



Once and Future Design

NEW INTERIORS HONOR THE PAST

The Parisian past continues to recharge 21st-century interior design. We've had our Chateau moments this year with the publication of a new book on *La Maison de Verre*. We spent our Lalanne hours with new books on that French couple's bronze furniture fantasies. Edith Wharton, who became arguably the first American interior designer with her influential book *The Decoration of Houses*, is the subject of a mammoth new biography. And we continue to ferret out the less-iconic artists of 20th-century furniture design like Edward Wormley, Paul McCobb and T.H. Robsjohn-Gibbings for inspiration. Be assured, there is no lack of innovation or referencing the past on the part of today's designers. We look forward with anticipation each season to the variety of 21st-century interior design. Just turn the page.



ABOVE: The same ribbon-cut sapele mahogany veneer of the other rooms was brought into the kitchen to replace original white cabinetry; countertops are granite; kitchen footprint remained the same. Windows were enlarged to the view; original pass through to dining room was kept in place. OPPOSITE: Detail of living room and hallway art.

What interior designer Pamela Smith first urgently needed to do was push the delete button on a 1970s remodel of the home and restore the essence of the minimalist original architecture. Smith put her elegant aesthetic on every room she touched. "The house has complete character. I wanted to move it into the 21st century without changing Ruocco," says Smith.

What Smith also achieved was a recurring theme of pleasing circular forms. From the half round of the sconces, to a dining table and the hanging light fixtures, to pillow fabrics chosen for the living room and family room, and a custom table, the shapes are round.

Ruocco, who was a fellow in the San Diego Chapter of the American

Institute of Architects, was known to embrace the leafy wonders of outdoors and bring them into his buildings. In the Pecka residence, the original dining room had a large floor-to-ceiling pane of glass that still looks out to a glorious tree and small pond and stepping-stones to the front door. In the living room, which has a beautiful canyon view, the windows started 30 inches from the floor. Smith brought the glass down to the floor and opened two walls to the view.

Walls in the dining room and living room were the original ribbon sapele, an African mahogany, rich and seductive, though some of it was in need of repair. In a masterpiece of craftsmanship, the new quartered ribbon sapele veneer has been matched perfectly to





LIVING ROOM walls were matched to the original ribbon-cut sapele mahogany of the dining room. Bar in hall is original with new mahogany double-hung door and surrounding walls. Stainless-steel fireplace surround is new. Seating is a B&B Italia Charles sofa and Cassina Nest love seats; coffee table is custom design by Pamela Smith Interiors.

