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MAY/JUNE 2017 | DISPLAY UNTIL 07/03/17

# MIX MASTER

IN DALLAS' PRESTON HOLLOW NEIGHBORHOOD, A MULTITALENTED EXPERT DESIGNS,  
FURNISHES AND LANDSCAPES HIS NEW MEDITERRANEAN-INSPIRED HOME.

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ARCHITECTURE, INTERIOR DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE /  
ROBERT TROWN, ROBERT TROWN AND ASSOCIATES, INC.  
HOME BUILDER / MICKEY MUNIR AND MICHAEL MUNIR,  
SHARIF & MUNIR CUSTOM HOMES

“IT IS RARE FOR ONE ARCHITECTURE FIRM TO HANDLE ALL DESIGN FACETS OF A PROJECT—WHICH HELPED BECAUSE THERE WAS ONE VISION.”

—MICHAEL MUNIR

The Dallas residence father-son builders Mickey Munir and Michael Munir constructed for residential designer Robert Trown showcases more than just one easily recognizable style. The Mediterranean-inspired structure mixes influences from France, Portugal and Spain with a crisp white rubble-set limestone exterior, a triple-stacked red-tile roof, a U-shaped courtyard and large expanses of minimalist black steel-framed windows. “It’s also a California-style blend in the sense that it reflects an indoor-outdoor attitude,” Trown says. But the beautiful mélange is actually part of a trend Trown has noticed emerging from his own clients. “In the past, many Dallas homeowners would say, ‘I want an English Tudor’ or, ‘I want a Marie Antoinette chateau,’” he says. Now, rather than a specific look, many request “a blended and collected feel,” he explains.

In Trown’s case, the goal for his home’s architectural style was to allow the house to grow and adapt over time. The home’s West Coast reference is particularly personal, as he and his wife, Yvonne, grew up in Southern California before spending 17 years in Aspen, Colorado. The ski resort town was a lovely place to raise two children, but the convenience of a larger city appealed to the couple when they became empty nesters. “Everything is so accessible here, and the people were a huge draw,” Trown says. So they sold their Aspen house and purchased a vacant 1.25-acre lot in Dallas’ Preston Hollow neighborhood, known for its grand homes and curbsless streets. Working with his colleague and project manager, Whitney Blackwelder, Trown designed, landscaped and furnished his new residence the Munir duo constructed. “It is rare for one architecture firm to handle all design facets of a project, including interiors and landscaping—which helped here, because there was one vision,” Michael Munir says.

For his new abode, Trown prioritized creating a sense of seclusion. He sited the house on a north-south axis, which increases energy efficiency while also controlling

the views and maximizing privacy. This was a must for one of the home’s most romantic features, an outdoor Belgian blue limestone shower area off the second-floor master suite. The setup “allows bathroom views of the outdoors with no need for window coverings,” Trown says. Because of the home’s axis, most of the major windows also face southeast and peek out to the lush landscaping. Nestling his home amongst numerous massive oaks, magnolias and cedars, Trown explains he “landscaped away the neighbors” by filling empty spaces with a rich plant palette of native drought-resistant foliage such as palms and succulents. “Miraculously, we didn’t need to take out anything,” he says, adding that the mature trees, when used in conjunction with new plant material, give the landscape a look of having existed for many years.

Along with layers of plantings, Trown incorporated various outdoor living spaces, including a motor court inside the front gates, an outdoor kitchen pavilion, a terraced courtyard and a privet-rimmed pool. Because of the home’s U shape, prominent windows from the main living spaces face the courtyard, which gives the homeowners more privacy, Trown explains. “We can have tons of glass with no window coverings and all that heavy drapery that used to be very popular,” he says. “All those swags and tiebacks—gone.” Should the couple need more privacy, however, integral solar shades—hidden above black steel-frame windows recessed within the walls—deploy at the touch of a button.

