

Name Droppers
 Martha Stewart "Party Streamer" pink paint fashions a feature wall in the family room. The lush pink and a Serge Trubach abstract painting set the color palette. A 1950s chrome chair from the Liberace estate, a 1970s Italian brass cocktail table and a Folke Ohlsson blue lounge chair create a snazzy seating area.



MODERN THINKING

Through thoughtful renovations and furniture choices, a design-savvy couple returns a timeworn 1960s ranch home to its former glory.



When experience and opportunity meet, happy outcomes occur. That serendipitous confluence of skill, luck and untapped potential came into play in big ways when designer Sean Gaston and builder Jim Jewell began their renovation journey.

Life partners for 25 years, Jim and Sean own Bee Renovated, a San Francisco-area construction company that renovates historical properties. For the past decade,

they have split their time between their 1936 Bay Area home and Palm Springs, where Sean also runs Sean Gaston Design.

Proximity and the couple's discerning eyes played vital roles in the evolution of their current home.

"We lived just around the corner from this house," says Sean. "It had been on the market for three years, but we knew there was something there. The low-slung

Warming Trend Designer Sean Gaston employs brass finishes, handcrafted pottery pieces and sunset-bright oranges to heat up cool-hued rooms, *above left*. *Chic Silhouettes* Fashion-forward forms create captivating vignettes, *above center*. A brass sun sculpture by Paul Belardo sits atop an elephant side table purchased from the Gerald Ford estate; a needlepoint owl pillow perches on the Folke Ohlsson chair. *Textural Trio* Vintage needlepoint pillows and midcentury-modern Italian cushions jazz up the 1960s sectional sofa, *above right*.

Perfecting the Blend "This room is a mix of French, Asian, the 1960s and the 1970s," says Sean. "It's always a journey when I decorate!" A chinoiserie screen, classic chairs in modern velvet, Chinese brass garden stools and a patchwork cowhide rug partner with a psychedelic sofa and a sleek coffee table to create a time-traveling composition.

TIMELESS TIPS

Clerestory windows boost light and visually raise ceilings in low-slung buildings.



Finely Furnished "The dining room is a little more neutral—a little more formal," says Sean. "This room, like elsewhere in our home, is all about the mix!" The George Nelson chandelier shines a vintage light on the driftwood root table and circa-1960 dining chairs arranged on a Moroccan rug, *left*.

Playing the Angles Shapely midcentury handblown glass vessels align on a 1970s Lucite bar cart. The pieces mirror the more muted containers depicted in the midcentury painting mounted on the wall, *below*.



architecture appealed to us. We could tell the home was significant though its origins were unknown." As luck would have it, though, the house's architectural significance was discovered after the couple purchased the structure in 2010 and began cleaning it out.

"We found the original building plans rolled up with old wallpaper rolls," recalls Sean. "It was such a gift! The home was built by noted architect Stan Sackley in 1967. Those plans let us put the house back to how he meant it to be."

Over four months, the couple and their construction crew returned an enclosed patio to its original alfresco state; re-stored an arcade; and refurbished the kitchen, working with its original layout and cabinetry. Once renovations were complete, Sean began furnishing the home with an eclectic blend of fine and funky furnishings purchased from online dealers and at local consignment stores and estate sales.

Of a Certain Vintage Sean and Jim had the original kitchen cabinets lacquered in white and then capped with vintage hardware that they had salvaged from a project in Berkeley, *right*.

Sweet Seats! Circa-1969 chrome and rattan chairs by Fabricius and Kastholm pull up to a Saarinen-inspired tulip table; its round shape allows for easy conversing. A vintage monkey bowl and the 1960s chrome-and-brass spiral chandelier by Gaetano Sciolari kick-start conversations.



Instant Idea
Group vibrant era-apt glassware to further your palette.



style
NOTES
Introduce a single vibrant hue in multiple tones and various forms to energize neutral spaces. Weave in leather accents and wood finishes for warmth. Use needlework pillows, crewel tapestries and hooked rugs to add authentic, handcrafted artistry.



Double Delight
Mirrors panel a far wall to add shimmer while amplifying light and highlighting the room's fine furnishings, including a 1970s white faux-bamboo dresser and a statuesque 1960s Martz lamp, left.

