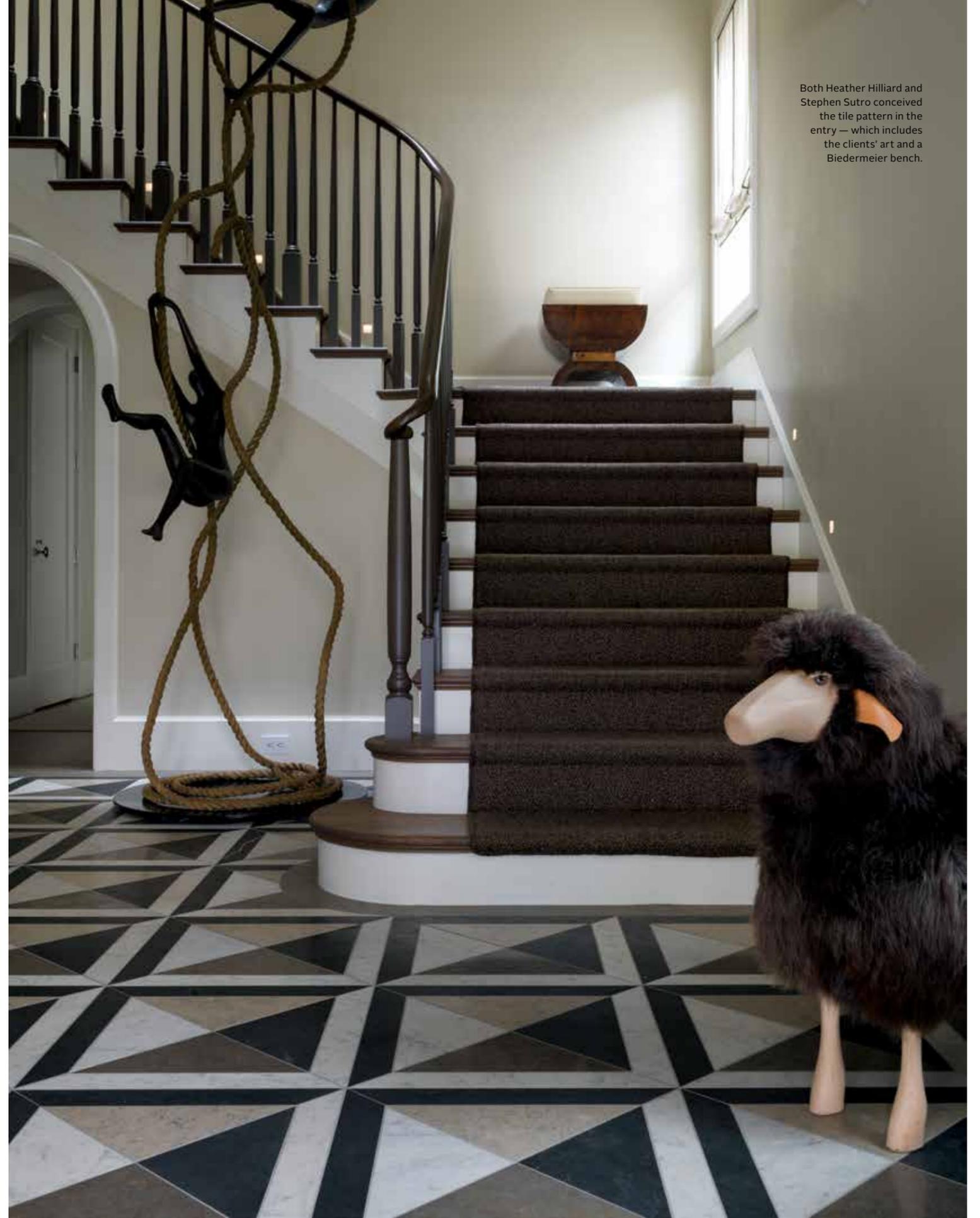


An Andy Warhol Campbell's Soup Cans screenprint, along with colorful seating, amp up the living room.



Both Heather Hilliard and Stephen Sutro conceived the tile pattern in the entry — which includes the clients' art and a Biedermeier bench.



