

Celebrate HOME

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**SNEAK
PEEK
ISSUE!**

THE ARTIST
Gladys Roldan-de-Moras



HOME

Interview with **Holly Siprelle Hedstrom** by **Cindy Dyer** • Photography by **Cindy Dyer**

Tom and Holly Hedstrom's house in north Arlington is a visual treat—very open and filled with light. I've visited the house several times, but this was the first chance I've had to look at it through my lens. I knew that the house had "good bones," but even I was surprised at just how beautiful it is in photographs. It is a hard house to leave! Holly shares their love of the house with Celebrate Home Magazine.

When you were house hunting, were there specific things you were looking for in a home?

We wanted to be in north Arlington, Virginia, to make it easier to commute into Washington, D.C., and to be closer to some of our friends. We were wide open on what style we wanted which really helped us consider different homes.

How would you describe your house style?

Open, contemporary, split foyer

How many houses did you tour before you found this gem?

Between the two of us, more than 35 homes!

What was your first impression of the house?

There was little curb appeal because it needed landscaping, but when we found ourselves inside the home, there was this burst of pleasure in how it was laid out and the stunning living room view.

Says Tom, "It all started as the typical compromise of trying to get close to Holly's job to minimize commuting time and yet being in an attractive neighborhood that was within our price range.

We had seen many homes in the general area, but none had inspired us enough to make an offer.

When we first drove up to the house, its low front profile and meager landscaping almost caused us to not go in, but as soon as we entered the front door and walked up the split foyer and saw the view from the living room over the heavily wooded horizon, we were very impressed. The rest of the house was also nicely done or else could easily have been improved—such as the 1960s vintage rec room and formica bar. It also helped that it was on a cul-de-sac, yet close enough to several main roads into Washington. As time has passed, we have gained an appreciation for the community-spirited neighbors and the progressive, well-managed services provided by Arlington county."

Did you immediately see how you were going to make it your own or did the process evolve over the four years you've lived in the house?

The process evolved. When we first saw the house, we agreed it was way too big for us, and we definitely didn't need an elevator! We just never saw anything else we liked as much as this house. And, since we were merging two households into one, we wound up being able to use a lot of what we already had without losing the overall feel we wanted of something open, clean, and uncluttered. We had some original ideas about how to make it our own, but things really evolved over time.

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Delicious Pops of COLOR





SPLIT DECISION

Left: Holly loves that this split foyer house mimics one of her favorite childhood homes. The flow of the house allows privacy for guests in the lower level but without feeling so separated. The open floor plan also means more light in every room.



HAVE A SEAT

Right: The banquette allows extra seating without obstructing the beautiful view from the living room.

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I'm glad we did some things right away (landscaping, new portico and walkway, new windows), and glad we waited to do others.

What changes have you made to the home?

One of the first things we did was the front yard and entrance to the house. We used a fabulous firm called Landscapes for You (www.landscapesforyou.net). Lynn Koch helped us achieve our goal of making the front yard more inviting, and she designed a deer-resistant garden that transformed the look of the house from the front. We now have interesting shapes and colors all year round.

Tell me about the landscaping challenges.

When we moved in, Tom immediately began to tackle the bamboo that had grown out of control in

the back yard (in fact it had begun to take over the back yard). He cleared and removed about eight pickup truckloads of bamboo, and reclaimed the back yard. The back yard is fenced so it's safe to let Bailey out back. In fact, she has become a favorite with our next door neighbors, so now she feels like her back yard, her front yard, and the neighbor's front yard, are all hers.

Any future plans for remodeling or decorating?

Most of the walls had been painted in neutral tones and we wanted to start introducing pops of color in the kitchen/dining room and my bedroom, so that was done fairly quickly. We have replaced lighting fixtures, repaired all the gas fireplaces, installed some wonderful artwork by photographer Cindy Dyer, and most recently we upgraded two



have found it very useful from time to time. Children who visit think they're in an amusement park!

How many families have called this place home?

We are the third owner, although the second owner stayed only long enough to upgrade the kitchen. The original owner was a doctor who was socially involved in the neighborhood and very well liked. Neighbors have told us Dr. Hosney welcomed them to the neighborhood with a party whenever someone moved in, and we are using some of the same service companies who remember him fondly as well. He passed away a few years ago, but in some ways we feel like we know him. He did the big expansion to add the elevator, new master bedroom, downstairs sunroom, and the addition to the living room to bring in more light. It was his work that made the house really something special.

What is your neighborhood like?

