

THE *girl* NEXT DOOR

A homeowner's parents had lived next door for years. Eventually, it became time for her to move in and start anew.

INTERIOR DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL PLANNING BY THOMAS CALLAWAY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER VITALE WRITTEN BY CANDACE ORD MANROE



Opening pages: In the living room of a Tudor-style home in Los Angeles, the sofa, custom designed by interior designer Thomas Callaway, is covered in a Ralph Lauren fabric; custom club chairs use Lee Jofa. A nineteenth-century French table was cut to coffee-table height; the English serpentine-skirt dresser dates from the nineteenth century. This page: Photographs of artists line the stair wall.

A 1930s Tudor-style cottage in Los Angeles had been in the family for years. While the new homeowners wanted interiors that were fresh, they also wanted to preserve the memories of the home, not the easiest directive for any interior designer to honor, but Thomas Callaway met the challenge.

His clients, Jan Stanton and her husband, Richard Holz, moved into the home that had once been owned by Stanton's late parents since 1976. As it turned out, Stanton and Holz had been living next door to it, in a larger house in which they had raised their five children.

It was a residence whose rooms were defined by classic Tudor-style details, such as textured plaster walls, vaulted beamed ceilings, and multi-paned casement windows. "Our attempt was to focus on the original architecture and make it the primary point of view," says Callaway, who worked with Holz's construction company to implement the changes.

The living room's original wood ceiling and the dramatic gallery above the master bedroom were so architecturally distinct that Callaway and the clients agreed to leave them untouched, though a faux-finish painter evened out and refreshed the stain in both areas. "Tom was fantastic at improving many of the details throughout, like finishing the casings around the windows and doors in a more authentic and charming way," says Stanton. Callaway implemented other changes, too, that were sensitive to the prevailing architectural

style, notably designing a Gothic-style wooden archway into the living room.

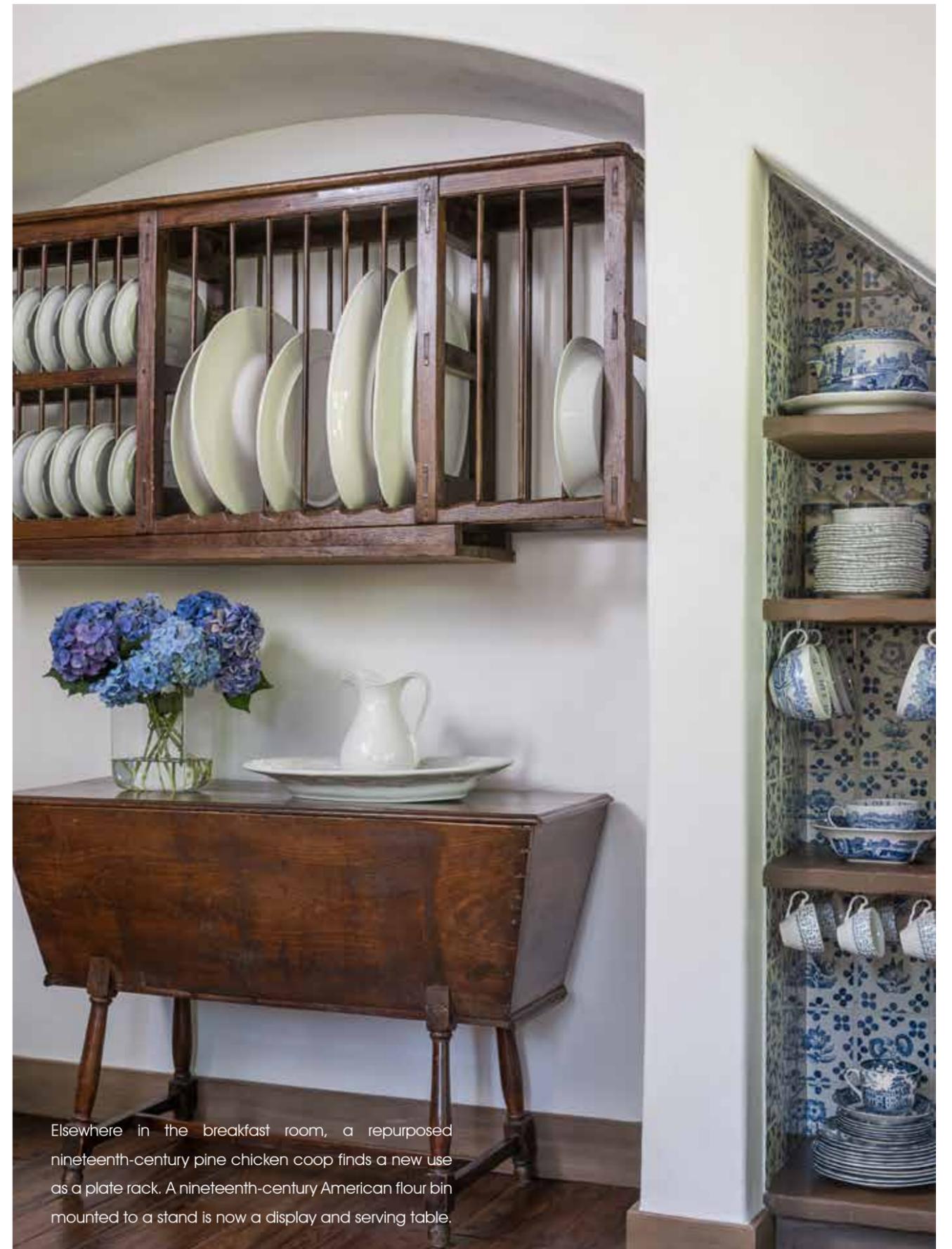
Callaway was determined to redefine the living room, which had felt overly formal, into a space with a relaxed cottage feel. He introduced upholstered custom furnishings in muted tones. "The pieces don't look like something that was recently made," Callaway stresses. Plus, the white walls give the room a "cohesive quietness," he notes.

