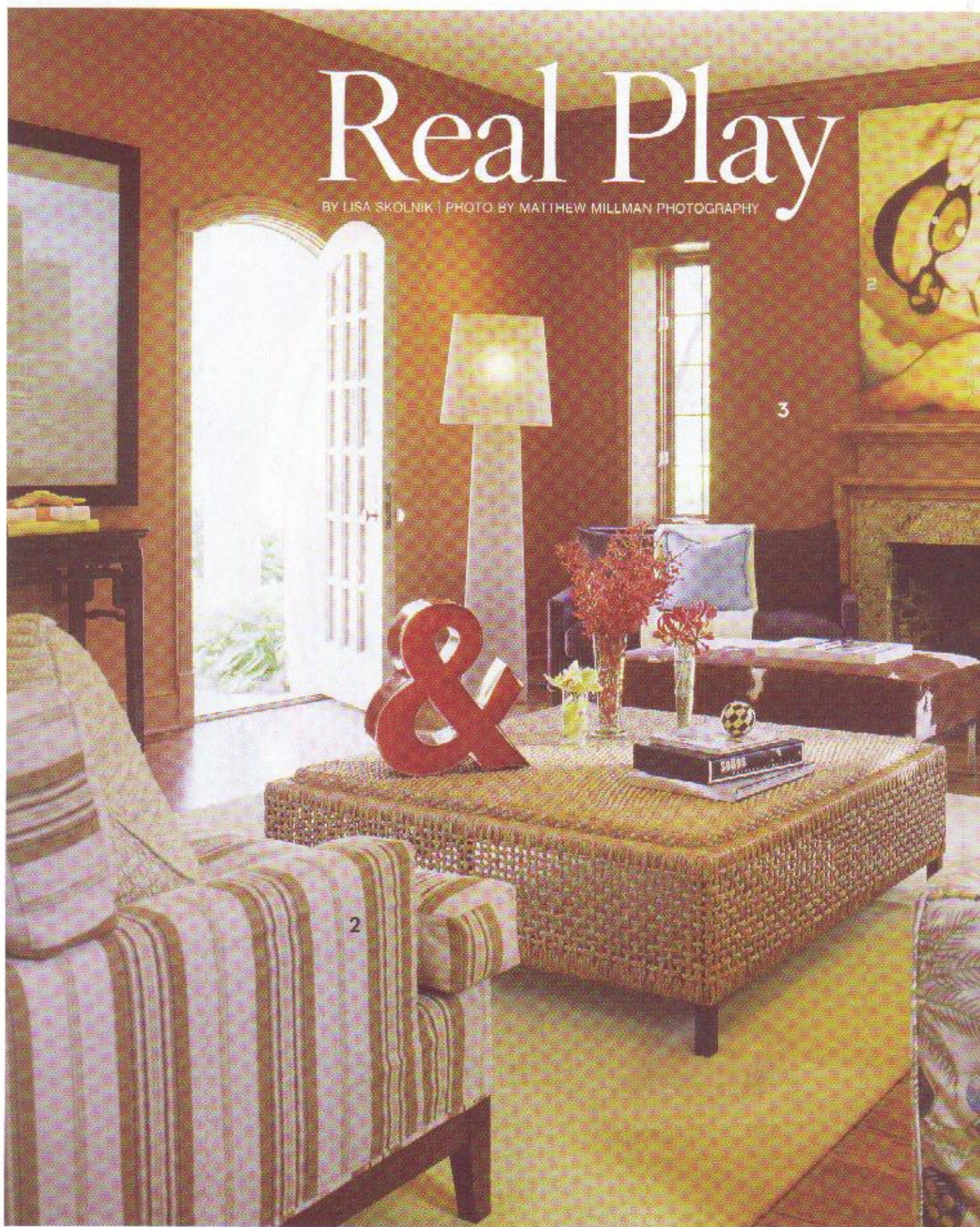
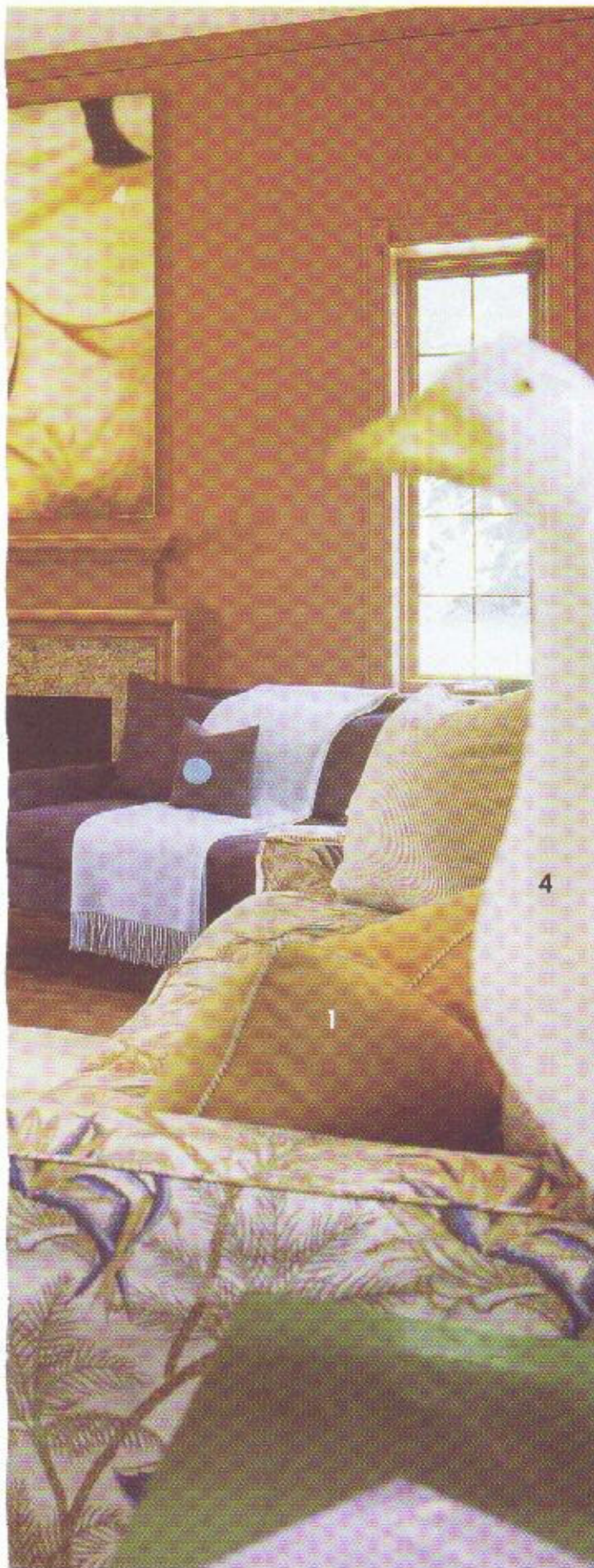


