

AD

A POLO CHAMPION
IN ARGENTINA

DREAM HOUSES AROUND THE WORLD

A BAMBOO VISION
RISES IN BALI

AERIN LAUDER
IN PALM BEACH

\$6.99

05>



7 25274 08430 2

TRAVEL SPECIAL
FROM THE MIDWEST TO THE
FAR EAST—WHERE TO GO NEXT

CULTURE *collecting*

THE LIVING ROOM—WITH PIECES BY DIEGO GIACOMETTI, FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, AND SERGE MOUILLE—EXEMPLIFIES THE MIDCENTURY TASTE OF ITS HOMEOWNERS, DECORATOR CAROLINE SARKOZY, OF INTERIORS FIRM CSLB, AND GALLERIST JACQUES LACOSTE.



Domestic Harmony

Designer *Caroline Sarkozy* and antiquaire *Jacques Lacoste* compose a home in Paris

Caroline Sarkozy and Jacques Lacoste crossed swords long before they fell in love and moved in together. It was at a Paris auction sale, and the two found themselves in a bidding war over a pair of Jean Royère firedogs. Sarkozy (half sister of former French president Nicolas) was bidding for a client—she had spent ten years working with Andrée Putman before starting her own interior design firm. Lacoste ran—and still runs—his own Paris gallery specializing in midcentury-modern furniture, and he knows as much about Royère as anyone alive (his exhaustive monograph on the designer—co-edited with fellow gallery owner Patrick Seguin—was published five years ago).

“I figured, Oh my God, if Jacques is bidding against me, these must be pretty good,” recalls Sarkozy. “At some point in the bidding, Jacques made a little sign to me—I’m leaving the firedogs to you. And I thought, That’s so elegant.”

Lacoste swears he wasn’t flirting. Years passed, and so did both their marriages to others. “And then one day,” she says to him, “you opened your eyes.”

Their romance has flowered in a vast apartment in a Belle Epoque building in Paris’s 8th arrondissement, and you can see the fruits of collaboration as soon as you walk through the front door. The long entry hall and dining area are flanked by eight drop-dead panels executed by the French glass-master Max Ingrand, who Lacoste believes is criminally

underappreciated. Saint-Gobain, the glass manufacturer, commissioned them in 1960 for its headquarters in Neuilly. To show that glass could outshine lacquer, Ingrand painted the panels on the reverse. The technique never caught on, but seeing the luminous panels here, you have to admit that Ingrand won his bet. Heeding a tip, Lacoste rescued the massive panels just before the building was razed in 2001. But, since no one could imagine how to use them, they never sold. It was Sarkozy who finally came up with the ingenious metal frames that allow the panels to function as doors without getting scratched. “That’s how we work together,” she says with evident pride.

Even so, the two do bump heads on occasion. The apartment’s once-baroque

CULTURE *collecting*

moldings are now straight and sober, the puffy cherubs removed. She wanted to keep them; he put his foot down. "I don't like angels," says Lacoste. "They were just put there so people would say, 'Ooh, that's a lot of work—you must be very rich.' " She, however, was the one who said Roger Tallon's 1967 *Zombie* chair, with its cutout eyeholes in the headrest, had to go. In the corridor, two unframed canvases sit facing the wall: his and her vetoes.

It works the other way, too. Sarkozy points to a startling blue ceramic vase by Émile Gallé from 1885, encrusted with flowers. "Isn't that incredible!" she says, and indeed it is. "Sometimes I go into Jacques's gallery and I just tell him, 'You're not selling *that*.' "

The living room makes it clear that their bipartisanship produces much more consensus than gridlock. The gems he unearths are set off by the work of gifted artisans she regularly collaborates with. Two fine Diego Giacometti chairs frame a mantelpiece of what looks like a jigsaw of glazed ceramic blocks designed by Sarkozy with the artist Emmanuel Boos.

"He always wants things to surprise him—new materials, new ways of thinking," says Sarkozy. "I'm more decorative, you could say. I need things that have charm." The result is a charming surprise. cs-lb.fr; jacqueslacoste.com —JOSHUA LEVINE



ABOVE A GILBERT POILLERAT TABLE, ERNST SPOLÉN SIDEBORD, MAX INGRAND FOR FONTANAARTE PENDANT, AND STRAW-COVERED OAK CHAIRS MINGLE WITH CONTEMPORARY ART IN THE ENTRANCE HALL. LEFT A JEAN ROYÈRE POLAR-BEAR SOFA SITS BEHIND A HUBERT LE GALL COCKTAIL TABLE IN THE LIVING ROOM. STUDIO WIEKI SOMERS LAMP; TAI PING CARPET.