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LOCATED ON NOB HILL, WITH VIEWS OF PROMINENT SAN FRANCISCO LANDMARKS, THIS 1927 APARTMENT WAS RENOVATED TO SHOWCASE A STUNNING ART COLLECTION.

# Reising above

By **Kathryn Loosli Pritchett**  
Photos by **David Duncan Livingston**

When physician and scientist Hans Reiser moved to the San Francisco Bay Area for a position with a biotech firm, he looked for an urban, sophisticated dwelling in which to set up home. Originally from Stuttgart, Reiser had lived in Boston, London and New York City. No surprise, then, that he was drawn to a city co-op apartment on Nob Hill with views of the Golden Gate Bridge, Coit Tower, and Grace Cathedral. Designed in 1927 by Weeks and Day, the architectural partnership that also designed the Mark Hopkins and Huntington hotels, the Spanish Baroque apartment featured large windows, high ceilings and generous natural lighting. San Francisco designer Jiun Ho worked with Reiser to update this classic space while staying true to its original design.

"We really wanted to retain as many of the details as possible while creating a modern feeling for the space, which needed to accommodate a stunning collection of contemporary art and antique furniture," says Ho. Some of the antique furniture came from Reiser's family, while other pieces were collected along the way then combined with custom, contemporary furnishings. The living room, for example, features vintage Eames chairs that Reiser's mother





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bought in Germany in the 1960s. They sit opposite a custom sofa designed by Ho. Between the seating is an old wood chopping block from Korea that functions as a coffee table. Reiser, a classically trained amateur pianist, practices daily on the Steinway grand piano across the room. His mantra, in life and in his home design, is that he seeks out things that are "true" and have "beauty."

"This room feels very formal, but it's also very clean and neutral," says Ho. "What brings color into the space is the people. Also, a clean architectural environment allows the art to shine." The entire home was painted Designer White by Benjamin Moore, a soft white that

Ho thinks showcases the art as well as speaking to Reiser's Germanic need for "pristine, precise spaces." In the dining room, a broader range of color is introduced with a beautiful striped wool carpet that sits beneath a rip sawn oak table by Cassina surrounded by Mies van der Rohe chairs. The dramatic "Birdie's Nest" light fixture by Ingo Maurer plays off the large antique candelabra purchased at auction. A periwinkle blue upholstered bed from Italian company Poltrona Frau anchors the bedroom.

Ho designed the walnut night tables on either side of the bed. A lithograph by Roy Lichtenstein and etchings





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Left: The living room with a custom sofa and chopping block tables. Top: The walnut nightstands lend themselves to the modern aesthetic. Above: Art takes many forms, including tabletop sculptures.





by Eduardo Chillida and K.R.H. Sonderborg face an antique chest from Reiser's family collection. Nearby the "Mopane" chair designed by Ho provides a witty contrast. "The chair is very primitive and its shape is quite organic," says Ho. "It balances nicely with the Moroccan rug, Saarinen side table and contemporary painting."

Having worked for years designing hotels in Asia and Australia, Ho thinks it's important that a design reflect its location. "I don't want to be surrounded by Louis XVI furniture in a

Tokyo hotel," he explains. For a San Francisco residence, Ho thought it was important to create a design that was both sophisticated and yet casual. He kept the color palette neutral in order to create a "calm oasis" in the space as well as direct the eye to the spectacular views outside. "Just looking out the window at Grace Cathedral, you're taken by the history and the intricate nature of the architecture," says Ho. "It's a wonderful contrast with the modern interior." ■

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