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ALL IN THE FAMILY

Cindy Nelson enlists her brother to design a contemporary home for her art collection and integrated family.

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Above: Evening falls on Cindy Nelson's home, designed by architect Jay Brotman with Dallas architect Will Snyder and builder Susan Newell and featuring a site-specific sculpture by Brad Howe. Right: A painting by Isaiah Zagar, known for his mosaic murals, hangs suspended in a window. The mahogany staircase complements the exposed-limestone walls. A painting by Kirk Mullenax hangs at the top of the stair, and a work on paper by Julie Anne Greenberg below.

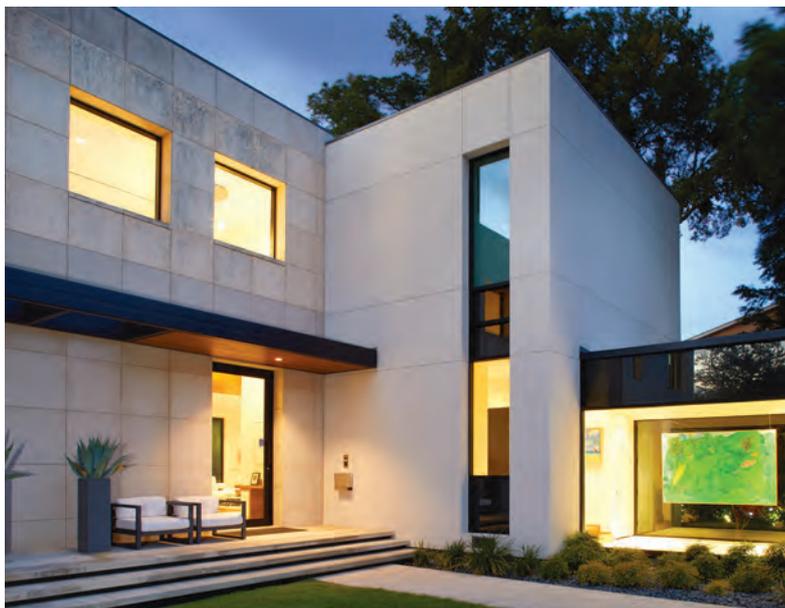
In *De Architectura*, the Roman architect Vitruvius extolled the virtue of architecture reflecting the perfect proportion of the human body. His theories citing stability, unity, and beauty have inspired builders throughout millennia. These timeless elements germinated in the North Dallas home of Cindy Nelson.

The Dallas native found the ideal architect to build her dream home in Jay Brotman. While Brotman is perhaps best known for rebuilding Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, he is also Nelson's brother. And while his projects are mostly nonresidential, for his sister he designed a contemporary idyll. Dallas-based architect William Snyder was also part of the architectural team. As Brotman explains, "Will brought in a lot of modern housing techniques." Snyder also drew up the final construction documents to reflect local building codes.

Nelson hired Dallas-based Susan Newell as the builder who then also provided her with critical interior-design advice. Together they designed the kitchen, bathrooms, and closets. "I loved picking every piece," Nelson exclaims. They worked closely with Poggenpohl to design an open kitchen, and with knoxtile for the bathrooms. Lynn Brotman, Nelson's sister-in-law and a corporate interior designer, made additional contributions, including the design of the Venetian plaster fireplace in the den. While each professional brought unique expertise to the project, Nelson is universally credited for her specific tastes. "She did a lot of homework. She had a good feeling for what she wanted and she could visualize it," Newell says.

Brotman's approach to any project starts by listening. "We had to understand how Cindy wanted to live," he says. Newell joined these initial conversations shortly thereafter. "We first came up with the design concept and developed it from that (with Brotman)," she explains. Ultimately, the home was designed from the inside out.

