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A woman with dark, wavy hair, wearing a sleeveless purple dress and a wide gold belt with circular studs, stands smiling in a bright living room. She is positioned behind a white sofa with several pillows, including a large blue tufted one and a white one with a Greek key pattern. Large windows in the background let in natural light, and a dining table is visible in the distance.

for the love of  
**art**

TIA AND DAVID HOBERMAN'S COLLECTION OF  
CONTEMPORARY ART INFUSES EVERY ROOM  
OF THEIR HOME WITH **COLOR AND CREATIVITY**



BY CANDACE ORD MANROE  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDMUND BARR  
PRODUCED BY JENNY BRADLEY



# Tia Hoberman

BEARER AND WEARER OF BOLD COLOR, SOCIABLE SHUTTERBUG, ENCHANTED BY ART, HOLLYWOOD HOSTESS, BENEFACTOR FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN

**W** With her penchant for lively and unusual color as a sort of wearable calling card, Los Angeles homeowner Tia Hoberman met her match in interior designer Windsor Smith. "We were introduced at a cocktail party at the home of a friend," recalls Tia. "Windsor had just designed her home, and it was the look I'd been struggling to achieve. I got a little emotional and gave her a big, inappropriate hug—I was so happy to find her."

The attraction was mutual. "I was immediately taken by how colorful Tia is. She's a beauty, and she knows how to wear bold strokes of color." That matters for a designer like Smith, who's only partly joking when she dubs herself "queen of the off-color palette." Her adeptness with color nuances and complexities was critical in her design of the new home Tia shares with her husband, David, and their three school-age children.

"Their master bedroom is the color of a Frappuccino," describes Smith, illustrating the subtleties of the color palette she created. "The only break in the sumptuous monochromatic space is the aqua silk curtain." The dining room palette began with a silver-leaf ceiling and branched out to "all sorts of grays and browns that you can't really define," she notes. Even rooms with less complicated hues, like the kitchen, become charismatic with Smith's quirky color combos and offbeat placements. She papered the kitchen walls in a chocolate brown, and accented that background with red lacquered chairs, pale pink lacquered bar stools, and pink lamps.

Knowing her way around color was imperative for Smith in working with Tia and David. Both homeowners are in the arts—Tia is a photographer and David is a producer. (In addition to some 200 movies, his credits include producing TV's wildly successful detective comedy *Monk*, starring Emmy Award-winning Tony Shalhoub and now entering its final season.) To



**Top left:** Dark stain on wood floors and on the stair treads and banister grounds the entry, allowing it to hold its own with stellar art. **Left:** Period pieces like the ebony Regency table mix with modern art like the woodcut on paper by Gert and Uwe Tobias. **Facing page:** Tia Hoberman's love of bright colors inspired the palette's accents.

Charcoal silk velvet on the dining chairs adds to the rich neutral palette articulated by the silver-leaf ceiling, damask curtains, and geometric rug. The Murano mirror, chandelier, and buffet table are antiques.





Pops of vivid color continue in the kitchen, with new red lacquered Italian armchairs, a red hanging "pineapple" lantern above the table, and a red "Gothic" lantern over the island. Architect William Hefner designed the cabinetry.

a less confident designer, the couple's knowledge of composition and color, form and flow, and the importance of a gratifying denouement might be intimidating. Not so for Smith, who was happy to leave placement of their fine and ever-growing collection of contemporary art—undisputedly the most important element in the home's design—in their own capable hands.

"Architect William Hefner created the [home's] amazing bones, and Tia and David selected and placed all the art. All I did was the finishes and furniture," Smith says modestly.

But her self-deprecation didn't diminish her role. Designing an interior to accommodate a rotating collection of color-packed, larger-than-life paintings (BTW: That's a 757 soaring alongside the staircase) demanded not only a designer with a sharp eye, but a design with a strong backbone. With art as their focal points, rooms cried out for their own definition. The challenge for Smith was to provide that identity without compromising the art.

She explains it this way: "I realized immediately that the most important thing about the project was incorporating this amazing art into a living home. I knew early on that we were building a gallery, but one with all the wonderful warmth of a traditional home. That was the challenge."

The first step she took to define spaces is akin to outlining the shapes in coloring books. "I painted all of the doors a high-gloss black lacquer to give a Park Avenue feel. I painted the handrail of the staircase an ebony mahogany, and I stained the wood floors a very dark walnut. The idea was to give spaces a sense of drama that could hold its own against the dramatic proportions and palettes of the art. The rooms had to balance the collections. Otherwise, the art would've taken over."

Smith's colorful first impression of Tia influenced the palette. "I was inspired by her blouse, thinking it would be only befitting that she have that same gorgeous turquoise in her living room, where she could hold court when entertaining friends and others from the arts."

Dressy turquoise and charmeuse pillows pop from their perch on the neutral linen sofa. "They give the living room drama and weight," notes Smith. The sofa's casual lines is a counterbalance

**Top right:** To keep the palette playful, Windsor Smith introduced pale pink painted stools at the bar. They add a soft counterpoint to the strong graphic quality of the checkerboard floor. **Bottom right:** Built on property that once belonged to actor Richard Widmark and that was featured on *I Love Lucy*, the house is an expanded Cape Cod design.





to the formality of the azzie satin window treatments, which are a mercurial blue. Tia and David's art inventory included the perfect piece for bringing the brilliant blue to the walls.

Choosing art to work with their decor isn't the typical order of business. In most spaces, the art comes first—and last. "It's an ever-evolving gallery," says Smith. "I can go over there on Thursday and return on Friday to find that all of the art is entirely different." At the time of photography, a large charcoal drawing of a mushroom cloud by Robert Longo commanded a living room wall. "There's something incredibly chic about the juxtaposition of that apocalyptic beauty and this domestic elegance," suggests Smith.

Large spaces like the living rooms appeal to the space planner in Smith, who likes "defining spaces with furniture." A banquette creates an intimate, alternative dining area, and a double-sided sofa maximizes appreciation of the lush garden view. "The views are what living in California is all about," says Smith—though in this art-lavished, color-splashed home, windows aren't the only portals worth peering into. ■

Architect: William Hefner Interior design: Windsor Smith

For more information, see sources on page 134



## kids first

As a mom, Tia Hobberman knows the enrichment children can bring to adults' lives. As a realist, she knows that not every child gets an equal chance. That's why her two favorite charities—Everychild Foundation ([everychildfoundation.org](http://everychildfoundation.org)) and First Star ([firststar.org](http://firststar.org))—are both child-centric, aiming to level the playing field. "My main attraction to Everychild was that it allows you to participate at any level, so I can still manage the constantly changing needs of our three children," explains Tia. Eliminating the necessity for fundraisers, the Los Angeles nonprofit relies on pledges from just over 200 local women to carry out its mission to alleviate the suffering of local children due to disease, disability, or abuse. Tia also supports First Star, the national public charity that was launched 10 years ago to help America's abused and neglected children through education, public policy, legislative reform, and litigation.

