

FABULOUS BEDROOMS & BATHS

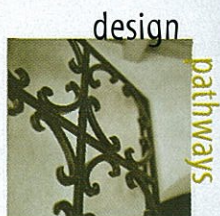
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ALEX VERTIKOFF

object lesson

The art of accessorizing

Text by Amy Abrams

It's the little things that make a house a home. Whether it's an 18th-century *santo*, a collection of small chairs, or a vivid contemporary lithograph, accessories give homeowners the chance to strut their personal styles. But instead of filling shelves with dust-collecting knickknacks, homeowners are choosing pieces that have greater relevance to their lives.

"As uncertainty in the world heightens, people want their environments to enrich their lives," says David Michael Miller of David Michael Miller Associates. "Since

Sept. 11, people care less about acquiring and more about what things mean, their history, their story."

In this quest for the perfect something to place on the mantel, three strong trends have emerged: religious icons such as *santos*; various collections and conversation pieces; and handcrafted Western items. Within these broad categories are objects that soothe the soul, spark memories or reflect personal interests and beliefs.

"Accessories should reflect the personality of the homeowner; this is what adds

Above: Rustic furnishings and a wall full of 18th- and 19th-century retablos add personality to an entryway in Scottsdale.



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Above left: In her own home, interior designer Sharon Fannin displays several collections, including this grouping of gleaming silver items. • Above right: Interior designer Billi Springer lent importance to the foyer of this north Scottsdale residence by including a trio of crosses and a religious statue atop a Spanish Colonial chest.

charm and magic to a home," says designer Judy Fox of Judy Fox Interiors. "Whether an object is inherited from a relative or purchased on holiday, it must be meaningful."

BEYOND ZEN

More and more homeowners are tending to their spiritual needs by creating places in their homes for meditation, prayer, spiritual study, yoga, or just plain relaxation. Some choose a small corner, others a room or an entire house. They accessorize with handmade artifacts, photographs, spiritual or religious objects, ancient spiritual texts, plants and flowers. Here, candles are an important element as well. Imparting a soft glow and often infused with aromatherapy oils to soothe the senses, candles are available in a vari-

ety of shapes, sizes and colors.

Interior designer and gallery owner Georgia Bates of Bates Collection built her business on the premise that objects from another time and place provide a satisfaction lacking in modern mass production. She finds treasures during travels to Mexico, Europe, and Central and South America, including many devotional objects from old churches, remote villages and haciendas.

"I love the energy of these old spiritual pieces," says Bates, pointing out antique *santos*, a Hindu clay figurine and an ornate altar piece from the Philippines. "All these pieces are alive; you can feel it. They were among other lives and other souls."

"More people are buying antiques and devotional pieces and accepting an eclec-

tic mix," adds Bates. "I hear less and less, 'I can't mix antiques with contemporary.'"

North Scottsdale antiques dealer Tyrone Campbell also sees an increasing desire for devotional objects, including *santos*. Campbell's adobe home showcases more than two dozen antique *santos* in addition to Native American art and artifacts with spiritual significance. Bates has created a "shrine room" with statues to honor Buddha, Christ and the Virgin of Guadalupe.

Divine objects create a serene space for reflection in an increasingly fast-paced world. Home becomes a place for rejuvenation. "Your sacred space can be anywhere," advises Bates. Placing a portrait of the Virgin Mary or an image of Christ in the bedroom provides a valuable message upon awakening, she notes.



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KIM CORNELIUSON

Above left: Carved stone and wooden heads comprise another of designer Fannin's interesting collections. • Right: Interior designer Judy Fox accessorizes with seashells and jewelry spilling out of a many-drawered chest.

COLLECTIONS & CONVERSATION PIECES

Some people opt to accessorize their homes with items they have collected, or use unusual objects with stories behind them. Donna and Morton Fleischer's 200-acre ranch northeast of Scottsdale is a treasure-trove of collectibles from all over

the globe. Their eclipsing passion is Western memorabilia, including holsters, spurs, bits and chaps, along with more than 150 saddles. In addition to these items, the Fleischers' home showcases numerous collectibles that reflect shared interests and aesthetic sensibilities. From

travels worldwide, Donna has amassed a 400-piece mother-of-pearl collection, including rare opera glasses, cigar clip-pers and writing sets. Four-foot-tall antique elephant tusks are displayed in the Arizona room, and a museum-quality collection of Spanish Colonial iron pieces