Conceptually, Brotman thought of it as a series of five boxes; three of which comprise the living areas, one for the garage, and one for the cabana at the back of the property. "It is a huge lot but not a huge





house,” he explains, adding, “The roots of contemporary architecture are building what’s needed and making it functional.” As part of that functionality, Brotman incorporated LEED principles, making it as energy efficient as possible. The home’s south-facing façade features a row of clerestory windows, amplifying natural light while minimizing summer’s heat. Full-length windows line the northern façade, offering views to a verdant yard, serene pool, and welcoming cabana, which is Nelson’s favorite room. Perfectly aligned with the living room, it reads as a cohesive whole to the rest of the house. Landscape architect John Armstrong collaborated with the design team to create complementary landscaping.

Airy and open, the rooms are scaled for intimate family living.

A central spine downstairs and a parallel bridge upstairs provide connective tissue that runs the length of the house. That every room opens onto this central axis is perhaps the physical manifestation of a household that was in need of healing. Nelson began this endeavor following the death of her husband. The home became a place for her family to start anew. “It was cathartic for her to think about the future and what it could be for her and her family. It allowed me to come visit, and we could focus on the future for her in a very healthy way,” Brotman says. With her children now young adults, Nelson shares the home with her partner, Barry Waranch.

The house serves as a showcase for their combined art collections. Nelson enjoys discovering new artists through such diverse venues



This page and opposite: The first-floor central spine leads to the kitchen and den with four oil on paper works by Peter Krauskopf (left) and a painting by Paris-based Jean Paul Donadini (right) installed above a Porada console table; a glass assemblage by Simon Waranch sits on the limestone floor.

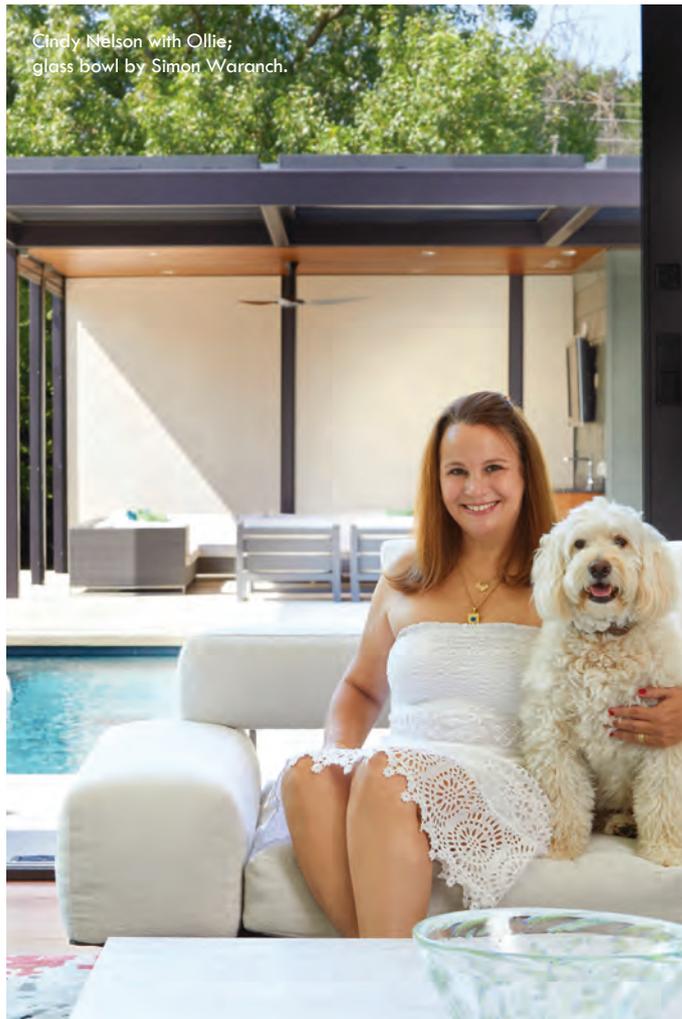
as Art Basel Miami and visits to area studios and galleries. A painting by Dallas-based Andrew Kochie accents the dining room with its pulsating energy. Kirk Mullenax's vibrant green canvas serves as a beacon on the staircase. Dallas Art Fair finds include work by Eric Zammit and Dan Miller. A site-specific sculptural commission by Brad Howe lends an additional air of welcome to the front of the house.

