

Los Angeles

The Rise of Vertical L.A.

APARTMENT LIVING



**The
Big Read**
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A JUICY NEW STEAK HOUSE

Play Ground

► A two-acre Pacific Palisades yard gains a resort-quality gym, lap pool, and other recreational attractions without losing any of its scenic allure

BY ANN HEROLD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLE LAMOTTE



HE NEW OWNER of a Pacific Palisades property wanted to add a substantial gym but feared cluttering the garden. As

he walked the two-acre yard with Grant C. Kirkpatrick and Erik Evens of KAA Design Group, Evens noticed that the tennis court jutted out over a small arroyo. Why not tuck the gym under the court? Evens asked. "The owner's eyes sparkled," says Kirkpatrick.

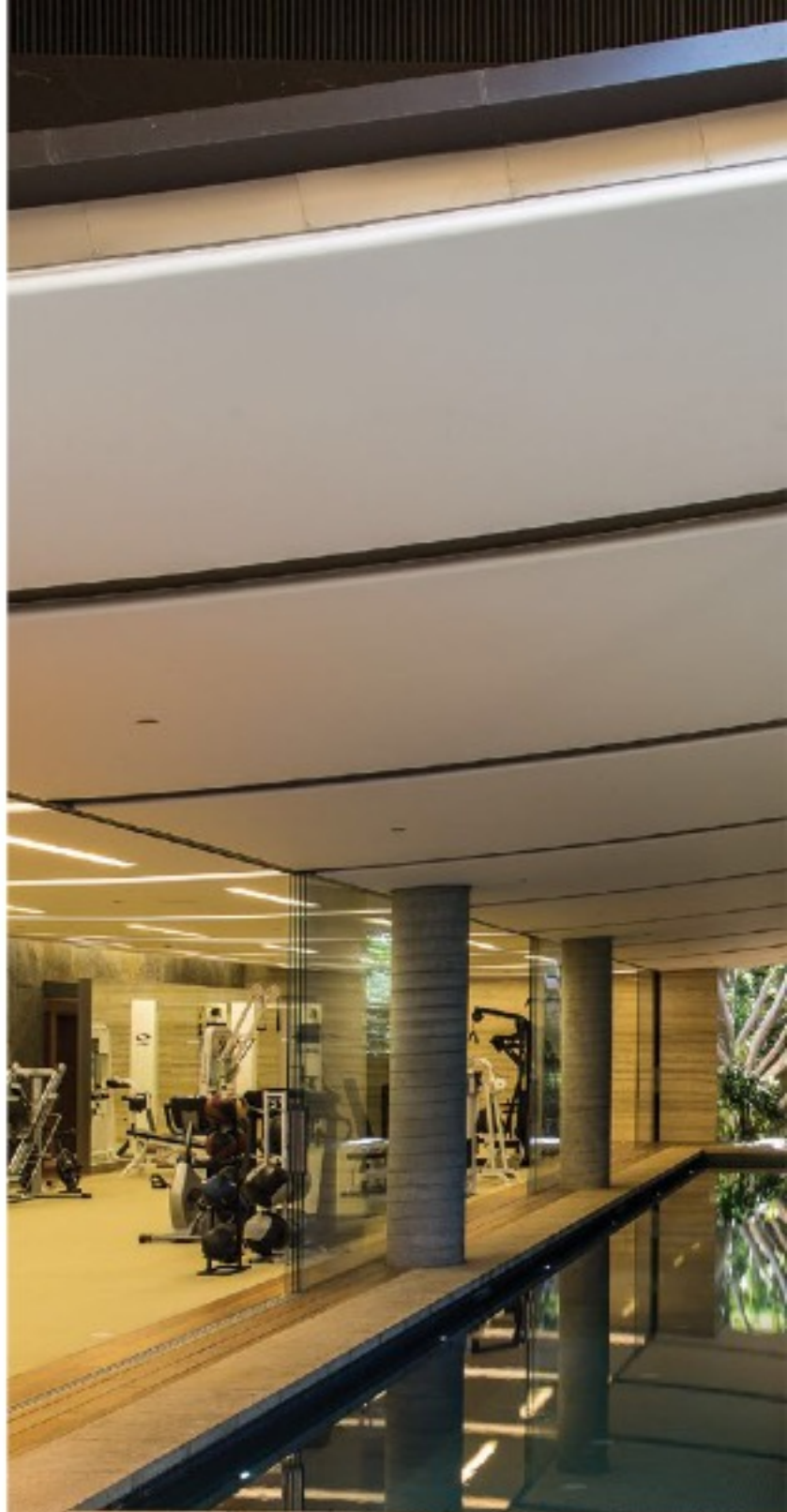
The challenge became imbuing the space—which includes two changing areas, a sauna, a TV lounge, and a room for about 20 pieces of exercise equipment—with a sense of the outdoors. Kirkpatrick opted for a wall of sliding glass that, even at 600 pounds per door, glides effortlessly on tiny ball bearings. Mirrors in the interior reflect the lush plantings by the lap pool, lending a woodsy feel. Now on most mornings the owner rises early to work out with friends he's invited to his gym, where they socialize as they sweat. "It was important to keep it one simple idea and let the location do the work," says Kirkpatrick of the 6,000-square-foot project, which took a year and a half to complete.

