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a vision of serenity

CHIP AND BETSY BARCLAY TOOK ONE TURN AND
CHANGED THE COURSE OF THEIR DECOR

WRITTEN BY **SHERRY MOELLER** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MORGAN HOWARTH**

If Chip Barclay hadn't taken a wrong turn on a residential street in McLean, VA, in 2003 and mistakenly visited a brokers' open house at a new custom home, he and his wife Betsy might still be in their traditional Mount Vernon colonial in Alexandria. That wrong turn led to the right move. They put a contract on the new home within days and left everything except their clothes, books, and CDs behind.

Inside the entry doors of Chip and Betsy Barclay's tranquil Manco Inc.-built home are: a Buddha from Kathmandu resting on a Christian Liagre console from Holly Hunt; custom shoji screens from Oriental Living; two of Dennis Carney's *Ebonite I-IV* paintings; and a Martha Sturdy bowl from Baker atop a Vesta Home table. Harry Donovan of Rugger Electric Inc. installed the Ingo Maurer rice paper chandelier purchased at Illuminations Inc.

RIGHT: Artist Ron Artman stands near his recently completed 44" high *Adagio* in an upper level alcove. Betsy Barclay sits in an adjoining gallery enjoying Marsha Staiger's *Wave* on the left wall. Artman's *Tanami* on the pedestal, custom benches from Isaac Arms Studio Furniture, and the tabletop bronze canoe by C.T. Whitehouse are also featured. The rug is from Tufenkian.

BELOW: Betsy displays *Gondokoro* by Artman in her dressing room so she can admire it daily. It's named after an old British outpost along the Blue Nile South of Khartoum. Artman often transfers the history he is reading about into the pottery he is creating.



Peaceful Composure

"We had a vision for our new home," says Betsy, who has spent her career as a financial services lobbyist in Washington, and it was a serene setting with an Asian influence. "We came to a point in our lives where we wanted to simplify," Betsy says. They sold or gave away what they had and started from scratch.

While Betsy says, "four years later, it's still a work in progress," to the outsider, the public spaces are individual works of art. The upper level gallery was one area they were not sure what to do with initially. Now, it is a peaceful haven for some of their favorite art pieces. The main floor living room became a Zen experience, holding Betsy's treasured Buddha and an Odegard rug, which appeals to her tactilely.

Also upstairs, a bedroom became Chip's dressing room so Betsy could have their bedroom's walk-in closet to herself. In fact, because it is the first room Betsy sees every morning, she chose to display one of Ron Artman's works that particularly speaks to her on an open shelf in the dressing area.

"Solitude is essential to creativity,"
Artist Ron Artman says.



Gallery walls
Benjamin Moore
Lacey Pearl
2108-70*



New Heights

Betsy is often inspired by art she sees by chance. She encountered Terrence Karpowicz's work at a disabled artists exhibit at Union Station. She bought one of his sculptures for their breakfast room. Betsy met another artist, Brooke Marks-Swanson, just before the Baltimore Craft Show and now has a grouping of hers above the family room fireplace. The Barclays also display sculptures by Joel Urruty in their gallery and family room.

Arguably the most profound inspirations in Betsy's life are the hiking trips she makes to the Himalayas. She has completed four hikes, anticipating a fifth five-week trek soon. "The trips are very difficult, but very peaceful at the same time," Betsy says. "Trekking can be compared to the way Ron creates his art – you have a goal in sight, but you face challenges and have to overcome difficulties along the way," she says. "Then completing the journey is a magnificent reward."

"My work is an artistic trek," Artman adds. "I build each day and every day I make that much

more progress. You learn patience and how to overcome obstacles. There's something freeing about it."

Betsy looks forward to each hiking trip, which she describes as "life altering ... you realize how little you need to live. The Asian culture, Eastern philosophy is very appealing," Betsy says. "It's very different than what we face in the West" and in sharp contrast to Betsy's former fast-paced life. She came to DC to work on Capitol Hill after graduating with a political science degree from Bowling Green State University. "I definitely had Potomac fever," she says.

"Given that almost nothing is calm about the airport industry these days," says Chip, president of the American Association of Airport Executives, "the art, decorating, and style of our home make it an especially welcome retreat for me."

"I find Ron's work very peaceful," Betsy adds. And it is in harmony with Betsy and Chip's Asian-influenced environment in the heart of the Western world. **ws**



Dining and living room walls
Benjamin Moore
Dior Gray
2133-40*

*Colors shown may not be exact. Visit benjaminmoore.com for more information.

RESOURCES

■ **Oriental Living**
301.656.9333
orientalshojiscreens.com

■ **Renaissance Fine Arts**
301.564.4447

■ **Ron Artman**
410.546.8412
ronartmanstudio.com

■ **Torpedo Factory**
703.838.4565
torpedofactory.org

Antique chairs and custom-designed ottomans by Palm Beach designer Marc Janecki flank the living room fireplace. Stormy by Jeanne Garant grounds Betsy's favorite room.

OPPOSITE, clockwise from top left: The entrance to the owners' suite features a Buddha purchased in California on a Roche Bobois table with a Sarah Tanner painting above it. **The Barclays are now working with Paul Corrie Interiors LLC to complete their suite.** In the dining room, a screen from Takashimaya in NYC accents one wall, Artman's *Thai Ritualistic Vessel* anchors the window, and a C.T. Whitehouse red canoe decorates the Baker table. Betsy's reaction to Artman's *Samarinda* sculpture was immediate and she knew it was perfect for the main floor alcove.





Awakenings

Artman, who lived in Australia for three years in the late 1980s, took up pottery as something to do and now creates ceramic sculptures, which exhibit an ancient ceremonial quality, full time. Each piece, which might appear to be wood, leather, or bronze at first glance, contrasts between smooth and textured, light and dark – emphasizing their differences. “In the end, you want harmony,” Artman says. “Like anything else in life, to achieve what you want to achieve, there has to be acceptance and compromise,” he adds.

“My response to Ron’s work was immediate,” says Betsy, who first saw his *Samarinda* sculpture in an advertisement for

the Baltimore Craft Show. “I had to have it,” adds Betsy, who left messages for Artman at the show. When she went to buy *Samarinda*, which she envisioned for an alcove off the main floor hallway, she ended up with two other Artman pieces. Betsy connects with his work. “They have a life to them,” she says, and an Asian influence. The artist also exhibits his sculptures at the Washington Craft Show.

Artman spent time in the Far East using low firing techniques, known as raku, to create pottery featuring red and orange undertones. “There are a lot of life lessons molded into my work,” Artman says. Betsy sees and appreciates that.



ABOVE: The foyer vestibule featuring Artman's *Selatan* leads to the library, which includes curved seating from Theodore's as well as a round table and custom rug from Vesta Home. On the side wall, a C.T. Whitehouse bowl and a pair of Brenda Belfield paintings accent the Powell & Bonnell table from Timothy Paul Carpets + Textiles.

RIGHT: The Barclays worked with Bill Crawford of KVB Inc. to change a few things in their new home, such as removing cabinets in the breakfast room in order to display Mary Hourihan Lynch's *Basalt Cliffs* above the counter. An Italian chandelier from Mobili balances above the *Arquitectura* table from Brueton. Chairs are from Roche Bobois.



Library and kitchen walls
Benjamin Moore
Abalone
2108-60*

LEFT: Old rice cutters from Bangkok in the foreground introduce the Niermann Weeks chest holding Artman's *Monkira* with *Out of the Blue* by Sarah Tanner hanging above it. "I like simple architectural forms," Betsy says.



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