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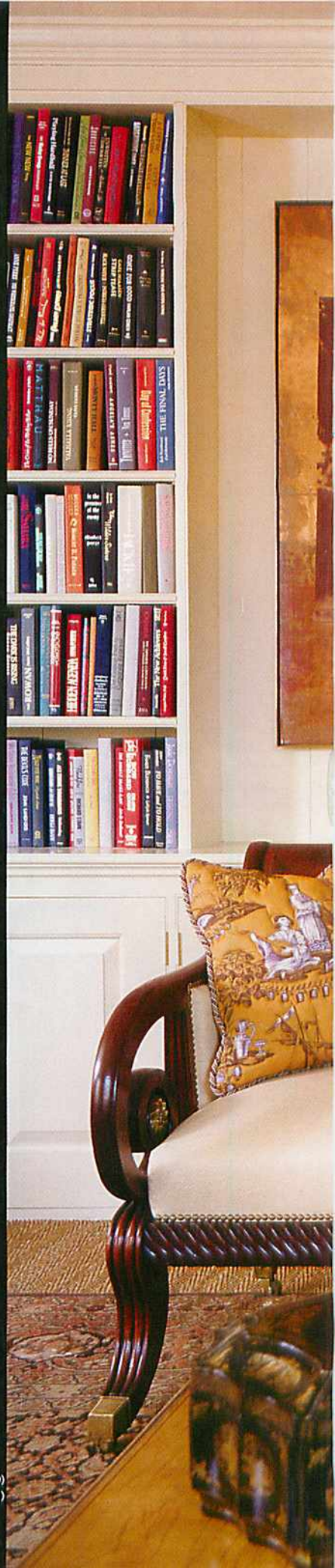
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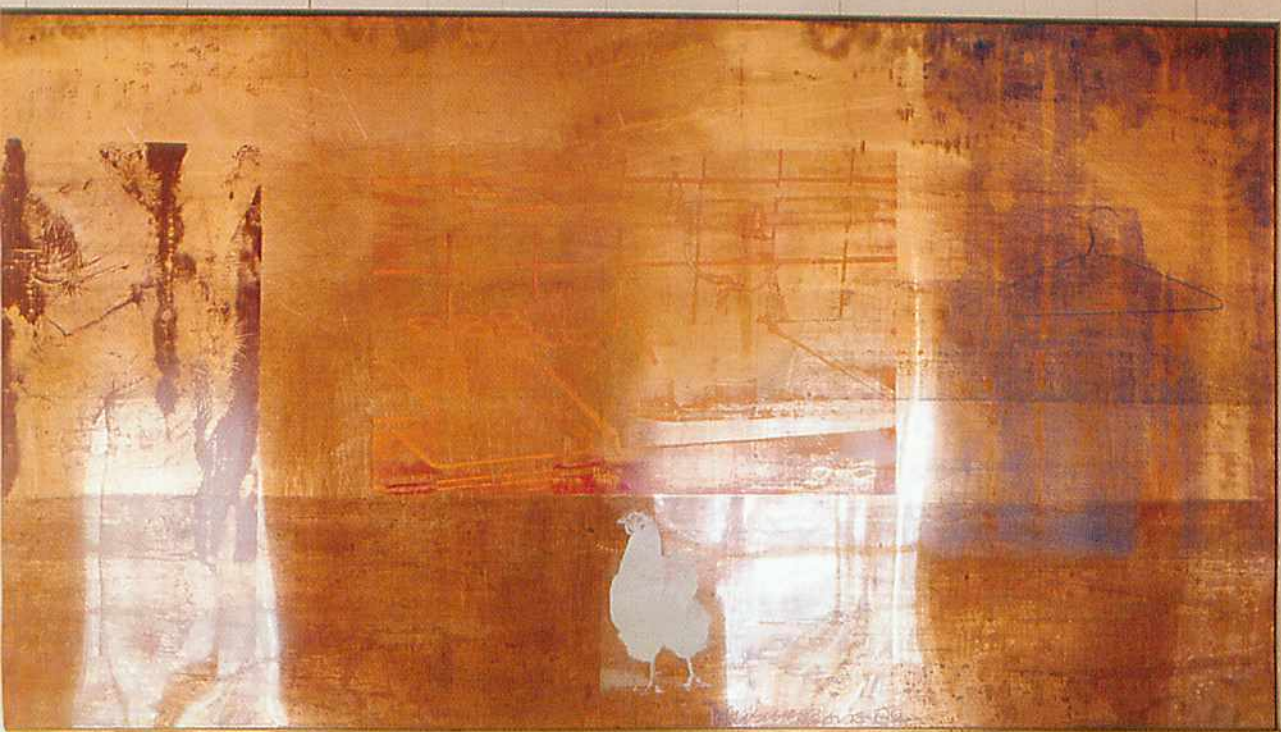
# Decorating With Art and Books

