



# DREAMING in COLOR

Produced and Written by Dawn **M**oore

Photography by **M**eghan Beierle O'Brien

Styled by Emily **R**uddo





If you ask Dawn Massey, being married to an artist is pretty swell. After all, commissioning a work of art just takes a little pillow talk.

“When I’m designing our homes and see a blank wall, I just turn to Eddie and say, ‘Can you create something for there?’” Ed Massey, an artist known for large-scale works on DC-9’s, a fleet of New York taxicabs and Malibu’s lifeguard shacks happily complies.

A visit to the Pacific Palisades home they share with their two children and chocolate Lab Harley, would lead one to believe there’s been a lot of those conversations. Built in 1948 and remodeled in 1980 by award- winning architect Eric Owen Moss, the modernist house is something of a neighborhood touchstone. Baby blue with billboard-sized numbers on each side, the structure announces its presence into a pop art microphone (at least that’s what it’s rumored to be), which leans over the entrance. When the Masseys first saw the property they both were unimpressed. Dawn however, had second thoughts. “I just kept thinking of the openness. Once I figured out how to add more wallspace for Ed’s work, he was sold.”



# W

“With color, one obtains  
that seems to stem from



ns an energy  
n witchcraft.”  
- Henri Matisse





2009's "Summer of Color" Lifeguard shack prototype – sand and all – sits on the kitchen island. A vintage crystal chandelier twinkles over the family's set of mugs, including one for their lab Harley.

