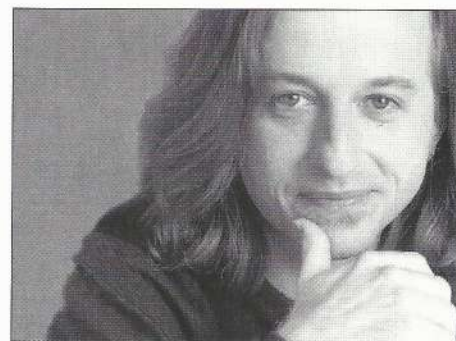


ETHNIC APPEAL

# ARABESQUE INCLINATIONS

Nomadic musings infuse a Maitland home with epic sensibilities





**DESIGN BY TROY BEASLEY**

**PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN ALLEN**

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Though using objects rather than words, designers tell stories. If their stories are well crafted, they will intermingle their creativity with ideas from their clients while also capturing a sense of place. Troy Beasley, principal of Beasley & Henley Interior Design in Winter Park, mined his fascination with Morocco to create a home in Maitland that is an exotic "read."

"My clients were open to making this home unique, which made the project such an exciting one," says the designer. "I had always wanted to do a project in which I could bring some of Morocco's ethnicity in and this was the perfect opportunity for that."

Beasley, who isn't certain why he's always maintained a fascination for the African nation, says, "Every time I pulled out books, I gravitated toward Morocco, even though I never traveled there." Movies about the country also spark his imagination because there is so much visual richness in the vivid colors and patterns that proliferate from Casablanca's architecture to Marrakesh's souks and the undulant sands of the windblown Sahara.

The billiard room, in fact, would make a wandering maharajah right at home, as it is in essence a tent within a room, replete with a swagged cloth ceiling, draped walls and playful lantern. The umber, sienna and crimson tones that dominate this space also dot the outdoor room that runs along the back of the home, a portion of which is similarly flanked by sumptuous curtains. Beasley carried these colorful hues throughout many of the family >

Above: Troy Beasley. Left: Looking toward the atrium from the living room, two Klismos chairs by Donghia with seats upholstered in pony hide are a modern take on the ancient Greek design, which makes these chairs at home in the classically reimagined interiors. Beasley designed the central fountain in the atrium after the many Italian street wells he had seen during travels to Italy.





living areas, but maintained a pale palette in the formal rooms, where he intermingled ice blue with buff and touches of gold. These spaces reflect a quiet elegance and proffer a welcoming coolness, all the more satisfying given Florida's abundance of intense sunlight.

"I was careful not to create just another 'big house,'" says Beasley of the 6,900-square-foot structure. "I wanted to provide a unique sense of character and charm in the interiors, which would complement the era of architecture from which I drew my inspiration — an authentic 1920s Spanish/Italian Villa Revival."

In order to make the house at home in its Central Florida setting, Beasley designed an

exterior that is only subtly ornamented with Moroccan accents, many of which are far from new to the Florida vernacular. "Moorish-Moroccan influences are important in old South Florida designs," he explains. "For many years, I had visited, read and wondered about the Italian villas and Andalusian casitas that dot the coast of South Florida. Along with these musings, I drew from years of European travel, books, studies, sketches, and a veritable collage of experiences."

From only hints on the front exterior — turned wooden railings, a carved stone archway and a peaked window detail — the Moroccan influences intensify with each step

indoors. An ornamented wood door and carved stone columns lead to a commanding two-story central atrium that sits at the center of the home. A fountain gurgles in the middle of the space in which the scale of the architectural elements — fluted archways, scalloped detailing and ornamental wrought iron — allows them to hold their own in the 35-foot-high, light-filled, glass-topped room.

"The atrium draws an emotional response from me every time I'm in it," says Beasley. "I designed it to feel like an outdoor room that the home fans out around, and I like it so much because you don't see many of these types of rooms here." He spent countless hours on all of the tiny details, designing the fountain, sifting through terra cotta tiles and combing books to find the perfect shapes for the architectural elements.

"Most projects stop short of achieving the character that I think this one achieves," he explains. "I wanted to make sure that the house was sophisticated and compelling, but rustic enough that the homeowners didn't need to be overly concerned if their children ventured into the living room or dining room with their toys or homework, or even jumped on the family room sofa every now and again."

This level of thoughtfulness was brought to every aspect of the design process, which, because he felt so free to express his creativity, seemed downright playful for the designer at times. And yet, he will admit that there were a few lofty challenges. "I had to take 15 years of design experience and condense it into a single residence while trying to maintain a set budget and timeframe," he explains. "The biggest challenge, I'd say, was knowing when to stop designing! Timing, along with the budget, finally assisted in that dilemma."

In the end, the designer exceeded what he set out to achieve — to create a home with a longevity of life and one that's a true pleasure in which to live. "This is what you get when a designer is allowed to be creative and explore his or her process," he says. "The end result is so enjoyable for everyone." □

This page: Colorful curtains set the outdoor summer kitchen apart from the outdoor living room. Personable touches are the coffered ceiling, which is made of pecky cypress, and the transoms, which are blue rondels surrounded by clear glass. Opposite: In the living room, a Louis XV chair upholstered in animal print has an antique crackle finish. The coffee table, which is actually two tables placed side-by-side, is contemporary in line but with frames in antique gold leaf; it marries modern and antique sensibilities, which Beasley likes to do.



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