

# santa fean

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## the home issue

hilltop home, mountain dreaming, enlightened design



# Manderfield condos

old school gets new grades

by Eve Tolpa

CLARE MARAIST NEVER PLANNED on being a property developer, but that changed when the historic Manderfield School on Canyon Road began to spark her imagination. The building, designed by John Gaw Meem in 1927, had been vacant and on the market for a number of years. "I was driving by every day," says the Louisiana native, who moved to Santa Fe nearly two decades ago. "I'd redo the stucco in my mind. The next day, I'd drive by and fix the windows. After four months, I had it all done in my head."

She purchased the property with the intention of converting it into living spaces, and with the assistance of Eric Enfield of Architectural Alliance, Inc., designed five attached units and three freestanding casitas, ranging in size from roughly 1,500 to 2,600 square feet, each with a unique layout. The casitas have 15-foot ceilings, while in the main school building, expansive floor plans and stunning floor-to-ceiling windows provide flexibility of use; many of the spaces would work equally well as great rooms, bedrooms, or private art studios. Maraist is choosing the fine finishes—colors, tiles, fixtures, appliances—herself. "I'm playing with all different kinds of design schemes," she says. "I feel like a kid in a candy shop."

The development falls under the heading of adaptive reuse, which Maraist calls "recycling in its grandest form." Not only did she have to work within the existing structure and its load-bearing walls, "I did a year of due diligence," including an archaeological dig, environmental surveys, and neighborhood outreach.

Prull Custom Builders broke ground in the summer of 2014, and the first unit is expected to be completed this October. Maraist, who has been involved with every aspect of the project, even got a real estate license; she and Keller Williams Bell Tower Properties colleague Michaelann Huitfeldt are handling the listings. "It's my baby, and that's why I want to be so hands-on," says Maraist. "I designed them all as places I'd want to live. I got the opportunity to build eight versions of my dream home." **51**



KATE RUSSELL



LISA FLYNN—MILAGRO DESIGN

Clare Maraist is turning Canyon Road's Manderfield School, designed by John Gaw Meem, into roomy condos featuring tall ceilings and enormous windows.