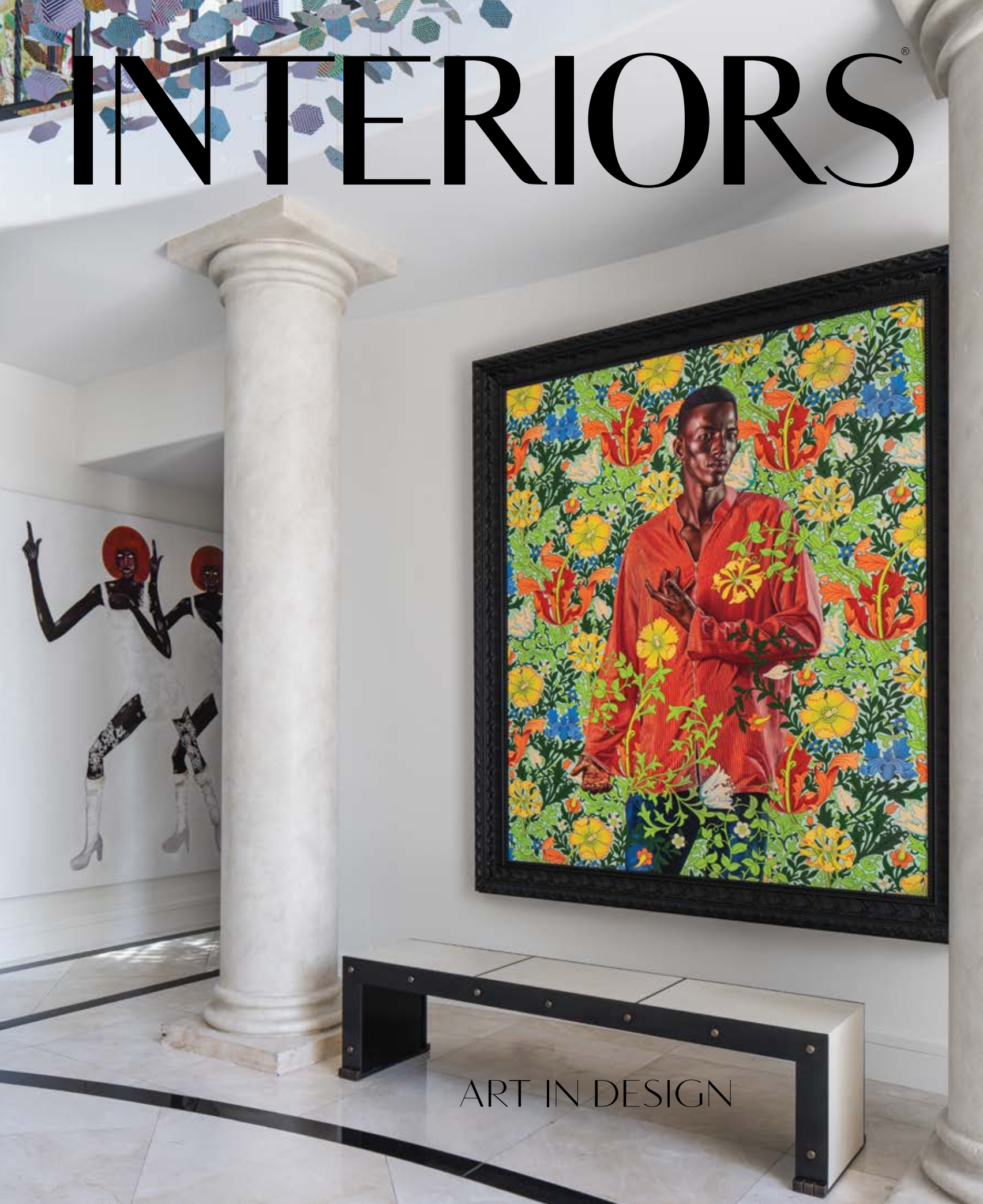


# INTERIORS<sup>®</sup>



ART IN DESIGN

## Keita Turner

### Whose art do you collect and why?

I collect the art of 20th and 21st century artists whose work resonates with my soul. My fine art collection ranges from abstracts, drawings, figurative paintings and landscapes to printmaking, ceramics and sculptures. My collection, both eclectic and nuanced, includes a favorite WPA-era portraiture piece of a solemnly pensive black woman. I own artworks by Ky Anderson, Ann West, Piero Spadaro, Hayley Perry, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Jordi Bonàs, Pierre Tal-Coat, and Jean Saudé [a printmaker who produced some of Edouard Benedictus']. I recently acquired limited-edition art plates at auction by New York-based multidisciplinary artist Derrick Adams, known for his internationally recognized *Floater* series, and Maurizio Cattelan, a contemporary Italian conceptual artist known for his artwork *Comedian* (2019), a banana affixed to a wall with duct tape, and his work *America* (2016), a functional toilet cast from 18-karat gold. And I love the work by my mother, visual artist Betty Toler Turner. Several pieces in my collection are comprised of her original paintings, drawings, etchings and prints. She is a huge inspiration.

### What kind of art are your clients drawn to right now?

Our clients are drawn to art that speaks to their cultural backgrounds and heritage. Several collect a global compilation of works that demonstrate the strength of assembling collections from an international perspective. Our clients build collections that include works from American, Latin American, European, African and Asian artists, as well as artworks by black, brown and indigenous artists from across the world. The clients we work with are attracted to art they deem desirable to live with, but that also captivates and mesmerizes their imagination. In addition to abstracts, figurative paintings, graphic works, conceptual art and sculptural pieces, we find our clients growing increasingly interested in collecting photographs of various subject matters, including architectural spaces.

### How do you usually design with art? Do you design with established collections or do your clients sometimes acquire pieces during the design process?

We often design interiors with our clients' established collections. In fact, we prefer this scenario of working with "mature" collections. We enjoy lending our expertise and exposure to the fine art world to designing interiors that celebrate the owner's unique collections. We are currently working on a home where the clients have amassed an impressive collection of original paintings by renowned Latin and Spanish artists. We conceived a scheme to best show

