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SF'S TOP INDUSTRIAL DESIGNERS LOOK INTO THE FUTURE

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WANTED

(AND OURS TOO)

The Single Guy

What's nearly as magical as falling in love? Finding the right decorator.

by Tam Putnam photography by David Duncan Livingston

I didn't want people to come over and say to themselves, 'This totally looks like a bachelor pad,'" says new homeowner Gary Kone. "I'm hoping to start a family here someday, though my friends tell me, 'First get the girlfriend, then you can decide which room will be the nursery!'" Kone is voluble, with a stock of entertaining stories and a slightly vulnerable streak that saves him from an excess of self-assurance. And he possesses an apartment in Presidio Heights that's definitely eligible.

This is the story of a relationship—if not the one his mom is waiting for, at least one that changed how he perceives "home." Kone, a real estate developer in his late 30s, met Martha Angus after seeing a Pacific Heights residence for which she'd done the interior design ("spectacular," he says). He'd recently bought two floors in a 1909 brick-and-shingle house. "It took me 15 months of going to brokers' open houses on Tuesdays to find the right place," he says. "I thought it was a cosmetic disaster, but the proportions were what I was looking for. I wanted to put my own personality on it." Before moving into the duplex, he redid the kitchen and bath and removed a wall to make a larger bedroom. He painted. Then it was time to furnish his dwelling.

"When I went through Martha's portfolio, the first page showed a French-style château in Connecticut," Kone says. "The next page showed Martha standing beside Ralph Lauren, and I said to myself, 'If she's good enough for Ralph Lauren, she's good enough for me.' But I thought I was out of her league."

"As a matter of fact, I'm very versatile," Angus says. "I develop a look for each person and style. In this case, Gary wanted a hip but still classic aesthetic."

To this end, Angus matched big minimalist paintings by contemporary artists with modern furniture from the '30s through the '60s. Throughout Kone's duplex, she composed a mix of contrasts—offsetting big gestures with smaller and quieter elements—and juxtaposed grand-scale artwork with understated chairs, bold colors with earthy neutrals.

Angus also added adrenaline to the living room with color: orange leather club chairs, a tomato-red lacquer table from the '30s and a canvas by Robert Kelly that's dominated by an in-your-face yellow. Like a show-off who enjoys being the center of attention, all this drama works because its companions are low-key: velvety taupe armchairs, a Jean-Michel Frank–style coffee table, a re-created '70s sofa in a sand fabric.

With an eye for unexpected shifts in scale, Angus placed a tidy little striped pillow on a chair in front of the seven-

FRIENDS MAKE THE MAN: *(from far left)* Gabriella Sarlo, Michael Alfaro, Deborah Arbasetti and homeowner Gary Kone. *(above)* Edging into the sparely furnished hallway of Gary Kone's Presidio Heights duplex is the graceful arm and leg of a Thonet chair, circa 1905, which designer Martha Angus found at the Ed Hardy showroom.

ARTWORK COURTESY OF JOHN BERGGRUEN GALLERY

MIDCENTURY MEETS MOD: In the dining room, the "85 Lamps" chandelier designed in 1993 by Rody Graumans for Droog hangs over a vintage five-sided table. The chairs surrounding the table are from the 1960s; Charles and Ray Eames' blue plastic Eiffel chair first appeared in 1950. Looming behind it all is *Mimesis III*, by painter Robert Kelly.

COOK'S TOUR: *(above, above right)* Kone chose the cabinetry and appliances in the kitchen himself, leaving Angus in charge of the fabric for the banquette as well as the art—*Snow-walk,* by Enrique Martinez Celaya. *(right)* In Kone's bedroom, Damien Hirst's *Methamphetamine* leans casually against the wall behind a curvaceous chaise longue from Swedish designer Bruno Mathsson.

foot-tall Kelly painting, while a white-porcelain puppy by Jeff Koons eyeballs the room from a very tall teak pedestal. Angus also played with the interaction of textures: In Kone's bedroom, next to a chair and ottoman covered in coarse oatmeal fabric, she placed nested white lacquer tables.

