

BIKINI ENVY—THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

# Santa Barbara

MAGAZINE

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LOUIS-DREYFUS'  
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Julia Louis-Dreyfus  
at home

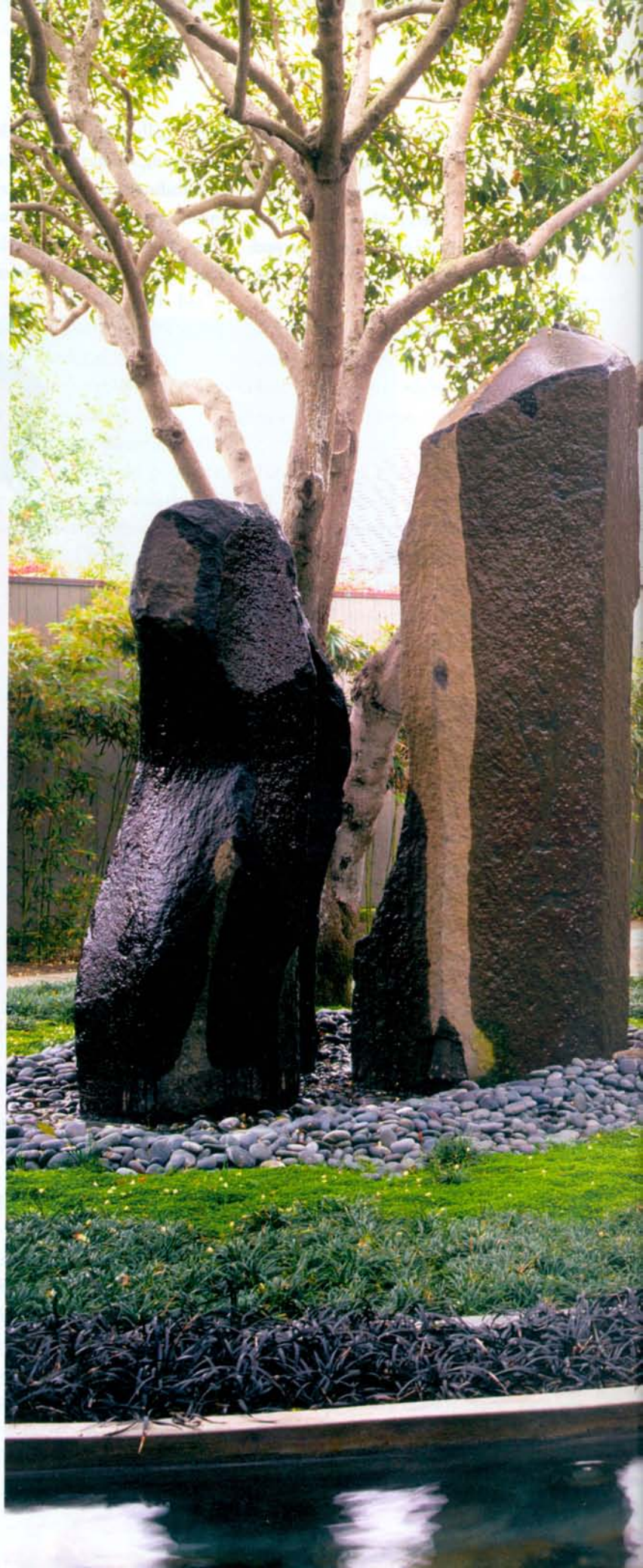




# A Seaside Synergy of Form and Space

SUSAN SULLIVAN AND CONNELL  
COWAN RELAX AND RECHARGE AT  
THEIR MODERN BEACH RETREAT

BY DEGEN PENER  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
LISA ROMEREIN  
PRODUCED BY  
NANCY SALVUCCI



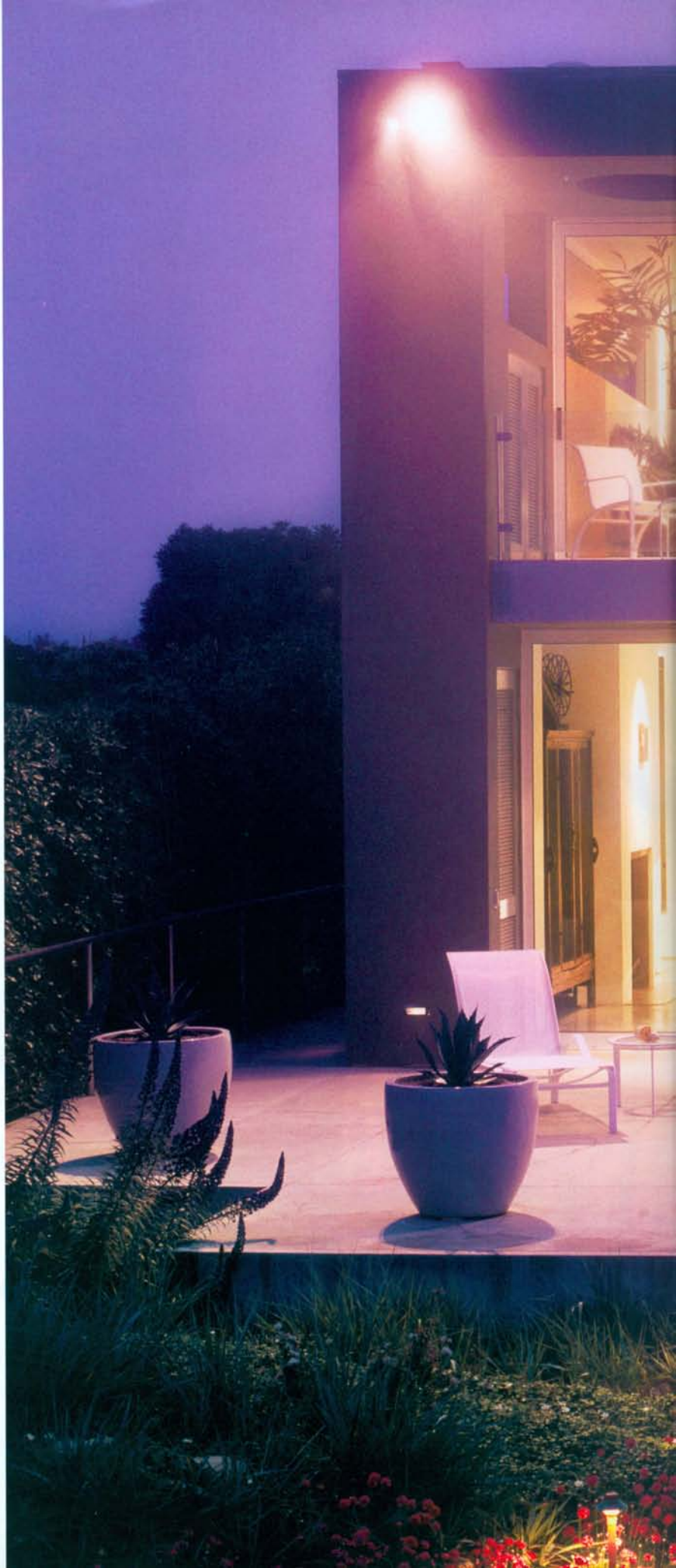


CONTINUED FROM PAGE 160 side of the house, in a courtyard area that connects to a guest house, the main house has an overhang which juts out a good six feet over a formal pond, calling to mind the many watery caves that poke into the island edifices across the channel. "It's an incredible spot," says Van Atta. "When you are there you are only aware of the ocean and the mountains." Yet more water flows from a large, contemporary fountain made of tall basalt rock columns that dominates the courtyard.

"You can never have too much water," adds Cowan, who designed the fountain himself.

Of course, there are always exceptions. It was water—water seeping into the wrong place—that first brought the couple to Santa Barbara in the late 1990s. Their house in Los Angeles had sprung a leak under the floorboards. "Basically, the floor buckled and they had to replace all of it. We had to move out and that catapulted us up here," says Sullivan. The two temporarily rented a house in Santa Barbara while the floors were being repaired. "And we did what so many people do when they are in an environment that is really beautiful, even if they

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The view of the house from the beach at night. (In case you're wondering, there are blinds installed in the upstairs bath.) OPPOSITE: Cowan (paintbrush in hand) and Sullivan have a chat with architect Neumann on the back patio.





The guesthouse looks out on a courtyard that includes a fountain of three huge basalt columns (designed by Connell Cowan) and a modern garden, composed of concentric circles (created by landscape architect Susan Van Atta). OPPOSITE: Architect Andy Neumann chose an inviting red door for the entrance.