# TRADITIONAL *with a* TWIST

Stephen Sutro and Heather Hilliard give a contemporary touch to a classic home

story by ANH-MINH LE photos by JOSE MANUEL ALORDA



Hilliard chose Lawson-Fenning's Elysian counter stools for the island.

**F**irst impressions matter. And when it comes to the entry of a home—like this Presidio Heights collaboration between architect Stephen Sutro and interior designer Heather Hilliard—it can set the tone for the rest of the residence as well as speak volumes about the inhabitants. “She’s really stylish, a little bit edgy in her dress, and wanted the house to reflect that,” says Hilliard of the wife, who along with her husband desired a traditional-with-a-slight-twist setting for their family and their prodigious art collection. The entry, for example, is appointed with a whimsical wood-and-wool sheep and Tolla Inbar’s *Taking a Chance*, which depicts a couple of bronze figures scaling ropes. The sculpture, which was purchased while on vacation in Israel, stands 12 feet tall and “was in storage for a long time until they found the perfect place for it,” notes Hilliard.

Sutro is longtime friends with the clients, who have a son and twin daughters. In addition to seismically retrofitting their early 1900s house and excavating to create a basement level—which increased the total square footage to 6,500—he banished the more formal and often small rooms. “They wanted the bones to be classic, and then wanted some bright and contemporary moments juxtaposed against that,” says Sutro, who achieved this in significant and subtle ways. He and his team constructed an open staircase from the ground floor all the way up

to a new roof deck—spanning four stories—that flows smoothly around each landing. “We curved the inside corners and tapered the shape of the steps as they met the curve,” he explains, describing the result as “a sleeker version of a classic thing.”

According to Sutro, “the most contemporary gesture” relates to the rear of the house, where expanses of glass now allow for idyllic views of neighboring Presidio National Park and maximize the natural light. “Light is a big deal,” says Sutro. “And it’s neat to be able to see all the way through this house—to see the green of the Presidio is really uplifting when you’re coming and going on the staircase.” It’s no surprise, the surroundings factored into Hilliard’s design scheme. The kitchen includes a breakfast nook and opens onto the family room. A banquette in the former and a sectional in the latter bear out the clients’ fondness for teal. “With all of the green outside,” says Hilliard, “we knew we wanted to use that color in here.” The space is further warmed up with brass elements like the Gubi pendants above the island, the linear hood with a bronzed finish and Jason Koharik’s fixture, which illuminates the nook.

Across the hall in the combined living and dining room, an Andy Warhol *Campbell’s Soup Cans* screenprint takes pride of place over the fireplace and is joined by Judith Foosaner’s *Outside* above the sofa from Baker, and a Damien Hirst woodcut spots piece, which surmounts a cabinet used to store the antique



The breakfast nook is outfitted with a custom banquette, Blu Dot chairs, Sancal table and Jason Koharik pendant.

dining table's extra leaves. Hilliard opted to keep the existing leather upholstery on the dining chairs, also antiques, and enlivened the nearby seating with color. A pair of Lucien Rollin Collection armchairs with walnut frames are covered in a yellow fabric by Pierre Frey that matches a Dries Van Noten dress that the wife loves. The Astor Bergere occasional chair, whose painted frame is trimmed with nailheads, features plum upholstery.

Hilliard injected vibrant hues into the kids' quarters, too, where notable art can also be found. In the son's bedroom, done in shades of blue, a Warhol screenprint with Mick Jagger's visage hangs above a bed that Hilliard designed. The daughters' bedroom includes a Hirst butterflies work, plus something that lends a more personable (not to mention charming) touch: a painting of a bunny by one of the girls. The room is punched up with berry-and-white zigzag bed skirts and a garnet window seat cushion. Hilliard smartly chose canopy beds, so the sisters can close their drapes whenever a little privacy is in order.

