

A Lasting Impression

ANTIQUES AND STATEMENT PIECES
TAKE ON A FRESH PERSPECTIVE IN A
HISTORIC PACIFIC HEIGHTS HOME.

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INTERIOR DESIGN AND INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE / SUZANNE TUCKER, TUCKER & MARKS INC.
HOME BUILDER / GLENN GOODMAN, GGD, INC.



Suzanne Tucker was all of 26 when she went to work for legendary designer Michael Taylor. She had a design degree from UCLA and had spent three years in the London office of one of designer John Fowler's last assistants, Peter Hood, when she finally got her foot in the door of Taylor's firm as his secretary. Within a month, he promoted her to his assistant. "You can't teach an eye for scale," he had told her. "And you've got it, kid." Following Taylor's death in 1986, Tucker went on to establish her own firm and make her name in the design world, but the lessons learned from the master of the "California look" still resonate with her. "I'll often find myself standing in a room thinking, 'What would Michael do here?'" she says. "It's not so much that I channel him, but he was such an influence."

So, when a longtime client downsized to a 4,000-square-foot house in Pacific Heights and asked her to design the interiors, Tucker felt that influence keenly. The client and her late husband had previously hired Taylor to design their much-larger home when Tucker was still his assistant. And as Tucker approached the design of the new house—built in 1908 and situated a half-dozen blocks away—she was presented with the opportunity to reimagine some of those statement-making pieces that Taylor originally discovered.

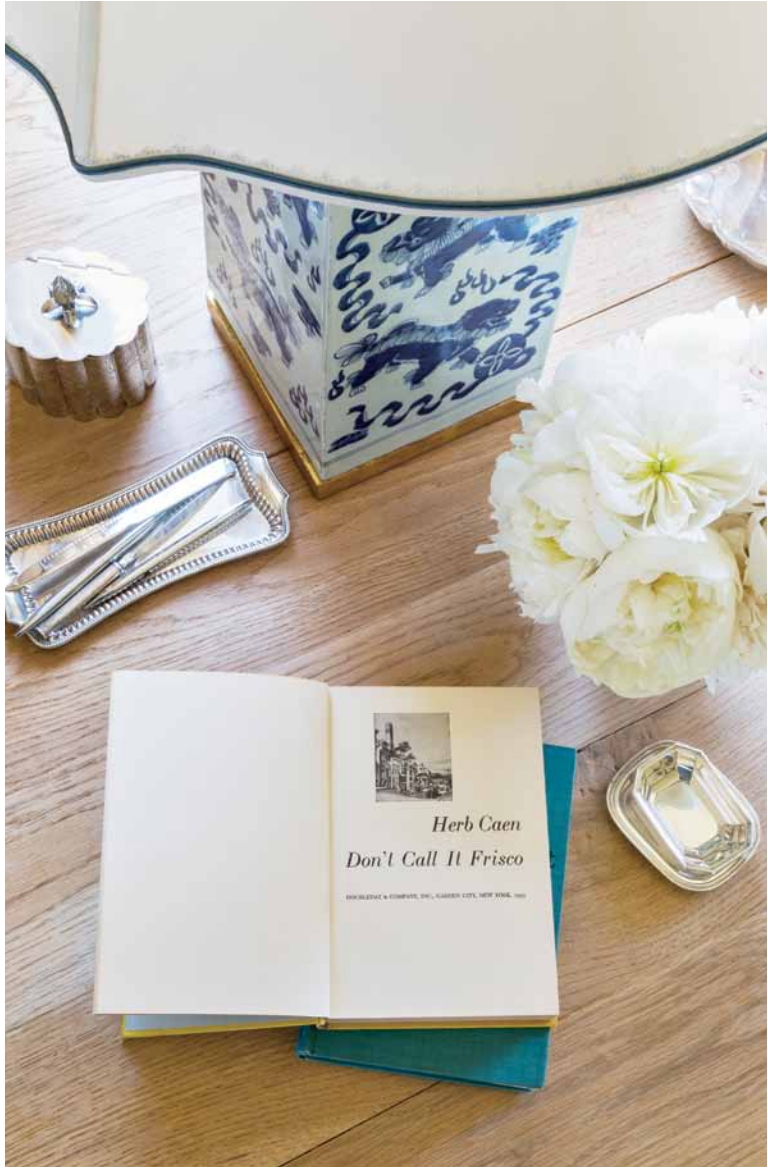
Although the new house had been extensively remodeled by the former owner, with the help of builder Glenn Goodman, the current owner wanted to put her own stamp on the place. After sizing up the rooms and discussing how the owner wanted to use the house, Tucker suggested ways for increasing both light and flow. Working with senior designer Amanda Ahlgren, she decided to gut the second floor's study, closet and bathroom and reconfigure the space into a serene master bathroom and dressing room. Transforming the existing skylight over the stair into a laylight was another move to add architectural interest and wash the house with light.



