



Next LEVEL

CLIENTS CHALLENGE A DESIGNER
TO FLEX HIS CREATIVE MUSCLES IN
THEIR ATHERTON ABODE.

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On a shopping trip to New York for her new Atherton home, designer Matthew Leverone's client fell for a Zanotta sectional. Covered in a neutral Pollack fabric, the piece now resides in the family room, where it's joined by a pair of Caste armchairs from De Sousa Hughes and a Jerome Abel Seguin coffee table. The arrangement rests on a carpet from Holland & Sherry.

Every once in a while, an extraordinary project comes along that becomes a professional game-changer, launching a designer's career to a new level. For Matthew Leverone, the tipping point was this Atherton home created for a South African expat family. "This project gave us a chance to push boundaries because the clients were so open and wanted each piece to be special," Leverone explains. "We were free to select interesting pieces and design custom elements in the house."

Leverone came aboard as the three-level house, a contemporary beauty by Pacific Peninsula Group clad in split-face Texas limestone, was coming together. Most of the structural details had been locked down, but the designer had the opportunity to offer input on the finishes, such as the flooring's warm gray color. He also used the client's vision to create a cantilevered oak-plank bar outside of the wine room and carve out a makeup area off the master bedroom. But it was the furnishings—luxurious yet understated, sculptural yet elegant—where the designer's formidable talents shone.

Beyond informing Leverone that her husband wasn't a huge fan of color, and that hues would have to come from the artwork and accessories, his client's brief was simple. "She said she wanted items that would make her happy and make her smile," the designer recalls. To that end, he encouraged a trip to New York and planned an itinerary of showroom visits to get a read on her preferences. The resulting scheme relies on neutrals, rich textures and gutsy pieces that both stand up to and soften the sharp lines and solid surfaces of the architecture.

Right: Centered beneath a Larsen fixture is a Bangle dining room table by Hudson Furniture with a custom-stained zebrawood top and a polished bronze base. Arranged around it are Joseph Jeup chairs upholstered in a fabric by Peggy Platner Collection and beneath it is a silk Woven Designs carpet. The artwork is by Udo Nöger.



Opposite: "To address the long entry space, the tables had to be interesting but also counterbalance the split face stone on the opposite wall with its vertical and horizontal lines," Leverone says of the console. Above is a Tom Lieber painting; the Peter Boiger sculpture is from Coup D'Etat.





Neutrals predominate in the home, but Leverone did incorporate colorful moments, such as the stools of his design dressed in sheepskin by Azadeh Shadovsky in the game room. The trio faces an Ochre table and a Coup Studio settee in Holly Hunt leather. The designer notes the space is intended for both adults and children to have fun.

Leverone looked for furniture that had great lines and sensual rounded shapes. He outfitted the living room with a sleek Holly Hunt sofa, a pair of perfectly proportioned cerused-oak armchairs, and a quartet of faceted coffee tables in an oak veneer. The Bösendorfer piano—which the client helped select—even exhibits a moment of sleekness not usually associated with the form. Similarly, in the dining room table, a zebrawood top resting on a base of interlocking statuary bronze rings, and a cabinet in the master bedroom with a chipped wood front bring pared-down gravitas. “They’re all simple but work well together,” the designer notes. He did allow for moments of levity. In the lower-level playroom, he paired a bench that reads as an attenuated wing chair with wood-frame stools covered in a long-haired blue sheepskin.

Sculptural lighting also has a starring role in this home. Leverone chose a Calder-esque fixture to hover above the dining room table. Composed of a pair of bronze tipped walnut arms projecting from a center rod and with natural linen shades at the opposite ends, it’s simple but packs a visual punch. The same goes for the light in the husband’s office, a Billy Cotton 5 Stick chandelier. Its satin brass finish adds a metallic note that plays off the stone fireplace.

Part of what makes the home such a triumph for Leverone are the many opportunities he had to conceive custom furnishings. In the master bedroom, he upped the sophistication factor on an upholstered headboard by

The office combines a work space furnished with a custom desk and Humanscale task chair with a cozy seating area anchored by an Axis Furniture swivel chair in a Coraggio material, a Gary Hutton coffee table and a Glenn Carpet Co. rug. Lending a glam note above is a Billy Cotton fixture.



trimming the perimeter in blackened steel. In a first for the designer, he created walnut bedside tables with bronze, etched-glass tops that are equipped with chargers for electronics. He outfitted the adjacent master sitting room, also known as the reading room—a spot the wife requested where she could do just that with her children—with a bespoke, low-slung sofa set on a wood base that extends to form an end table.

The designer relied on luxurious carpets for his biggest textural moves, animating the neutral-hued spaces. In the living room, for example, he installed a Tai Ping wool and silk rug in shades of tonal grays. “The silk gives it a luster, and it’s juxtaposed by the flat textural weave of

the border,” the designer observes. In the reading room, he selected a lush silk and mohair number carved with a stripe pattern. For the pool house, he opted for a rug with a weave that mimics the trellis just outside. “We pulled the outside in,” says Leverone, who adds that the connection was particularly critical for his outdoorsy, athletic clients, whose pursuits include spirited games of underwater hockey.

Leverone values the level of faith his clients placed in him. “We’re so appreciative when we get clients who love the process and want to be involved but also let us do our job,” says the designer. “There is mutual respect, and it shows in the outcome.” ■

Leverone’s client wanted a cozy spot where she could read to her children, so he created a stylish reading room. The custom sofa in a Peggy Platner Collection fabric offers an ideal lounging area, while the silk and mohair rug makes for a dreamy landing spot for small feet. For lighting, the designer chose an Allison Berger Glassworks pendant.



Left: To accent the spa, situated in an indoor-outdoor space and encased in slabs from Haussmann Natural Stone, Leverone chose a pair of Atelier Vierkant planters. The interior is covered with tile from Walker Zanger.

Opposite: Giant fabric wraps the custom steel-framed headboard in the master bedroom. Leverone also designed the coordinating walnut and bronze bedside tables. He finished the bed with a coverlet in a Rogers & Goffigon material and a duvet made of Casamance fabric.

The designer opted for similarly sculptural forms for the outdoor furnishings. A quartet of Janus et Cie chairs surround a Seasonal Living coffee table, while a Tuuci umbrella shades Dedon loungers. An RH covered daybed is an enticing spot to shelter from the sun.



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