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SERENITY

Melanie Turner and Stan Benecki push the boundaries in Buckhead with a dreamy California-style haven in Tuxedo Park

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In the living room of this Buckhead home by developer Stan Benecki and designer Melanie Turner, organic textures mix with large-scale, neutral furnishings to evoke the ease of California living.

A pair of large-scale paintings by Atlanta artist Todd Murphy presides over the fireplace and adds an element of movement to this serene corner of the living room.



IT'S NO SECRET THAT CREATING AN innovative but intriguing home takes talent and teamwork, but it's a balance interior designer Melanie Turner of Melanie Turner Interiors and developer Stan Benecki of Benecki Homes have nearly mastered. The husband and wife are an undeniable force behind some of Atlanta's most showstopping residences, and it's their synchronicity that makes them so unstoppable.

When building a Buckhead manse from the ground up, the couple knew they wanted to pull out all the stops. "There's a format between the two of us where we're always trying to raise the bar with design," Turner says. "We had a fresh canvas and were able to do things that a lot of people haven't seen before."



Swathed in Sherwin-Williams' Caviar, this inky library strikes a moody chord. The sofa and chair are through Bradley, and the coffee table and desk are by Julian Chichester.

Inspired by the sophisticated ease of California living, they, along with residential designer William T. Baker, employed an edited approach that incorporates traditional elements but also organic textures, large-scale furnishings and a high contrast palette to produce a breezy escape that feels as understated as it does sculptural.

In the larger-than-life living room, custom floor-to-ceiling windows allow natural light to illuminate the space and reflect off the custom plaster walls, which Benecki extended from floor to ceiling without trim for a clean feel ("it just glows in here," says Turner).

This unassuming but fresh effect continues in the room's furnishings, which Turner kept mostly neutral, adding balance with textured details such as knit pillows, an African beaded headdress, a knotty wood console and artwork by Atlanta artist Todd Murphy.

To break up the large living space, Turner fashioned two distinct sitting areas: one visible from the entryway and another tucked at the other end of the room in front of the television, where "you're able to sit as a family, watch television and make a mess if you want, but you can't see it from the front door," notes the designer.





In the lofty living room, sunlight streams through floor-to-ceiling windows and reflects off custom plaster walls, which continue up to the ceiling seamlessly without trim. Turner selected white furnishings with pops of black for a crisp sense of cohesion, while texture in the form of a knotty wood console, jute rug and vintage finds such as a string of beads and a headdress from Africa create sensual appeal.

"WE WANTED THAT CALIFORNIA LIFESTYLE, AND WE WANTED THE HOUSE TO FEEL LIKE YOU'RE ALWAYS ON VACATION WITHOUT ACTUALLY LEAVING TOWN." — MELANIE TURNER

Custom tile from SOURCE lines the kitchen walls and extends up to the barrel-vaulted ceiling. "We actually have a tiled kitchen at our own house," says Turner. "We loved it so much that we wanted to incorporate it in this house." To make the room feel even more open, they avoided upper cabinetry. The black-and-white palette strikes a harmonious balance between masculine and feminine. Barstools, Bradley Banquette, TecnoSedia. Appliances through Guy Gunter Home.







opposite Large-scale dentil molding puts a twist on traditional in the chic dining room. Chandelier, Oly. Round table, Bradley. *below* A bar features an array of vintage glasses from

Turner's own collection. *right* Melanie Turner and pup Scooter stand in the home's entryway, where a pair of crane murals by Bethany Travis create a unique welcome.



Equally light and open is the kitchen, where a large window provides views of the backyard pool and glossy custom tiles by SOURCE create a striking effect on the walls and high barrel ceiling. Continuing the black-and-white scheme, bright Arabescato Vagli marble countertops contrast with darker elements such as the barstools, banquette and cabinetry, painted Sherwin-Williams' Caviar, which was also used on the bar cabinets and the walls of the home's moody library.

"We wanted the space to be simple and bold," says Turner of her signature aesthetic. In the master suite, she explains, "male and female play off each other with black and white" via custom geometric flooring—tile in the bath and carpet in the bedroom—that stands out against the white walls.

This bold color contrast is tempered with more-traditional elements used throughout the home. "There are elements builders

used to do in houses that are no longer done that give them personality and character," says Turner. One such addition is a pair of murals—black-and-white cranes painted by artist Bethany Travis of Peshaw Hill. Another traditional touch is the dining room's ornate dentil molding, which was scaled larger than usual for a fresh twist.

"Everything's familiar, but it's just put together differently. It's using all those elements but using them very softly," says Benecki. "We're able to put the details and the energy in this house that we'd like to do without having somebody tell us no. And then when it's done, people realize that it's what they wanted all along."

It's this dream team's creative synergy that allows the architecture and interiors to play off one another so seamlessly, and the result is one of a kind. And, true to form, Turner and Benecki sold the house within three days of completion. Raising the bar, indeed. *See Resources, Back of Book.*

The black-and-white scheme continues in the master bedroom via a custom rug through SOURCE and a sofa from Lee Industries. Bed, Room & Board. Chandelier, Circa.





above A barrel-vaulted ceiling creates a sense of openness in the master bathroom, where custom tile from SOURCE adds interest. Brass light fixtures give a nod to classic style, while custom cabinets stand out against white walls. *right* Perhaps one of the home's most intriguing elements

is the master bath's shower, which features custom doors and a window that faces the backyard (there's a retractable screen for privacy). "We wanted it to feel like you were outside at all times, so we did an outside shower window that looks into your garden," says Turner.

