



# WHY THIS SPACE works

By MAURI ELBEL | Photography by MICHAEL HUNTER

## Designer Spotlight: Betsy Homan of Betsy Homan Interior Design

THIS LIGHT-FILLED, INSPIRATIONAL ART STUDIO AND SOLARIUM SERVES AS A TESTAMENT TO BETSY HOMAN'S ABILITY TO INTERPRET HER CLIENTS' PERSONALITIES AND PASSIONS THROUGH THOUGHTFUL USES OF COLOR, TEXTURE AND DETAIL. REINFORCING HER BELIEF THAT OUR ENVIRONMENTS ARE OUR NESTS, HOMAN DESIGNED THE MULTI-USE ADDITION TO THIS SHAVANO CREEK HOME TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF A GROWING FAMILY.

"THIS IS A LOVELY, VERY TIGHT-KNIT FAMILY AND THEY WERE WANTING TO HAVE THIS DEDICATED SPACE WHERE THEY COULD PAINT WHILE LOOKING OUT ON THEIR BEAUTIFUL GARDENS AND LANDSCAPED YARD AND POOL," SAYS HOMAN. "BOTH THE DAUGHTER AND THE MOTHER ARE VERY TALENTED PAINTERS AND THEY WANTED A SPACE WHERE THEY COULD LEAVE THEIR PAINTINGS WHILE IN PROGRESS BUT ALSO USE IT AS A LOVELY ROOM TO READ IN OR ENTERTAIN." THE LONGTIME SAN ANTONIO-BASED INTERIOR DESIGNER SAT DOWN WITH *URBAN HOME MAGAZINE* TO TALK ABOUT THE DETAILS BEHIND THIS COZY AND CREATIVE SPACE.



### What remained at the forefront of your mind as you designed this sun-soaked space that's primarily used as an art studio?

**BH:** My clients love nature. They are avid gardeners and have these beautiful gardens just outside. They were looking for a way to bring the outdoors in so we wanted a neutral-colored room with accents of green, and we relied on lots of textures to create the interest and drama.

### What is the feeling one gets walking into this angular, light-filled room?

**BH:** It's calming. It's inviting to paint in, to walk into with a

book in hand, or for eating a lovely evening dinner overlooking the summer gardens. This room is light, airy and ready for creative energy. It truly is a multi-purpose room.

### Please tell us about the elegant wrought iron and wood framed French entry doors.

**BH:** The elegant wrought iron and glass French doors are from Builder's First Source. My client and I selected the style of the door and then the style of the wrought iron. The glass and iron doors bring natural light into the family room yet give you the feeling that you're entering a special room. They appear so graceful when you are in the family room and you look into this room. But they are dual purpose too. They not only lend themselves to the light, airy look of the solarium, but they are also functional because of the way they let natural light pour into the family room.

### How did you make sure this room would remain functional for your clients?

**BH:** It is a room where paint needs to be easily cleaned from the floor. So durability was a big factor. We approached the entire project with this in mind, but we also wanted something that was functional and beautiful so I designed custom cabinetry which reflects a more English whimsical style to meet their painting supply storage needs. Inside there are many drawers dedicated for different color palettes of paint. The upper and lower cabinets are painted in Benjamin Moore's "Elephant Tusk" with hand-painted accent lines of

"Dry Sage" and contain ample room for storing miscellaneous art supplies. The upper doors were designed with a curvilinear latticework to keep the look of the cabinetry light and airy. These cabinets are connected together with sage green and taupe handmade basketweave tiles from Materials Marketing. These tiles accent the "Golden Butterfly" granite countertop from Universal Marble. To reinforce our English theme, we used pewter Celtic-styled knobs from Allen and Allen.

### I love the creamy and soothing contrast of materials in here. Tell us about these selections.

**BH:** We purposefully used a light neutral color palette to



keep the light in the room bright and neutral which is ideal for painting. We used ivory split-faced limestone for texture on the walls from Emser Tile, white washed wood ceiling and beams, and a durable porcelain floor laid in a “Versailles” pattern with playful inset patterns. The decorative wood panel between the upper and lower windows conceals motorized solar shades from Texton™, providing sun control with the touch of a wall switch. This natural selection of materials highlights the outdoors, and by not over-doing the room, it keeps the look very clean.

**The overall aesthetic of this Shavano Creek home is undeniably traditional, but how does the vibe in this room differ?**

**BH:** It’s casual yet refined, which is a reflection of my client. This room was a departure from the rest of the traditional home because of the height of the ceiling and different textures. When you are standing inside this room, you almost feel like you are in a miniature tower.

**These furnishings are very simple, from the white round table to the wicker seating. What were you trying to achieve with minimalist selections?**

**BH:** Our goal was to keep the room simple and let the room’s architectural elements shine. The architect, Steve Heflin and Associates, put in those huge windows so we wanted to use that to our advantage, making the clients feel as if they were painting outdoors. Because this is a very tall room, we wanted to add the plank wood ceiling to articulate the room’s architectural character. This multi-use space can be used as an art studio but it’s a lovely room where the client can entertain or read, which is why we left it sparsely furnished as a solarium.

**Standing inside this space now, what is your favorite element?**

**BH:** The ceiling! The large domed hexagonal painted ceiling is stunning. We used large pine planks within the trusses to emphasize the hexagonal dome originally created by the architect.

**As artists, how does this space function for your clients?**

**BH:** Perfectly. The room is filled with north light and has plenty of space for both mother and daughter’s easels. The specially designed cabinet holds all their organized paint supplies. This space is truly a painter’s dream. ❖



**BETSY HOMAN INTERIOR DESIGN**  
210.824.1959 | Betsyhomedesign.com