

the ART of the matter

Celebrated artwork, classic midcentury furnishings and stylishly camouflaged practicality make this home both sophisticated and family-friendly.

Lending a touch of glamour to the living room, lacquered walls, *right*, complement a Mona Kuhn photograph and an acrylic abstract by Ed Nash. The custom-made ruched leather settee brings textural balance to the luxurious blue velvet Leon Rosen swivel chairs, which play off the colors in the vibrant Nash painting.



A dark lacquered finish on the new, grandly scaled Oly cabinet, *below*, echoes the wall sheen. Silver metal pulls and legs provide a counterpoint to the cylindrical brass bases on the Rosen chairs. *Quadrature du Cercle* serigraphs by Yvaral (aka Jean-Pierre Vasarely) repeat the circular theme.



Art and architectural history degrees and a keen eye for updating classic looks made designer Stephanie Jarvis the on-point choice to rethink the interiors of this Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, home. “The owners have an extensive art collection, they’re young with four small children and the home was very traditional,” Jarvis says. “They wanted it stylish, youthful and art-centric, but they also wanted their children to feel at home, with nothing off-limits.” A cherished abstract by Mary Page Evans that once belonged to the wife’s grandparents became the muse for the whole-house reboot.

It was a natural decision to locate the inspiration painting in the front hall and introduce the home’s refreshed mix of iconic midcentury designs, a streamlined black iron stair rail (complete with custom baby gates) and the exuberant

blues of the painting set off by elegant barely gray walls. “The fabulous custom stair rail and matching baby gates are perfect examples of the homeowners’ commitment to both family and style that continues throughout,” Jarvis says.

Underfoot, a dramatic riff on the traditional black-and-white-checked floor combines squares and parallelograms of white limestone and basalt in geometric splendor.

“Selecting a fairly neutral background allowed us to play with graphics and texture and to really let the artwork serve as the driving force,” Jarvis explains, adding that durable yet beautiful surfaces and fabrics welcome the children in every room. “Almost every fabric in the house is bomb-proof,” she says. “We stuck with vinyl, mohair, leather and velvet.” Hair-on hides play a key role on some furnishings as well as layered over more delicate rugs.



The front hall’s stair rail, lighting, flooring and artwork introduce a kind of symphonious geometry. “These types of tailored pieces go best with abstract paintings,” Jarvis explains, pointing out that she loves the buttoned-up lines of the vintage chandelier juxtaposed with the flowing exuberance of the abstracts. Vibrant blue vintage Seguso glass column lamps pair perfectly with the Mary Page Evans painting behind them that inspired the redesign of the entire house.

While nearly all of the home’s furnishings wear child-friendly fabrics, Jarvis made a concession with the family room’s notable pair of early Platner chairs, *below*. “The white Holly Hunt linen was too perfect to pass up with the prevailing whites here and in the adjoining kitchen,” she says, adding that treating the fabric repels stains.



Furnishings from a who’s who of acclaimed designers, including Warren Platner, Milo Baughman, Leon Rosen and Eero Saarinen, help generate the midcentury modern vibe that enhances the artwork. High-quality reproduction pieces and lighting fill in where needed. “The midcentury furnishings are as serious a collection as the artwork,” says Jarvis, “but we also had to evaluate those choices, not just for style but for comfort and survivability with family use.”

Ultimately, the clean-lined designs and quiet backdrop allow the owners’ art collection to take center stage, bringing color and matchless beauty to every space that stands up to everyday life.

“I love the unexpectedness of it all,” Jarvis says. “You can do something you’ve seen a thousand times, or you can do something that really reveals your passions. This home is a true reflection of the family who lives here.”

decorating with art

- **WARM THE BACKGROUND** Bright white walls work in a gallery setting but can be too stark for your home. Soft, warm colors make spaces more inviting while still showcasing art.
- **TAKE YOUR TIME** Your collection acquires a natural cohesiveness when you gather pieces you truly love over months and years. Hastily gathered artwork can appear stilted.
- **FILL IN MISSING PIECES** Take stock of your artwork and note colors, genres, topics, sizes and other attributes. Consider available walls in your home, your furnishings, lighting and other artwork, then determine what you may still need to balance each space so that you’re prepared to make a move when you spot your next piece.
- **COMPLEMENT YOUR COLLECTION** Layer in accessories and objects that accentuate what you love about the artwork, such as the fabulous lamps in the front entry of this home that play off the central abstract painting’s vibrant blue.



