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TROPICAL FUSION

A FAMILY'S ORANGE COUNTY HOUSE OFFERS A RESORT-LIKE SENSIBILITY THANKS TO ITS COLORFUL PALETTE, RICH MATERIALS AND FLUID INDOOR/OUTDOOR SPACES.

WRITTEN BY JOANNE FURIO PHOTOGRAPHY BY KARYN MILLET

INTERIOR DESIGN John Wooden and Dustin Dorr, ASID, John Wooden Interiors

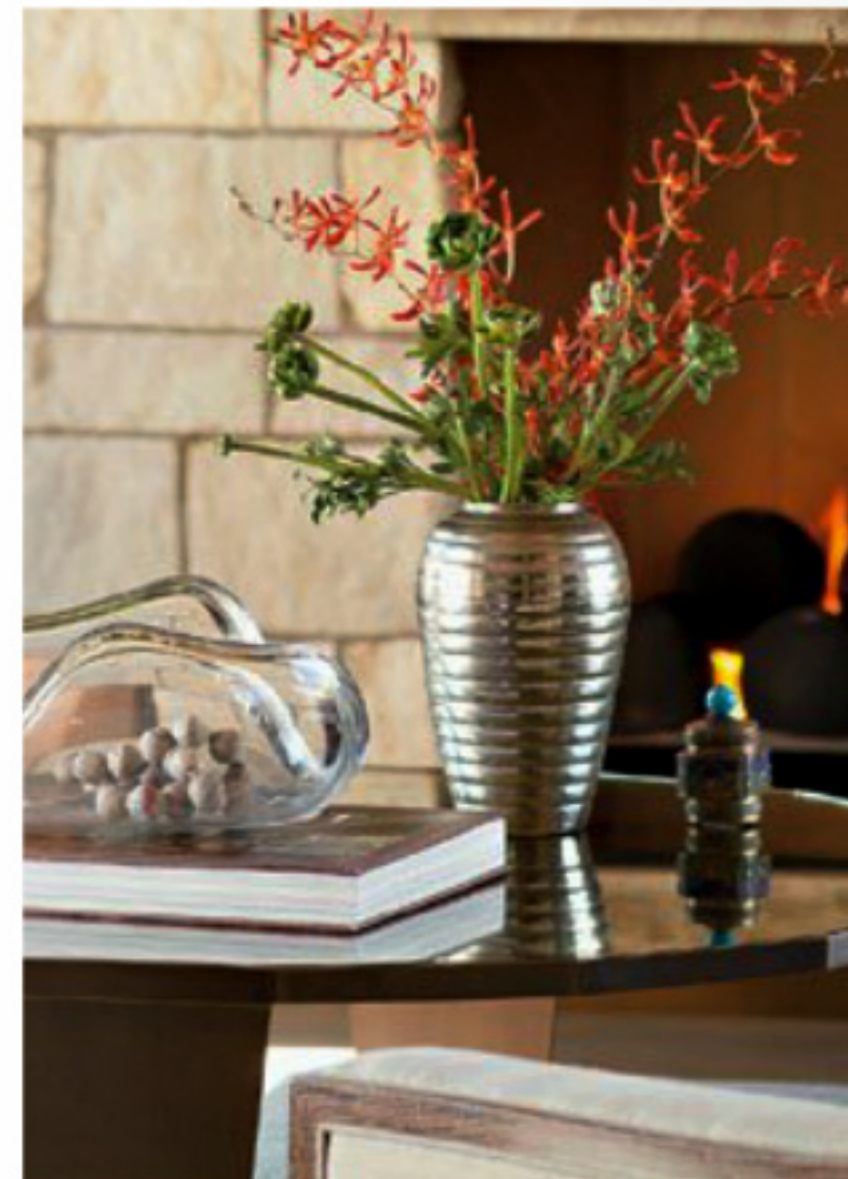
ARCHITECTURE Jeffrey A. Dahl, Jeffrey A. Dahl Architect

HOME BUILDER Bruce Roeland, Roeland Construction Inc. | **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE** Lisa Gimmy, ASLA, Lisa Gimmy Landscape Architecture

BEDROOMS 6 | **BATHROOMS** 8 | **SQUARE FEET** 7,460



Designers John Wooden and Dustin Dorr chose a Warren Platner dining set for the kitchen nook. *Top right:* Michael Berman Limited's Piedmont swivel chairs, covered with Jim Thompson silk, offer fireside seating in the living room. *Bottom right:* A bronze Gary Gibson table centers the group.



