

POLITICAL POSTURING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 78

returned to the East Coast, she went to yoga every day with her aunt, Rory Kennedy. Back at Harvard, she found the only yoga studio in town.

Before long, Townsend helped create a program at the university where students practiced on thick wrestling mats. She never thought she could actually become an instructor. "I was going to be a lawyer or a doctor," she says, "but I knew I would probably fail organic chemistry."

After college, Townsend moved to L.A. and started working as a business analyst, telling companies what they were doing wrong. Her only happy moments were during weekend yoga classes. Over time, she took a teacher training workshop, studied with Erich Schiffmann and assisted on a retreat in Tahiti. It wasn't long before she quit her day job to teach full time.

"My parents thought I was totally crazy," says Townsend. "They were like, 'When are you going to get a real job?'"

Lately, the only things slowing her down have been injuries. Townsend underwent three incredibly painful knee surgeries last year, though the recovery time gave her the opportunity to use her "business brain," as she calls it, to open Up Dog Fitness.

"I'm happier now more than ever," Townsend says, smiling. "There's something stable and wholesome about connecting with yourself in a yoga studio that helps you get through the joys and sufferings of life. It's definitely part of my family's legacy to better the lives of people." 8599 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, 310-360-7200; updogfitness.com. ●

ARTFUL ABODE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 148

with Gabrielle, and Ariana, 15, Govan's daughter from his previous marriage.

Each room blends personal objects and classic design—offset with eye-catching artwork. Walk into the foyer and you'll spy a Korean moon jar next to a dreamy photograph by Catherine Opie, or a perky sunset print by Andy Warhol hanging above a

white Eero Saarinen table surrounded by office chairs in vivid, sun-burnt orange.

"The idea is that it's timeless, not some '60s minimalism," says Govan. "If you pare things down in a certain way, you often see more, not less."

In particular, the public rooms feature a compendium of such classic furnishings with thoughtful color-bursts of art.

An iconic Castiglioni Arco lamp drapes over a Charles sofa by B&B Italia in the living room—next to a Brody Condon modified computer game of Elvis gyrating against a hot-pink background. Another Saarinen table rests in front of a Warhol *Camouflage* print in the breakfast nook. In the library, two soft-purple Arne Jacobsen egg chairs face each other, next to another Condon creation—this time, of Timothy Leary's pal Baba Ram Dass.

Of all the home's art, Govan seems partial to the digital pieces. "People don't realize how powerful it is to live with," he says. "It's the way of the world now. Ariana makes videos with her friends for fun. And, like David Hockney, Gabrielle is drawing on her iPad."

The family initially vowed to hang only one artist in each room. "It's about being minimal and specific," says Govan. "It's not using art as decoration—that's the key for us. For example, I would never put flowers in front of a work."

Citing a strong point of view, the couple doesn't use decorators, preferring instead to buy multiples of their favorites. "We like what we like," says Ross. They estimate that they own something like 12 Saarinen tables and five Charles sofas among their three homes. (The family has an apartment in N.Y. that they now rent out and a house in the Hamptons.)

Other objects Ross simply purchased on the spot. "I saw it, and I said, 'I'll take it,'" she says, smiling at the "very James Bond" Willy Rizzo coffee table she discovered at Blackman Cruz. The circular disc opens to form a bar, and a bucket-shaped hole is filled with ice and Champagne.

Entertaining is key. At LACMA, museum directors have a long history of wooing and socializing from Hancock Park. Whether cocktails for 100, an artist's lecture or a quiet dinner for 18, Govan and Ross needed a large, open kitchen that could accommodate caterers, plenty of

storage and a backyard that could be tented. Before he passed away, New York event kingpin Robert Isabell even drew a floor plan for Ross to help her figure out how many people she could actually fit in the house for a dinner party.

The word on the street is that Govan-Ross soirees are as unfussy as their home.

"It was artistic but low-key," recalls one guest who attended the LACMA holiday party. "It felt very neighborhood-y. There were people draped over the armchairs of the sofa—drinking, chatting. You could tell that everyone was there because they liked them, not just to do business."

"It's not so much about the art on the walls," LACMA and MOCA trustee Jane Nathanson adds. "They always have stunning flowers, a fun mix of people, and a relaxed atmosphere. They live artfully." ●

MANHATTAN TRANSFER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 171

the Boom Boom Room by those in the know—for a night of star gazing. 848 Washington St., 212-645-4646; standardhotels.com. ● Bringing British boutique-hotel charm to a quiet cobblestone street between Soho and Nolita, **The Crosby** is every bit as charming as it is chic. Bedecked with pleasantly mixed printed fabrics and copious pillows, the hotel's 86 rooms and suites over 11 floors each feel like a posh studio apartment. 79 Crosby St., 212-226-6400; firmdale.com. ● **The Cooper Square Hotel's** sleek glass tower offers a serene Modernist oasis on the edge of Manhattan's East Village. The minimally luxe rooms provide an eagle's-eye view on the coursing streets below. Secret treat: the outdoor terrace adjacent to the second floor lounge on Indian summer evenings. 25 Cooper Square, 212-475-5700; thecoopersquarehotel.com. ● For those who'd like to sample life in a rarefied slice of downtown, look no further than the **Gramercy Park Hotel**. The classic (if not always sparkling) destination was transformed in 2006 by master hotelier Ian Schrager and Julian Schnabel into an art-filled aerie. Two Lexington Ave., 212-920-3300; gramercyparkhotel.com. ●