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Rachel Bilson
WELCOMES US INTO HER LOS ANGELES LAIR

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Love Nest

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A MIDCENTURY-LEANING **MINIMALIST** MEETS A GIRL WITH **BOHO** TENDENCIES? WITH THE HELP OF INTERIOR DESIGNER **KISHANI PERERA**, ACTORS **RACHEL BILSON** AND **HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN** CREATE A HOME THAT **RADIATES** AESTHETIC HARMONY

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Rachel Bilson at her antique piano, which is topped with her beloved mermaid sculpture and a collection of framed art she selected with her boyfriend, Hayden Christensen. Dress, Isabel Marant; shoes, Chanel. Hair: Davy Newkirk for Tracey Mattingly. Makeup: Amy Nadine.

Think of Kishani Perera as a design matchmaker of sorts—one skilled enough to create common ground between two high-profile clients. "Rachel's aesthetic is girly laid-back elegance with vintage touches," says the Los Angeles–based interior designer, referring to actress Bilson, a woman known for an unerring fashion sense blending bohemian and classic influences. "Whereas Hayden"—that would be Bilson's longtime love interest, Christensen—"is much more understated." So when the couple moved into their contemporary ranch-style abode in the hills of L.A., they turned to Perera for an easy, livable interior that would be the ideal midway point for their predilections.

It was a challenge that Perera wholeheartedly embraced. "The word *eclectic* is overused these days, but my taste truly is that," the designer says. "People are complex—they're not all midcentury or bohemian, for example, so I try to find the full picture with every client. Old and new, different cultures, it's a big mixing bowl to me." This philosophy is on full display in Perera's two-and-a-half-year-old store, Rummage, where an ebonized Victorian cabinet and an antique circus mirror might live next to Italian space-age lamps and an Art Deco peacock bed frame.

After establishing an instant connection with Bilson ("she's a crazy animal person, just like me"), Perera launched into the couple's first decorating priority: the living room, the uncontested heart of the home. The expansive space, with its high ceilings, exposed white beams, and wall of windows, was in need of some serious warming up. "Rachel and Hayden had a pretty good idea of what they wanted the space to look and feel like: midcentury, loungey, and inviting," Perera says. A sprawling sectional covered in deep-teal velvet, a coffee table of reclaimed wood, and a fireplace refaced in creamy brick provided the basic elements for a warm and layered look.

Of the collaboration with Perera, the tight-lipped Bilson is uncharacteristically effusive. "It was such a pleasure working with Kishani," says the *Hart of Dixie* star. "She got a feel for our style instantly." The secret to the well-balanced mix of two strong design visions? According to Perera, it's about finding where they overlap and "keeping the focus right there in the middle." The result is a tranquil yet vibrant style sanctuary: a sweet spot if ever we've seen one. **L**

"Entertaining was a major factor in the design of the living room," Perera says. "They wanted to comfortably host lots of friends and family, and the sofa achieves that without the need for much more additional seating."

Bilson cuts a striking figure in a floor-length Isabel Marant dress and vintage coral-and-gold YSL earrings from Decades—a look that's tailor made for playing hostess at home.

Good Bones

The clean lines of mid-20th-century furniture anchor the space, enabling it to take on more textural elements. Bilson and Christensen fell in love with this vintage armchair and had it reupholstered in a navy wool with a subtle maroon stripe. As for the Lamp Works floor lamp, "they wanted something with a bit of weight—the room is so big that it eats up everything in there," Perera says. The Ralph Lauren Home rug, which Perera spotted at the Las Vegas Design Center's Safavieh showroom, is a take on the popular Beni Ourain style: "They've always been drawn to that Parker Palm Springs kind of look."

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Surface Area

"Rachel and Hayden were set on an earthy element in the room," says Perera. "She really wanted a rustic farm table. I looked everywhere: vintage shops, 1stdibs..." It wasn't until they were browsing on Etsy that they found HeirloomReclaimed, run by a Missouri-based craftsman who makes custom furniture out of wood salvaged from barns. The four-by-eight-foot table that they commissioned easily accommodates stacks of art books and impromptu bouquets, and can even be used as a low dining surface. "We got it for around $800," Perera says.

Window Display

The lack of window treatments (a design decision stipulated by the couple) means that sunlight streams unfiltered into the room, putting the objects on the glossy white console in sharp relief. The two blue drip-glaze lamps were found at vintage store 45 Three, on L.A.'s Fairfax Avenue, and paired with simple custom-made shades from the family-run Desert Shades.

"The sofa came from an inspiration deck Kishani sent us," says Bilson. "It was the perfect pop of color—just what the room needed." Velvet ikat and Aztec-inspired pillows from Lulu & Georgia add lushness and depth. Dress, Vanessa Bruno; necklace, Dannijo.

Stonework

The previous iteration of the fireplace consisted of wavy ceramic tile that drew the eye—and not in a good way. "It was the only thing you saw when you walked in the house," Perera says. "We knew it needed to be addressed immediately, since it would dictate the rest of the design." A bone-color brick veneer from Southern California company ARTO was the ideal choice: "neutral enough that it blended in with the walls but still looked sculptural and interesting."

Call it a minimal mudroom: two oatmeal-color stools serve as perches for Bilson's books and Chloé bag underneath an array of artworks sourced from local galleries.

"It's Rachel's pride and joy," says Perera of this intriguing portrait, long loved by Bilson and displayed above a vintage leather chair and side table.

Designing Duo

"It's great to collaborate with other creative minds who understand style and can think outside the box," says Kishani Perera, here with client Rachel Bilson in the living room they created together. These five L.A. decor stores are among the designer's go-to sources.

JF Chen Run by formidable dealer Joel Chen, this 34,000-square-foot gallery specializes in pieces ranging from antique Chinese porcelain to works by Donald Judd. "I shop here for almost every project," Perera says.

Inheritance "A jewel box of a store filled with tiny treasures and curiosities," including hand-hewn pitchers from Vermont and lambskin bookends by local designer Sophie Nova.

midcenturyLA "A massive warehouse full of European pieces." You'll find names such as Wegner and Wikkelsø, but also well-priced gems of unknown provenance.

Olde Good Things "You can dig up the most interesting things, from a stunning piece of architectural salvage to a turn-of-the-century light fixture."

Rummage "I hand-selected every piece and love them all dearly!"