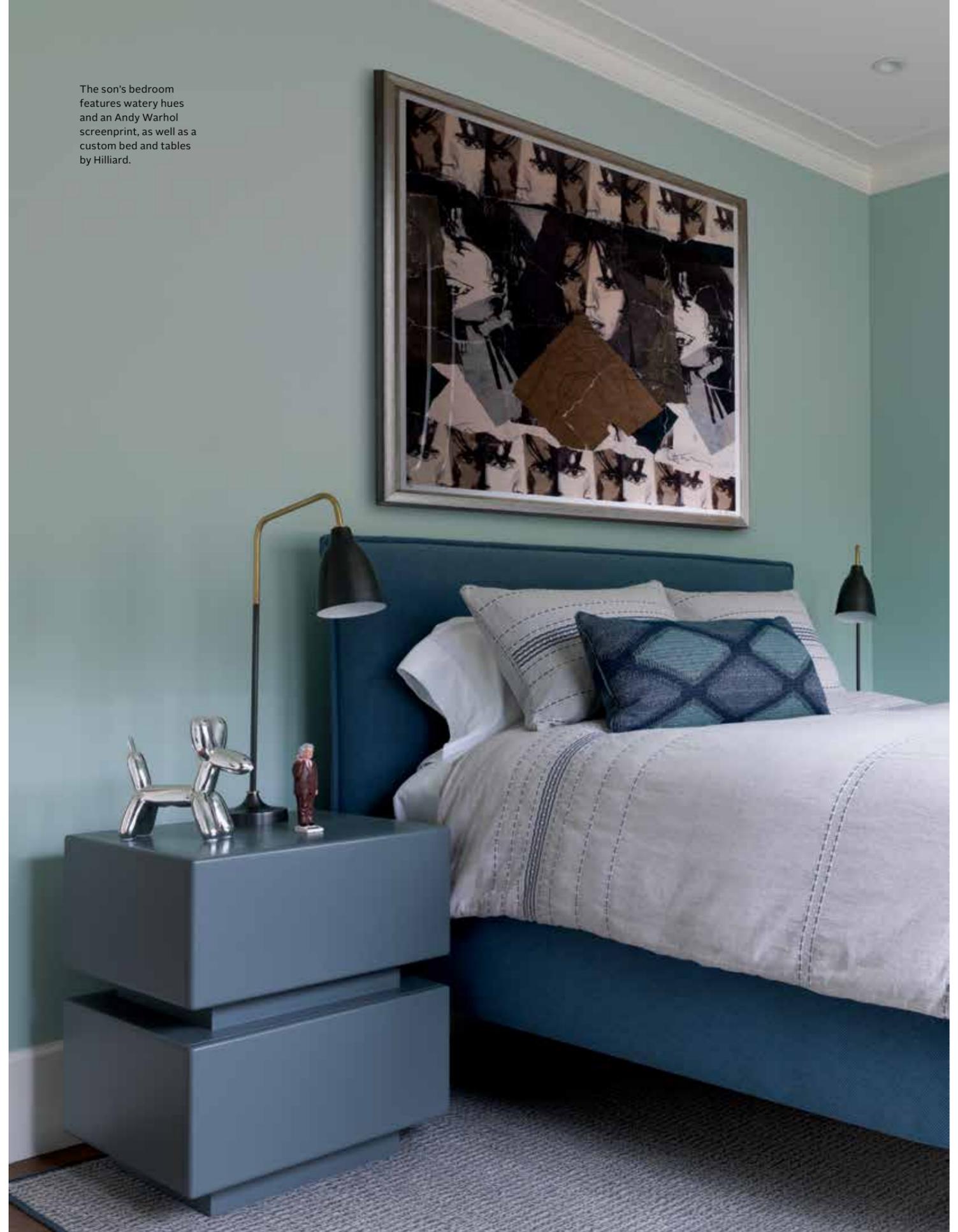
With her background in art history and years spent working at the University of Pennsylvania's Institute of Contemporary Art and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, it's not uncommon for Hilliard to shepherd her clients through the art-buying process. "In this case, the clients already had the art-collecting bug," she says. "They'd been acquiring art for the past 20 years, and it was exciting to integrate their collection into the house and overall design." Her approach to the interiors considered the size of the pieces, rather than their content. "I don't really like the kind of decoration where you match the chairs and the fabrics to the art," she notes. "We tried hard not to let that inform us. We figured that these wonderful, colorful works in these moody rooms would pop off the walls."



In the master bath, the marble flooring's chevron motif echoes the pattern of the oak flooring elsewhere in the house.



The family room is furnished with a vintage Bas Van Pelt lounge chair, a curved sectional by Ochre and a custom coffee table from the Lacquer Company.



The son's bedroom features watery hues and an Andy Warhol screenprint, as well as a custom bed and tables by Hilliard.