



OPPOSITE: Damien Hirst's 1997 acrylic *Caesium Carbide 89* is the focal point of another part of the living room. The 1940s French walnut armchair is from Lorin Marsh. On the low table is a 1920s Japanese silver vase, from Naga Antiques. ABOVE: Wittels's neutral palette for the dining room gives emphasis to an oil by Robert Kelly. Chandelier, Maison Gerard. Chairs and sconces, Holly Hunt. Dakota Jackson dining table.

chrome. In this project, he created a tightly edited, contemporary setting with a strong Art Déco influence.

The walls, draperies and upholstered furniture are all beige, forming a neutral background for his clients' growing art collection. "They have a sense of modernity, but they also wanted to incorporate treasures from other periods, especially the early 20th century," he says.

Wittels's sophisticated touch is immediately apparent in the entrance, which is dominated by a red oil by Donald Judd.

"It was my intention that the color scheme remain monochromatic with the exception of the two red ottomans, in order for the art to provide the only accent color," he says. To this he added a glamorous 1940s French mahogany console with a polished-steel base, a 19th-century French mirror and a pair of silver Art Nouveau vases mounted as lamps.

The entrance opens onto a gallery, which is also the link to the living room, the dining room and the library. "I wanted guests to experience the progression of the rooms

visually as they moved through the space," Wittels says. He installed mirrored niches on both sides of the gallery fireplace to highlight a pair of early-18th-century Chinese lacquered cabinets. A dramatic black-and-white painting by Richard Serra commands the wall above the mantel. To give the traditional mantelpiece a new look, Wittels added marble and brushed-steel elements.

The floors are stained a chocolate brown "for contrast," he says. "I love the look of the neutral beige walls set off by dark floors: It's clean, crisp and

adds drama." Directly beyond the gallery is the living room, whose décor he calls "an exercise in scale and proportion." In keeping with the dramatic green and blue stripes of the Ugo Rondinone painting over a sofa, Wittels emphasized the horizontality of the room by having the furniture be low and at precisely the same height. He designed two Ruhlmann-inspired side tables to match the armrests on the sofa "so your eye is drawn straight across." Then he turned his attention to lighting. "I love the vertical play of the white-