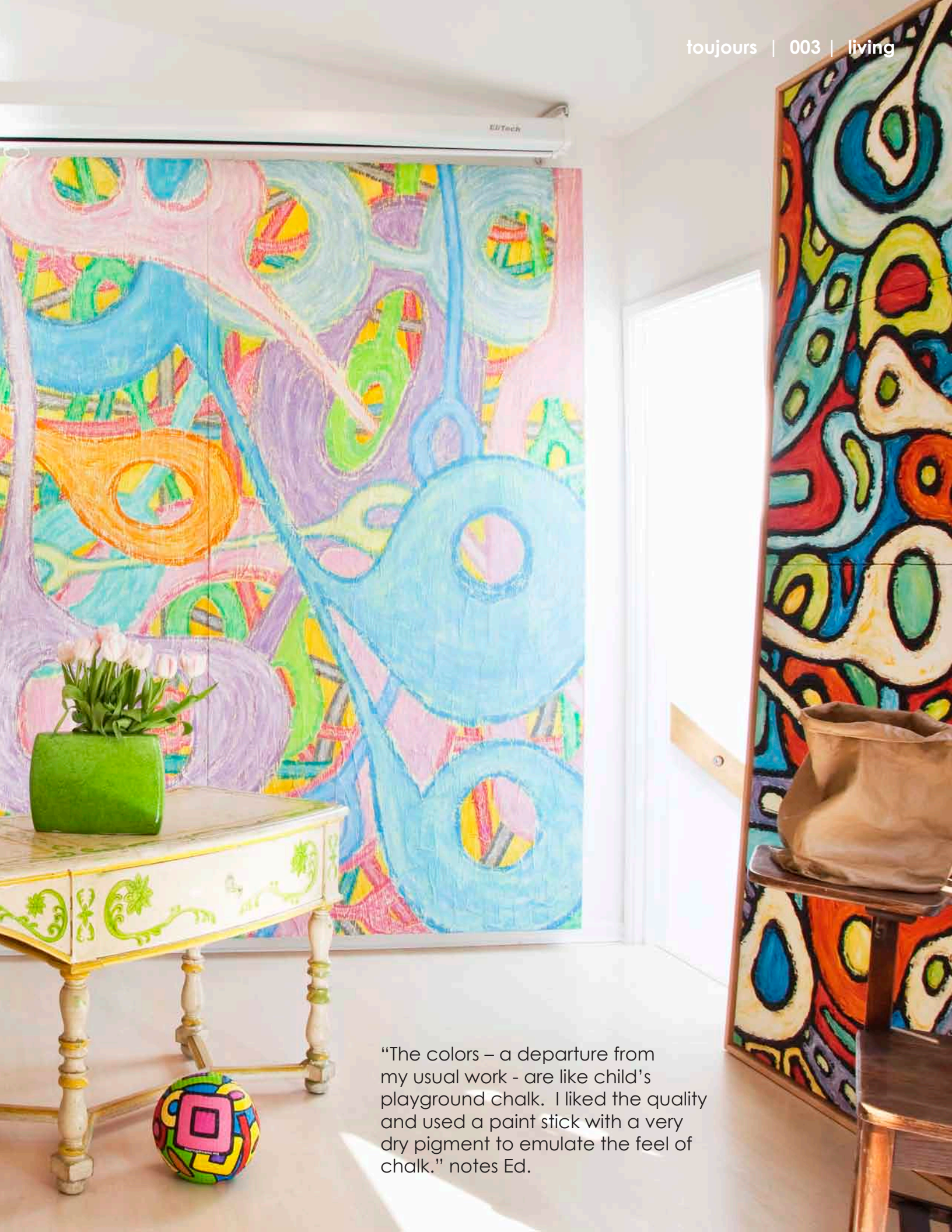


As you head down the stairs leading to the entrance, the royal blue interlocking circles painted on the pavers induce a smile. Once inside – certain you’ve fallen down the rabbit hole - a cranberry and white striped wall sports a tangle of dripping grapes surrounding a mirror - reflecting that you are now grinning like an idiot. Beneath, is a cardboard box stating, “Please do not Discard. Homeless and positive.”

Ed Massey’s work is similar to biting into a cherry Starburst – colorful and tart with an unexpected explosion in the middle. A little Keith Haring, a little Wayne Thiebaud with a Matisse chaser.

Lemon yellow vinyl covered sofas trimmed in lime green face a glass table stuffed with old toys. Rosy pink crescent-shaped benches surround the custom wrought iron dining table that in a single stroke pretty much captures





"The colors – a departure from my usual work - are like child's playground chalk. I liked the quality and used a paint stick with a very dry pigment to emulate the feel of chalk." notes Ed.



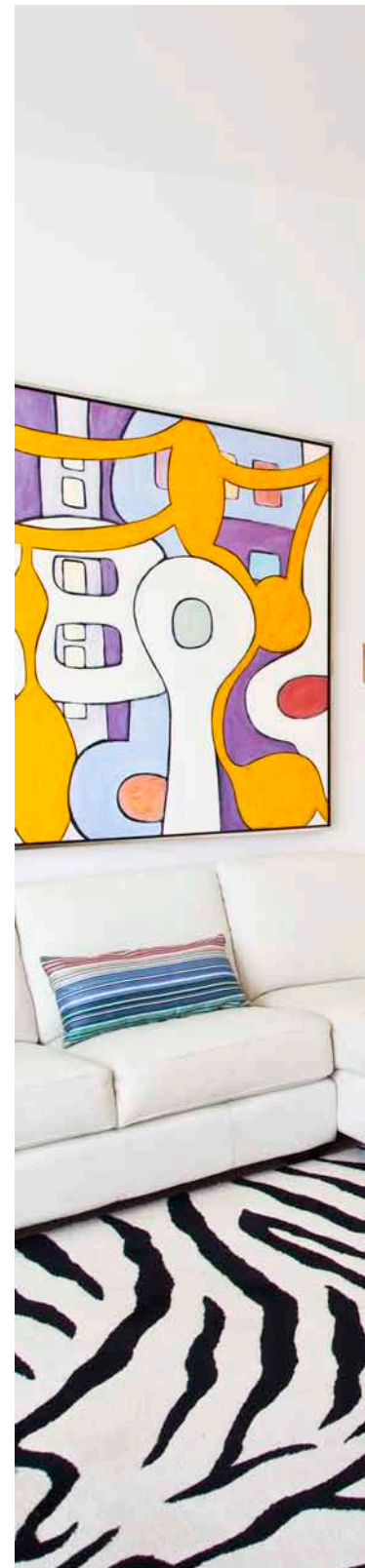
the Massey's magical union. Knowing they wanted a glass-topped table to display the handmade roses Ed created for Dawn's 150 lb. wedding dress, they commissioned an ironworker who toiled away while they honeymooned in Paris.