off their colorful art collection of figurative, landscape and abstract works without it matching the decor. The intention is for the art to be the star attraction in the home set against a more neutral background. The pops of color will come from the art, rather than the art serving as color coordinated decoration. We've also had clients acquire pieces during the process. A client recently commissioned a captivating painting and then they entrusted us to have it surrounded within a work-of-art hand-carved custom frame.

### When is the ideal time to introduce art into a design project?

The ideal time can vary depending on the project and client. If we are working with a client's existing art collection, we will document and inventory their pieces from the onset and determine where each work will live in the completed environment. In this case sometimes the art informs the design. Otherwise, we will introduce art or help our clients choose art by working with art consultants and galleries who have access to the right emerging or established artists. We also encourage the client to seek new works throughout the duration of the design process.

### Why is the voice of the artist so important, especially in these times?

I believe the voice of the artist is important in these times because it not only reflects the artist's unique point of view, life experiences, values, identity and concerns—which may ultimately resonate with the viewer as an empathetic participant in the work. The artist can be the societal and attitudinal changemaker, here to illuminate one-of-a-kind perspectives, encourage exchanges of ideas, nurture communities on the margin and cultivate the voices necessary for inspirational growth and connectivity.

### Does art need design, or vice versa?

I lean more toward the position that design needs art. Whether that art is in the form of purely visual or conceptual artworks or is introduced through functional mediums such as unique handcrafted furnishings, art and its application bring vibrant cultural and personal expression to an environment. I believe art should be more than merely decoration. It needs to be intellectually stimulating and inspiring. And while in theory design is not art, I strongly believe great design is undoubtably art.



Brad Bunyca