Walls adorned with artwork and books  
instantly warm a room  
and add personality.

By Kelly Ryan Kegans Photographer: Ross Chapple Field editor: Eileen Deymier (pages 44-49)  
Photographer: Alise O'Brien Field editor: Susan Fox (pages 50-51)







In the Philadelphia Show House, interior designer Carl Steele punctuated the classically designed space with a modern painting by American pop artist Robert Rauschenberg. "It plays on the warm butterscotch colors highlighting the space," Steele says.







Volumes of books surrounding the focal-point fireplace wrap this room, adding to the overall warmth of the space. White plaster horses, made by early-20th-century sculptor Walter Rotan of New York, accessorize the bookcases.





“A room without books is a body without soul.”



—statesman, orator, and author Cicero

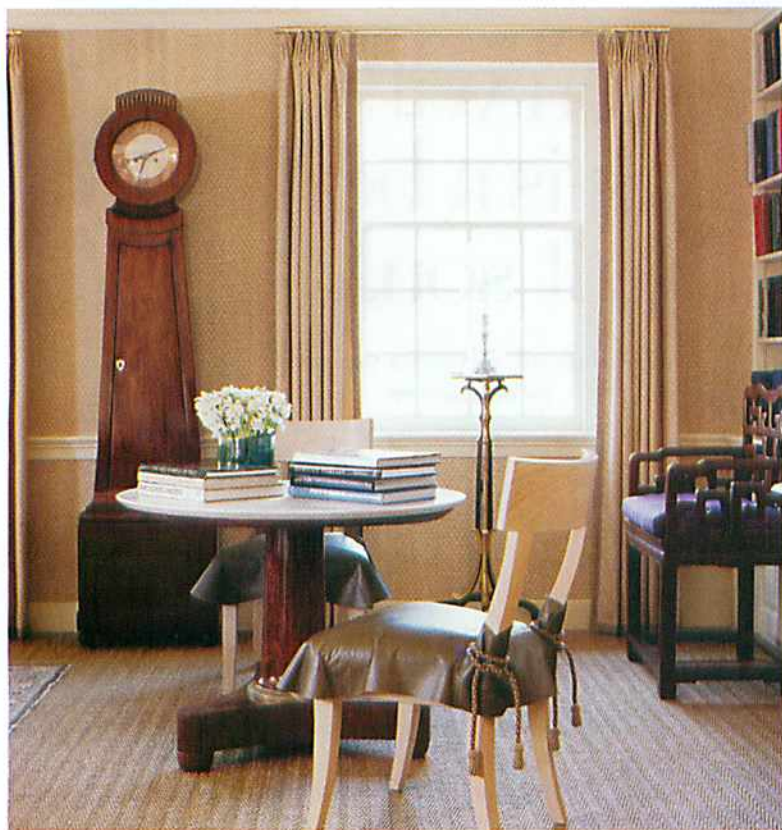
Many design and art professionals believe that what appears on the interior walls of a home speaks volumes about those who inhabit the space. Stephanie Hoppen, a London gallery owner, former dealer in antiquarian books, and author of *The New Decorating with Pictures*, agrees. “It is hard for me to relate to empty walls because I believe what you put on a wall says a great deal about yourself. Books and pictures: These two things add tremendous soul to a home,” she says. That’s why considering how books and art are arranged is almost as important as cultivating the objects themselves. Proper display will contribute to how much they will be viewed, enjoyed, and even conserved, Hoppen says.