They say you can never go home again, but the old adage makes no mention of the town next door. In the case of an entrepreneur who grew up in Fountain Valley, the town next door is Huntington Beach, where the weather is fine, the beach close by and the lifestyle conducive to raising a family. He was living there with his wife when they found out she was pregnant with triplets. They quickly began looking for larger accommodations and discovered an old house on a lot across the street from a park. The location was perfect for their soon-to-be expanded family, but the house was not. And so they decided to tear it down and start from scratch. Having admired another residence in the neighborhood, they called on the same team—interior designers John Wooden and Dustin Dorr, architect Jeffrey A. Dahl and builder Bruce Roeland—to make it happen.

"They came to us with very specific criteria," says Wooden, who co-designed the house with Dorr. "They wanted a modern take on a Craftsman with a resort-like feel." The couple also loved the tropical indoor/outdoor



The navy-lacquer Poliform cabinets make a colorful statement in the kitchen, where back-painted glass tiles by Concept Studio complement countertops from Caesarstone. The fixture is from Satori Light Sculptures, and McGuire bar chair seats are upholstered with a metallic from Edelman Leather.

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lifestyle of Hawaii and wanted the house to evoke that relaxed sensibility. Through a careful selection of rich materials and thoughtful design details within a flowing layout, the house manages to hit all of those notes.

Dahl thought the Craftsman choice a good one, because it would tie in with historic homes in the town. "The challenge was to create a different interpretation of the Craftsman that would satisfy the owner's high-tech needs," Dahl explains. The husband wanted a fully automated home that would allow him to control all the systems, including lighting, window treatments and audiovisual, from every room. To accommodate the complex systems, "miles of wire went into the house," says Roeland.

To keep the scale of the structure in proportion with the neighboring homes, Dahl created a subterranean level for the gym, home theater and sauna. He placed the main public spaces on the first floor and then designed the second story to be only partly visible from the curb. He positioned the husband's office over the entrance (with a view of the park) and extended the private spaces back from there.

Inside, Wooden and Dorr worked with rich mahogany details—such as majestic 8-foot-tall doors—and gray-finished white oak floors. Initially, the wife thought the spaces would feel too masculine. However, that changed with the addition of elements like the living room's swivel chairs upholstered in four shades of silk and a De Gournay wallcovering adorned with hand-painted fish in the dining room. "Once the soft lines of the furnishings, some subtle patterns and pops of colors went in, she felt the feminine touch," says Dorr.



The hallway leading to the children's bedrooms is accented with draperies made from Great Plains linen and three tackboards so that each of the family's triplets has one. Rosemarie Allaire, who was responsible for the house's lighting design, selected the recessed downlights.



Hand-painted fish swim across a silk De Gournay wallcovering in the dining room, where a Liana S. pendant by Aqua Creations resembles a sea creature. The designers created the custom table and the Asian-inspired console. The Aileron chairs are by Holly Hunt.

