

IN LIVING COLOR

Houston interior designer's contemporary home makes a stunning splash in Tanglewood

Houston Chronicle Sunday 23 Mar 2014 By Sarah Rufca

Courtney and Mark Elias almost missed out on their dream house — twice.

The couple were just starting out on a house hunt seven years ago

when Courtney fell in love with an unusual contemporary home in Tanglewood. Designed by Albert Pecore in 1982, the starkly modern white exteriors set it apart from the tradi-

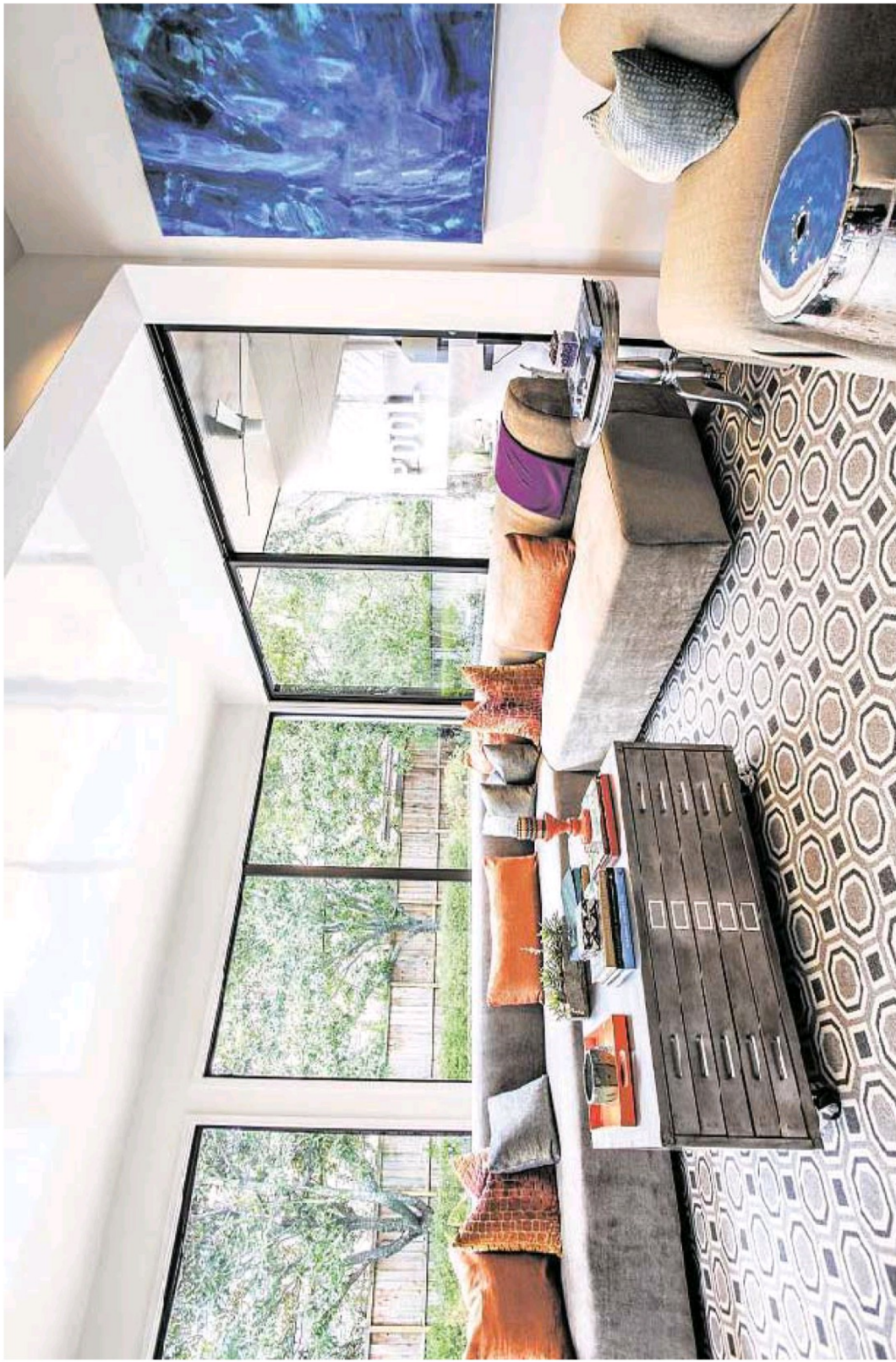
tional homes lining the rest of the block.

"We call it the 'Sesame Street' house," said Courtney Elias, an interior designer and the owner of Creative Tonic design studio. "One of these things is not like the others."

The Elias put in an offer, but twice found themselves on the losing end of a bidding war until the house's quirks turned off the winning bidders. For one thing, it has two sets of piers in the foundation due to an error during construction. For another,

the original owner, an oil man, was worried about gas explosions, so the house has no gas connections at all. Neither dissuaded the Elias, nor did the fact that the 4,800-square-foot house had only two real bedrooms while they have three sons.

Courtney Elias names her mother as her greatest inspiration, and that includes growing up in a series of houses that were always under construction or renovation. Accordingly, when they moved into their home, she revamped the rooms upstairs →



The coffee table in the family room is a converted flat form document file found by Courtney Elias at Round Top. "I love coffee tables with either a shelf or drawers. I can't stand to just have a table and waste all that room," said Elias. The custom sectional was designed with the help of Elias's friend, designer Jon Green.