

Interior Design



Blessing swans found in Thailand make their way across Sacco's living room.

Desert Transplant

Joseph Sacco uses acute design ingenuity to make his west Las Vegas home a temple to the good life

Story by Dauphine Crane
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Joseph Sacco didn't have great timing when he moved his business, JS Interiors Group, here from Chicago. It was 2008, and conditions were hardly propitious in Las Vegas, so he spent an entire year doing absolutely nothing.

Then, in serendipitous Las Vegas mode, he met landscape designer Bruce Anderson in his driveway and they built a fast and furious friendship. And it was Anderson who intervened when Sacco was all set to move back to Chicago. He realized Las Vegas could not afford the loss, and so he introduced Sacco to Lovee Arum, Las Vegas' own totem of style and wife of legendary boxing promoter Bob Arum. Thanks to her assist and that of other receptive friends, Sacco hasn't stopped working since.

He's always attracted great projects,

even when he was just starting out. On his first day as a student at the Harrington College of Design in Chicago he landed his first job, renovating a 6,000-square-foot brownstone on the Historical Register of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Society. He also digs—with the assist of his longtime partner, Victor Finley-Brown—to take care of his own digs: He's owned four to date, including three in Chicago. His Las Vegas abode, on the west side of the city, was built by Blue Heron.

"We liked the location, and because of the L configuration, I knew that by picking the top right-hand corner of the set we would be the only ones to have a full view of the Strip. At 4,996 square feet, it also happened to be the biggest one of the lot," Sacco says.

Not that he feels the need for extreme space; in fact, he's on an inflamed

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crusade against the “huge and juvenile” combo of certain local mansions.

Always a perfectionist, Sacco wanted to revise the floor plans and the finishes of his prospective home, and after much debating with the real-estate agent, finally won out.

And he did it all in a year and a half. Top priority was a two-week trip to his beloved Milan where he shopped at B&B Italia, Flexform, Poliform and Armani Casa. He fed his more exotic passion of MK cabinetry in nearby Verona, whose teakwood populates the Miele-laden kitchen.

Also paramount at chez Sacco/Finley-Brown is art. The space is a collection of paintings, photographs and sculptures by the likes of Australian Simon Maberley and artist and friend Daniel Witczak. Then, beautifying the walls in the two-story living room, there is a paper-on-Plexiglas piece sprayed with automotive finish by a Chicago artist, a lighted mobile by New York artist David Weeks and the backdrop of a flock of antique teakwood blessing swans originally found in an outdoor church in Thailand.

Sacco’s devoted aestheticism spans even the less-flashy features, such as the plumbing fixtures, all by Dornbracht, and the custom teak screens also chosen for their sculptural as well as their practical uses.

The one unresolved corner of the



The entryway is adorned with art by Dan Witczak.



The upstairs loft/office space features cabinetry by Poliform and a painting ("Night of the Sphinx") given to Sacco by a client.

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The open kitchen design has been the centerpiece of many a house party.

property was the pool area, as he's never had to work on one, mainly because of his urban heritage. So he consulted four different companies, and after fighting a lethal pebble allergy, finally got what he wanted. Winter will bring the Sacco touch to the pool as well: It will get covered in Plexiglas so as to revert to usable space. "Perhaps as a runway for a Las Vegas Fashion Week," he suggests.

Always the problem-solver, with a touch of irony, he has connected the hearing aid of his riotous grandmother, Antoinette Giaccio (she lives with them), to an AMX Audio Video Smart Home System. Every time she walks into her room and

the TV is on, the sound goes directly into her hearing aid and therefore keeps the television muted to others.

It remains to be seen whether Sacco will ever bring his talents to the Strip. He does love the Wynn, whose design team (which included Anderson) was led by Roger Thomas, executive vice president of design at Wynn Design and Development. He even, rather compulsively, recorded (via photographs) its genesis and completion before he even moved to Las Vegas.

Or to put it in his own decisive speak: "If Roger Thomas wants me, he can have me." ■