Among the most striking attributes of the home's interiors, especially following Callaway's work, is a constant interplay between light and dark. To establish a visual foil to the large expanses of dark wood, Callaway had many of the walls hand-troweled with heavy, textured plaster painted pure white. "The undulations feel historically correct," he says, "while the all-white shade gives the rooms "a bright, spare, almost monastic feel."

At the staircase, Callaway added handsome walnut-hued wainscoting to establish an even greater contrast with the white walls. He incorporated shades of gray on the railing and risers to enhance the effect of the staircase as a whole. The space is flooded now with natural light via a multi-paned skylight Callaway designed and that he had cleverly trimmed with wood to match that used on the staircase. The skylight is a subtle, but effective echoing of materials and form. Meanwhile, the couple's collection of black-and-white



In the breakfast room, nineteenth-century Windsor chairs are situated around an antique English oak gate-leg table. Handpainted, Portuguese tiles surround the firebox. The lighting fixture above is a nineteenth-century French oil lamp.



Elsewhere in the breakfast room, a repurposed nineteenth-century pine chicken coop finds a new use as a plate rack. A nineteenth-century American flour bin mounted to a stand is now a display and serving table.



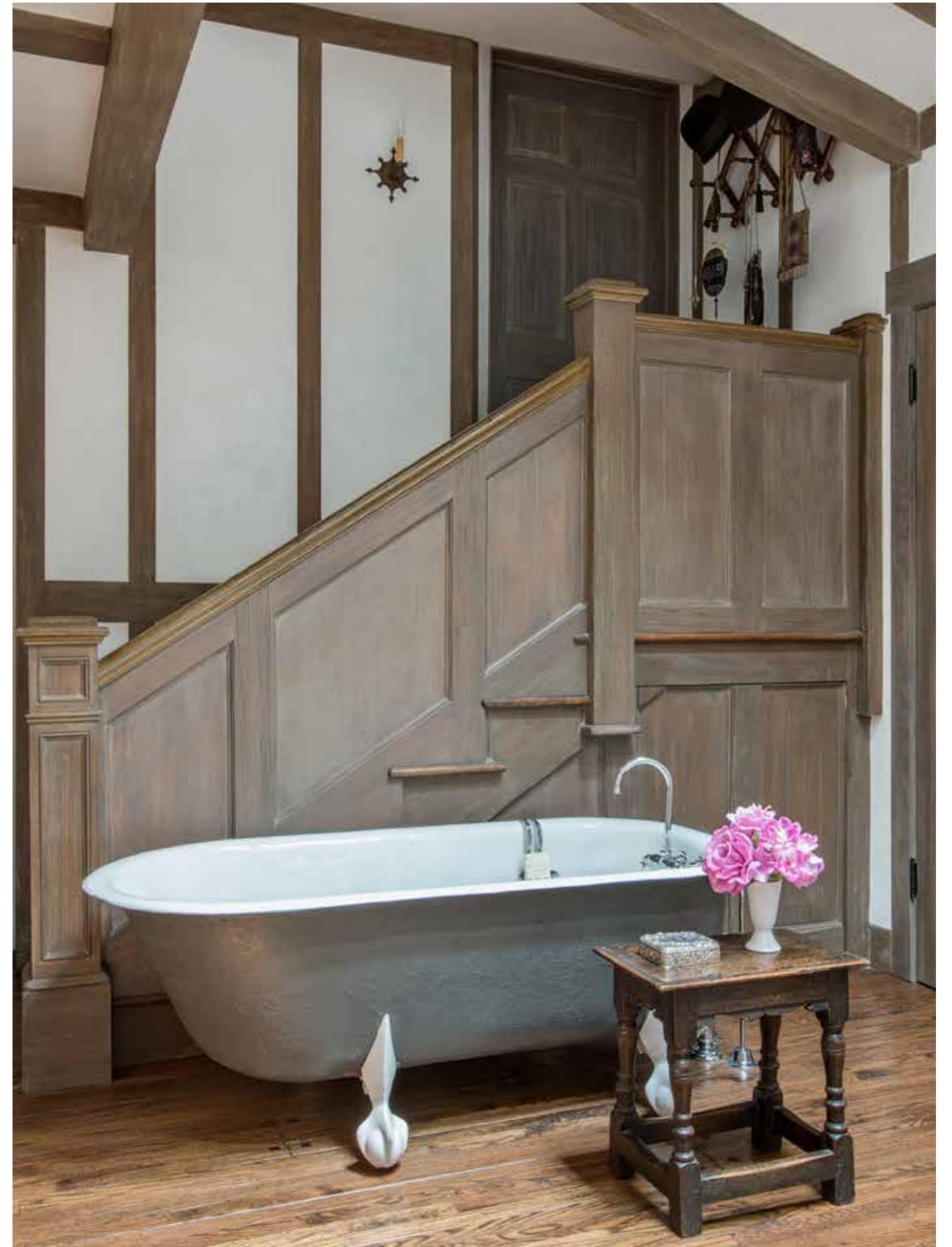
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Left to right: The Wolf cooktop is surmounted by concrete shelves displaying Pillivuyt ironstone. Oranges in a Villeroy & Boch bowl and peonies in vintage Staffordshire are atop a nineteenth-century French pine table. The kitchen's chandelier is a nineteenth-century French cast-iron double-yoke with milk shades. The butler's pantry stores Apilco ironstone from Williams Sonoma. Cabinetry color is Benjamin Moore's Arctic Shadow.



