

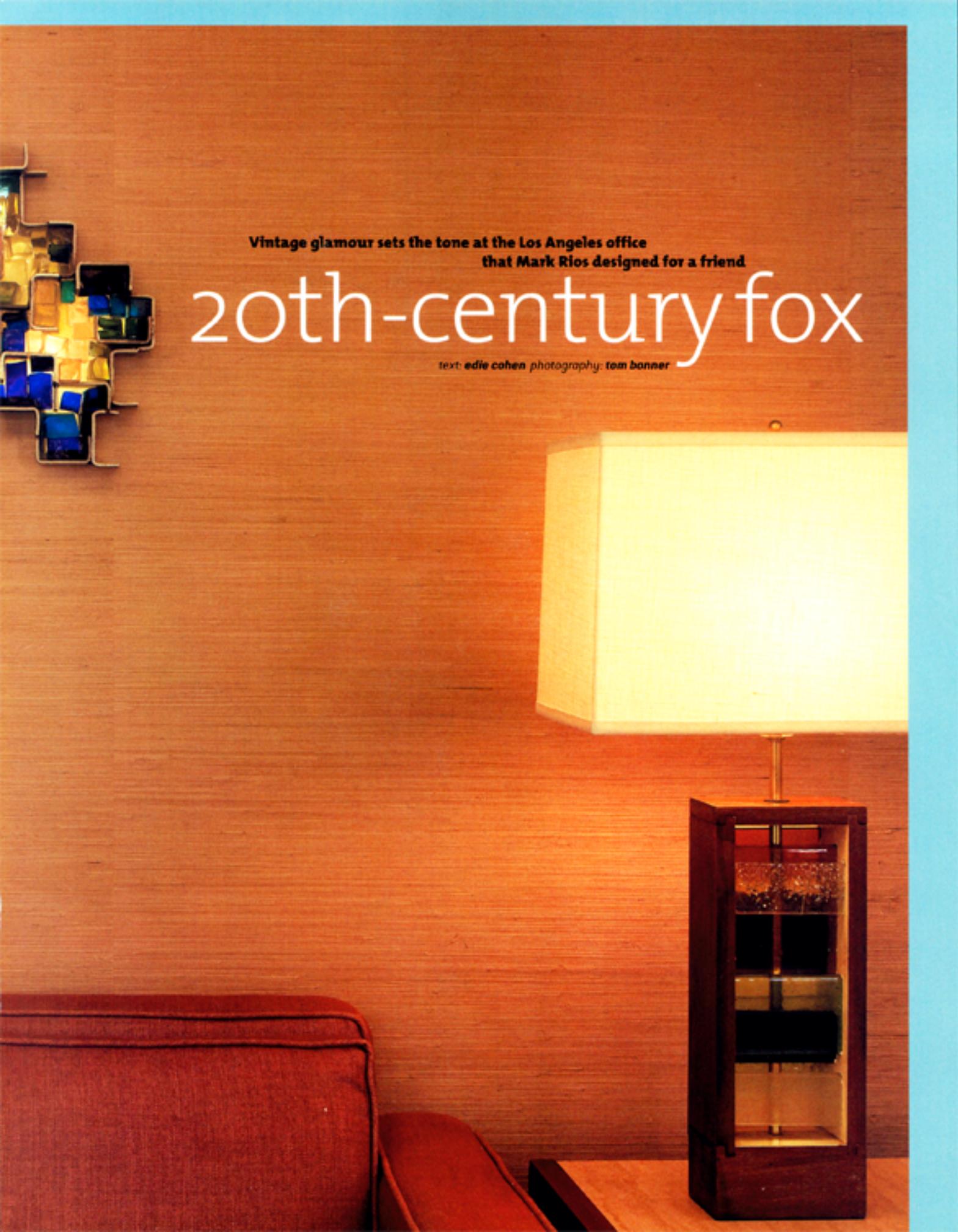
INTERIOR DESIGN®

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A photograph of a Los Angeles office interior. The walls are covered in vertical wood paneling. On the left, a colorful abstract sculpture made of various colored glass blocks is mounted on the wall. In the foreground, the back of a red upholstered sofa is visible. To the right, a lamp with a large, rectangular, white fabric shade sits on a dark wooden table. The lamp's base is a tall, dark wooden rectangular box with a glass front panel, revealing internal components. The overall lighting is warm and ambient.

Vintage glamour sets the tone at the Los Angeles office
that Mark Rios designed for a friend

20th-century fox

text: *edie cohen* photography: *tom bonner*



Previous spread: At the shared headquarters of Baroda Ventures and the David Bohnett Foundation, a Rios Clementi Hale Studios project in Los Angeles, the founder's office features a glass mosaic sculpture by Angelo Bratto, best known as a lighting designer. Frances and Michael Higgins designed the table lamp.

Left, clockwise from top: The 1940's building's quatrefoil details, such as this wrought-iron grille, inspired a wall covering inside. Flooring on the second-floor landing is stained walnut. In the partner's office, a vintage Paul McCobb desk meets shirts worn by Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger in *Brokeback Mountain*. **Right:** A custom storefront system, framed in painted steel I beams, sets off spaces including the reception area, where a chair by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and a sofa by Charles and Ray Eames sit beneath a chandelier by David Weeks.





Above: In the founder's office, a McCobb desk, a Gio Ponti conference table, and a Jean Perzel desk lamp and chandelier, all vintage, mix with a new sofa by Glenn Lawson and Grant Fenning and a travertine-topped coffee table and a walnut cabinet, both custom.

