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Bella vista

A beautiful view, an eclectic art collection and a desire for open space provided the inspiration for this terrace house renovation

A commanding view of the Golden Gate bridge, a great neighborhood and some interesting architectural features sounds like a winning formula, but the home featured here also had a downside – a boring 1950s interior.

Before they moved in, the new owners of this San Francisco terrace house found interior designers simpatico with their vision. They presented a list of requirements, chief of which was to create beautiful open spaces with an emphasis on sculptural design.

Vernon Applegate, of Applegate Tran Interiors, says from the beginning the designers knew they could never compete with the home's magnificent view. Instead, they needed to feature it from every room in the house. So the interior has been designed to offer a breathtaking panorama from the living room chairs, the kitchen sink and the master bath. Inside the front door, where once there was a wall and an entrance into a powder room, there is now a clear view of the ocean.

Applegate says the new open plan

Left: This terrace house in San Francisco sits on a bluff, approximately 30 floors above the houses on the street below. As it commands views of Golden Gate Park and the Marin Headlands, the interior needs to balance, rather than compete with, the scenic panorama.

Above: Sculptural forms are an important aspect of this design. The back of the kitchen pantry has been painted a rich blue and used as a backdrop for the client's art collection.







Previous pages: The large open-plan living area has been divided into specific zones and furnished with both function and form in mind. For example, the white backless sofa in the center of the room doesn't hide the view from those seated in the other sofas and chairs in the room.

Above: The fireplace is both a practical and an aesthetic feature. The mantel is large enough to display art and provide additional seating, while the chimney flue has sculptural appeal.

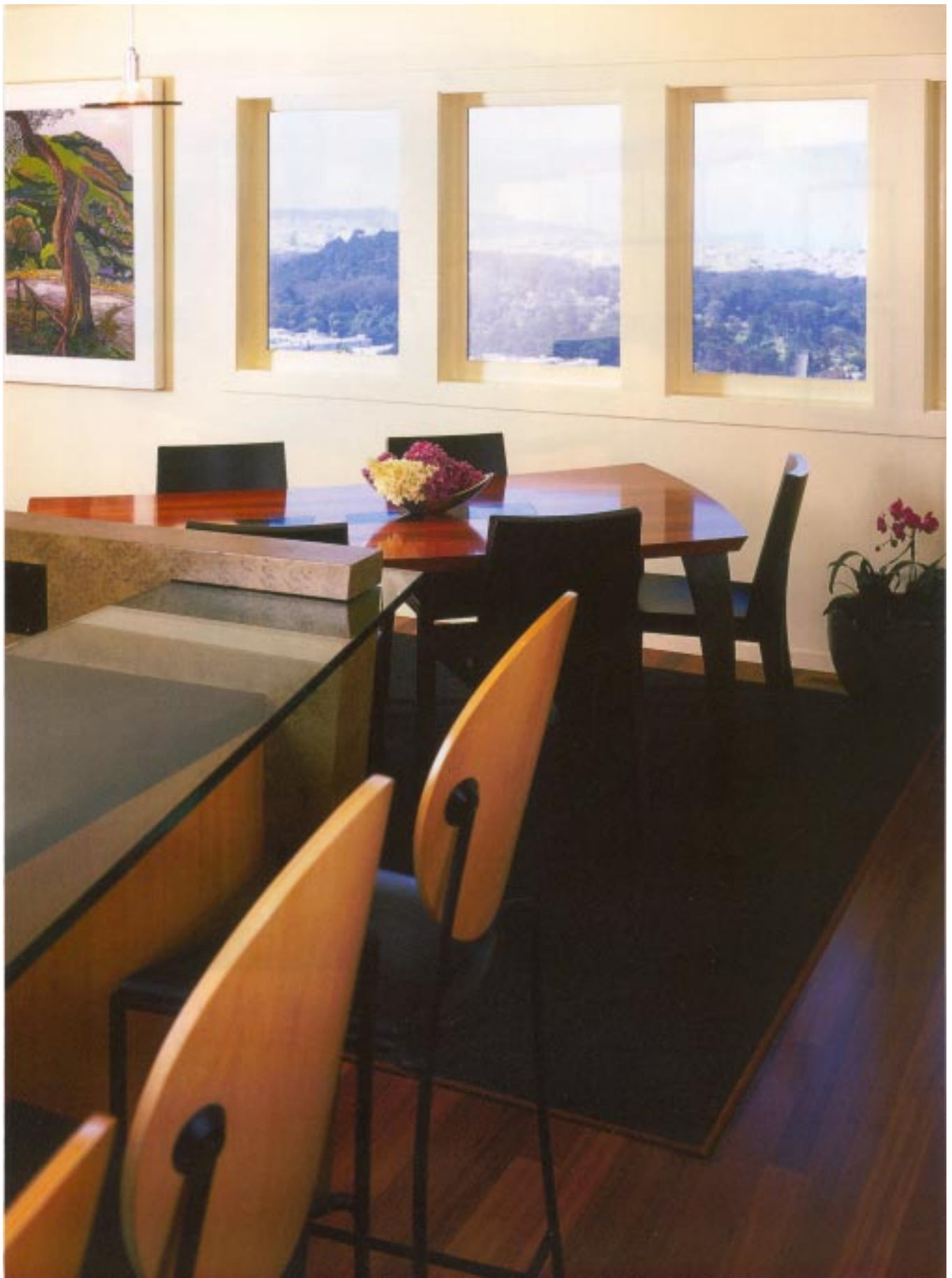
Right: Each piece, including the dining suite sourced from two furniture designers, was selected with care.