Among the notable works in Barry's collection are two paintings by Tom Pribyl, acquired from the beloved, now-shuttered Edith Baker Gallery, as well as a painting by the late Scott Barber. Julie Waranch Fleischman, Barry's sister, is an Austin-based artist whose small, gemlike paintings and collages are sprinkled throughout the home.

Simon Waranch, his son, is an up-and-coming glassblower whose work was recently featured in these pages. Nelson is one of Simon's most enthusiastic collectors. His floating spheres bob in the pool. A grouping of his shaped silver reticello vessels, suspended from the ceiling, activate an upstairs reading nook. And his functional objects are used on a daily basis.

Aesthetics were at the heart every decision, beginning with the approach to the home. Guests pull into an expansive parking court that is embraced on one side by the living spaces and is perpendicularly anchored by the garage. Entering the home, guests are greeted by the staircase, which, Brotman says, "becomes a central piece of art. It is very light and airy and connects to the bridge."

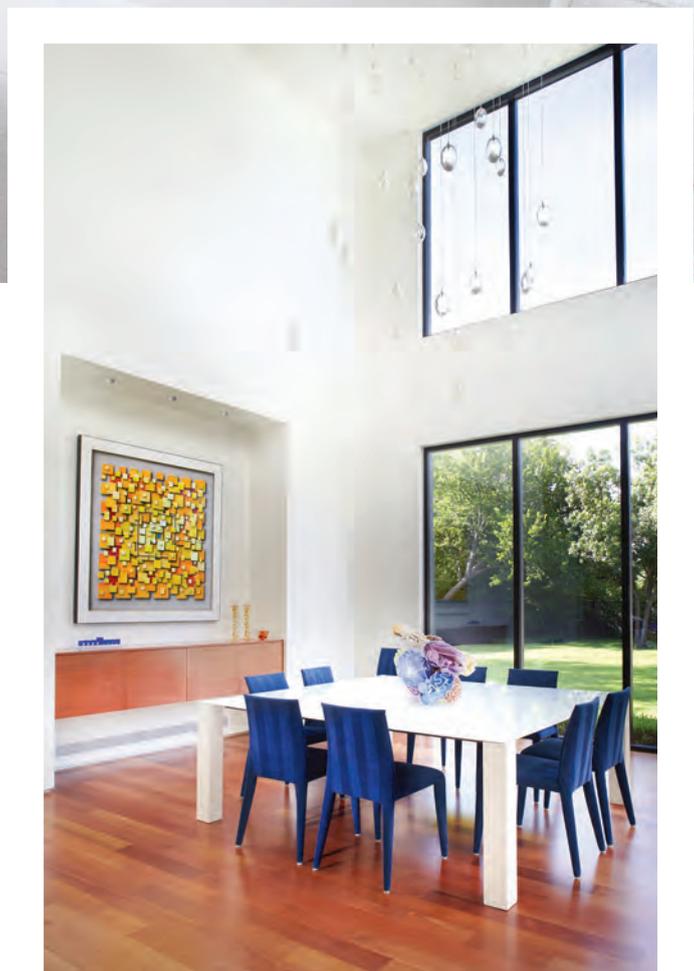
Poggenpohl kitchen with blue-glass vessel by Simon Waranch.



Cindy Nelson with Ollie;
glass bowl by Simon Waranch.



In the den: a Flexform sofa and B&B Italia table with glasswork by Carlyn Ray; black armchairs by Verzelloni; two wooden chairs by Porada; a sculpture by Eric Zammit flanks the sliding glass door with a yellow painting by Ibrahim Jalal (left). Far right: The dining room features a Porada table paired with chairs by B&B Italia, Andrew Kochie's 519 acrylic on canvas, and a glass assemblage by Simon Waranch.



