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GARLANDS, WREATHS AND AN ILLUMINATED TREE WELCOME VISITORS TO THIS SHINGLE-STYLE HOME ON LAKE WASHINGTON DESIGNED BY SULLIVAN CONARD ARCHITECTS. CITRUS CENTERPIECES DESIGNED BY FIORI FLORAL AND GARDEN, (206) 329-3944, ADORN THE GEORGE III TABLE IN THE DINING ROOM (OPPOSITE). A PHILIPPE COGNEE PAINTING HANGS ABOVE THE TUSCAN CREDENZA; THE ANTIQUE CHANDELIERS HAIL FROM GENOA.



INTIMACY ON A GRAND SCALE

WRITTEN BY LISA KENNEDY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAURIE BLACK

Seasonal flourishes underscore an Eastside couple's love of formality and family



If the measure of a home is in how comfortably the owners inhabit it and how welcome guests feel, then this Eastside residence is a resounding success.

Located at the end of an antique cobblestone driveway, the 10,000-square-foot home designed by Sullivan Conard Architects and built by Schultz-Miller occupies a magnificent perch above Lake Washington. A verdant lawn planted with fruit trees cascades down to the pool, the cabana/guest house and the shore. Beautifully sited and designed to maximize light and views, the home's design derives from the owners' interest in traditional shingle-style architecture.

"The owners wanted a house that was suitable to formal entertaining but also comfortable for a family," says project architect Peter Conard, who collaborated with Stephen Sullivan on the design. Inspired by McKim, Mead and White, the architects created a gorgeously proportioned home with a graceful balance of grand and intimate spaces. Visual surprises abound in unlikely places: the informal entry with its double Dutch doors, the tunnel connecting the cabana to the main house, and the master bedroom's circular vestibule with an oculus (and a Matisse).

The house is at its very best during the Christmas season, when it is festooned with extravagant and unusual decorations that extend into most rooms. "This house demands the very best the Earth has to offer," says the lady of the house. With the help of Fiori Floral and Garden, she has chosen two natural themes, one for the formal areas based on lemons, limes and tangerines, and one for the informal areas based on pomegranates and crab apples. Although grand by virtue of their scale, the decorations are simple, original and fresh, designed to create focal points of beauty rather than an overdose of holiday cheer.

Outside, oak-and-laurel-leaf swags drape the balcony over the entry, and a fir covered in white lights perches above the front door. Light-filled birch trees line the driveway, live firs are clustered by the front door, and two-sided wreaths that are beautiful both inside and out adorn every window. Even outdoor furniture is "candy caned" with red-and-white ribbon and outlined in white lights.

The interiors, realized in collaboration with San Francisco designer Michael Tedrick of Tedrick & Bennett, Inc., are full of treasures but feel welcoming and not a bit stuffy. "We wanted the house to be rooted in tradition but also to be fresh," says Tedrick.

"We wanted warmth," adds the lady of the house, "so everything here has a golden or yellow base."

DAILY LIFE CENTERS AROUND THE TWO-STORY GREAT ROOM (LEFT, ABOVE), WHERE A TOWERING TREE FLANKS A KITCHEN FESTOONED WITH GARLANDS AND A COLLECTION OF FRENCH TEA CANISTERS. A DOUBLE WREATH ADORNS THE FRONT DOOR (LEFT, BELOW), WHICH OPENS ONTO A LIGHT-FILLED ENTRY HALL AND THE LIVING ROOM BEYOND (OPPOSITE). THERE, AN 18TH-CENTURY CHINESE COROMANDEL SCREEN IS PAIRED WITH CUSTOM SEATING DESIGNED BY MICHAEL TEDRICK.





The light-filled entry leads down three stairs to a large rectangular room flanked by fluted columns wrapped with garlands laden with citrus fruits and tied with silk bows. Fortuny curtains, Persian carpets and an eclectic mix of French, English and Italian antiques adorn the space. In the living room, a rare 18th-century cinnamon-red Chinese coromandel screen forms a dramatic backdrop, while softly colored and textured sofas and chairs project an aura of comfort. The four-pedestal George III dining-room table (which can seat up to 40) and the Tuscan credenza are decorated with cachepots overflowing with citrus and greenery. Antique chandeliers from Genoa catch the flickering light of a silver butler's tray crowded with white pillar candles and lemons.

In the honey-hued, pine-paneled library, a caramel suede sofa and cocoa mohair chair cozy up to a fossilized limestone fireplace decorated with velvety magnolia leaves. An English pub table used for games looks out to a circular covered porch, where a fireplace crowned with a citrus wreath allows friends to gather outside even on chilly December days.

The informal wing of the house features a stunning two-story kitchen and great room presided over by a magnificent 13-foot Christmas tree. The tree is lit by hundreds of amber lights and covered with birdseed balls, clusters of holly berries, copper tags, toile ribbons

and a panoply of personal ornaments. The stainless-steel hood over the island is trimmed with a pomegranate-and-crab-apple garland.

Despite its size, the room feels homey, warmed by the creamy white, curry and paprika palette. Custom nickel lanterns bring the eye down, as does the collection of French tea canisters that line the kitchen wall. Limestone covers the work surfaces, while a salvaged teak plank tops an eating counter. In the seating area, large-scale upholstered pieces are covered in quilted toile and striped linen; a brick-red barn door slides open to reveal a computer alcove. Garlands drape the balcony above, which links the great room with the wife's office and the children's wing.

The upstairs rooms are cozy and full of creature comforts. The master bedroom is an oasis of ivory calm, with a rare "Duchesse Brisee" chair in honey leather offering an ideal spot from which to gaze at the fireplace, the Picasso over the mantel and the lake. The daughter's yellow-hued bedroom is decorated with a lemon-ball wreath and the son's blue-and-red room has a candy-cane wreath hanging from the bedpost—sweet reminders guaranteed to inspire sugarplum dreams. ■

Lisa Kennedy is a Mercer Island interior designer and freelance writer.



THE HUSBAND, AN AVID SPORTSMAN, SAVORS TIME SPENT IN HIS PINE-PANELED LIBRARY (OPPOSITE). CUSTOM SEATING COVERED IN SUEDE AND WOOL ADD TO THE RELAXING ATMOSPHERE. AN ANTIQUE GAME TABLE AT THE FAR END OF THE ROOM IS FLANKED BY FRENCH DOORS LEADING TO THE COVERED PORCH (ABOVE), WHERE WICKER FURNITURE AND A BLAZING FIRE PROVIDE A WELCOME OUTDOOR RETREAT, EVEN IN WINTER.