A TEXAS STAR

A small town, an hour west of Houston, proved the ideal locale for a family's second home. It would be a place they could fill with their treasures.

INTERIOR DESIGN BY *MEG LONERGAN*

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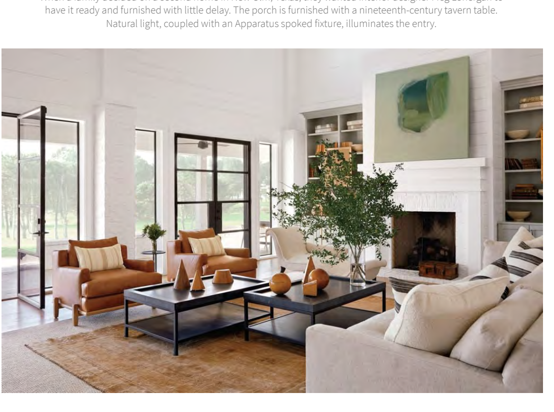
WRITTEN BY *ZACHARY WILSON*

When a family decided on a second home in New Ulm, Texas, they wanted interior designer Meg Lonergan to have it ready and furnished with little delay. The porch is furnished with a nineteenth-century tavern table. Natural light, coupled with an Apparatus spoked fixture, illuminates the entry.



The seating area of the great room is defined by a Moss Home sofa and Lawson-Fenning chairs adorned with pillows from Kelly Wearstler and Kerry Joyce. A jute-and-wool rug is layered with an antique Oushak.

The dining portion of the great room is equipped with a rustic cedar table from Belgium and ebony-stair O&G Studio low-back armchairs. Antique wooden spools, found at Round Top, are used as vases.

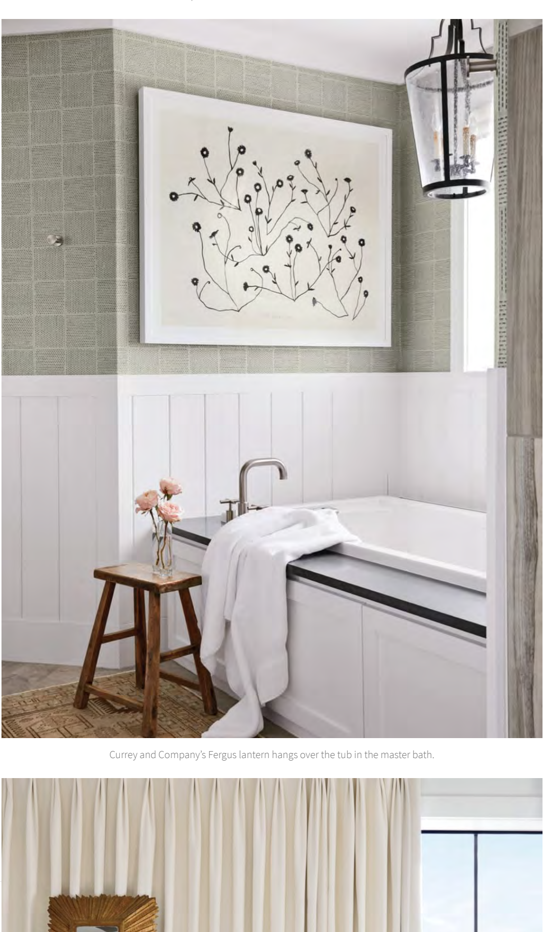
Custom-colored Waterworks tiles are used on the kitchen walls. The island is furnished with Palecek's Nora stools, fitted with Holly Hunt cushions. A Kerry Joyce shade filters outdoor light, while globes from The Urban Electric Co. are positioned above.

Bookshelves are cleverly fitted beneath a staircase. The shelves are filled with a variety of antique books and wooden spools. The rug is antique Oushak.

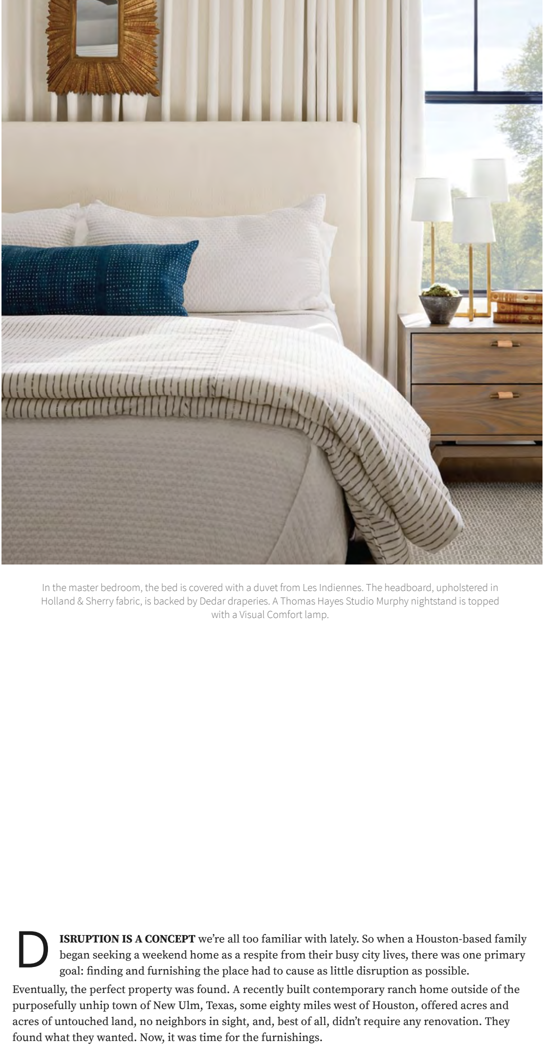
A guest bed is fitted with a Serena & Lily quilt, a Lisa Fine bolster, and a headboard upholstered with Zak + fabric. A Chelsea Textiles lacquered chest of drawers serves as a bedside table. The wall-mounted lamp is Workstead.

