

The homeowner hung a lively work by Brazilian artist Tiago Carneiro da Cunha in his bedroom built-ins instead of a television, then filled the shelves with more paintings and sculptures.



POWER PLAY

Daher Interior Design complements a client's art collection with furnishings that stand strong.

BY MARNI ELYSE KATZ

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL J. LEE



Daher Interior Design conceived the puzzle-like shelving installation, painted Benjamin Moore's "Copper Kettle," so the owner could display three-dimensional pieces in the living room.

PAULA DAHER'S CLIENT MAY NOT (DEFINITELY DOES NOT) LIVE in a modernist mansion, nor is he music-industry royalty (he's a business exec). Still, that didn't preclude the designer from presenting parallels between Alicia Keys and Swizz Beatz's art collection and his own when she followed up after visiting his South End condo. "I had just read an article featuring their home and art collection, and so had he," Daher says. "I knew his art held a similar power and joy in his life." Her reference sealed the deal.

The homeowner tasked Daher with furnishing his newly renovated triplex from top to bottom in a manner that complemented his art collection. "We paid careful attention to furniture forms, making certain that each element could stand on its own," she says.

The collection encompasses paintings, sculpture, pottery, and glass, all with a strong point of view. These are not pieces that fade quietly into the background. The owner, who grew up visiting museums with his parents and serves on the Advisory Board of the ICA, Boston, is attracted to pieces in which the maker explores identity and honors self-expression. "I like artists who tell interesting stories through their work," he says.

Once Daher cataloged his collection and determined how he lived—he often works from home and loves to entertain—she created schemes for every space. The living room, with its triptych of maze-like shelving that Daher's firm designed to display their client's colorful pottery—from contemporary airbrushed earthenware to



A sculptural wall relief in plaster by Karon Davis, an artist whose pieces grace the collection of the ICA, Boston, hangs over a credenza that Daher designed to store the printer.



TOP LEFT

The Botero-like figure in the oil painting by Hana Ward, a Black artist based in Los Angeles, echoes the curves of the CB2 bed, as well as the shiny Adam Parker Smith sculptures.

TOP RIGHT

An oil painting by trans artist Katja Farin, a quadtych by Damien H. Ding from Steven Zevitas Gallery, and a painting by Sable Elyse Smith that is based on coloring books given to kids whose families are dealing with the legal system hang left to right in the breakfast nook.

BOTTOM RIGHT

The homeowner was drawn to the soft colors and figurative storytelling in James Parker Foley's *Raising the Dory*, an oil painting he purchased from Abigail Ogilvy Gallery in SoWa.



textural slumped ceramics—is the star. Sinuous sofas in pearl gray and peacock blue and a pair of Minotti three-legged chairs in cognac-colored velvet read as soft sculptures.

The rounded forms juxtapose the sharp lines of the Macassar ebony dry bar, where the homeowner hung two paintings: *Intertwined tubes* (worms? intestines?) by Lauren Quin, a rising star out of Yale University, and a vivid abstract by Sam Gilliam, a Black artist who found success later in life. On the back wall, a grisaille portrait by Kohshin Finley, who works from photographs to capture his subjects' vulnerability, skews

solemn. "It lends a stillness to the room where the other works are energetic," the homeowner observes.

Figurative works keep company in the dining nook, where a semi-circular banquette with a channel-tufted back hugs a Lawson-Fenning table with a playful base. The paintings' amorphous forms and expression-neutral or faceless visages speak to identity and ambiguity, as does the large painting behind the Flexform sectional in the media room downstairs. All are quietly seductive and imbue the spaces with soft, saturated colors.

As in the living room, the atmosphere in the office is invigorating. A creepy-

cool mixed media piece by Didier William hangs behind a handsculpted desk by indie designer Casey Johnson, inviting interest as a Zoom background. "The artist is a Haitian American reflecting on the Black, gay, and immigrant experience," the homeowner says. "It's very powerful."

The most provocative piece—a rope-wrapped puffy pink heart with a mirrored finish by Adam Parker Smith—lives in the guest bedroom. It references Shibari, a Japanese rope bondage technique, the homeowner reports. Is it hiding in there or meant to be in your face? "I like controversy, especially in the guest room," he says. We're guessing the latter.