To design a room around a collection or incorporate books and art into an overall scheme, interior designers advocate grouping like objects, adding built-ins if necessary for neatness, and creating a natural focal point. Any collection, from small and modest to extensive and grand, looks more important when similar objects with a common theme are grouped. If a collection, such as leather-bound books, small drawings, or a particular kind of porcelain, is extensive, it frequently requires a combination of wall surfaces and adjacent built-ins or étagères and tabletops. To avoid overcrowding and overwhelming a room, designers advise rotating items, perhaps bringing out collections or parts of them seasonally. Serious collectors often overcome the problem by regularly trading up, swapping lesser antiques or art for finer pieces as their eyes and resources improve.

## Displaying Books

Built-ins, freestanding bookcases, or étagères solve the problem of overly crowded tabletops. Adjustable shelves are a reasonable option for collectors, particularly for those who are likely to swap out items of varying sizes. If heavy books are part of the display, each shelf span requires reinforcement every 28 inches to avoid sagging. Picture lighting, added to the exteriors of built-ins, gives a pleasing gallery feel to a room where at least one wall features floor-to-ceiling shelves. A common way to display art and design





books is to stack them on a large round table. "A lot of designers have a central stool that can double as a table, and it's interesting to pile books up to have four piles of books that relate to art and interior design," Hoppen says. The author also uses a chest at the foot of her bed for stacking "waiting to be read" books.

## Arranging Art

To display art, the best advice from designers and galleries is the simplest: Hang the most important artwork where it is most visible and most enjoyed. In practice, this translates into hanging art at seated eye level. The natural tendency is often to hang art too high, especially in rooms with 10-foot or higher ceilings. With high, sometimes soaring ceilings, often the norm in newer houses, designers may incorporate tall vertical elements, such as cartoons—wall drawings with patterns copied from tapestries—that fit the scale of the spaces. Other options for dealing with high ceilings include stacking paintings rather than scattering them around the room, or installing a picture rail that allows for the rotation of framed, wire-hung art.

Art and collections work well when displayed as a natural focal point—such as above a mantel—or grouped on the most prominent wall as a primary or secondary focal point. A favorite painting or cherished family portrait is an obvious and pleasing choice above a mantel; a creative arrangement may incorporate brackets for display. Used in this manner, brackets flank or







This photo: For reading and writing at a comfortable height, Steele introduced a writing table in the library. **Opposite:** To allow more light into the space, he extended the drapes beyond the borders of the window and had mirrors installed in the recessed wall areas abutting the window frame.





**This photo:** In this Houston study, artwork by 19th- and 20th-century American artists is grouped in a pleasing display above the sofa. **Opposite top:** The arrangement is complemented by books and a plate collection nestled in built-in bookshelves that flank the sofa. **Opposite bottom:** The symmetrical treatment of artwork is echoed throughout the space.



“  
Art is the  
only way  
to run  
away  
without  
leaving  
home.”

—choreographer  
Twyla Tharp



surround a mirror or artwork or part of the collection. Other important pieces may be displayed on the mantel.

A generously sized foyer or upper-level hall may work well to display collections of neatly arranged artwork, such as prints or art photographs. Likewise, the stairwell, particularly when open to an entrance hall, provides a stunning setting for groups of collected paintings or drawings, such as antique botanical prints or small oil paintings. An upstairs hall connecting family bedrooms or a private back stairwell is ideal for grouping framed family photographs, new or vintage. Hoppen recommends freshening your family portraits with new mats and vintage frames. “Don’t ignore your photographs; [they are] very warm and show our human side,” she says.