We love our neighborhood because it's the best of both worlds! It's close to Washington, D.C., but

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bathrooms and a downstairs bar area. I'd like to redesign the dining room. We love the new carpet, but we would like to have the dining room furniture and bar stools resemble the millwork in the kitchen since those two rooms are so connected. I would also like to redesign the back yard.

Does Tom get involved with design decisions?

We work really well together. He has definite ideas about what he does and doesn't like, and that helps keep me grounded. We have had our disagreements, but with both of our input, we have been very happy with all the outcomes. We are both really pleased with the bathrooms/bar project that was completed this past summer.

Tell me about the elevator.

The elevator was installed by a previous owner who wanted to age in place. We laughed about it when we discovered it, but both of us (and the dog)





TREE HOUSE VIEW
The living room is Tom and Holly's favorite room.



SPIRITS WATCHING OVER US
The Hindu statues, purchased during a trip to the West Coast, remind Holly of the transformative power of introspection, spirituality, yoga and meditation.



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because of all of the wooded spaces and nature center nearby, it's very easy to take a walk in the woods with the dog. To our surprise and delight, we discovered a great dog park nearby also, so there are plenty of opportunities for Bailey to romp and play with other dogs or in the woods.

We're close to great restaurants and shopping, a beautiful community nature center and walking trails by the Potomac River.

What is your favorite room in the house?

The living room is our favorite place, near the windows. When we entertain we prefer to have folks for brunch because the house really shines in the daytime. We also like the downstairs rec room now that the old bar is gone and we have reclaimed that room. It has turned into my "girl cave" for needlepoint and meditation.

What inspires you?

I'm inspired by the outdoors, clean lines, open spaces; things that suggest serenity and peacefulness, both inner and outer journeys.

How would you describe your personal style?

Fun, not fussy. Neither Tom nor I ever felt like having a living room as an unused museum quality space that would seldom be used. We are both informal people and we like our space to reflect our personal styles.

What type of architecture are you drawn to?

I love contemporary architecture. The only house I really loved that my family owned as I was growing up was a somewhat contemporary split foyer. I think it's pretty hilarious that this is what we live in now, but I love the flow of it. The two floors aren't so distinctly separate, although the folks in the guest room in the lower level can feel like they have their own space if they need it.

It's clear that you embrace color. What is your approach to your color palettes?

In the public areas, I'm really looking for warmth and fun. What is going to make people feel

comfortable, how can I add some whimsy, and most of all, how can we and our guests feel most at home. If there is a method involved to choosing color, it revolves around these elements.

Your bedroom colors are more spa-like and restful. I'm assuming that was intentional.

Although the whole home should feel like a sanctuary of sorts, it's important that the sleeping rooms are places of peace and serenity. Televisions aren't a part of the bedroom, for instance. I have some small buddhas in the bedroom as well as a favorite stone that says "Begin Again"—a reminder to be in the moment, a promise of renewal, and the ability we all have to start all over whenever we want. I love the fireplace, and although gas fireplaces aren't for everyone, I love being able to turn it on remotely before I get out of bed in the winter months. It makes me feel like a member of the family on Downton Abbey!

Do you have "go to" paint colors?

Tom would proudly say that this is the first home I have had in a while that doesn't have any lavender (yet)! That has been a "go to" color in the past, but we are both drawn to softer colors in the sleeping rooms, and more dramatic colors in the main areas. Tom helped me pick out the aqua color in my bedroom, and I have been very happy with it.

I see a lot of punches of red in your home—what about this color are you drawn to?

My mosaic pieces that were made by Sophie Bethune were primarily red. They quickly found a place in the living room and helped brighten the color there since we found ourselves with a large brown sectional sofa. We decided to play off the red by getting two red chairs from Crate & Barrel, and we carried that color into the polka dot fabric we used to re-cover the bench and sunroom chairs. As time went on, we seemed to gather more redness to our home, and we both enjoy the cheerfulness and warmth of this color.

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DRAWN TO THE LIGHT

Left: This room leads to an inviting light-filled sun porch that opens to the tree-lined back yard (otherwise known as Bailey's domain).



THE GIRL CAVE

Right: Tom and Holly enjoy the downstairs rec room now that the old bar is gone and they have reclaimed the room. It has turned into Holly's "girl cave" for needlepoint and meditation. Generous punches of red warm up this basement room.

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Your love for original art is apparent.

