from a large shuttered window and works of art. The painting over the bathtub is by Sherri Belassen. Flooring is travertine.

ulous pieces enhances their importance and doesn't allow them to become an overwhelming motif," she says. The decor of the adjacent living room is a case in point. While the sofa's fabric is strongly reminiscent of Native American artistry, accessories are primarily from the Orient. Included are table-top sculptures of ancient Chinese tomb guard figures and such Japanese antiques as stirrups and a jar once used to ferment beer. Although they are divergent, the periods and cultures represented in the furnishings complement each other.

The Silvermans have an adventurous spirit, a love of color and a sophisticated appreciation for art, the designer notes. And these attributes are evident from room to room.

In the living room and elsewhere in the home, various warm shades are unifying elements. In a kitchen revamped with granite countertops and cabinetry refinished in black, the center island is a stand-out feature painted in red. Dishes seen through glass-front cupboards and small appliances in red add pops of color.

The ruby hue is perhaps nowhere more resplendent than in the master bedroom, where bold red-painted walls above white wood-paneled wainscot-

ing serve as a backdrop for Contemporary art. How does one assure someone that sleeping is a real possibility in such a stimulating setting? "The red in the master bedroom isn't a jarring primary red that would be difficult to live with," Keig explains. "It has a lot of brown in it and works well in the space because of its subtlety." She adds: "Paint is an easy and inexpensive way to change a room, so convincing a client to try this isn't difficult—after all, it's just paint."

Art plays a significant role in this home and is showcased even in the master bath. "It's an integral part of the process of finishing a space," like frosting on a cupcake, Keig explains. "Besides the obvious artistic element, art adds color and interest while allowing people to surround themselves with objects that bring them joy."

Joy is what the homeowners feel in their Arizona home, and also a bit of surprise. "I had no idea what Southwestern was," Anna Silverman admits, recalling an initial planning meeting with Keig. "I thought, 'Oh, what are we getting ourselves into?'" Today, she says, "Things turned out spectacularly." □

See Sources.