"I am crazy for vintage," says Sean. "There's a wealth of pristine vintage things available here. People came down here to be swanky—and many of the high-end furnishings are still in great shape. I gravitate to art and furnishings that I have a visceral reaction to—each room's design is driven by objects I find. It's the mix that makes a space interesting."

Noted designer pieces from 1950 to 1980—some owned by Liberace and President Gerald Ford—mix it up with Art Deco, Asian and European antiquities for a look that reads as classic, contemporary and downright cool.

"Palm Springs is about having fun, so we like to have fun when we decorate," says Sean. "It's the environment that really drives our decorating choices and colors."

The home's openness—to the swimming pool, golf course, and the sky and mountains beyond—inspired the many shades of blues and greens that provide pizzazz throughout the white-walled interiors. The vivid tones repeat through modern artworks, vintage glassware and touchable textiles.

"I like to blur time periods and design styles, and update classic pieces with new fabrics in fresh colors,"

Cushy and Colorful
In the master bedroom, opposite, a carved Moroccan headboard, stone-veneered nightstand, needlepoint pillows and vintage sconces provide old world patinas to balance out more modern elements such as the Lucite bench and progressively patterned textiles.

Hospitality Plus
Guests never want to leave this commodious and eclectic bedroom, right. Art Deco olive burl chairs and a 1970s loveseat combine with a 1950s leather elephant footstool (designed by Dimitri Omersa for Abercrombie & Fitch) and a Japanese screen for a trip through 20th-century design.





Instant Idea
Move interior
elements outdoors
for special events.

says Sean, pointing to Lucite dining chairs covered in midnight-blue velvet, a lounge chair wearing lighter blue silk and pillows done up in mod fabrics.

Fashion-forward furnishings, whimsical accents and hip harmonies move from one space to another to create a chic, cohesive composition that promotes indoor-outdoor entertaining and laid-back living.

“We love the light, the connection to the pool, the outdoors and the view—and, of course, the fact that we are surrounded by our friends and family,” says Sean. “There’s never a dull moment here! In fact, we have to plan when to spend a quiet night at home and not go out or entertain!”

Alfresco Gallery Jim and Sean move the jester painting outside when a party’s on tap, *above*. The midcentury painting partners with a freeform Curtis Jere sculpture, a formal Regency console and Chinese garden stools for a distinctive eating area. *Memorable Structures* “We rescued those screens—and everyone who sees them wants them,” Sean says. Designed by E. Stewart Williams circa-1960, they define the patio, which also features a midcentury Malm fireplace and vintage Brown Jordan furniture, *right*.



Transparency
Tantalizes Canines
Farley and Lulu cavort behind the glass wall that abuts the sea-green front door, *above*. The pool’s turquoise waters—which inspired the home’s color scheme—draw visitors’ eyes through the formal living room.

Indoor-Outdoor
House Jim (standing in the living room) and Sean (hanging out in the master bedroom) illustrate how the home’s wide, tall corner windows not only bring the outside in but also bring the inside out, *right*.



COLOR IT MODERN

Sean Gaston says the look of the couple’s Palm Springs house is minimal and clean, with the color scheme reflective of the home’s setting. Here are his suggestions for coloring a mid-century modern world.

Start with white. Paint exterior and interior walls white to blur the lines between inside and outside; white surfaces let the landscape’s features and interior furnishings take center stage.

Look outside. Sean brings in the blues of the swimming pool, palm tree greens, and the pinkish, orange and golden hues of desert sunsets to link living spaces with the environment.

Find a muse. When devising a palette for a room, take your color cue from a major find, a period-app fabric or a piece of kaleidoscopic artwork; Sean points to the painting in the family room and the Edward Wormley sofa in the living room as inspirational pieces.

Thoughtfully edit. Look closely at how Sean decorates and you’ll see that he limits the number of punctuating colors in each room. It’s rare that he incorporates more than two different hues, which reflects his less-is-more vision.

Turn up the temp. Streamlined spaces benefit from the inclusion of light and dark wood finishes, warming metals like brass and bronze, and textural textiles such as cowhides, lamb’s wool rugs and posh velvet upholstery.