For the living room of a Pacific Heights home, designer Suzanne Tucker selected an antique Sultanabad rug from Mansour in Los Angeles. She also custom-designed a sofa upholstered with a Rogers & Goffigon Ltd fabric, and covered two chairs with Tamora Weave by Groundworks. The coffee table is by Ironies, and the painting is by Wayne Thiebaud.

Tucker hung a pair of 18th-century Venetian etched-glass mirrors with an engraved cartouche cresting, that Michael Taylor found for the client's former home, in the living room. The Louis XIII limestone mantel is from La Maison Francaise Antiques in Los Angeles. The sconce is from John Rosselli Antiques in New York.

Opposite: In the master bedroom, a circa 1890 English porcelain lamp (left) from Ralf's Antiques in Los Angeles rests on a table with a book by columnist Herb Caen. An 18th-century Austrian bleached-oak table (right) near the entry holds a vintage Chinese bowl.





Tucker, who worked with builder Glenn Goodman to update the interior architecture, gave the main floor a more casual flow by making the openings between the living room and the dining-family room symmetrical. The Ming Dynasty lacquer cabinet, one of a pair, is from H.M. Luther in New York. The artwork is by John Register.



Goodman also worked with the former owner to renovate the kitchen, which features antique English-pine columns and hemlock cabinetry. Tucker accented the space with woven bar chairs by The Wicker Works and a pair of ceiling lights from Ann-Morris in New York.

Downstairs, Tucker reconfigured a powder room and replaced the living room's marble fireplace with a 17th-century French Louis XIII limestone mantel, and also enlarged one opening in that room to match a second, creating greater symmetry and flow into the adjoining dining-family room. "That renovation turned what could have been a very formal living room into a much more approachable space," she explains.

Goodman, who had updated the home's mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems in the previous renovation, enjoyed the chance to work on the structure a second time. "The size of the house is deceiving," he says. "You can't really tell how big it is; it feels very comfortable."

He was especially pleased with the new master bathroom. "It has some amazing full-size marble slabs, and the floor is a custom marble mosaic to fit the space," he adds. "There wasn't a detail left untouched in that room."

With the renovation in full swing, Tucker and her client did a walk-through of the old house, perusing such impeccable pieces as a pair of 18th-century Venetian mirrors that Michael Taylor had found, among others. "Suzanne told me to pick out the pieces I really liked," the owner recalls. "Most of the upholstered items were too large, and I didn't think the mirrors would ever fit. But Suzanne said, 'I think we can do it.'" The mirrors are now positioned in the new living room, along with a sofa Tucker

For the dining-family room, Tucker hung a vintage pendant from Assemblage Ltd in Chicago above a custom-designed walnut pedestal table fabricated by Rose Tarlow Melrose House. The custom-made armchairs—wearing Ocelot fabric by Cowtan & Tout—are patterned after a Michael Taylor design, and the Bakhtiari rug is from Tony Kitz Gallery.





A custom hand-painted wallpaper by Gracie gives the master bedroom a garden-like feel. The bed features a Tucker & Marks-designed headboard covered with Rose Tarlow Melrose House linen from Shears & Window. A hand-embroidered Chelsea Textiles fabric covers the Califfa bench by Formations. The Kirman rug is from Doris Leslie Blau in New York.

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-SUZANNE TUCKER

A mosaic floor with tile by Waterworks marks the renovated master bathroom, where an acrylic fan chair from Caché in Los Angeles pulls up to an Art Deco-style mirror. A Regency-style verdigris lantern from Charles Edwards in London suspends from a new laylight above.



custom-designed for the space. However, a Chinese rug, which Taylor had originally selected for the old house, was too big for the new home, so Tucker found an antique Sultanabad that fit perfectly. “Being able to search for and find exquisite antique rugs makes all the difference,” she says. “I always tell my clients—even those who don’t like antiques—you have to have something in a room that’s old. Preferably older than you are.”

The owner’s art collection, which includes works by Wayne Thiebaud and John Register, also made the trek from the old home, but the bird-of-paradise-printed fabric used to upholster the walls of the master bedroom had been discontinued. In the new master bedroom,

Tucker suggested a custom-colored Chinoiserie paper embellished with birds and butterflies. “It brought back that feeling of falling asleep in a garden,” says Tucker. “The room is always washed with light, even on the grayest days.” In addition, two enormous gateleg tables that Taylor had found for the old house now flank the bed.

Tucker’s design throughout gracefully blends old and new, past and present. “Being able to place things in different ways in a new house gives you a fresh outlook on life,” says the designer. The client agrees. “It’s so fun to see your art and other things in a different place,” the owner says of the home and Tucker’s perfectly appointed interiors. “I haven’t rearranged a thing.” ■

Fabrics by Suzanne Tucker Home—including the linen Carita on the walls and Arabesque, a matelassé, used for the coverlet—define a guest bedroom. The Tucker & Marks-designed headboard is covered with a Clarence House fabric from Kneedler Fauchère. A 19th-century Italian lamp rests on a nightstand.