Upon their return, the piece was delivered and smack in the center – unrequested – was the Eiffel tower. “The craftsman had been watching a show about Las Vegas, saw the tower and thought it would be interesting to add, not knowing it was actually in Paris,” explains Ed. Where they just returned from. Serendipity.

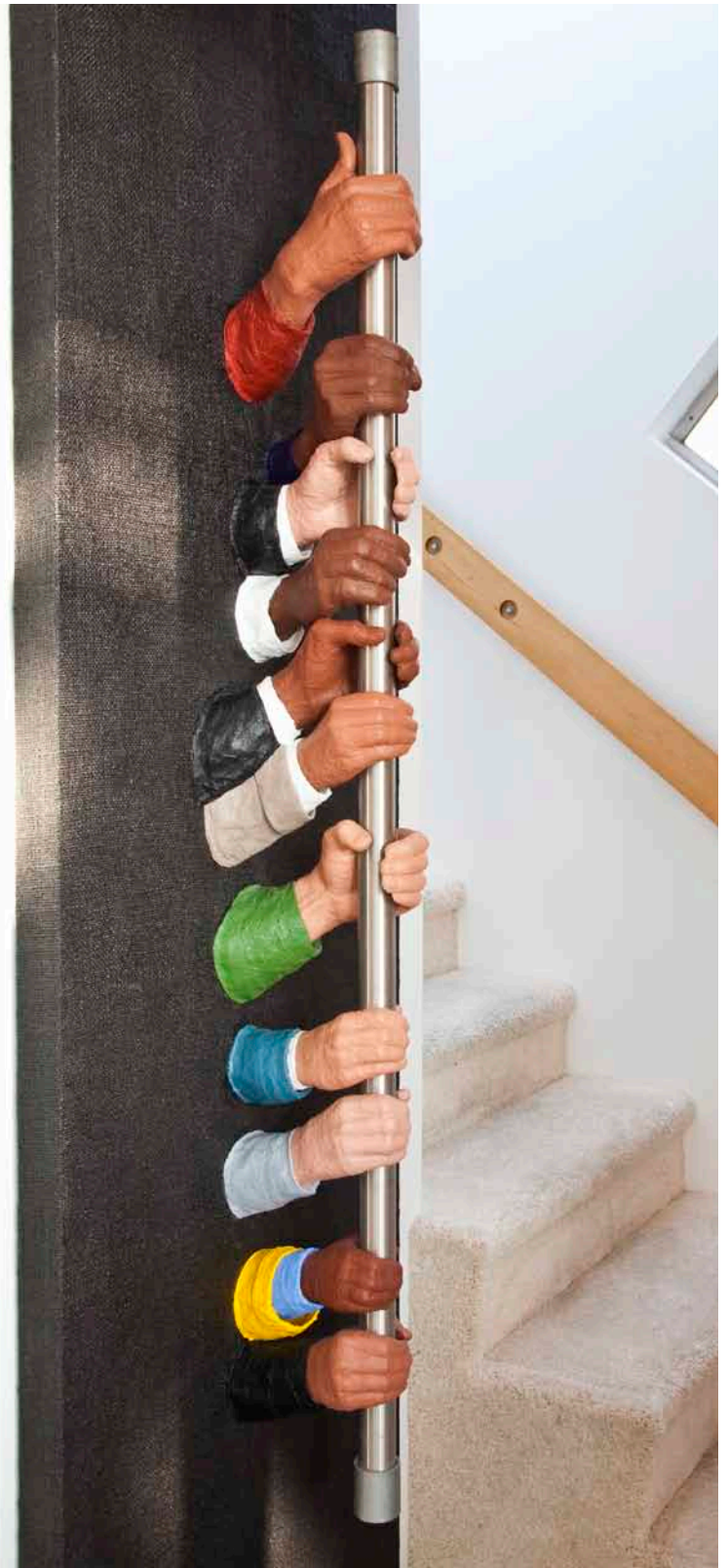
The one item that nods to the structure's midcentury aesthetic is a white leather covered Eames lounge and ottoman. Interestingly, it is also the only white item in the house. It nestles into a cozy reading space by the fire where an example of Dawn's irreverent sense of design is found. “There were two built-in beautifully crafted wood veneer and glass cases which we chose to drywall over to showcase a painting Ed created for the space.” Amorphous shapes ooze and stretch and intersect in the hues chosen for the room by their seven year-old daughter Georgi and eleven year-old son Felix. Few parents would turn to their pre-teen offspring for the family's living space color palette, but the dreams and desires of children are central to both Masseys.