That his family would have so many reasons to play outside also enchanted the owner of the Palisades site. "The pond really tugged at his heart," says Kirkpatrick of the existing tree-shaded body of water with a dock and rowboat. Kirkpatrick built a pavilion, made



GET THE PARTY ROCKING

A boulder from Sydney Peak Stone in the Mojave Desert was halved to make the fire pit. The owner placed other boulders as personal touchstones in the yard.





THE SECRET GARDEN

1. Crews dug into the earth below the tennis court to make space for the massive gym. A cantilevered roof, which extends over the lap pool, was added to ensure the structural integrity of the building. A waterway that provides natural drainage

was diverted underground next to the complex. **2.** From the upper terrace by the tennis court it's impossible to see the gym that lies below. **3.** One of two changing rooms inside the space, where the owner often works out with friends.



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of wood that had been left behind on the property, next to the koi pool atop the waterfall. Closer to the house Kirkpatrick and his team filled in an oddly shaped swimming pool that lacked a cover and replaced it with a more traditional design that could be childproofed. A large lanai was erected on one side of the terrace for social gatherings, and a fire pit with chairs was placed nearer the house with an unobstructed view of the tennis court. Inspired by the beauty of a grassy meadow, landscape architect Damon Hein, project engineer Damon Jordan, and the owner came up with a Cy Twombly-esque design for a swing set. The custom piece, finished with automotive paint, was installed beneath giant sycamores that form an upside-down V.

Hein and the owner handpicked boulders at a Mojave Desert quarry to act as visual accents in the garden; one is artfully arranged at the bottom of the limestone stairs leading to the gym. Their placement was painstakingly mapped out by the owner. "It was somewhat spiritual," says Kirkpatrick. "They're aligned in such a way that the owner was centering himself on the property."



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WATER WORTHY

4. Architects Grant Kirkpatrick and Patti Baker of K&A Design Group focused on opening up the gym so that, despite its location below the tennis court, it wouldn't feel subterranean. **5.** The owner's children can row the boat across the pond, which has also attracted a family of mallard ducks.

6. Koi live in a pool above the waterfall, near the edge of the pavilion. **7.** The custom swing set, flanked by mature sycamore trees, looks out on a grassy meadow. **8.** A seating area warmed by a fire pit lies across the pool from a lanai, which was designed to enhance al fresco entertaining on the upper terrace.





WHERE TO LOOK AND LEARN



FIELDS OF DREAMS

> Want more landscapes? Among the 17 paintings in *The Artist's Garden*, now at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, is *Spring Bouquet* by Jane Peterson.



MADE IN AMERICA

> The exhibit, which revolves around American impressionism, originated at the Philadelphia Academy of the Fine Arts. It includes *Saint James's Park, London* by Daniel Garber, a member of the art colony in New Hope, Pennsylvania.



BED OF ROSES

> *The Crimson Rambler* by Philip Leslie Hale illustrates a prominent theme of the Huntington show: the evolution of the garden from elite privilege to more common pastime.