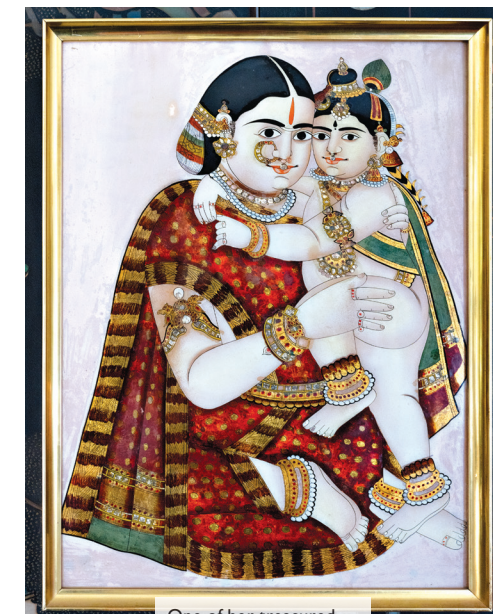


Treasure HUNTING

Known globally for her love of explosive color and exotic prints, Michelle Nussbaumer, critically acclaimed interior designer and owner of Design District boutique Ceylon et Cie, dives into details of her creative process.

By Krystal Sarna // Photography by Billy Surface

Jet-lagged yet glowing, Michelle Nussbaumer has just returned from an Egyptian voyage, for the first time in 30 years, to meet a new client. “I’m super excited about the idea of working in North Africa,” says the designer. As she does whenever she travels, Nussbaumer gathered ideas for her work, this time for her latest textile collection. “I’m always excited to go anywhere exotic and off the beaten path,” she says. “I’m just inspired by beauty.” The Wichita Falls-born Nussbaumer, a Southern Methodist University alum, has amassed a trove of treasures (including items on the opposite page) through her travels from Rome to Rajasthan, India, many of which she shares with her clients through her shop, Ceylon et Cie (1319 Dragon St., 214.742.7632, ceylonetcie.com). Others, she keeps for herself. Each room in her home is a conglomeration of artifacts from her globe-trotting travels. Pottery from Mexico, rugs found in Morocco and paintings of Indian royalty tiled along the staircase all work together harmoniously in her maximalist Bluffview home. However, it’s the house itself that she considers greater than the sum of its parts. “I really see myself more as an artist who uses the house as a canvas and objects are my medium,” says the mother of four. When she designs for others, she starts with a long questionnaire about her clients’ lifestyle to find out what they want out of their home and how they’d like to live. “It’s a collaboration, but I’m always happy to have more creative license than people are willing to give,” she says. “When I get free reign, magic happens.” As for her favorite project to date? “The best project is always the next project.” ■



One of her treasured collectibles is a 19th century reverse painting on glass from India.



Wood-carved camel wrapped in gold leaf from JF Chen antique showroom in Los Angeles



Antique chair refinished with Nussbaumer's Suleiman the Magnificent textile at Ceylon et Cie



A Poseidon bust by Sir Anthony Redmile greets guests in the entranceway of her home.

Bronze bangles dipped in gold from Nussbaumer's Rock Candy Collection can be found at Ceylon et Cie and Forty Five Ten