Beachfront living doesn't get any more modern than this. Actress Susan Sullivan and her partner, psychologist Connell Cowan, recently built a Santa Barbara beach house that looks like an oversized Donald Judd sculpture that just happened to wash up onshore. The two-story structure—clad in a layer of clean, grey plaster—comprises a large ground-floor living area with a bedroom and his and hers baths above. Large planes of glass on both floors open out to the inescapable expanse of ocean fewer than 50 feet away. Connecting downstairs to upstairs is a breathtaking spiral staircase with aquamarine glass steps that carry up, up and away.

"It's designed to be this great open space," says Sullivan, whose acting career bridges Broadway (a debut opposite Dustin Hoffman in *Jimmy Shine*), television (*Falcon Crest* and *Dharma & Greg*) and movies (*My Best Friend's Wedding*). "When you walk in you are not even supposed to be aware there is a kitchen. There are no pulls on the cabinets. The dishwasher and microwave are built in. The whole thing is

CONTINUED ON PAGE 168



The main living space—wide-open and airy—has a mix of contemporary and Asian furniture; a painting by Thomas Leaver hangs to the right of the fireplace. LEFT: Susan Sullivan at the bottom of the spiral staircase.









The couple appreciates their dining table so much that they avoid blocking it with chairs. Behind the table, a long, narrow window illuminates a luminescent hanging sculpture by Jacob Hashimoto. Paintings by Elaine Jordon.

OPPOSITE: "From the very beginning," recalls Neumann, "Susan said, 'When I walk in, I want to see this sculptural spiral staircase.'" Nestled in its sinuous curve is a sculpture by Cecilia Z. Miguez.









Sullivan in the kitchen, which unobtrusively takes up just one wall of the main living area. OPPOSITE PAGE: "One of the first things that we bought before we moved in was this table," says Sullivan. "It's called an artist's table and I thought, 'Oh, isn't that a wonderful theme for this house.'" Sitting on the table, purchased from Kim3, is a sculpture by Cowan.











CONTINUED FROM PAGE 154 sleek." Adds architect Andy Neumann of Neumann Mendro Anducaitis Architects, who designed the home: "The cleanliness of it is really soothing and refreshing."

The entire house seems to float in its surroundings. Indeed, as modern as it is, the house is set into the landscape in a fashion similar to the Channel Islands hovering on the ocean. Fronting the beach, there's a garden of native plants hugging the sand dunes. "They wanted it to be natural and wild," says landscape architect Susan Van Atta. On the other CONTINUED ON PAGE 162