Clearly, Kone's unreconstructed bachelor self has been gently ushered (beer can in hand) from that room. True, a bed with a chocolate-brown cowhide headboard anchors the space, and Kone shows off his pivoting plasma TV with obvious relish. But Angus has introduced a lightness to the room with a pair of '50s Murano glass lamps within which gilt-edged bubbles, more Champagne than beer, seem to rise. The colored dots running down a Damien Hirst print and the sliced-up shapes in a painting by Caio Fonseca over the bed add their share of lightheartedness. If Damien Hirst can do domesticated, unironic cheerfulness, any guy can.

Angus credits her studies at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris and at Carnegie Mellon with influencing how she thinks about her work. "I don't approach interior design as catalog shopping," she says. Until 1996, she lived in New York, where she designed the interiors of stores for Giorgio Armani and Ralph Lauren, as well as homes for Estée Lauder and Lauren. In everything she does, she proposes an elegant slant on tradition, often alongside

HUE AND CRY: From the Hermès-orange leather on the Privet club chairs (from the Hedge Edition line) to the bright yellow of Robert Kelly's *Nocturne* canvas, colors bring the living room to vibrant life. A porcelain puppy by Jeff Koons oversees it all from atop a solid teak pedestal found at March, on nearby Sacramento Street.

contemporary art; she also delights in mixing pieces with fancy provenances and unusual flea-market finds.

Warm and unpretentious, Angus is quieter than Kone. She's small, blond and—on this day, at least, when the apartment is being photographed—all wrapped up in a black turtleneck. She listens as Kone talks enthusiastically about her talents, commenting in turn, "Gary contributed a lot. He has really, really good taste."

"I have strong opinions," Kone admits. "I was looking for East Coast meets Presidio Heights. Park Avenue, only without the pretentiousness."

A few years ago, Kone lived bicoastally for a while, with a loft in SoHo as well as a place in the Bay Area, and, like Angus, he's still drawn to New York. "When I met Martha, I saw that she had an East Coast sensibility," he says. That affinity is most apparent in the library, with its overtones of '40s-film swank: a Breuer cart loaded with martini supplies mingles with a pair of patent-leather-covered armchairs, one in dark chocolate and the other in cream. ("I bought the armchairs cheap and didn't know what to do with them," says Kone. "I couldn't really tell by the little swatches Martha showed me how they'd turn out. It was my

CITY LIGHTS: *(above)* Kone's love for New York (a sentiment shared by Angus) shows itself in his study: salvaged subway signs, a skyscraper painting and a Marcel Breuer tea cart that's been converted into a rolling bar. *(right)* Oversize mirrors and a glass-walled shower expand the bathroom's apparent dimensions.

gutsiest decision.") Two vintage signs listing subway destinations, once used on New York trains, hang on either side of a bookcase.

Angus' ethos is spare and tchotchke-free. One of the few small decorative items in the house is a rich blue Belgian Art Deco vase in the dining room, which picks up the blue of an Eames chair from Design Within Reach. The irregularly shaped room, its sides six different lengths, was a challenge that Angus answered with an irregularly shaped table by Johannes Krahn, a midcentury German architect. Drawn up to two of the table's five unequal sides are a set of '60s chairs with chunky seats that seem to be supported by silver lightning bolts.

Kone was more intimately connected to the project than are many interior design clients. He says he worked seven days a week for 10 months on the renovation. "I chose the knobs for the kitchen cabinets, the brass grille covers for heating vents," he says, "and, at the other end of the spectrum, the insulation in the walls."

Kone takes great pleasure in the details of his refurbished home, exuberantly describing the revelatory moment when he spotted the edge of the marble counters at the Williams-Sonoma store downtown. "I'd already ordered the marble, and one day I went into Williams-Sonoma. When I saw the beveled edge on the counters there, I said, 'This is it!' And it didn't cost any more than the basic edge." He selected the kitchen's custom-made cabinetry, Sub-Zero refrigerator, Viking stove and other appliances; Angus suggested the painting over the banquette and the banquette's fabric, which is made for outdoor furniture. "I wanted my friends to feel comfortable here, for the place to be user-friendly. Martha told me you could throw a plate of spaghetti and meatballs against the banquette without a problem," says Kone.

