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INTERIOR DESIGN / NANCY BURFIEND AND JAMES FUNG,
H&B DESIGN GROUP
HOME BUILDER / EDWARD WINZENRIED, SCHULTZ MILLER



MEDIEVAL CHIC



THE LEAVENING EFFECTS OF
FRENCH STYLE FROM THE 1930S
AND '40S TEMPER A DESIGN
INFLUENCED BY THE MIDDLE
AGES INSIDE A SEATTLE HOME.

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Thassos marble from Ann Sacks, accented by black tile from Oregon Tile & Marble, provides a dramatic foundation for the entrance hall. Wrought-iron consoles support lamps from RH. The chandelier from Keil's Antiques in New Orleans was restored by Harold's Lighting.



A pair of 1940s French lions from Eccola in Los Angeles, illuminated by gas-fired lanterns from Carolina Lanterns in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, stands guard at the entrance of a Seattle home with interiors by Nancy Burfiend and James Fung.

How's this for an eccentric aesthetic program? "He wanted a *Game of Thrones* type of feel, but more modern," James Fung says of the owner of a Seattle home on which he worked as project designer alongside interior designer Nancy Burfiend. "Not quite medieval, but with strong stone and ironwork—nothing too light or delicate." Although the owner was enamored of the show's 11th- to 13th-century European production values, he also envisioned a home with French Rococo, Moorish Revival and Art Deco elements—and wanted to integrate other imagery into the mix in a nod to his Pacific Northwest roots. Ultimately, says Burfiend, "he was looking for a bold design language and asked for statement rooms for entertaining while keeping comfort in mind."

Fortunately, the house, originally designed by Castanes Architects, offered classical architectural details that "aided in reinforcing our design concept," notes Burfiend. Chiefly,

the residence came ready-made with a spectacular groin-vaulted ceiling worthy of a medieval castle, along with columns and a symmetrical layout. A few adjustments did have to be made in order to create "a very clean, simple jumping-off point," says Fung. All of the casework received new paint, and in the dining room, the duo redesigned the existing buffets, taking them in a Deco direction with stepped fronts, marble tops and black paint.

This move created the backdrop against which the designers could freely blend rustic finishes with finer ones. In the former camp are, among others, a floor made of distressed truck decking in the subterranean whiskey lounge and a family room fireplace made of rusticated black granite framed in ebonized reclaimed Douglas fir. In the latter camp, elements include gold-leaf ceilings—"He wanted gold leaf with a particular amount of shine to it," remembers Burfiend—and Venetian plaster walls in several rooms.



The client was exceptionally clear and confident, Fung and Burfiend recall. In fact, a trip he took to Louisiana early in the process oriented the designers in a very specific direction. "He wanted things to have a story behind them," explains Fung. Adds Burfiend: "It created a sense of authenticity to the overall furniture presence within the home." The client began making the rounds of the New Orleans antiques shops and sending the team pictures of lighting, which helped the designers develop the scheme. A gold-and-bronze Empire chandelier ended up in the entry under the vaulted ceiling, while two 19th-century French wrought-iron lanterns now hang above the dining room table. A circa-1900 French Gothic-style chandelier

helps illuminate the family room. More "story" came in the form of an ornate late-19th-century American piano purchased from a private dealer.

Some contemporary furnishings also nod discreetly to the Middle Ages vibe. A zinc-topped game table with nailhead trim in the family room is flanked by leather chairs with barley twist stretchers and more nailhead trim. Lions—a favorite motif of the owner and a common symbol of heraldry in the high medieval period—stand at the home's entry. The lion theme is also incorporated on the brass details of the bar in the whiskey lounge and on the door knockers that access it.

Deco influences give all this potential heaviness some ballast. Fung and Burfiend surrounded the dining table, for



Opposite: Rusticated black granite and Douglas fir create a bold fireplace surround in the family room. A circa-1900 chandelier from Kell's Antiques and a pair of Carolina Lanterns fixtures light the space. The ironies wing chairs upholstered in Townsend leather evoke a medieval vibe and are balanced by the A. Rudin sofa in Holland & Sherry chenille.

Below: Holly Hunt leather covers side chairs from Empiric in Los Angeles, which, along with 19th-century throne chairs from Debenham Antiques in Suffolk, England, surround an RH table in the dining room. The rug from Driscoll Robbins Fine Carpets adds organic texture. Cathy Conner at Studio C hand-laid the gold-leaf ceiling details. Superior Manufacturing fabricated the new cabinets.

Black and gold tones abound the great room with pieces such as the antique Wm. Knabe & Co. piano, a wing chair from Fritz & Hollander and the 1960s ram's-head chairs from Fairfield County Antique & Design Center in Norwalk, Connecticut. The coffee table from Blackman Cruz in Los Angeles and the Keleen Leathers hair-on-hide rug from Terris Draheim also play into the black-and-gold scheme.





Lambert Marble & Tile installed the Ann Sacks mosaic tiles in a herringbone pattern on the risers of the gently curving stairway. The vignette at the base of the stairway features a vintage garden table topped by an antique wood figure, both from Kirk Albert Vintage Furnishings.



instance, with chairs reminiscent of the French 1930s and covered them in green leather to lighten up the feel of the room. The master bedroom's stylish nook, sporting gold-leaf wallcovering, an embossed-leather-and-lacquer cabinet and gold-framed armchairs, could easily have graced a project by renowned French Deco designer Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann. "It was tricky to get all this to work and not have one piece overwhelm the others," admits Burfiend.

Also tricky was a lot of the craftsmanship that was involved, says general contractor Edward Winzenried. "All that gold-leafing required scaffolding," he explains. "The craftspeople were in the house for almost a month to hand-apply all those 8-inch squares of gold leaf, then seal the ceilings," he says. Winzenried also revamped the family

room fireplace. "Our masonry subcontractor had to climb inside the fireplace structure and install big steel beams to make sure it could hold the weight of all that granite," Winzenried says, adding that it also took three weeks to lay the marble floor in the master bathroom. "The major construction happened with the owner living on the site, so sequencing had to be very prioritized."

In the end, though not quite the life-and-death struggle depicted in *Game of Thrones*, where warring factions vie for the Iron Throne of the Seven Kingdoms, the project still required tremendous skill in order to balance the competing aesthetic impulses that could have derailed the design. "It's ornate, and there's so much going on," concludes Burfiend, "but it's not overbearing." ■

Elsewhere in the great room, a sofa by Bradley in green Moore & Giles leather pairs with triple-burnt teak-root tables from Andrianna Shamaris in New York. Victoria Hagan wing chairs from Susan Mills Showroom and a Driscoll Robbins Fine Carpets rug complete the setting.



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-NANCY BURFIEND



Opposite: Calacatta Luccicosa marble tile from Meta Marble & Granite defines the master bathroom. Penthouse Drapery created the Roman shades with Perennials fabric from Susan Mills Showroom. The Waterworks plumbing fixtures are from Chown Hardware.

Below: The master bedroom's custom bed, made by Village Interiors, looks to the water. Tufted armchairs by Worlds Away and a vintage bench from Kirk Albert Vintage Furnishings skew midcentury modern. Covering the floor is a Hibernia Woolen Mills carpet. Jeffrey Tritt & Associates painted the walls throughout the interior, including in the master bedroom.

