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There's an uneasy paradox surrounding many new luxury homes today. The vast square footage and homogeneous amenities can leave the interiors devoid of warmth and personality. Too often they are all body and no soul.  Such was the challenge for interior designer Elizabeth Krial when a couple in her own Reston neighborhood asked her to create a sense of tradition and history in what essentially was "a big white box," she says. After living for seven years with a patchwork of furniture from their previous home and some hasty color and design choices, the homeowners' dream of an inspiring place to relax, entertain and raise their two young children remained largely unfulfilled.  "Not only did they need a sanctuary from the hustle and bustle, but also something that was enduring," Krial says. "They were really searching for a home that represented permanence and tradition."  Tradition, of course, does not materialize overnight. So Krial conducted extensive interviews with the couple about their expectations and lifelong influences. "It's important for a client to know what he or she values, and how they want to live," Krial says. The conversations cemented the need to create an orderly, pampering retreat from the frenetic pace of a two-career family in the DC area. Krial also noted the importance of gracefully co-mingling the couple's desired warm color palette with more vibrant paintings given to them by the husband's mother, who is an artist.  Armed with a clear mandate, Krial set about layering the house with personality through the use of architectural elements, lush fabrics and extensive decorative painting. Like the acts of a well-orchestrated ballet, each room reveals its own personality while complementing what precedes and follows in every direction across the open floor plan.  **"Not only did they need a sanctuary from the hustle and bustle, but also something that was enduring," says interior designer Elizabeth Krial.**  Nowhere is the home's grace more evident or inviting than in the formal dining room. Here the designer added grandeur by placing classic frieze molding a few inches under the crown molding and creating custom wall and ceiling panels decorated with hand-painted Venetian plaster. What initially catches the eye as a **flirtatious glint in the wall** panels upon closer inspection reveals a subtle floral pattern that perfectly mimics the pattern of the room's damask drapery.  Krial turned to artist Victoria Bingham to create the decorative-paint treatments throughout the house. Bingham, who runs the Alexandria-based Buon  Fresco with her husband Andre Kouznetsov, hand-stenciled the dining room panels using a "broken shine" technique created with a special patent-pending tool. Aside from making a statement of their own, the panels direct the eye to other gold accents in the room including a Carver's Guild mirror, decorative carving on the Louis J. Solomon dining chairs and the ceiling medallion above the antique Baccarat chandelier.   In the dining room, a Carver's Guild mirror, decorative trim  on the Louis J. Solomon dining chairs, and the ceiling medallion  above the antique Baccarat chandelier reflect the gold color scheme.  Bingham also implemented the "broken shine" technique in the foyer, where it gives a sense of depth to the Venetian plaster as it reflects the light. The double-height foyer holds one of the home's most dramatic elements: Hanging high on the walls flanking the front door are oil paintings of the owners' two children, painted in a Baroque style by Kouznetsov and framed with decorative molding. "After Andre finished the paintings the family wrote us a letter to say they just sit on the stairs and stare at the paintings," Bingham says. "I can think of no greater compliment."  Across the foyer, a complementary frieze encircles the living room walls, where decorative panels were again created but this time painted using a striae technique in warm golden tones. Bingham used a high-gloss finish to paint the plastered ceiling a dusty rose to reflect the color both in the room's rug and the walls of the living room. "I always finish ceilings," she says. "The eye doesn't like to focus on white, and without color on the ceiling you are left with a three-sided frame."  That certainly is not the case in the family room, where a glorious sky mural crowns a seating area where the family can relax by the fire. Bingham painstakingly created the mural standing atop scaffolding. The blues and purples in the ceiling mural enhance the cool-color touches Krial has sprinkled throughout the rooms: the curtains in the adjacent kitchen, the Schumacher wallcovering in the powder room, the Spode china atop the dining table and in many of the floral arrangements.   In the family room, Victoria Bingham created a glorious sky  mural that crowns a comfortable seating area.  The wall of windows in the family room affords a panoramic view of the yard which, like the interiors, comprises a sequence of complementary areas: A manicured parcel of lawn, a playground for the children and a gathering site anchored by an enormous stone fireplace. Accessible from both the lawn or a path that meanders around the side of the house, the space is embellished by Krial with terra cotta urns and pillows and other accessories.   Interior designer Elizabeth Krial set an elegant tone in the living  room with rich fabrics and furnishings.  Not one to leave the future of her interiors to chance\_this is, after all, a decorator who hand-selected each flower for the foyer arrangement\_Krial has educated the homeowners about how they can keep layering in new family memories in style.  "There are still some spaces that need to be filled in," she says, pointing to a nook in the foyer begging for embellishment. "So I made them an accessories guide, a list of what's still needed around the house with recommended measurements, that they can carry along in their travels and help with making purchases abroad."  The history of this home, it seems, is still unfolding.  *Catherine Applefeld Olson is a freelance writer in Alexandria, Virginia. Photographer Bob Narod is based in Sterling, Virginia*    Andre Kouznetsov also painted a portrait of the owners' daughter.   In the back yard, an inviting stone fireplace makes a cozy  gathering spot in fall.  \*\*Out of the array of interior design magazines, Home and Design magazine stands out as a primary idea source for luxury home designs.  Wonderful visuals of inspired d\_cor and lush landscapes are combined with expert advice to provide a fundamental reference point for bringing amazing home interior design ideas to life. | |  | | | |  | |  | | --- | |  | |  | |  | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  |  |  | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Sign up for the H&D Style Insider newsletter!  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