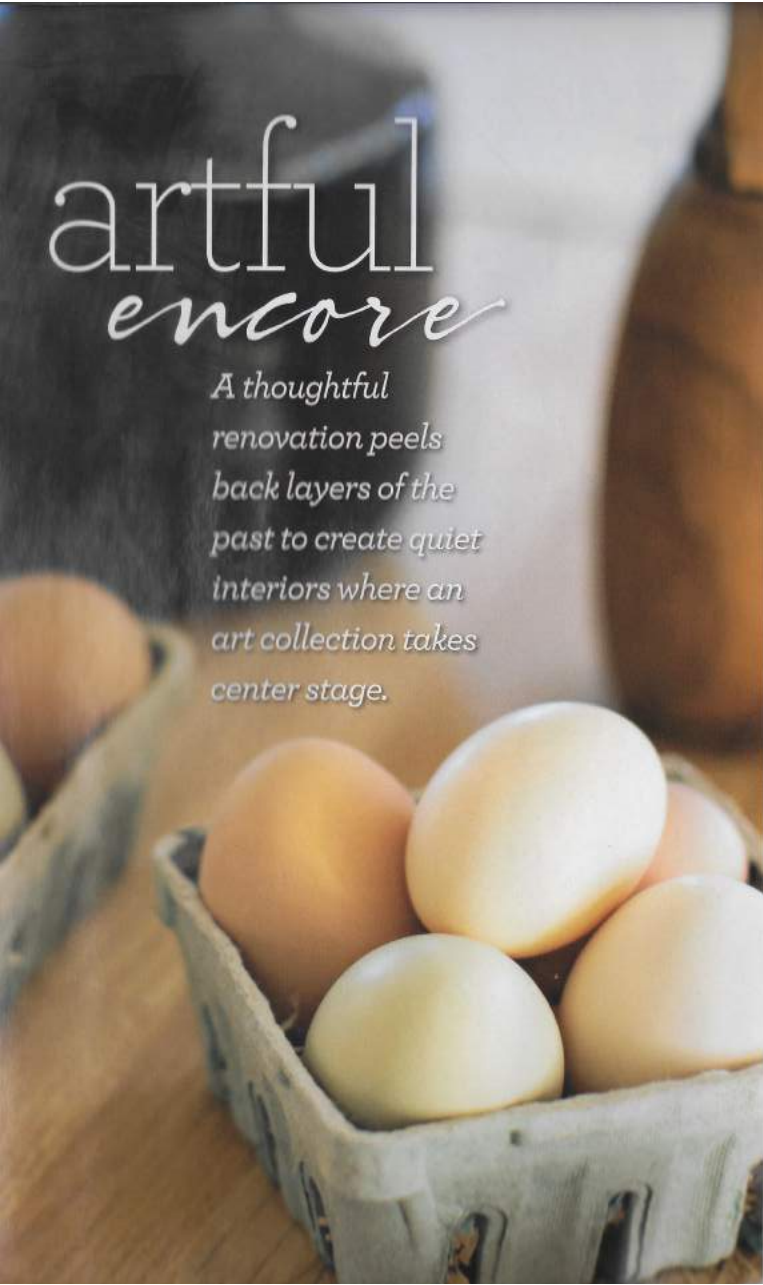


# artful encore

*A thoughtful renovation peels back layers of the past to create quiet interiors where an art collection takes center stage.*



*this photo:* The front door evinces the special attention paid to this California home's wood elements when it was owned by a cabinetmaker. The foyer, now clad in painted shiplap, hosts a hall tree and bench—vintage pieces from the homeowners' collection—and a rattan chandelier.



## The story told by a California home her clients were

considering buying absolutely charmed designer Kari Arendsen. “The building itself was a work of art because it had once been owned by a cabinetmaker,” she says. “There was an aliveness about it that inspired joy because it was obvious it had initially been created with love.”