Massey's piece “Back to School” contains a seemingly innocent lunch bag concealing a semi automatic weapon.

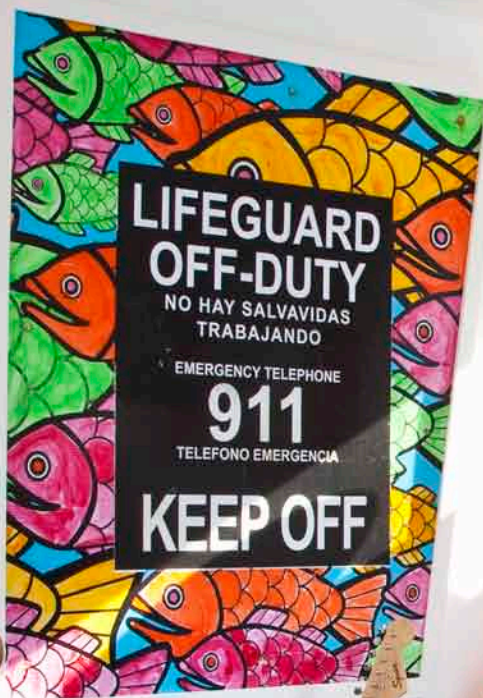


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Ed's work often revolves around children's themes and in 1995 he developed Portraits of Hope as a creative therapy program for children in pediatric facilities. Throughout his travels, he noticed that flowers were a consistent theme in children's drawings regardless of ethnicity, age or demographic. Simple shapes yet symbolic of hope and joy, the flower became the overarching imagery for Portraits of Hope and can be found hovering in the sky on airships, zooming around a track at NASCAR and covering the eaves in their back yard. Other pieces are more provocative like "Please...not tonight" which addresses child sexual abuse and "Back to School," a school chair that holds a lunch bag whose contents include an apple, a sandwich and semi-automatic weapon.





In the garden, flowers are almost redundant next to Ed's masterful use of color both inside and out. "I've spent many, many hours studying the colors of nature and still can't replicate the vibrancy of a purple bougainvillea bract," he laments. I would beg to differ as we stand on the hydrangea-blue basketball court gazing at his work "Table for Six." After digging a hole large enough for a Mini Cooper, the piece includes six stationary exercycles topped by a large wooden table all painted in stripes of white and hyacinth. "It's a nice place to eat a triple cheese, extra thick pizza with chocolate fudge cake!" notes Dawn.

Are the Massey's ready to relax now that the space is art filled? "Once completed," Dawn shares, "we are eager and ready to move to our next adventure!"



The Seussian landscape adds pointy punctuation to the amorphous interlocking ovals spewing trickling water from four spouts. The fountain, devised as a privacy screen, offered another surface for Massey's imagination.







**Ed and Dawn  
Massey with their  
dog Harley**