meant that instead of using walls to divide the living area, rugs, furniture, floors and lighting now denote individual spaces. For example, a conversation area in the living room is marked by a woollen rug.

The fireplace is open on two sides, with an L-shaped mantel that doubles as additional seating. Around the fireplace distinctive works of art have been chosen specifically for this space. Applegate says the clients had some art before the renovation, but many pieces were bought with particular spots in mind.

The art collection has a distinct Pacific Rim flavor, which reflects the home's location on the edge of the ocean. In the fireplace zone, a Chinese scroll prayer table stands on the mantel, and a painting by American artist Chris Cox hangs above. The Filipino vessel in front of the fire is made from drilled coconut shell.

Throughout the living room, warm color tones have been used to balance, rather than compete with, the floor-to-ceiling window that dominates the room. Color is also used to mark out zones, as





Above: When in the kitchen you can view the ocean, but once you have served the meal you raise the island extension and shield your dinner guests from the sight of dirty dishes. This kitchen has won a couple of prestigious design awards, including the NKBA Kitchen of the Year.

Above right: Continuity is important in the home's design and many of the elements in the kitchen, such as the black granite countertop, are repeated in the bathroom. Art works also feature prominently in both the kitchen and the bathroom. In the latter, Hawaiian paintings hang on the wall, while Japanese baskets make for appealing waste bins.

on the two-tone wall that contains a comfy sofa in its cozy niche.

A grand piano is highlighted by a track lighting system designed to add whimsy and drama.

"Lighting is a key aspect of the design. It has been used to bring everything to life," Applegate says.

The emphasis on beauty is carried through to the kitchen, which was named an NKBA Kitchen of the Year. It has been designed to keep the practical aspects of this working space concealed from the

relaxation areas. All of the appliances have been placed along the wall furthest from the dining table. A row of wooden cabinets with glass insets is cantilevered above the floor, functioning as kitchen cupboards but offering a furniture look.

The structural pillar in the center of the kitchen, covered with polished concrete, conceals all of the plumbing pipes and electrical wires that connect to the large island.

Many of the motifs and materials used in the kitchen, such as the black granite



countertops, the cantilevered cabinets and the displays of art work, are repeated in the bathroom upstairs. Continuity was paramount when designing the home's interior, Applegate says.

"We wanted there to be a seamless design throughout the home, rather than a series of separate rooms," he says.

They also didn't see their role as limited to designing the interior. Applegate's design partner, Gioi Tran, created an acrylic painting that hangs in the stairwell and is entitled *Reflections of Light*.

Interior designers: Vernon Applegate and Gioi Tran, Applegate Tran Interiors, ASID, NKBA (San Francisco)

Paint manufacturers: Benjamin Moore, Pratt & Lambert

Lighting: Policelli Lighting

Living room furniture: Sofa and side chairs by Knedler Faucher, Holly Hunt collection

Selected artworks: Chris Cox and Gioi Tran

Decorative pieces: The Far Company, Forgotten Shanghai

Kitchen cabinets: Custom vertical eucalyptus with natural finish and vertical grain pattern

Backsplash: Marble

Oven and cooktop: Thermador

Ventilation: Vent-A-Hood

Microwave: Thermador

Refrigerator: Sub-Zero

Dishwasher: Miele

Waste unit: Waste King

Coffee system: Miele

Shower: Dornbracht

Bathroom cabinetry: Custom vertical cherry

Bathroom sink: Kohler

Bathroom faucets: Polished chrome by Dornbracht

Tiles: Baroque Pearl with flamed finish

Photography by Tim Maloney