This allure was evident even though the 1980s Rancho Santa Fe home had been left disjointed by previous makeovers; the materials used in the interiors, in many layers, were out of sync. Contractor Travis McCaw calls the current renovation a never-ending process of discovery. “The house had been remodeled so many times over the years, we would peel drywall off to find another layer behind it with old wallpaper on it,” he says. “We pulled up a hardwood floor to find it had been installed over travertine that was laid over terrazzo.”

Once the past was stripped away and the interior walls ripped down to the studs, the team reconfigured the layout “to optimize the flow and connection of each room. All new flooring, finishes, windows, doors, plumbing, appliances, and furniture

sweeping views of an orchard that had been cut off,” Arendsen says, “so we completely opened the house on that end and built a long deck for outdoor dining and entertaining.”

“It was a profound transformation,” says Arendsen, who succeeded in giving the homeowners what they desired: no-fuss interiors that would be the perfect backdrop for their South American art collection. “We created an organic natural vibe so the collection would intuitively work with the design,” she says. “The interiors let the charming pieces of art be the stars.”

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**opposite:** A custom dining table, positioned in the middle of the home, is surrounded by chairs with low backs so they don't interrupt the views. “There were so many wonderful beams in the home but some of them were hidden in drywall,” designer Kari Arendsen says. “We removed the drywall and exposed the beams to bring warmth to the space.” **above left:** The niches in the living room were designed to hold the homeowners' extensive collection of pre-Columbian artifacts. So the art can shine, Arendsen chose unobtrusive elements for the space—muted upholstery fabric, a subtly patterned rug, and a coffee table that feels almost transparent with its minimal lines and

*right:* The three pendants hanging above the kitchen island are strung with coco beads. Calacatta marble with a leathered finish wraps the top and sides of the island. Folding glass doors were added to open the east-facing end of the home to an expansive outdoor living space and to sweeping views.

*below:* In the breakfast room, a custom oblong Douglas fir table with a whitewash finish welcomes vintage chairs from the homeowners' collection.

*opposite:* Gracie, the homeowners' treasured pup, perches on a bench covered in vintage kilim cloth. Behind her, the stacked split-faced limestone fireplace surround in the living room looks as if it has witnessed decades of fires, but it's a new addition.



"These homeowners are morning people so we opened up the east-facing side of the house to let in the beautiful natural light."

— interior designer Kari Arendsen





## curatorial savvy

Creating interiors that envelop an art collection seamlessly is a talent. Here are a few tips designer Kari Arendsen suggests for a stunning outcome:

**EDIT CAREFULLY.** *When an extensive art collection will be placed in a home, it's important to keep key pieces in mind from the start. "We knew what the homeowners had on hand from the very beginning," Arendsen says. "I was selective with the pieces I curated because the collection was so substantial. Because I knew my choices as I was sourcing, the art intuitively worked with the other design elements when the home was finished."*

**KEEP IT NATURAL.** *When Arendsen is incorporating an eclectic collection, she prefers a light or a dark neutral color palette. "I feel neutrals, especially white, invite earthy elements in," she says. "Keeping the color palette clean elevates the mood of the art and makes the collection the focus."*

**MAKE EVERYTHING RELATE.** *Here, drywall-covered beams were uncovered; others were sandblasted to remove layers of the dark gray paint that had been applied. The natural warm tone of the beams perfectly echoes that of other architectural elements, such as the shelves inset into niches that hold the homeowners' collection of pre-Columbian artifacts.*

*left to right, from top: Gracie poses for her glamour shot. Arendsen and her team collect unusual objects (such as this vintage mirror, stool, and candlesticks) and store them until they offer an additional dose of personality to interiors they design. The master bathroom holds a generously sized tub atop a herringbone-patterned limestone floor in pale shades of gray. Built-in shelves near the tub provide handy yet beautiful storage. The master*



*this photo: The master bedroom's four-poster is made of powder-coated iron, and the bench at the foot of the bed is also iron. The bedside table was custom-made to look vintage, and the sconce above the headboard is an industrial-chic element that feels right at home in the space.*