This page: A duvet cover in Ralph Lauren fabric adorns the nineteenth-century cherrywood bed. The custom settee, designed by Callaway, is upholstered in Schumacher linen. Right: A vintage cast-iron footed tub takes center stage in the bath.



photography, which lines the staircase, further emphasizes the dark and light contrasts throughout the home.

In the breakfast room, Callaway recognized the effect of the tiled fireplace, but he also saw the need to soften it. He had certain out-of-scale tiles removed that had been embedded in the mantel. He designed a swooping chimney breast, sculptural in its grace, outlining the form with clean, well-articulated moldings. To further brighten the room, Callaway removed existing dark ceiling boards, leaving just the beams. He then had the spaces in between the timbers plastered white. "It's now a much cheerier cottage kitchen than it had been," says Stanton. "Tom took the room up several degrees in brightness."

A large plate rack, likely once a chicken coop, now holds Stanton's collection of ironstone, while her blue-and-white transferware is contained in a narrow, sharp-angled cubby that her mother had tiled years earlier, and yet more cookware lines poured-concrete shelves. In keeping with the Tudor style, Callaway added thick wooden header beams over each of the windows, which, like those throughout the home, are left curtainless to better reveal the precise geometry of the panes and to let natural light flow in.

Callaway cites the master bedroom, with its double-height balcony/gallery, and adjoining bath, as the most architecturally intriguing spaces in the house. "Those details are master strokes of the original architect," he says. "Like the rest of the house, this background of structural shapes, surfaces, and materials, particularly the giant stone fireplace, became the principal players." The fireplace, though solid and monolithic, even baronial in scale, is not only one of the most powerful decorative elements of the home, but also the most emotionally charged one. An inscription above the hearth, put there by Stanton's parents years earlier, reads: "Home is our garden, the children our flowers."

"My goal for the master suite," says Callaway, "was to keep the focus on these strong architectural elements, making the furnishings and fabrics secondary to the magical interior space.

What I brought to the room's architecture was a bit of added wood and plaster details. I half-timbered the walls and filled in the voids between these vertical-boarded interruptions with real plaster that glows with the changing of the light in the room." Previously, the walls in the bedroom were covered with a gray-and-white floral-patterned paper that made the room "cozy, but dark, heavy, and more dated and feminine than Rick and Jan found to be comfortable. Out with the wallpaper!"

The bath already included a small stairway, but Callaway optimized that intriguing element by adding a paneled wall set with a handrail as a backdrop for the tub. "This helped the stairs feel like less of an intrusion and gave the room even more character," he says. Because the room is spacious, Callaway repositioned the footed tub to the center, which is typical of many period English bathrooms.

Every day from the time Stanton wakes up, surrounded by the bedroom's canopy of trees, to when she goes to bed with a good-night glance at her parents' inscription on the hearth, Stanton is reminded of her good fortune living in a home so close to her former one. "Unlike so many of the big modern houses in Los Angeles, it is truly a home — traditional, but not old-fashioned. Plus, this house is full of so many loving memories." ■

"The home's architecture became the star, the timbers and plaster the canvas."

— Thomas Callaway