Lindsey Adelman fixtures over the island, *above*, and breakfast table “are very artistic, so they’re perfect for the house,” Jarvis says. “We also love that you can adjust them up or down to achieve the perfect look and illumination.” Bertoia counter stools with vinyl seats and a powder-coated finish are as durable as they are stylish.

Philippe Starck Ghost chairs add wispy elegance around the breakfast room’s Saarinen Tulip table, *left*. “I love that the chairs have a classic French silhouette translated to this modern material,” Jarvis says. “They’re a nod to the home’s traditional roots but are quirky, fun—and washable!”



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“I had to get up very early and stand in a dark field at an outdoor antiques sale to land a pair of 1960s Italian glass mirrors,” Jarvis recalls, revealing that Round Top, Texas, is one of her favorite resources for midcentury Italian glass. She flanked the library’s dark wood fireplace with her dazzling finds and contrasted them with “edgy raw-steel chests,” *above*. “Unexpected things make a traditional room feel fresh and young and not too precious,” she says.

Jarvis balanced the abundance of traditional mahogany in the library, *opposite*, with the golden glimmer of brass accents on the Nuevo desk chair. The desk receives daily use by the wife, with frequent visits from her small children, so Jarvis selected hide upholstery. “The patterned hide perfectly complements the chair and is virtually indestructible,” she says.

A Moroccan-style rug by Moattar, *right*, lightens the look of the mahogany-rich library and lends softness underfoot where children often tread. Grass-cloth wallcovering dials down the traditional style with natural texture that pairs very well with the prominent wood.





An Anthropologie mural, *above*, brings a whimsical vibe to a bedroom for a little girl “who really loves all kinds of creatures and animals,” says Jarvis. She added a fanciful antelope-patterned rug by Stark. The sweeping lines of the Restoration Hardware canopy bed heighten the fairy-tale feel, while white Pottery Barn nightstands offer bedside storage.

A Julian Chichester cloverleaf mirror above the Pottery Barn dresser, *left*, adds more storybook charm to the little girl’s room. “I think the lesson here is about mixing high and low and finding a wonderful balance—especially in a child’s room,” Jarvis says, pointing out that the mirror is a London import and the dresser can be ordered through a catalog.



A vintage Karl Springer tessellated horn-base desk picked up on Palm Beach’s Dixie Highway (also often referred to as Antique Row) grounds a small work area in the master bedroom, *opposite bottom right*. Abstract-printed velvet from Holly Hunt covers the vintage chair that completes the chic zone.

Beneath the master bedroom’s generous leather Hickory Chair bed, *below*, is a Moroccan-style rug by Moattar whose pattern echoes that of the railing on the deck outside. Framing the view are curtains made from linen that was hand-painted “in a modern riff on abstract splatter artwork to give it some painterly animation,” Jarvis explains.



An extra-tall ceiling in the nursery, *right*, served as an expansive canvas for this artsy ombré wall treatment. “We wanted to have fun with the scale of the room,” Jarvis says, adding that the vintage Van Teal lamp inspired the color scheme. Matched with a John Derian Moroccan pouf, the comfy Baughman swivel chair, upholstered in a happy orange indoor-outdoor velvet, provides a hit of complementary color.

Both mudroom and playroom, *below*, this space boasts custom-made lockers for each member of the family (including pets) as well as storage for craft supplies and playthings. The round table features a durable zinc top: the ideal surface for children to cut, glue and color on without worry.



The highlight of the breezy screened-porch sitting area, *above*, is a John Dickinson six-legged African table—an authorized casting by Sutherland. “It’s a statement that shows you can even bring style to a porch,” Jarvis says.

Palecek San Martin rope chairs surround the outdoor dining table, *left*, with comfort. “The owners love this really huge table with the white concrete top because they enjoy hosting big dinner parties out here,” Jarvis says. White Darryl Carter Tidal Vessel bowls add simple elegance to the tabletop.