In addition to privacy, Trown also wanted to emphasize telling a story through the home’s construction, “rather than relying on trims and finishes to make the design interesting,” he says. Free of window frames, jambs and baseboards, the house showcases reclaimed oak floors and rafter beams—cleaned but not painted or stained—harvested from decommissioned barns in upstate New York. Trown also credits the Munirs for approaching products in new ways. For example, the duo produced the home’s double-thick walls by mixing paint into plaster to create a soft rolling surface with just a bit of mottling. “The color was mixed in as it was applied,” Michael Munir says.

The walls serve as a backdrop to the mix of furnishings that reflects the homeowners’ eclectic tastes and Trown’s years of experience in designing houses for clients around the world. “Dealers know the kinds of pieces we like and send us pictures all the time,” he says. But when Trown can’t locate what he wants, he customizes a piece from a showroom line or designs it himself—like a table in the living room made from a walnut tree that had blown down during a storm on a nearby farm.

The overall result shows off a collaboration of not only styles but also talents between Trown and the Munir team. “This was one of the best and most inspiring homes we have had the pleasure of working on,” Mickey Munir says. That sentiment is also true for the homeowner, who drew upon his skill and experience to achieve the ideal mix of architecture, landscaping and interior design for his residence. “Yvonne and I love living in the home,” he says. “Once we enter the property, we are in our own world.” ■



Jeld-Wen doors from Energy Shop beckon from the living room to the courtyard, the heart of the Dallas home Mickey Munir and Michael Munir built for residential designer Robert Trown and his wife, Yvonne. An antique floor candelabra from England tops reclaimed oak flooring from Old Grain in Marble, Colorado. Trown customized the rug from Polar Carpets & Rugs in Paradise, Nevada.



The living room features reclaimed beams through Heritage Restorations and an antique mantel from Pittet Architecturals. A custom tufted chaise wears leather by Cortina Leathers, while matching custom A. Rudin sofas don Kravet fabric. The French side table is from Le Louvre French Antiques; the expansive window is Crittall, purchased through Grand Openings Windows & Doors.

**Opposite:** A kitchen archway opens to the adjoining breakfast room, where a Paul Ferrante chandelier illuminates a walnut table from Legacy. Neal & Company Upholstery covered the seats of the chairs in Mark Tursi Product leather. The wood carving is from Le Louvre French Antiques. CHT Systems handled lighting control systems and audio automation throughout the home.

**Below:** A Crittall window from Grand Openings Windows & Doors reveals a 300-year-old Spanish urn, which Trown acquired from Berbere World Imports in Culver City, California. Hernandez Custom Upholstery fabricated the lounge chairs in the nearby library using Mark Tursi Product leather.



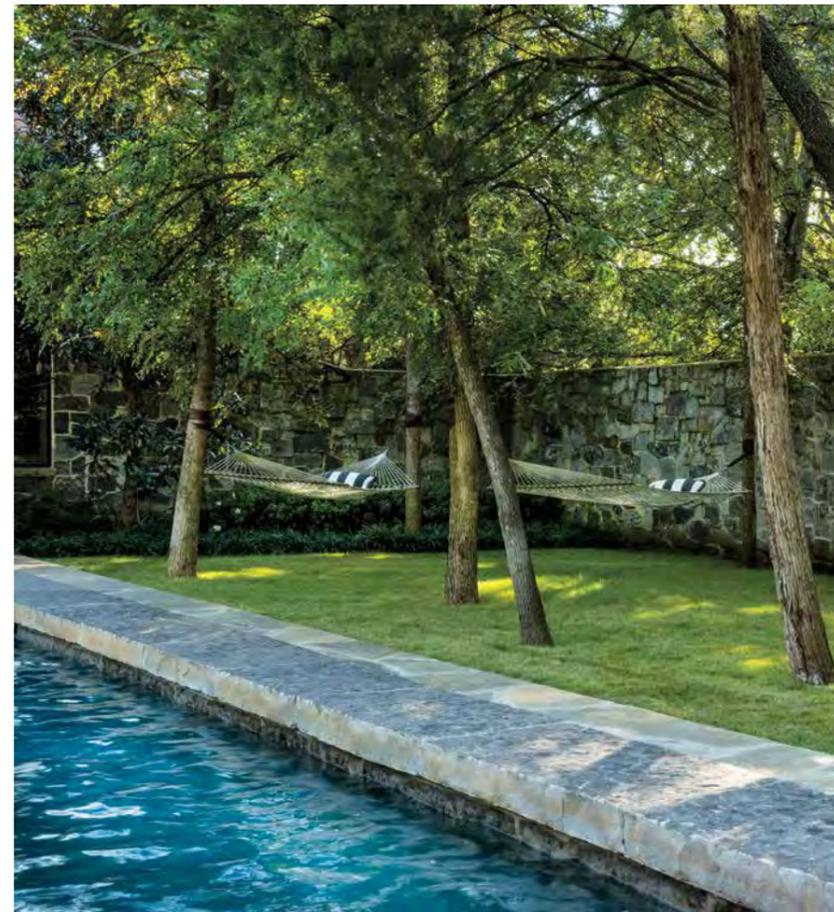
“OUR HOME IS A CALIFORNIA-STYLE BLEND IN THE SENSE THAT IT REFLECTS AN INDOOR-OUTDOOR ATTITUDE.”

