

SOPHISTICATION AND COMFORT IN HORSE COUNTRY

A bicoastal dream team creates a back-road masterpiece

STORY BY **NORMAN KOLPAS**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MICHEL ARNAUD AND STEVE MUNDINGER**

HOUSE NOTES

"When we found this beautiful 6-acre property in horse country on the back road between Aspen and Snowmass, I knew I wanted to create a family sanctuary that felt like a work of art," says the lady of the manse. She and her husband, Chicago-based executives with two children in their 20s, had already begun construction on the 11,000-square-foot residence when they found the perfect bicoastal creative team to make it happen: famed Los Angeles-based interior designer Rose Tarlow, founder of the Melrose House collections of furniture, fabrics, lighting and accessories, and Arthur Chabon, AIA, a nationally respected architect who rose through the Manhattan office of legendary "modern traditionalist" Robert A. M. Stern before beginning his own practice in 1998 in Irvington, New York.

The homeowner diligently provided the duo with plenty of inspirational input. "I spent maybe 75 hours making a journal with photos of our family and how we lived, and images I cut out of things we liked and didn't like," she says. Then she and Tarlow embarked on two separate buying trips to Europe, with multiple stops in London, Paris, Brussels "and a lot of very out-of-the-way places an

hour's drive in every direction," she says. Shipped back to Colorado by the container load, the purchases ranged from centuries-old limestone fireplaces to botanical prints, wooden-bead chandeliers and Chinese calligraphy brushes. In combination with Tarlow's casual yet classic furniture selections, all were precisely positioned by the designer to feel as if they were collected naturally over time. Says Tarlow, "She wanted it to look sophisticated but not overdone, just comfortable."

Meanwhile, Chabon's interior architectural designs fashioned a perfectly harmonious setting, with rooms at once formal in appointments such as beamed ceilings and oak moldings, paneling and floors, and informal in a floor plan that is open, expansive and free-flowing, revealing fresh indoor and outdoor views at every turn. "We didn't slavishly follow classical or historical rules," says Chabon. "There's a sense of freedom."

In the process of participating actively in the successful three-year-long endeavor, the satisfied owner came away with a bonus she hadn't anticipated. "I've been to grad school twice," she says, "and I felt like I also got an MFA in design doing this project." »



In the living room, rich custom walnut moldings, deliberately designed to harmonize rather than match, frame both the doorway to the dining room and the built-in bookshelves. Occasional tables, sofas, and upholstery are all from Melrose House.



MICHEL ARNAUD

Right: European antique and flea market finds, including a 19th-century botanical print, add casual comfort and charm to the family room. Beyond is the kitchen, planned by the homeowner herself, which showcases a custom copper-nickel hood with decorative metal bands and hand-hammered rivets, crafted by François Guillemain of Firedance Studio. The kitchen counters are Absolute Black granite.

Below: Above the dining room's two tables, both by Rose Tarlow for Melrose House, hang 19th-century antique wooden beaded chandeliers found in a Paris flea market.



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—ROSE TARLOW,
INTERIOR DESIGNER

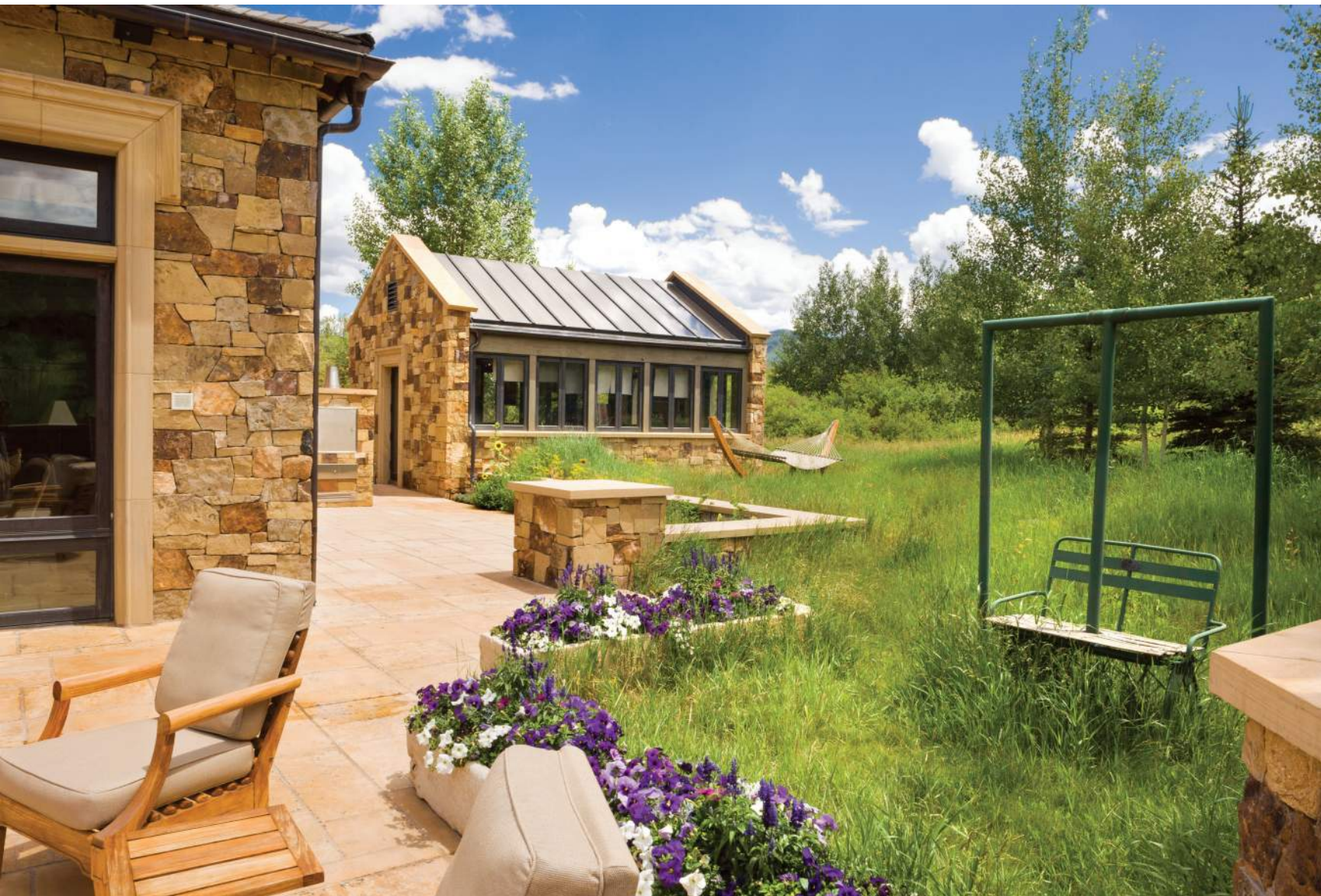


A reclaimed hemlock beam between the kitchen and family room adds old-world gravitas. The floor is reclaimed Cotswolds stone.

MICHEL ARNAUD



STEVE MUNDINGER



Opposite: From the terrace, a path leads to a studio built two years after the main house. The design was a collaboration between architect Arthur Chabon and the homeowner, a passionate artist. Custom maple cabinetry and a glass ceiling with motorized blinds provide an ideal creative space.

Above: Outside the family room is a terrace paved in French limestone. An old chairlift seat provides a spot to enjoy the garden.

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