



**Revival
Romance**

**TIMELESS COLORS
WORK THEIR MAGIC
TO REFRESH
A 1920s HOUSE.**

INTERIOR DESIGN *Thomas Callaway*
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Interior designer Thomas Callaway brought warmth and romance to a 1929 Spanish Colonial Revival house in Los Angeles when he roused its icy white interior with color. In the entry, walls were painted in modulated golden tones to mimic limestone. Goya table, Panache Designs. **OPPOSITE:** The spectacular stenciled ceiling was restored by painter Esther Carpenter.

HB's PAINT PICKS
 ● Crème Brûlée ● Bullfrog
 ● Rare Sienna, all by Valspar.



A soft, buttery glaze on the walls gives the living room a golden glow. Callaway chose rich, mellow fabrics "that look as if they could be remnants of old-world textiles," he says. The sofa is upholstered in Kravet's Bolgheri. Square pillows, Folk Manor House by Scalamandré. Antique tapestry pillow, Y&B Bolour. Curtains in Rose Cumming's Grayson.



BARBARA KING: Given your passion for historical architecture and restoration, did you find it exciting to revitalize a 1929 Spanish Colonial Revival house?

THOMAS CALLAWAY: Thrilling. There were so many remarkable details that were begging to be played up, to make them really sing. The house had been renovated in 2001, and thankfully, original details like the stenciled ceilings and beams, stained-glass windows, and checkerboard entry floor had been left intact. But the entire interior was painted white. As my clients, Brad and Julie Shames, said, it was ice cold.

So it desperately needed to be brought back to life?

Did it ever. My job was to give it warmth and romance with color, and to enhance its period style with the furnishings and fabrics so that it felt like a house from the '20s that was still in great shape, and not freshly done. Even when I start from scratch with the architectural framework, my goal is to make the style specific, not a mishmash of periods. At the same time, I didn't want this place to feel like a stodgy re-creation or a museum—it's a more airy take on the era, my own interpretation.

Can we make a quick detour and touch on your past? You were an actor for 20 years.

Acting was a childhood dream. I had a love affair with the Wild West, and I wanted more than anything to be a movie cowboy like Shane, galloping on a horse, six-shooter blazing. I first acted in soap operas and onstage in New York, but then I came to Hollywood and got TV and film roles—several of them, happily, in Westerns.

How is it that you made the switch to interior and residential design?

Well, for one thing, it just seemed to come



ABOVE: "When I painted the billiards room blue, it leapt to life," Callaway says. Custom hue on walls and ceiling. **OPPOSITE:** Callaway pulled his colors from the floor tile to amplify the Moroccan spirit. Banquette covered in Quadrille's Cadet Stripe. Curtains in a Kravet linen.

naturally to me. I'd done my own house in Brentwood, a Spanish rancho-style hacienda that ended up being featured in magazines and design books. The phone began to ring, I did some jobs for people while I was still acting, and eventually I thought, This is what I'm meant to do. So I put up a shingle and started a new career. I'm totally self-taught, but miraculously, it has worked out extremely well.

You also seem to have an innate color sense, a painter's instinct for knowing how to use it to create moods.

I do think that's one of my strengths. I studied studio art for a year in Europe when I was in college, so that certainly trained my eye. I like colors that you can't put your finger on rather than on-the-nose colors where you say, 'Oh, that's turquoise.' They're usually muddier, a little off, and they shift tones with the changing light. I find elusive colors much more evocative of emotion, and in a historical structure, more evocative of a sense of time.

Why did you run the gamut from soft and light to deep and intense colors here?

We started in the living room, and the first

thing my clients asked was, 'Can you give it a feeling of being suffused with a golden light?' I instantly thought the plaster walls should be done in a soft, buttery, translucent glaze. And the gray-green curtains have a gold thread running through the fabric that throws off little glints as light hits them. Then we carried that golden glow into the entry, but we faux-painted those walls to look like limestone. For the dining room, which is on the other side of the entry, I suggested a pinkish-peach blush. In candlelight, it's beautiful on people's skin.

What came next?

I felt that the library would be the perfect place to go with the boldest, darkest color, to make it cozy. So we applied a custom glaze to the walls that's a cross between Pompeian red and terra-cotta. We painted the ceiling light blue for contrast, lending a sense of more height to the room.

There's another even more striking red-and-blue combination in the billiards room.

I pulled those shades from the floor tile to give the room a dramatic Moroccan vibe. With that voluminous coved ceiling, I find it one of the most romantic spaces in this home. Once I painted the walls and ceiling blue-gray, it just leapt to life in a wonderful way. I liked the Moroccan effect so much, I did it again in the guest room. But I used a deeper tone, a beautiful blue-green that unifies the bedroom and the dressing room and creates depth when you look through the arched doorway.

Do you have a favorite color?

Not really. But I just launched a line of hand-printed Belgian linens for Holland & Sherry, and of all the colors I used, I think burnt orange is probably my favorite. It pops with other colors.



ABOVE: The tiles on a raised Jacuzzi create a focal point at the end of the pool. French doors open to the poolhouse. **BELOW:** Callaway is a self-taught designer who once had a career as an actor. **RIGHT:** The dining room is bathed in a blushed peach that gives the room a twilight aura "and really flatters the complexion," Callaway says. Woodwork is painted in faux grained walnut. Country Trestle table, Emanuel Morez. Barcelona dining chairs by Panache Designs, covered in a Kravet fabric. Antique Pakistani rug.



LEFT: The breakfast room holds a custom table and chairs in a Schumacher fabric; the clients' mahogany breakfront was painted blue-green to set off their pottery. **ABOVE:** Neutral tones prevail in the family room. Highgrove sofa by Thomas Callaway Benchworks in a Jeffrey Stevens fabric. **BELOW:** The guest-room colors have a Moroccan flavor. Walls are painted in Benjamin Moore's Wythe Blue. The headboard is covered in Hanover and pillows in Balerno, both by Pindler. Chest, Horchow.



"The library seemed like the perfect place to go with the boldest of color choices," Callaway says. "It's a cross between Pompeian red and terra-cotta, with light and dark variations." For contrast, he had the ceiling painted light blue and embellished the cove with a gilded stencil design. Vintage French bar cabinet and club chairs. Round table, Lee Stanton Antiques.



For the master bedroom, Callaway designed a headboard with "Mediterranean exuberance" and painted bedside tables to complement the Cowtan & Tout damask upholstery. Pillow in a Kravet satin velvet. **OPPOSITE:** Benjamin Moore's Hint of Mint on the walls and the antique crystal sconce and chandelier make for a peaceful but sparkling bedroom. The custom bench is covered in Sheila Coombes's Nomad velvet. FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES

