FLORIDA DESIGN

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Light Magic in Miami Beach
Design as Remedy in Amelia Island
A Ranch Revamp in Okeechobee
& More

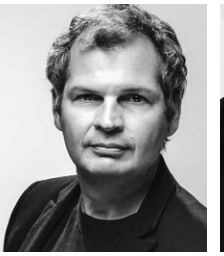
ALTERED STATE
Florida Museums Celebrate 100 Years of Surrealism

ROBYN BRANCH

Robyn Branch Design

"Design Therapy," page 156

Helping a couple build their forever home in Amelia Island was a particularly satisfying project for interior designer Robyn Branch. The project was a literal labor of love for everyone involved as it helped the wife heal from a serious biking accident. "As the house came together, she got better too, and that was wonderful to see," says Branch, who worked closely with architect John Dodd and builder Scott Payne. "In terms of design, we took inspiration from the scenery for color tones and punctuated with black to define the spaces along with other earthy hues." *robynbranchdesign.com*



MAX STRANG
BRIGGS EDWARD SOLOMON

Strang Design | Briggs Edward Solomon

"Home on the Range," page 166

A recent commission took Max Strang to Okeechobee farm country, where he spearheaded the expansion of a ranch house. "It was such a pleasure to work in this spectacular setting surrounded by scenes of Old Florida," says the architect. "I deeply enjoyed this project on a personal level." Interior designer Briggs Edward Solomon was equally pleased about his involvement. "One of my favorite aspects of the home is its seamless integration with nature," he says. "My job was to honor the essence of the ranch and embrace its unique character." *strang.design; briggsedwardsolomon.com*

ROBERT RIONDA

Robert Rionda Interiors

"Artful Balance," page 178

When Miami designer Robert Rionda headed to Key Largo to oversee the interiors of a couple's 8,000-square-foot condo retreat, vacation vibes were not on his mind. "These clients wanted an elevated home to display their amazing modern art collection," he says. "They wanted it to be comfortable, but to also serve as a gallery." Rionda delivered with a layout that allows residents and visitors to have private and social areas, as well as plenty of museum-like moments with interesting art vignettes. *robertrionda.com*

MICHELLE MILLER
DIANA LEPINE

Michelle Miller Design

"Revamp Redo," page 186

When it came time to give a 1920s colonial-style house in Old St. Petersburg a historically sensitive renovation, its owners found the pitch-perfect designers for the job. "We took a very eclectic approach," says Michelle Miller, who worked with Diana LePine on the project. "The interior decor of the home integrates antiques and new furniture pieces with a hint of Moroccan and West Indies influences. This was done to balance the decor and create a classic setting. The harmony of the design comes from balancing the old with the new." *michellemillerdesign.com*

ANDREW SUVALSKY

Andrew Suvalsky Designs

"Beachside Backdrop," page 194

After a husband and wife who are serious art collectors found their ideal condo at Sloan's Curve in Palm Beach, they called on interior designer Andrew Suvalsky to craft a setting for their masterpieces and luxurious interiors emphasizing the apartment's ocean views. "I was asked to create a perfect home—first for the art and secondly for the clients," says Suvalsky. "Each design choice we took in this residence was preceded by a question: 'Where will the art go so it can help us tell the most compelling story.'" *asdesigns.com*

An aerial view of the existing home (left) and new pool house (right) in Okeechobee brings the vastness of the family-owned ranch into view. Owners of the property since 1986, Ramon and Georgina Corona consider themselves stewards of the land.

HOME ON THE RANGE

AN ADDITION TO A RANCH HOUSE IN OKEECHOBEE'S FARM COUNTRY GIVES A FLORIDA FAMILY ROOM TO GROW

ARCHITECTURE MAX STRANG & MARCELA ARANGO, STRANG DESIGN, MIAMI, SARASOTA & WINTER HAVEN, FL
INTERIOR DESIGN BRIGGS EDWARD SOLOMON, BRIGGS EDWARD SOLOMON, MIAMI, FL
TEXT SAXON HENRY | PHOTOGRAPHY KRIS TAMBURELLO

WHEN RAMON AND GEORGINA Corona decided to provide their sizeable family with more space to gather within a wide swath of ranchland in Okeechobee, there was one architect they were determined to hire.

"Max Strang was the only person we wanted to work with when we decided to add the pool house and pool to our property," says Ramon. "We had to ensure that the new additions would seamlessly integrate with the existing structure and harmonize with the terrain."