—ROBERT TROWN

In the dining room—with expansive views of the courtyard and surrounding gardens—the Evora wrought-iron crystal chandelier by Ebanista sparkles above a custom dining table by Ironies. Walnut chairs from CBS in Los Angeles wear Mark Tursi Product leather. Conrad sunshades decorate the windows.



The lush grounds were designed by Trown and installed by Williams Landscape, with detailing by Cedar Crest Gardens. In one area, wicker RH seating gathers around a custom wrought-iron coffee table by Mountain Ironworks in Aspen, with a top from Stone Yard in San Diego. The Redland clay tile roof is from Texas Tile Roofing.



**Above:** Mountain Ironworks hand-crafted wrought-iron gates leading from the courtyard to the pool. A spillway wall with mosaic tile separates the pool and spa, both designed by Trown and installed by Robertson Pools. Lanterns are RH. Stucco on the pool house façade is by Flores Raf Exterior.

**Left:** Hackett stone slab walls complement the Idaho quartzite pool deck, which "doesn't stain or get hot and isn't slippery," Trown says. The site plan saved the lot's existing elm trees, creating the ideal locale for Frontgate hammocks.

In a guest room, bolsters made with Casamance fabric adorn a custom bed from Bradshaw Design in Salt Lake City alongside a Spanish antique nightstand from Melissa Levinson Antiques in Los Angeles. The lamp is from Allan Knight and Associates. Richard Bettinger photo art from David Sutherland hangs in an alcove.



At a guest room entry, a reproduction Portuguese-style ebonized table holds a trove of antique treasures, including a lamp from Brown & Co. and a Chinese vase. The wool carpet is from Interior Resources.



In the sitting area of the master bedroom, a fireplace designed by Trown boasts a Nero marble hearth and a firebox of reclaimed French firebrick in a herringbone pattern. A sofa and chair—both covered by Hernandez Custom Upholstery in Kravet fabric—join an antique coffee table from Legacy and a lychee tree-trunk side table from Brendan Bass. The carpet is Nourison.



**Above:** Belgian blue limestone lining the master bathroom's shower wall travels through metal-frame windows to an outdoor shower area, forming a privacy wall that makes window coverings unnecessary; the glass enclosure by Acro Glass has a sand-blasted privacy panel. Mosaic tile on the floor is from Lebanon, and the indoor shower head is Grohe, with outdoor shower fixtures by Kohler.

**Right:** The opaque Crittall oculus from Grand Openings Windows & Doors and the potted plants give the outdoor shower area "a Japanese teahouse feel," Trown describes. A Victoria + Albert tub from The Bath & Kitchen Showplace is encased in Kosmus granite and underlit to make the mica flecks glow; tub fixtures are Newport Brass. The 17<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish oil painting is from Pittet Architecturals.

