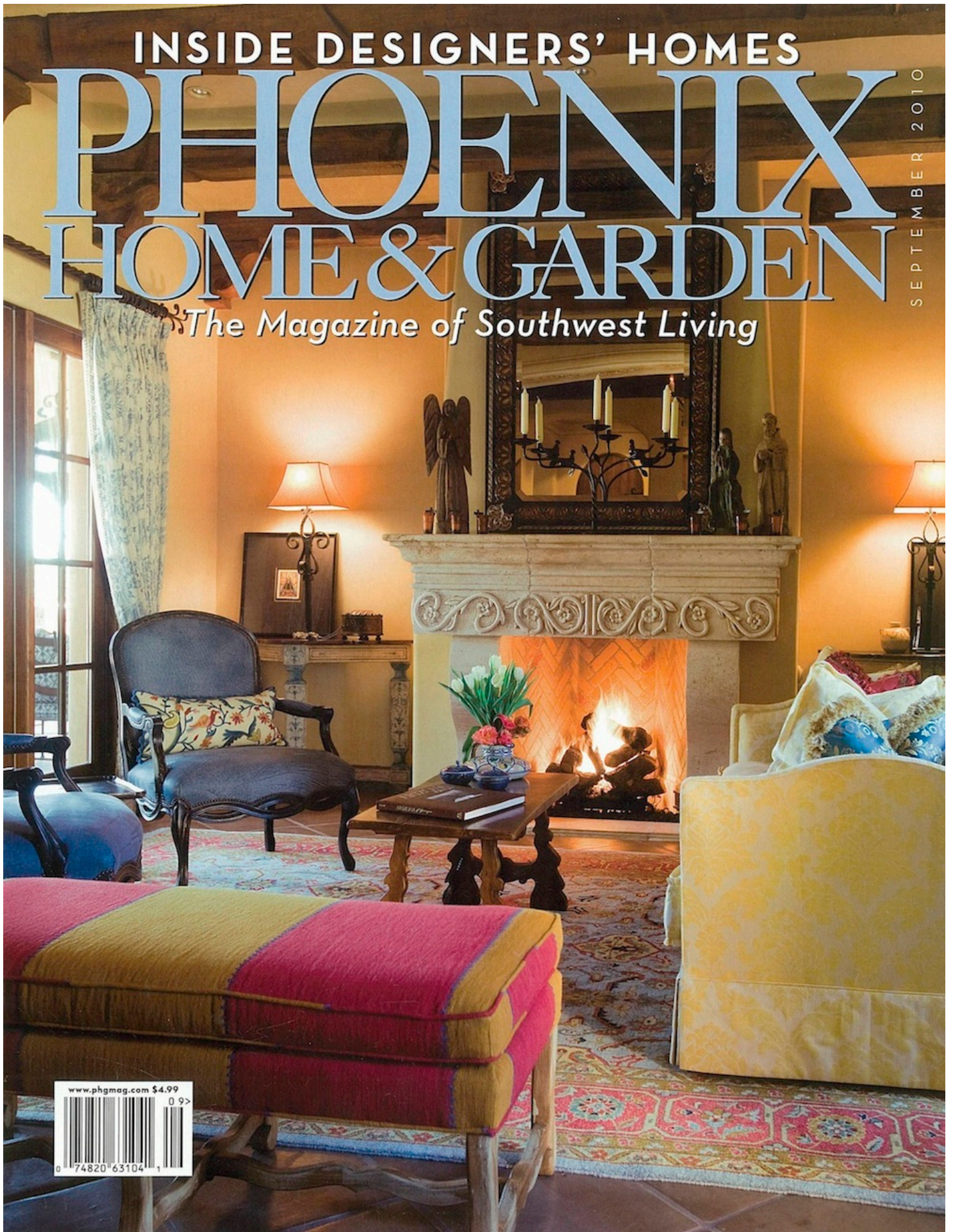


INSIDE DESIGNERS' HOMES

PHOENIX HOME & GARDEN

The Magazine of Southwest Living

SEPTEMBER 2010



www.phmag.com \$4.99

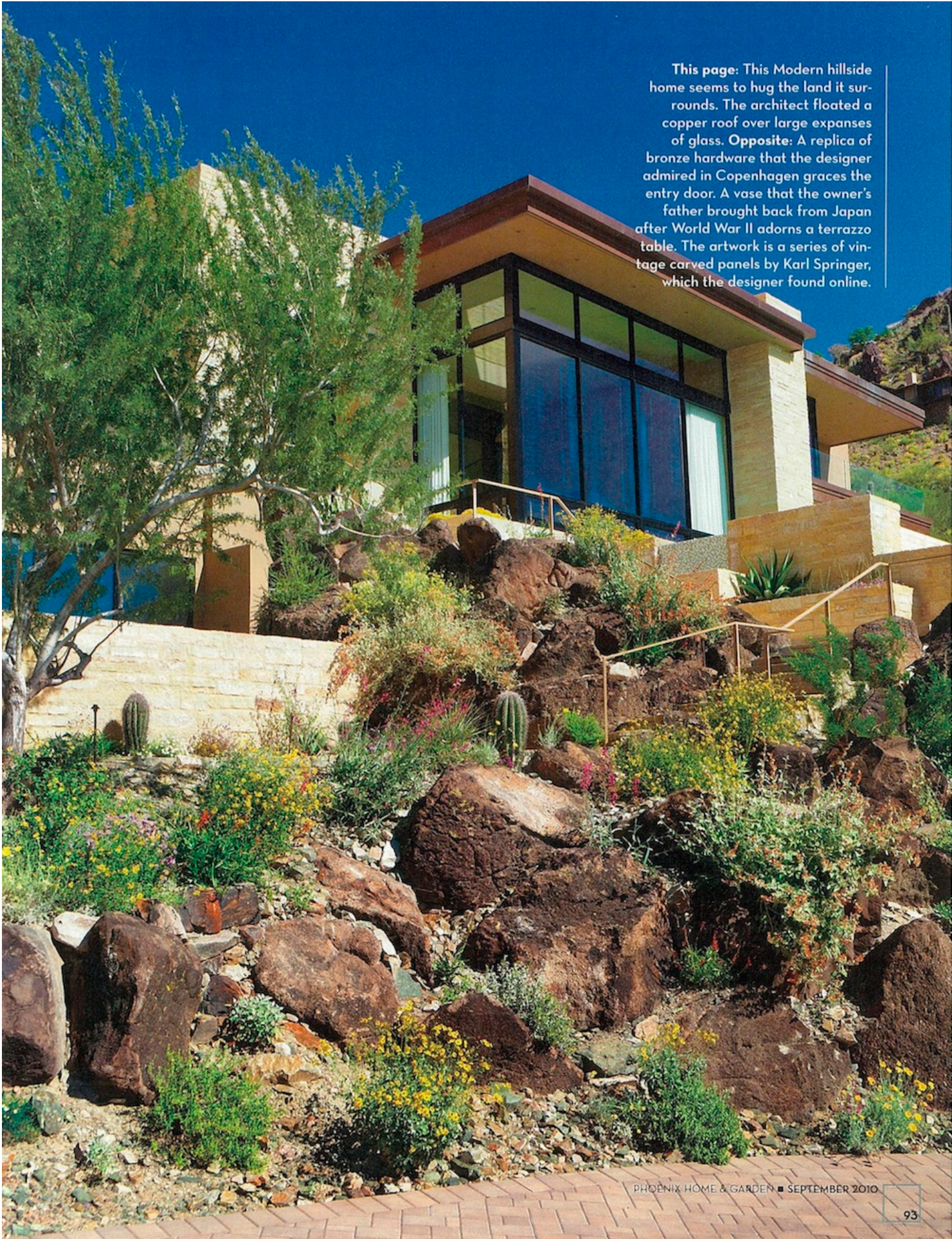




OLD MEETS NEW

REPURPOSED PIECES STAR IN A
DESIGNER'S REMODELED HOME

TEXT BY JUDY HARPER ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAURA MOSS



This page: This Modern hillside home seems to hug the land it surrounds. The architect floated a copper roof over large expanses of glass. Opposite: A replica of bronze hardware that the designer admired in Copenhagen graces the entry door. A vase that the owner's father brought back from Japan after World War II adorns a terrazzo table. The artwork is a series of vintage carved panels by Karl Springer, which the designer found online.



When Wendy and Ian Ackerman embarked on a four-year project to build their hillside home, they knew they wanted an inviting, livable house where every inch could be enjoyed. Rather than create “showcase” living and dining rooms they would seldom use, the homeowners sought less formal spaces with sophistication, character and quality.

Marvelous views dictated the orientation of the 7,300-square-foot Paradise Valley, Arizona, home, which is built on three levels. A hands-on interior designer known for her innovative design solutions, Wendy says the project was truly a collaborative effort, with architect David Dick, builder Joe Costello and landscape designer Jeff Berghoff among the key players.

“Wendy and I walked the mountain many times to see what views were available,” recalls Dick. “We never talked about what style of home it would be; it literally evolved. Wendy chose a very sophisticated and tailored palette that is not so much about style, but simple lines that are clean and easy to look at. The mountain is so beautiful, and we wanted the house to nestle in and not compete.”

Warm and welcoming, the home suits the owners’ lifestyle, whether they are sharing dinner for two or hosting a gala celebration for friends and family. From the front door all the way through the residence, everything has a purpose. There are no stagnant places. Even a home gym complete with steam shower gets daily use.

A spacious dining area, living room and media room flow easily from one to the next. The generous use of limestone, walnut, and Movingue—an African satinwood—gives the home a sense of warmth, despite its openness. Exterior elements such as Minnesota creekstone are repeated inside.

The ingenuity of the owner is apparent in decorative mosaic tile flooring in the master bath, powder bath and butler’s pantry, while

a multicolored area rug makes a statement in the living room. “My concept throughout the home was to balance the hard, angular edges with softness and curves,” says Ackerman.