RIGHT: Architect Max Strang chose a rustic treatment for the railing on a second-floor balcony, one that left the views unencumbered.

LEFT: The great room holds a deft mix of old and new. The antique hewn bench and chair were sourced in Belgium, and the enormous planter was once a wine cask that hails from France. "The soulful saddle, which is owned by the client and was previously used on their horses, became a statement piece," says designer Briggs Edward Solomon. "By placing it on a simple stand, we were able to showcase its significance and create a focal point in the room."

BELOW: Whitewashed woodwork set the theme for the interiors. The sectional in the great room is covered in de Le Cuona linen, and the coffee and console tables are custom designs by the Briggs Edward Solomon team.

Given Strang was born just up the road in Polk County, Florida, the architect felt his sensibilities were primed for the job: "I was born for this project," he says.

The fact that the home is nestled into a grouping of oak trees that rise above a serpentine creek drove the design of the new 3,400-square-foot building. "We borrowed heavily from the existing residence and placed the new structure just the right distance away from the main house—still close by and convenient, but far enough away to maintain privacy," explains Strang. "We used great restraint to ensure the building fit in, and we paid particular attention to where the main porch was, having it overlook the pool, the beautiful sunsets, and the oxbow in the creek."

Nature was also one of the main factors designer Briggs Edward Solomon considered when approaching the interiors. "I drew inspiration from the panoramas and the materials that were previously used while also incorporating some old primitive pieces and adding

ABOVE: A cellar on the first level of the pool's ranch house was created to ensure wine is always on hand for family dinners and special celebrations.

modern lines," he explains. "It was important for me to honor the essence of the ranch, to embrace its unique character, and to incorporate elements that reflect its lifestyle and history. The result is a harmonious blend of the past and the present."

This nod to ranching is not a superficial one, as the Corona family raises cattle and horses on the land. "Ranching has been in my family for generations," says Ramon. "It is not only a livelihood but an opportunity for the whole family to share in the responsibility of caring for the land and animals that live on it." The Coronas view conservation as nothing short of a legacy and they relish the unique opportunity the land gives them to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

The project architect on the Strang team, Marcela Arango, responded viscerally to the environment while working on-site. "Being able to design for open preservation land surrounded by cattle pens, hay bales, and a rushing creek was one of the most rewarding and incredible experiences of my career so far," she explains. "Just incredible."

ABOVE: The white oak side tables on the second-floor loft were custom made for the space (the oak is the same as the trees that tower over the home). The coffee table is covered in a pale leather.

A desk by Briggs Edward Solomon and a chair found in an antique shop in London were set up in a corner of the home with vast views of the land.

The ample porch carries the whitewashed theme from the interiors to the exterior. "Exposing the joists and ceilings brings this outdoor room ample character," says Strang. "We chose pine because it's simple and rustic." The bar surround of aged six-inch oak planks was sourced from One by Oak and echoes the ruddiness of the ranchland.

LEFT: "I love the idea of the family running through the cattle pens to the pool," says Strang, who designed the diving platforms to the water to allow the children to pretend they are cowboys and cowgirls. Outdoor showers right next to the pool means family members can ride up on horseback, tie up the horses, rinse off, and jump into the water.

The ranching culture was just as inspirational for Strang: "A few months before we started, I was reading the novel *A Land Remembered*," he says, "so the flavor of a family interacting with the Florida wilderness was in my head."

Solomon salutes the congruity they all achieved by working together. "One of my favorite aspects of the home is its seamless integration with nature," he says. "Max did a great job of creating a space that feels perfectly in sync with the countryside. His attention to detail in incorporating features such as large windows, open floor plans, and strategically placed outdoor living spaces allows for amazing views of the surroundings."

The homeowners say a particular attribute that resulted from the renovation is an

ABOVE: This view of the 3,400-square-foot pool house illustrates how seamlessly it is situated in its setting. “One of the captivating aspects of the ranch is its tranquil location underneath an oak hammock,” says owner Ramon Corona. “It is surrounded by ancient trees and immersed in nature.”

experiential one. “The second-floor balcony, which offers a view that extends deep into the ranch, is one our favorite spots,” says Ramon. “This property has evolved from a place of tradition and ranching to a cherished home for our family. It is grounding and serves as a refuge from the fast-paced world. Time simply slows down here.”