Resources on page 108



California; 805/695-8180.  
**PAGE 38 (left)**  
**Tub, fixtures**—Waterworks; 800/899-6757; [www.waterworks.com](http://www.waterworks.com). **Rug, glass cotton and soap containers**—Rue de Lillie Antiques, Summerland, California; 805/695-8180. **Cabinetry refinishing**—Viscarras Furniture Refinishing, Goleta, California; 805/967-7615.  
**Towels**—Yves Delorme; 800/322-3911; [www.yvesdelorme.com](http://www.yvesdelorme.com).  
**PAGE 39**  
**Throw pillows**—Rue de Lillie Antiques, Summerland, California; 805/695-8180. **Shade for lamp on bombé chest**—M. Freeborn Studios, Summerland, California; 805/695-0373. **Chairs flanking bombé chest**—Englishman Fine European Antique Art & Furnishings, Vail, Colorado; 970/476-3570. **Settee, coffee table**—Summerhill Antiques, Etc., Summerland, California; 805/969-3366. **Flooring** antique French oak, custom finish—Cavendish Grey, Los Angeles; 323/653-2230.  
**PAGES 40-41**  
**Toile bowl with artichokes, majolica in armoire**—Rue de Lillie Antiques, Summerland, California; 805/695-8180. **Red-and-white plates stacked on table**—Spode, through Royal China & Porcelain Cos., Inc.; 800/257-7189; [www.spode.co.uk](http://www.spode.co.uk). **Range, ovens**—Viking Range Corp.; 888/845-4641; [www.vikingrange.com](http://www.vikingrange.com). **Stove backplate**—Europa, Santa Barbara; 805/899-4164. **Scale on counter**—Englishman Fine European Antique Art & Furnishings, Vail, Colorado; 970/476-3570. **Wire basket on counter**—Rue de Lillie Antiques, see above. **Door** custom—Couture Concepts, Santa Barbara; 805/962-9519. **Flooring** antique limestone—Cavendish Grey, Los Angeles; 323/653-2230. **Stonework on wall**—Pat Scott Masonry, Santa Barbara; 805/683-9194.  
**PAGES 42-43**  
**Chair by skirted table; chair fabric; toile plate on table; accessories on bureau; bed; design of duvet, shams, dust ruffle, and draperies**—Rue de Lillie Antiques, Summerland, California; 805/695-8180. **Fabric for skirted table, duvet, shams and dust ruffle, draperies**—Susan Willis,

Ltd., Carpinteria, California; 805/684-5085. **Sheets**—Yves Delorme; 800/322-3911; [www.yvesdelorme.com](http://www.yvesdelorme.com).  
 For more about French decorating at home, see [www.bhg.com/sipfrenchtwist](http://www.bhg.com/sipfrenchtwist).

## Decorating with Art And Books

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**Interior designer**—Carl Steele, Carl Steele Associates, Inc., 1606 Pine St., Philadelphia, PA 19103; 215/546-5530.

**Wall color** HC-32 Satin Impervo—Benjamin Moore; for the location nearest you, call 800/672-4686; [www.benjaminmoore.com](http://www.benjaminmoore.com) [P].

**Coffee table**—Hinson & Co., New York City; 212/475-4100 [T].

**Upholstery fabric for chairs, sofa**—Old World Weavers, New York City; 212/355-7186; [www.old-world-weavers.com](http://www.old-world-weavers.com) [T]. **Wall, drapery fabric** Grove Brothers, **carpeting, area rug**—Stark Carpet Corp., New York City; 212/752-9000; [www.starkcarpet.com](http://www.starkcarpet.com) [T].

**PAGES 50-51**  
**Architect**—Brent Nyquist, Atticus Architecture & Design, 2444 Times Blvd., Suite 236-H, Houston, TX 77005; 713/526-1978; [www.atticusarch.com](http://www.atticusarch.com). **Wall color** #059—The Sherwin-Williams Co.; 800/474-3794; [www.sherwin-williams.com](http://www.sherwin-williams.com). **Sofa**—Baker; 800/592-2537; [www.bakerfurniture.com](http://www.bakerfurniture.com). **Sofa fabric** Clarise Woven Texture, **slipper chair fabric** Elephants cotton print—Brunschwig & Fils; 800/538-1880; [www.brunschwig.com](http://www.brunschwig.com) [T]. **Fringe for slipper chair** Cyrano Moulinee & Traviate Suite de Tete—Passementerie, Inc.; New York City; 212/355-7600 [T]. **Seagrass rug** Herringbone—Stark Carpet Corp., New York City; 212/752-9000; [www.starkcarpet.com](http://www.starkcarpet.com) [T].