Many of the pieces we have are prints, but we have been fortunate to discover some wonderful artists that we both really love. Cindy Dyer's photographs were purchased last summer and they were all garden images. We fell in love with many of them, and we now have her images throughout our home. The beautiful splashes of color make us feel like we're in a garden even on the coldest of winter days. Both of the new bathrooms contain her work, and we consider them the crowning glory of those projects. I also have a few mosaic pieces that I love that I bought from a co-worker, artist Sophie Bethune. The pieces are fun and eclectic!

Tell me about the glass objects on the mantel.

I began collecting glass orbs (as Tom calls them) decades ago. I fell in love with them at a Sugarloaf Craft Festival and bought my first one. As friends discover that I collect them, I have received several as gifts. When my grandmother began to downsize several years ago, she gave me a few of hers, so it has become a special collection that intermingles family, friends, and my own pieces.

Tell me about the statues that flank the fireplace in the living room.

I was trained at an ashram to teach hatha yoga in the Hindu tradition. That experience was a transformative one for me, and when Tom and I found these Hindu statues in La Jolla during a trip to the West Coast, we decided to have them shipped to our home. They have a central place in the living room to remind me that there are many spirits watching over us, and they also remind me of the transformative power of introspection, spirituality, yoga and meditation.

Do you entertain a lot in the house?

We love to entertain here. I threw Tom's 60th birthday party here and we used the entire house. We have thrown other parties as well; a colleague's retirement, family birthday parties, and brunches/dinners for friends and family. The flow of this house is perfect for any size of party, and there

are plenty of spaces for people to gather. I like the kitchen's openness and, since guests always wind up there anyway, Tom and I feel like we can be part of the party even if we are working in the kitchen getting things ready.

Do you shop for decor online or in stores?

We are drawn to clean designs, so Crate & Barrel is one of the stores we have used. I got really interested in modern carpets and found an incredible shop that sells them. Neither of us are particularly drawn to more traditional oriental carpets, but the modern designs available now can help you create an exciting and artistic feel to your home.

Have you applied the principles of feng shui to this house?

I have become a Reiki master practitioner over the past 10 years, and I have found that the use of crystals can amplify the power of a Reiki session. (Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation as well as to promote healing.)

I incorporate crystals in our home to amplify certain energies as well. A carnelian crystal placed near the entrance of the home invites positive energy into the home. A rose quartz at the south-east corner of the home attracts and sustains positive, loving relationships, and a citrine in the opposite corner (the wealth corner) attracts and retains financial abundance.

I am not an expert on feng shui, but I know that there are certain places that mirrors should and should not be placed; i.e. never above the bed, never opposite the entrance to the home, etc.

Another primary element of feng shui suggests that clutter does not allow the free flow of energy in the home. Keeping a home clean and uncluttered encourages a positive flow of energy throughout the home, as does the quality of light and air. In fact, some people have mentioned that applying feng shui principles to a cluttered home is like putting expensive makeup on a dirty face.

Because I am an energy worker, I also did a thorough energetic clearing of the home shortly

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after we moved in to remove the residual energy left by previous occupants, and to create a strong and clear energy foundation for our lives.

Tell me about your career.

I have worked for The American Psychological Association for 24 years. Since 2004 I have been in charge of staff initiatives, a small office involved with staff recognition, community involvement, volunteer activities, health and wellness, and internal communications. We are proud to offer, in the health and wellness area alone, seated upper body massage, yoga, Pilates, meditation, dance aerobics, resistance bands, and metabolic acceleration classes. I love what I do, and feel very blessed to be able to provide this kind of support to my co-workers.

Are you closer to work?

The move from south Arlington to north Arlington has made a huge difference. Even though the number of miles difference isn't that huge, the missed traffic and congestion by moving six miles from work has made a difference in my commute. And it's much prettier driving across Chain Bridge or driving on the George Washington Parkway than it is driving down I-395 in stop-and-go traffic.

No kitchen is complete without...

our dog, Bailey, in the middle of it all!

Tom says, "We got Bailey by accident but she has been such a pleasure. Holly had two cats over the years but they eventually died. Holly did not impulsively replace them but about two years later she began thinking she really would like another cat. I was quite happy with no pet and hoped she might change her mind.

One day we visited friends who rescue Golden Retrievers. They had what they thought was a Golden mixed breed who seemed like a very good dog. We decided to adopt her and within a few weeks we were approved. We took her into our home and soon she entered our hearts. We have had such a good time with her. We like to joke with each other that Bailey is the result of us compromising between getting a cat or having no pet at all!" **CHM**