Real Play

BY LISA SKOLNIK | PHOTO BY MATTHEW MILLMAN PHOTOGRAPHY





A playroom doesn't have to play to the interests of the kids alone—especially kids on the cusp of adulthood. San Francisco interior designer Ken Fulk proved that point with this haven for a Lake Forest divorcé and his two young teens. Originally a main-level owner's suite, the space was large and formal instead of intimate and accommodating. Fulk took his inspiration from “the houses on the *Real World* sets,” transforming the room with such success that it became a hangout for everyone in the family—and all of their friends. “Playroom” was no longer the right moniker for this hangout. “They call it ‘the lounge,’” says Fulk.

1 Layout The room's three activity zones all are oriented toward the 100-inch projection screen TV. A long, all-embracing sofa and pair of outside easy chairs anchor the room, flanked at one end by a secondary seating area of two mini-loveseats in front of the fireplace and at the other end by a food service area (not shown). With a display-case-style restaurant refrigerator loaded with drinks, wire storage bins laden with candy, and a commercial popcorn machine, the space functions as a full-fledged, movie-palace snack concession, and “it's always fully stocked,” says Fulk.

2 Furnishings Oversized furniture brings intimacy to the 20-foot-by-18-foot space. The upholstered pieces are sturdy, durable, and cleanable—thanks to slipcovers (those on the sofa and easy chairs are machine washable, while the mini-loveseats' slipcovers are dry cleanable). A 5-foot-square coffee table is made of foot-friendly, washable woven willow; the carpet is a forgiving dark cream; a gigantic pair of floor lamps are crack-proof resin instead of glass; and an ottoman is covered in washable hide.

3 Color Earthy hues of beige, blue, brown, cream, and tan appear in all the upholstery fabrics; sugary wall colors (Pumpk'n Pie accented by Robin's Egg Blue in the alcoves surrounding the window frames) punch up the palette. Accessories, such as pillows and throws, embrace both hues to restate the color scheme.

4 Finishing Touches A painting by Mexican artist Adrian Procel is a significant work of art, yet “gives the room instant teen-quality attitude because it looks like Ali G,” says Fulk. “Kid-proof” qualities are countered by well-chosen accessories: a vintage, plastic, light-up goose that mocks the notion of an authentic stuffed bird that might be found in a serious study and a plastic amper-sand salvaged from an old movie sign that references the primary intent of the room—watching videos. **MH**

LISA SKOLNIK, A CHICAGO WRITER WHO SPECIALIZES IN DESIGN, IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO *MIDWEST HOME CHICAGO*.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON RESOURCES FEATURED IN THIS STORY, PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 123.