Opposite top: Glass supported by painted steel trelliswork forms a canopy over the back door. **Opposite bottom:** Panels of limed oak front an office.

Rios Clementi Hale Studios doesn't typically do pretty. But the firm made a special exception for the Los Angeles headquarters shared by Baroda Ventures, a tech-savvy private-equity firm, and its founder's nonprofit effort, the David Bohnett Foundation. "I learned not to be afraid of luxury," principal Mark Rios says. So in went showstopping chandeliers, a floral wool rug, and Hollywood Regency references—just for starters. The two-year renovation involved much more than furnishings. After demolishing existing suites, Rios

rebuilt a cohesive interior on a residential scale.

He and David Bohnett share a history. They met as classmates at the University of Southern California. Then Rios designed two houses for Bohnett and three of his previous offices, including one for GeoCities, a Web hosting site that predated social networking. (In 1999, Bohnett made much of his fortune by selling GeoCities to Yahoo!) So the architect knew his client's taste well.

"David loves mid-century buildings, but this one was not," Rios says of the Paul Williams–like 1940's brick town house in Beverly Hills. "Modernism is light, openness, transparency, democracy. Classicism is details, finesse, elegance." This renovation interweaves the best of both, playing off the inherent tension between them.

Rios built his reputation on equal parts landscape architecture, architecture, and interiors, and he was able to engage all faculties here.





In the entry courtyard and a private courtyard off Bohnett's office, Rios installed fountains, granite pavers, and crape myrtle trees. Just inside the building, a stunning glass stairway is the first contemporary insertion, setting the stage for the upper level's reception area and work space for 14.

Reception's ceiling is beachy bead-board, painted creamy white. The rest of the architecture is much more urbane. Black-painted steel I beams frame a storefront system; flooring is dark-stained walnut. Combining the two modes, a tailored sofa by Charles and Ray Eames sports upholstery of blue-and-white seersucker. Strictly citified are Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's leather-covered Barcelona chair and David Weeks's steel Torroja Cross chandelier. It's all about layering and luminosity, themes carried throughout the 4,200 square feet.

If interiors have that SoCal glow, that's because Rios fitted the reconfigured, seismically upgraded roof with six skylights. Sunshine from the windows also gets through to the core, thanks to the storefront system's runs of clear glass. You might suppose that all these glass surfaces would add up to a fishbowl effect, but Rios took care of that, where necessary, with 6-foot-high limed-oak panels.

Enamored of white back-painted glass, too, he used it in multiple locations. Above the few open workstations, it seems to elevate the ceiling plane. The same material lines the walls of the internal stairs, its reflectivity turning a stairwell into a light well.

He assembled a top-notch collection of vintage modern furnishings by scouring Web sites, auction houses, and antiques shops. Some staffers got desks by either George Nelson or Paul McCobb. Perhaps the luckiest employee of all, though, is the partner who literally got the shirts off Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger's backs, from their roles in *Brokeback*





Left, clockwise from top: The receptionist sits at a desk topped in walnut. A brass inlay punctuates the lacquered top of the custom 12-foot-long table in the conference room. Back-painted glass panels are installed above custom workstations. *Right:* The conference room's other defining features are Eames chairs with stamped-leather upholstery, custom pendant fixtures with brass shades 2 feet in diameter, and custom vinyl wall covering.

Mountain—they're now displayed in an acrylic box mounted on the wall. "David calls them the Ruby Slippers of gay rights," Rios notes. (Those rights are a prime consideration of the David Bohnett Foundation.)

In Bohnett's own hushed office, a medley of 20th-century styles. a walnut McCobb desk shares billing with a round mahogany Gio Ponti table. Above it, a chandelier's stacked frosted-glass disks add an art deco note. Across the room, a glass mosaic wall sculpture from the '70s introduces vivid color. Custom contributions: a vintage-inspired walnut cabinet and a brass coffee table topped in travertine. Other residential touches include pale gold wool carpet, taupe silk curtains, and caramel-toned linen wall covering.

The mood isn't this serious everywhere. "In some spaces," Rios says, "we just had fun." Details got exaggerated big-time. Enormous escutcheons emblazon the 6-foot-wide sliding doors to the conference room, where Rios went bold and brassy—literally and figuratively. The wall covering is printed with a lively gold quatrefoil pattern adapted from exterior details original to the building. "The energy culminates here," he notes. Down the center of the ceiling, he hung a trio of brass drum fixtures, each 2 feet across. And inlaid brass asterisks dominate the snowy-white lacquered top of the 12-foot-long oval table. Sure, the Eames Aluminum Group chairs placed around it may seem a facile choice. But how often are they covered in crocodile-stamped leather, dyed baby blue?





PROJECT TEAM

HUAY WEE (PROJECT ARCHITECT); MELISSA BACORA; GARTH RAMSEY; JEAN LEM DI SABATINO; DANIEL TORRES; RDS CLEMENTE HALE STUDIOS; PNT SKINNER LIGHTING; LIGHTING CONSULTANT; GROUP OLIVER; AUDIENSURE CONSULTING; VENERLASEN ASSOCIATES; ACOUSTICAL CONSULTANT; BRANDON & JOHNSTON; STRUCTURAL ENGINEER; SULLIVAN PARTNERSHIP; MECHANICAL ENGINEER; PEL; ELECTRICAL ENGINEER; DORLAND COMPANY; METALWORK; DPC WOODWORK; WOODWORK; GIRONX GLASS; GLASSWORK; STEVE BEATTIE PAINTING; PAINTING CONTRACTOR; FORT HILL CONSTRUCTION; GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

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