A cozy children's bunk room features a built-in bed, which is set with pillows using Schumacher fabric and a Serena & Lily quilt. A Visual Comfort Charlton floor lamp is positioned next to the bed. The vintage rag rug is from Carol Piper.

Geometric molds, found at the Round Top Antiques Fair, adorn surfaces throughout the house. The windowshade pattern is Schumacher's Joshua Tree Natural Moons.



Currey and Company's Fergus lantern hangs over the tub in the master bath.



In the master bedroom, the bed is covered with a duvet from Les Indiennes. The headboard, upholstered in Holland & Sherry fabric, is backed by Dedar draperies. A Thomas Hayes Studio Murphy nightstand is topped with a Visual Comfort lamp.

DISRUPTION IS A CONCEPT we're all too familiar with lately. So when a Houston-based family began seeking a weekend home as a respite from their busy city lives, there was one primary goal: finding and furnishing the place had to cause as little disruption as possible.

Eventually, the perfect property was found. A recently built contemporary ranch home outside of the purposefully unhip town of New Ulm, Texas, some eighty miles west of Houston, offered acres and acres of untouched land, no neighbors in sight, and, best of all, didn't require any renovation. They found what they wanted. Now, it was time for the furnishings.

That's where Houston-based interior designer Meg Lonergan came in. Since this was her third project for the family, Lonergan was certain she understood what the client did and didn't want. "It made the design process seamless," she says, which was a relief, since "they were keen on using it almost immediately." In fact, the whole process was so nondisruptive that Lonergan and her team did the entire install—furniture, rugs, tile work, hanging artwork, light fixtures, and more—between a few client visits. "We were able to do it without interrupting a weekend out there," she says.

The first thing you notice about the home is its tall, glasspaned doors and windows. Since the property is extremely secluded, Lonergan left them all uncovered, offering uninterrupted sightlines straight through the home. "You see vibrant yellow wildflowers; sturdy trees; and a big, beautiful pond," she says. "I wanted to let the views speak for themselves."

A large living/dining/kitchen/great room is the interior hub of the house. "A lot of the design decisions were based around entertaining and coming together—having room for multiple families, whether it's their friends or family staying," Lonergan says. The double-height space was kept mostly white, except for the kitchen, where Lonergan installed deep green tile. "Right off the bat, I wanted to add the depth of color through tile in there," she says. In the living and dining room spaces, rich neutral tones echo the property grounds, and furnishings are luxurious but usable, with lots of texture. "We were going for a sophisticated feeling, where all generations, from the grandparents to the middle generation to the youngest, would be comfortable." Lonergan says. "Not overly kid-like, and not overly mature."

A single-slab table anchors the dining space between the kitchen and living room. Large sofas offer comfortable seating for many, along with twin leather chairs and an antique chaise lounge beside the fireplace. While the furniture sits on layered rugs, two large Noguchi lanterns hover overhead, unhindered beneath the vaulted ceiling. "We went round and round with what the lights should be in that great room," says Lonergan. "But ultimately, I'd felt in my heart from the beginning that they should be these lanterns, because at night, they are like the full moon, just this beautiful, warm glow that fills that space." She used custom-made brass poles to secure the lights in space, preventing any swaying.

The house sleeps six adults and eight children, thanks to an upstairs bunk room. In the master bedroom, Lonergan used white curtains across the entire wall behind the bed to add texture and depth, as well as the option to enjoy the views or gain some privacy. A floating French architectural mirror gives the room an airy vibe, unencumbered even by gravity. And in the master bath, gray grasscloth wallpaper provides texture and variety in a serene escape from it all.

Among Lonergan's favorite pieces in the house is a collection of educational geometric molds that are arranged on a coffee table in the family room. These and other whimsical finds, including even a steel sombrero, came courtesy of the Round Top Antiques Fair, the famed twice-yearly extravaganza that's a mere twenty-mile ride from New Ulm—a fact Lonergan took full advantage of when furnishing this home.

The sculptural molds perfectly sum up Lonergan's design philosophy. "To me, successful design has irony," she says. "It has surprises; it has juxtaposition. It has something that you're not expecting, or something you will remember or comment on. You want to experience the interior. Those geometric forms completely encapsulate that feeling to me. They are outrageous; they're funny. They're ironic, but appropriate." Lonergan goes on to add, "Not everything needs to be a painting or a picture. I really tried to incorporate unique things that were artful without being a piece of art. Things like that are total conversation starters."

"I really try to design for my clients," says Meg Lonergan. "I don't want someone to walk into a house and say, 'Oh, Meg Lonergan did that.'"

"I like everything to look collected and soulful."
—Meg Lonergan