**Prints purchased through the following dealers:**  
**Meredith Long Galleries**, Houston; 713/523-6671.  
**Hirschl & Adler, Inc.**, New York City; 212/535-8810.  
**Susan Sheehan Gallery**, New York City; 212/489-3331.



## Seaside Retreat

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**Interior designer**—Gary McBournie, Gary McBournie, Inc., 33A N. Main St., Sherborn, MA 01770; 508/655-3887.

**Architect**—Tom Berentes, Hannacroix, 139 Main St., Nantucket, MA 02554; 508/228-0957.

**Landscape designer**—Bonne Kehoe, Little Flower—Cottage Garden Design, P.O. Box 54, Siasconset, MA 02564; 508/257-6803. **THROUGHOUT**

**Lighting, wiring**—Blanche P. Field, LLC, Boston; 617/423-0715; [www.blanchefield.com](http://www.blanchefield.com) [T]. **Framing of artwork**—Roger E. Lussier, Inc., Boston; 617/536-0069.

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**Rattan settee, chaise, and chairs** Gazebo #81132, 81134, 81131 (not recommended for outdoor use)—Crate & Barrel; 800/996-9960; [www.crateandbarrel.com](http://www.crateandbarrel.com) (product line varies). **Striped umbrella fabric** #2308-03 Porquerolles/Giroflee Bleu Matelot—Pierre Frey, New York City; 212/213-3099 [T]. **Pillow and cushion fabrication**—Drape It, Inc., Watertown, Massachusetts; 617/926-8864.

**PAGES 55-56**

**Drapery fabric** discontinued—Scalamandré; 800/932-4361; [www.scalamandre.com](http://www.scalamandre.com) [T]. **Trim for draperies** discontinued, **sofa fabric** discontinued—Zimmer + Rohde; 866/627-6899; [www.zimmer-rohde.com](http://www.zimmer-rohde.com). **Fabrication of draperies**—Drape It, Inc., Watertown, Massachusetts; 617/926-8864. **Wall paint**—

Benjamin Moore; for the location nearest you, call 800/672-4686; [www.benjaminmoore.com](http://www.benjaminmoore.com) [P].

**PAGE 58 (top left)**

**Table**—Rafael Osona Auctions, Nantucket, Massachusetts; 508/228-3942; [www.rafaelosonauction.com](http://www.rafaelosonauction.com). **Landscape painting diptych** *Mioxes Pond*—Illya Kagan, Illya Kagan Studio, Nantucket, Massachusetts; 508/325-0302; [www.illyakagan.com](http://www.illyakagan.com).

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**Wall fabric** #89318.01/349 La Seyne Check in Honey—Brunschwig & Fils; 800/538-1880; [www.brunschwig.com](http://www.brunschwig.com) [T].

**Fabrication of wall covering**—Drape It, Inc., Watertown, Massachusetts; 617/926-8864.

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**Roman shade and pillow fabric** #16281-003 Breezy Point in Sky Blue—Scalamandré; 800/932-4361; [www.scalamandre.com](http://www.scalamandre.com) [T].

**Fabrication of Roman shade, pillow**—Drape It, Inc., Watertown, Massachusetts; 617/926-8864.

**Drapery fabric** #0261 Gauze in White, **headboard fabric** #7153 Telluride Denim in Blue—Henry Calvin Fabrics; 888/732-1996; [www.henrycalvin.com](http://www.henrycalvin.com) [T]. **Bed skirt fabric** discontinued—Osborne & Little, New York City; 212/751-3333; [www.osborneandlittle.com](http://www.osborneandlittle.com) [T].

**Blue-and-white checked quilts**—Ralph Lauren Home; 888/475-7674; [www.rhhome.polo.com](http://www.rhhome.polo.com) (product line varies). **Bed canopy fabric** #89404-281 Newton woven stripe in Denim—Brunschwig & Fils; 800/538-1880; [www.brunschwig.com](http://www.brunschwig.com) [T].

**Fabrication of headboard**—Connors Design, Ltd.,