ODD BEDFELLOWS: A Caio Fonseca painting, *Pietrasanta*, watches over the cowhide headboard. The bed is flanked by a pair of white lacquer tables from Swallowtail and matching 1950s-era Murano glass lamps. At the foot of the bed, a Khotan rug (from Ed Hardy) was woven in eastern Turkistan in the 1880s.

He's invited some people over for the shoot, and introduces not just one but two of them as his best friend. His best friend Michael has brought his girlfriend, Deborah, and she and Kone's other best friend, Gabriella, laugh when they see a deliberately offhand arrangement of vegetables set out in the kitchen for the photographer's benefit. "They know this is probably the first time there's been anything green and leafy in here," says Kone.

It's likely that his aesthetic give-and-take with Angus has offered Kone a preview of the domestic dialogue that he seeks. After all, inviting someone in to take a survey of your life, house and hopes is a pretty intimate step.

"I feel incredibly fortunate to have this place," Kone says. "If you have health, family and friends, you have 99.9 percent of what's important in life. All the rest is just extra." He pauses and laughs. "Or for me personally, the rest—that other .1 percent—is a giant big-screen TV." x

how to get the look

It's all in the details—the only thing left to do is the shopping.

by Jennie Nunn

Fit for a King
Eames Eiffel side chair ($199) and armchair ($299) at Design Within Reach *(1913 Fillmore St., 415-567-1236, www.dwr.com).* "I bought the Eiffel as a piece of sculpture for the room. It's a fun blast of color." *—Martha*

Enamored With You
Enameled folded sheet steel table ($5,800) at Hedge *(48 Gold St.,415-433-2233, www.hedgegallery.com).* Although Angus didn't use this table in Kone's duplex, its clean lines would fit right in.

Prince Charming
Ivory shaving brush ($58), ivory razor ($98), chrome razor stand ($98), Icewater classic hand towel ($8), large comb ($16), resin cup ($55), Clean grapefruit and ginger hand wash ($25), sisal sponge ($12), all at Waterworks *(55 Geary St., 415-982-1970, www.waterworks.com).* "Waterworks products are clean and classic—they are accessories, really. It always looks so beautiful when the entire bathroom is filled with Waterworks." *—MA*

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT): COURTESY OF DESIGN WITHIN REACH; STEFANIE MICHEJDA; COURTESY OF HEDGE

Dream Weaver
Forrest Jones utility basket ($54.50) at Forrest Jones *(3274 Sacramento St., 415-567-2483).* "Baskets can be used for a variety of purposes—next to the fireplace for firewood, for beach towels at the side of the pool or for boots and shoes in a mudroom." *—MA*

Fresh Coat
Farrow & Ball paint in Matchstick ($55/gal.) at Farrow & Ball *(8475 Melrose Ave., L.A., 323-655-4499, www.farrow-ball.com).* "I went through about 100 quarts of paint just to find the right colors." *—Gary Kone*

Bed Head
(from top right) Palmer European sham ($110) in Spectator fabric ($252/yd.), Elliot Boudoir throw pillow ($95), Ralph Lauren Colin white/black stripe throw pillow ($295), all at Ralph Lauren *(90 Post St., 415-788-7656, www.polo.com).* "When looking for bed linens, thread count doesn't matter—if the sheet feels good, it's a good sheet! The ultimate luxury is pressed sheets. Just be sure not to use bleach or starch when laundering linens." *—MA*

Orange Twist:
Privet chair with mahogany block feet ($4,900) at Hedge. "I chose the chairs as a punctuation of color in Gary's beautiful, neutral shell." *—MA*

Rise and Shine
Jonathan Adler lacquered nesting cubes (small, $150; medium, $350) at Jonathan Adler (*www.jonathanadler.com).* "I love those little tables. It's always nice to have a combination of finishes in a space. It's like death to a room to have all the same wood. Fine art always hits the scene sooner, but now it has finally hit furniture with lacquer. Rollo May said, 'Artists are the antenna of time,' and this is completely true." *—MA*

(PAINT, BASKET, PILLOWS): STEFANIE MICHEJDA; *(CUBES):* COURTESY OF JONATHAN ADLER; *(CHAIR):* COURTESY OF HEDGE