And the exterior limestone is reinforced through exposed walls on the interior. Limestone floors echo the walls and contrast with the ribbon of mahogany used in the staircase and the bridge. In the den, incorporating this lush dark wood floats each room as a unique space. Commercial-grade metal stripping quietly lends definition to each material on the floor.

Details, such as reveals and strategically placed outlets, further define the home. “We picked up the aesthetics of museums,” Brotman explains. He also focused on the proportion and scale of each room. “The goal with this is to create a place for living,” he continues.

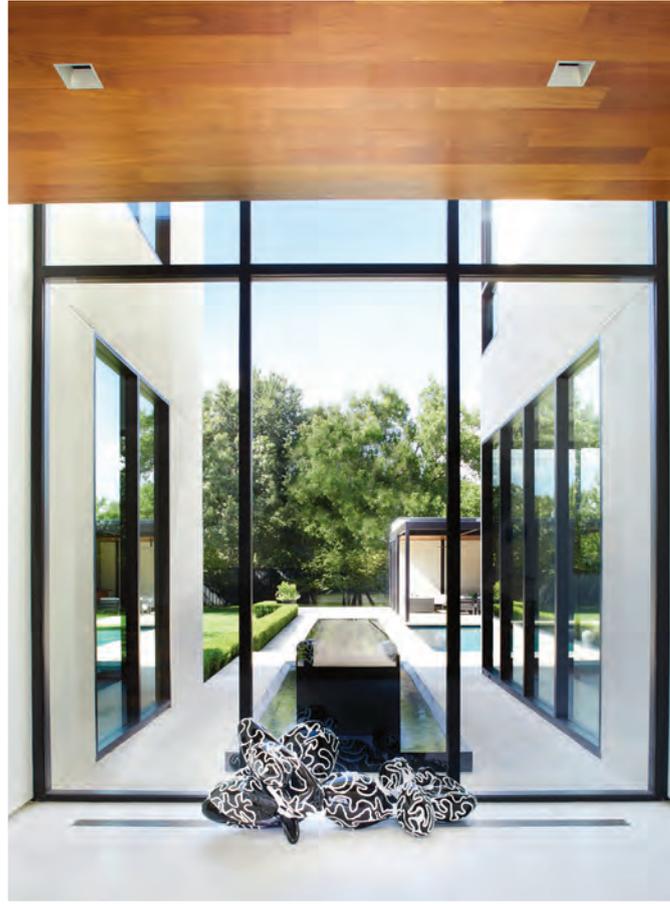
For Nelson, this home is an oasis. “I pull up and I’m just happy,” she professes. The project was a delight for everyone involved. “I love my architect and my builder is great,” she enthuses. Brotman echoed the sentiment, saying, “We played together very well in this endeavor.” And Newell cites it as one of her favorite projects, adding that by the time it was over, she and Nelson felt like family.

Stability, unity, and beauty. While it may have taken a village to build, this team created a modern-day palazzo of hope and healing. **P**



Top: The primary bedroom faces the verdant outdoors and features a Montigo fireplace, Minotti chair and nightstand, and glass vessels by Simon Waranch. Below: A site-specific glass installation features Simon Waranch's silver reticello forms installed above the B&B Italia chair, with a painting by Seung-Ha Lee on the right.





Center: Cindy Nelson's daughter's bedroom features a Jonathan Adler sofa with two recent glass vessels by Simon Waranch, a South African sculpture, and a painting by Casserroi. Left: A view of the fountain designed by Cindy Nelson shows off the stunning yard with an assemblage glasswork by Simon Waranch. Below: An arresting view of the glass-infused, limestone home designed by Jay Brotman with landscaping by John Armstrong.