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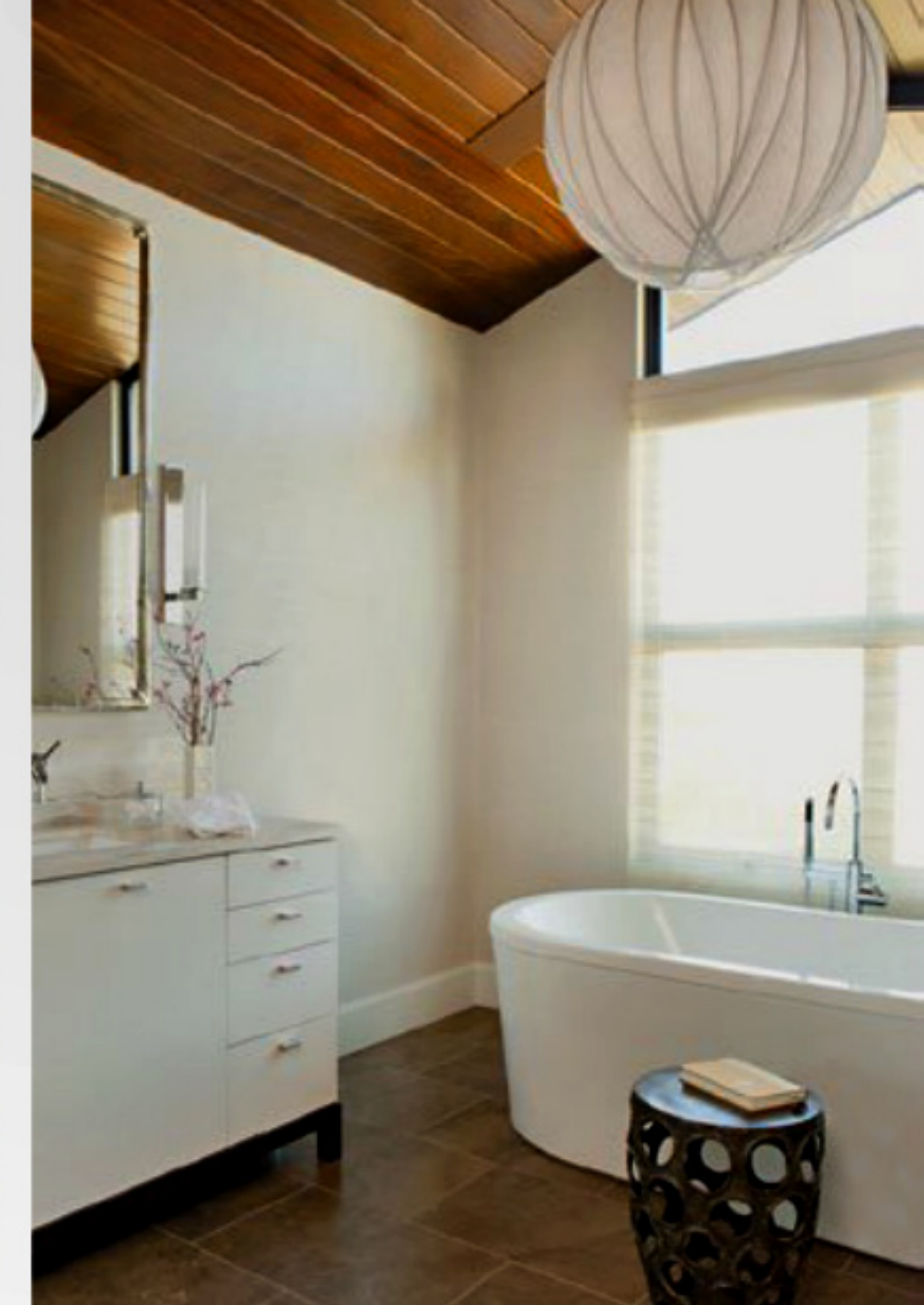
A coral shade of travertine surrounding the family room fireplace and a navy-lacquer Poliform kitchen helped establish the color palette. "Lots of color keep the interiors feeling young and cheerful," says Wooden. The eclectic mix of furniture, including contemporary, vintage and custom pieces, also keep things fresh. "Some of our custom pieces were inspired by Asian antiques, in a salute to luxury Hawaiian resorts," adds Dorr.

In addition to aesthetics, a huge design consideration was, of course, the kids. And while the house had to be easily navigable by the triplets, the furnishings still needed to be sophisticated enough for the parents. Off the kitchen, a Warren Platner dining set offers the benefit of indestructible fabric, while the weathered finish and rounded corners of a sculptural coffee table in the family room make for an equally hardy design.

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Designed as a tranquil retreat, the master bedroom is marked by a Fromental wallcovering that is hand-painted with cherry blossoms. The custom walnut bed is dressed with bedding from Barbara Martin Custom Linens, and the Eero Saarinen chairs were purchased from Jules Seltzer Associates.



Above: In the master bathroom, a travertine countertop from Walker Zanger crowns a lacquered custom cabinet. Fittings from Dornbracht finish off a tub from Hydro Systems, and the lantern is by Oregon artist Stephen White. Left: A vintage vase lends a graphic touch to the space.



Above: The walnut-clad fireplace wall in the family room is inset with a saltwater fish tank. A custom linen-covered sectional faces a sculptural eight-leg coffee table, which the designers created with a practical weathered finish. Right: A Buddha statue overlooks a koi pond near the front entry.



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Instead of a backyard, the couple requested an interior courtyard, which blends seamlessly into the family and living rooms through the use of 20-foot and 14-foot bifold glass doors. Landscape architect Lisa Gimmy had to “provide a lot of functionality and flexibility” in the 57-by-40-foot space. In addition to designing a pool and an infinity-edge spa, Gimmy also put in palm trees and bamboo to give the courtyard a tropical look and shade.

During the two-year process, most of the decision-making meetings took place at the couple’s old home so they could be near the children. So “the big reveal was quite astonishing,” says the husband. “It feels as if we’re on vacation,” the wife adds. “It’s like a resort, only more comfortable because it’s our home.” **L**



Architect Jeffrey A. Dahl designed the living room and library, separated by a stone fireplace with an integrated fish tank, to open onto a resort-like courtyard through bifold glass doors. Landscape architect Lisa Gimmy added palm trees for a tropical feel.