“We built this as an adult house, and flexibility was important to us,” she adds, noting that the gym and his-and-hers office spaces all have bathrooms and easily could be converted into bedrooms. A pair of elevators makes the home accessible to all. “A lot of thought went into the layout. We didn’t plan on building something so big, but it’s such a comfortable house to live in, and we really do use the entire house.”

Old and new blend effortlessly in the residence, from French 1930s Art Deco gates that open to Ackerman’s studio, to a great-uncle’s etchings and her mother’s needlework. The designer incorporated furniture pieces from her parents’ home, as well as ornate doorknobs that trace their roots to her grandparents’ decorative-hardware store in New York City. A chandelier in the master bath belonged to another grandparent.

“It’s fun to have unique pieces,” Ackerman reflects. “That’s what makes it your home and tells your story. I’ll never forget when my mother first came up here and put her hand on this doorknob. She said, ‘I’m not going to cry,’ and I said, ‘Why not? Everyone else does.’”

A true labor of love, the home required a tremendous amount of planning, coordination and attention to detail that paid off in the end. That’s the benefit of doing everything right, notes the designer. Once you are finished, there is nothing left to do but relax. □

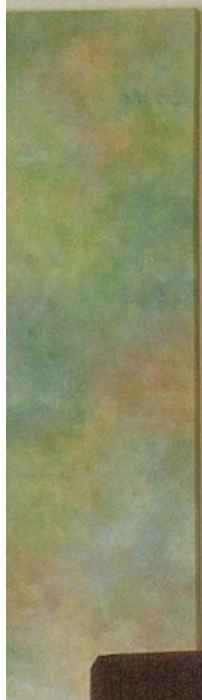
Above: Wenge wood cabinets with brushed-nickel hardware add richness to the kitchen. Back-painted glass covers the refrigerator/freezer and wraps around the room as a back-splash. The countertops are a mix of quartzite and granite. **Opposite:** Tall windows reveal the desert landscape beyond the breakfast area. The staircase leads to a private patio.



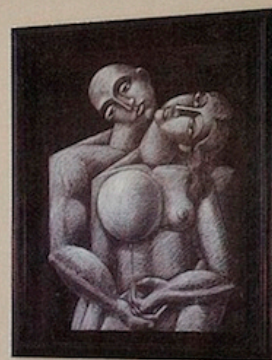
A 1940s French vanity, which the designer traced to a vendor at a Paris flea market, creates a glamorous look in the powder room. The Porta Romana mirror broke before the owner had a chance to hang it, and subsequently was redesigned by a local artisan. The gouache painting reflected in the mirror is by Rebekka Modlen. Homeowner Wendy Ackerman designed the mosaic floor.




The designer incorporated a mix of old, new and repurposed furnishings, including this Primavera wood dining room set from her parents' home. The vase is a Japanese Satsuma, the stainless steel sculpture by Donald Tully is called *The Hunter*, and the untitled painting is by Gale Kaseguma.



Inspired by the desert view outside her window, Wendy Ackerman designed the wool Tibetan rug in the living room to reflect the colors of the landscape beyond. "I wanted the art to be on the floor in this room, with the furniture taking a step back, almost as a silhouette," she explains. She also designed the steel side table; the coffee table came from her parents' home. The oil pastel by Yuroz is titled *Embrace With Balloon*, and the bronze sculpture by David Borgerding is titled *Wachlar*.





A wall of Minnesota creekstone inset with a see-through fireplace separates the living room from a wet bar and media room. Walnut flooring laid in a chevron pattern plays off the angles of the home. Canine Lola Scout admires it from the comfy rug. Dressed in Movingue, the stairway leads to the master suite. A wine closet and cabinetry are tucked beneath the stairs.



Above: Architect David Dick designed the walnut and glass doors to the master bedroom, taking inspiration from a pair the homeowners admired at The Ritz-Carlton in New Orleans. Wendy Ackerman designed the bed, nightstand and chaise lounges. The smooth cast-stone fireplace contrasts with the rugged texture of Minnesota creekstone. **Left:** The master bath is a self-indulgent delight. Ackerman designed the decorative mosaic tile flooring as a counterpoint to the room's hard architecture. Using her keen artist's eye, she salvaged leftover pieces from the floor to create a series of mosaic tile wall panels for another area of the home. The colorful upholstered chair is from her childhood home in New York. Reflected in the mirror is a painting by Linda Carter Holman. **Opposite:** Looking for Modern French pieces to balance the interior architecture, the designer found this 1930s French secretary desk made of Brazilian santos palisander, a type of rosewood. Once blotchy and yellowed, the goatskin front was refinished by Irene Wagner to blend with the wall color and chair. A 1930s cast-aluminum gazelle on a steel base keeps watch from above, complementing the medallion on the front of the vintage piece. The mixed-media collage by Yuroz is titled *Reclining Nude*.

See Sources.

