





## An Artist's Retreat

Ashe Street sits right at the edge of Old Town. Like most of the streets in Key West, it is named for an early settler, Thomas J. Ashe, one of the island's first city engineers. This area of the island is typified by two-story, wood-frame Conch houses. It is one such house that artist Lynn Sherman and her husband, Leonard Reiss, bought several years ago.

Partially hidden by the ubiquitous palm trees and a sweet little picket fence, the entryway is set back from the sidewalk. This small separation between the house and the public thoroughfare is unusual in this part of town. Inside is a long, narrow front hallway with a distinctive high ceiling. Two guest bedrooms at the front of the house face each other across the passage. Behind one of the bedrooms is Sherman's office, with a stairway leading to the master bedroom suite. Traditional in feeling, all of these areas are in the original part of the house. But it is a new space that transforms the residence into something unexpected: a living room addition as wide as the house itself.

"The addition sold us on the house," points out Sherman. "This is where everyone gathers." The room is all white, warmed with wood accents and brown sisal carpeting and alive with accessories, art, and orchids. It is a place to settle in. The new construction is designed to make the indoors flow seamlessly into the outdoors. Glass doors on all sides open to the exterior, and the sunlit lap pool is just steps away. The surrounding vegetation filters the brilliant sunlight that positively illuminates the interior.

The house is reflective of Sherman's personality. The artist studied at the Philadelphia College of Art and at the Barnes Foundation in Pennsylvania. She spends several hours each day painting in a small studio in the back corner of the property, and her work is exhibited in galleries in Philadelphia and New Jersey and at the Lucky Street Gallery in Key West (actually located on upper Duval Street). She apprenticed with

The front of this two-story wood house is painted pale yellow. The glass door and transom window above allow light to fill the long hallway that runs through the house.



The dining table opens to seat sixteen. Mature plantings create a privacy wall around the property. Lynn Sherman's paintings hang to the left of the door. Sculptures by local artists Helen Harrison (left) and Duke Reed (right) sit on the table.

Robert Kulicke, a well-known American artist and educator specializing in still lifes, and two of his paintings hang in the guest bedroom. Sherman's works grace the walls of many Key West houses, as well as those of the Tranquility Bay Resort in Marathon, where there is a cohesive collection. "It is really exciting to see them all together," she comments.

Key West is a community of many artists, and during the winter season the art scene is ongoing. Sherman is a regular at local gallery openings and strong supporter of the other artists on the island. "The art scene here is

very diversified and exciting," Sherman notes.

Another of her talents is interior design.

"I especially love to create tablescapes," she says of the interesting arrangements of objects, including Gae Aulenti lamps that look like palm trees. As an artist and designer, she has an eye for what works, and the eclectic collection of art and sculpture gives the interior spaces character, adding excitement and interest without taking away from the casual living so treasured in Key West. "We have fun here," Lynn says. "And that's what Key West is all about."









The living room at the back of the house is filled with collections that Lynn Sherman and Leonard Reis accumulated on their travels. Art books are casually piled on the coffee table, which is flanked by two white sofas and Lynn's treasured Aulenti lamps. The underside of the roof overhang is painted turquoise to reflect the color of the pool.





Lynn's painting studio is a charming little structure at the back of the property down a short winding pathway from the pool.



A wicker dining chair  
provides a private  
seating area for an  
at-home breakfast.

