



Left: In David Wiseman's dining room, the Carlo Scarpa table is by Cassina and the dining chairs are by Thonet; the bronze-and-porcelain *Branch Mirror with Cherry Blossoms* and the bronze aluminum, quartz, porcelain, and plaster *Cloud Garden Canopy* chandelier are both by Wiseman.

The wizard of silver lake



At his Los Angeles house, artist David Wiseman lives in an indoor wonderland filled with flora and fauna of his own peculiarly gorgeous design. **BY ARIANNE NARDO**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SPENCER LOWELL

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It would have been easier to visit designer David Wiseman’s Los Angeles home in daylight. But winding through Silver Lake’s sleek terrain high above Sunset Boulevard in near darkness adds intrigue to this first-time visit. A lattice-patterned gate opens onto a small courtyard, leading to two decorative bronze panels set in the entry windows. An outdoor wall sconce glows like a metallic beehive, confirming that this is the place. Inside, the house has a kind of polished, California-casual vibe punctuated with delicate, whimsical pieces: A porcelain owl hangs in the kitchen, and an intricate brass mirror hangs above the fireplace in the den. The eye-catching works by Wiseman himself illustrate his ability to meld the ornamental with the organic.

The 38-year-old designer, a California native, has always appreciated this part of L.A. “I grew up in Pasadena, so Silver Lake felt exotic,” he says. He moved into the house, a 2,500-square-foot split-level with expansive views of the Griffith Park Observatory and the Los Feliz Hills, five years ago, but until recently, he hadn’t found the time to decorate it.

“I put my studio first,” he says. “I’ve always circled my wagons around making sure clients are happy.” His dramatic design installations, furniture, and objects are all inspired by nature—brass branches that twist around mirrors, porcelain cherry blossoms that unfurl across ceilings, spiderweb-like fireplace screens rendered in bronze. They can be found in places like Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Dior stores in Tokyo and New York, and Silicon Valley residences. “I’m trying to bring nature and this idea of wonder into the home and to make it feel as though it always belonged—it isn’t an appliqué; it’s part



The living room is anchored by the bronze-and-porcelain *Collage Fireplace Screen* by Wiseman, who also designed the *Terrazzo Coffee Table*. The stool is by Renate Müller.



In the kitchen, the breakfast banquette is upholstered in Jiun Ho fabric, and the pillows are made from Dedar and Décors Barbares fabrics. The framed prints are by Manon Bellet.

STYLING BY BARRY FOX

of the tissue of the architecture,” he says.

Wiseman’s creative life is supported by his brother, Ari, a former deputy director at the Guggenheim Museum and now codirector of Wiseman Studio. Ari recently oversaw the editorial development of his brother’s first book, a namesake monograph that was released in April that delves into the artist’s mind and what has influenced him through drawings and essays. While helping Wiseman manage

his studio, Ari gently admits that though his brother’s work was going swimmingly, the design of his home “was unaddressed.”

So when Ari moved in with his fiancé in New York, he shipped a collection of furniture to his younger brother in L.A. After inheriting that trove, Wiseman realized it was the ideal time to focus on his home. He enlisted Barry Fox, an interior designer and Ari’s friend, to help. “I can make an object, but the idea of putting this room together with this throw pillow—I don’t go there,” he admits. “Barry goes there. He can embrace my ideas and introduce me to new ones and put it all together into something livable.” As the son of a New Orleans architect, Fox brought

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an experienced, sophisticated eye to the space; he’s worked in everything from Sotheby’s art auctions in New York to real estate in Los Angeles.

Fox refined the selections and imbued the home with deeper design influences. Calibrating the mix, he assembled pieces that complemented Wiseman’s works. Two cowhide lounge chairs from Brazilian designer Sergio Rodrigues sit near the artist’s fire screen. A generously scaled Silvio Coppola walnut buffet displays Wiseman’s objects and personal collection in the dining room. “I wanted some strong investment-quality pieces that there aren’t a lot of,” says Fox.

Their collaboration produced a slightly bohemian but grounded and masculine aesthetic. “It worked really well,” Fox says. “I was building off of David’s vocabulary.”

As a design incubator and curated habitat, the home provides an intimacy

that the studio experience can take only so far. It allows Wiseman to see the vitality of his designs in real life. The *Branch Sculpture* and *Glacier Pendant* in the stairwell, for example, entice guests up the stairs. The coffee table represents an early experiment embedding terrazzo in bronze, and the lower-level lounge features a rug of his own design. He made bronze hanging planters for the outdoor living area, where he spends time with friends.

The space is also biographical, marking certain points in the designer’s life. In the dining room, the plaster-and-quartz installation is an artist’s proof of the work he presented at his solo show at New York’s Kasmin gallery last March. The Lost Valley wallpaper, a spectacular scene of vines, waterfalls, and animals, envelops the living room. It began as a sketch and morphed into an elaborate wallcovering with designer Lisa Miller. “At first I thought I wanted a blank John Pawson–like conceptualist box because, after staring at ornament every day, I needed to come home to nothing. But I realized that every piece tells a story and speaks to my practice and my team. These are cherished pieces,” says Wiseman. “There’s a bit of discomfort that I’m creating a museum of myself, and I am cognizant of that weirdness, but I love what I do.”



From left: A detail of the screen in the living room; Wiseman’s bronze-and-porcelain *Small Owl* on *Oak Branch* sculpture, as seen in the kitchen.



The den is decorated with various Wiseman pieces, including the mirror, sculptures on the floor, wool-and-silk rug, and nickel-and-bronze *Drip Table*; the sofa is upholstered in de Le Cuona fabric; the teak stools are by Ralph Lauren Home covered in vintage indigo textiles.

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