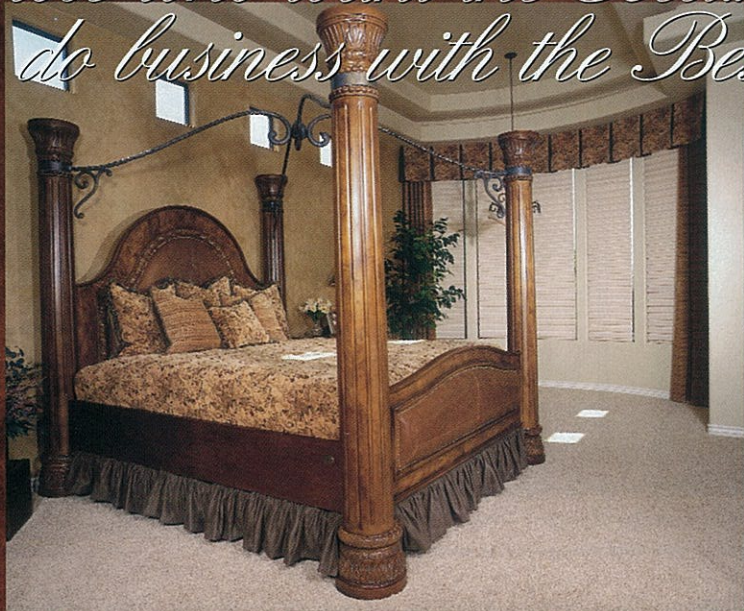
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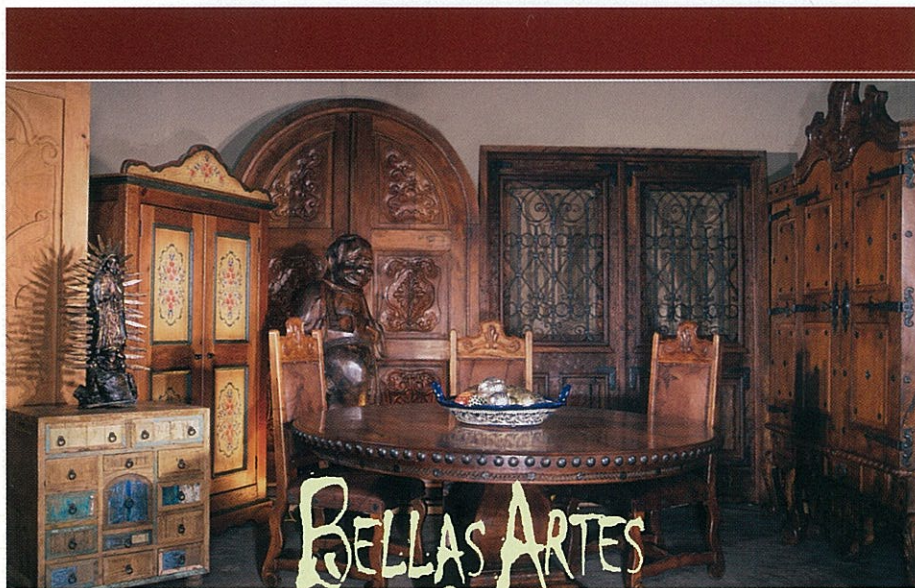
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creates an architectural grid-work of design on a wall leading to the master bedroom.

"Each piece represents the joy and excitement of discovery for my husband and me," Donna notes. "The contents of our home represent things that we love and appreciate for their beauty and uniqueness, but also tell a story about time and place in our history together."

Internationally famed artist Fritz Scholder decorates his Scottsdale residence with a variety of collections, including more than 17,000 books, as well as masks (over two dozen), crosses, crucifixes and more. An extensive traveler, Scholder is constantly acquiring new works from exotic destinations. He advises, "Buy more than just an item to decorate the shelf. Buy what's real. Look at it. Touch it. Is it talking to you? Are you falling in love with it? Do you want to make it your own?"

Accessories also can be conversation pieces, such as the wallpaper blocks interior designer Billi Springer had framed for a client's Scottsdale home. Designer Fox also enjoys accessorizing with unexpected objects. "Coffee tables are excellent places for elements of surprise," she says. "Fill a unique or antique box with bird eggs and rose petals."

Her own living room includes an antique side table with multiple drawers that house her collections of buttons and Indian jewelry. "I drape necklaces over the open drawers," she comments.

"Collections need not be expensive," Fox offers. "Seashells and candles can have special meaning and add a personal touch. Enlarged family photos printed in sepia tones and similarly framed make a strong statement and celebrate family."

WESTERN CHIC

With Western design continuously evolving, Western-themed accessories have a new refined look. Today's artisans are using increasingly sophisticated materials with stronger construction and longer-lasting finishes. These handcrafted treasures bring regional relevance to Valley homes.

"You won't see howling coyotes; the look today is not kitschy or primitive," says Valerie Watters of Valerie's Furniture & Accents in Cave Creek. "Leather frames, boxes and lampshades are hand-