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ART IN DESIGN

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Contents

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DEPARTMENTS

24

ART IN DESIGN

Artist and photographer Charles Kay Jr.

28

COVET

Tom Dixon, Rosie Li, Roger Thomas and more

34

ARCHITECTURE

Landry Design Group's extraordinary ceilings

40

STUDIO

Celebrating the legendary brand Kravet at 100

46

DESIGN FILE

Breegan Jane electrifies Native Restaurant in L.A.

52

DETAIL

The latest designs from the industry's top brands

120

NOTEBOOK

International design resources in this issue

122

PARTING SHOT

Jasper Johns at the Broad

COVER STORY: 72

INTERIOR DESIGN: PEMBROOKE & IVES

PHOTOGRAPHY: CARMEL BRANTLEY

AND STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON



EXQUISITELY NATIVE

PHOTOGRAPHY: MANOLO LANGIS





The first thing you see when you walk into Native Restaurant in Santa Monica is a photograph of chef Nyesha J. Arrington's hands, one on the handle of a sauté pan, the other in the midst of peppering the pan's contents with spices, the effects a sizzling, smoking explosion of flavor. Los Angeles designer Breegan Jane ensured that this shot, by Andrew Herrold, set the tone for the restaurant's interiors, which, like the menu, combine influences from many world cultures, reflecting and celebrating the diverse makeup of the City of Angels. "Native was unique in many ways, particularly because of the passion I felt for not just the design process, but also the space and for the people who would spend their time inside it," Jane says. "There was never a doubt in my mind that the aesthetic of the surroundings needed to sufficiently match the magic occurring within them. I wanted to tell the story of Native through the art that greets its patrons."

That artistry combines a matte black stamped-tin ceiling, Xamiera Bar Stools by Everly Quinn, Crate and Barrel's Tig Bar Stools, a long, communal tufted banquette that invites human connection, and handmade weavings and tapestries that are, says Breegan, "a wonderful representation of the beauty behind the wall, in the kitchen, that you don't get to see until it is exquisitely presented on a plate in front of you." Just as the chef's short rib "rolled" dumpling surprises and delights with a soft exterior resembling a bone, so do the interior moves. "As patrons taste Chef Nyesha's creations, they are met with a myriad of flavors and textures that pair exceptionally well," Jane says. "She mixes a little crunch with something soft, or an extra crisp with an element that hits you smoothly. It was this theme that I mirrored with design by utilizing leathers, painted surfaces and reclaimed wood. The goal was to visually express what Nyesha does with her food. Each finish evokes its own individual mood while effortlessly working together to tell the story of texture and delicious fare." ■ breeganjane.com — EH

