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elanie Werner's dream come true is tucked away on tree-shaded Beaver Street in Sewickley.

It's not the home, although the English Romantic Tudor is the stuff dreams are made of. Designed by Pittsburgh's Devlin Architecture, the nearly year-old, 11,000-square-foot house, crafted of hand-molded brick and limestone, replaced another Tudor structure that had deteriorated beyond repair. The new home blends into the neighborhood as though it's been there for decades.

It's the fine art gallery — dubbed Galerie Werner — that sits above the home's two-car garage, neatly hidden from passersby.

"Since I was 8 or 9 years old, I wanted to be involved in the art world," says Werner, a former advertising/marketing specialist. "Once my daughters were in school, I knew I could make the gallery work — if I kept the business separate from my family life."

Gallery visitors enter through an oak-paneled foyer and walk along a cloisters-like passage, not catching even the slightest glimpse of the living quarters.

Aside from two understated contemporary tables and chairs, decorative touches are few, allowing viewers to focus on European oil paintings from the 18th- to mid-20th centuries adorning the walls. A multi-pane clerestory runs the length of the Douglas fir-trussed vaulted ceiling, gently showering the 750-square-foot space with diffused natural light.

From a recessed plasma television screen displaying additional art, to a custom-built hutch that doubles as a wet bar, the details reveal careful planning.

In contrast to the gallery, which hosts preview receptions for larger groups, a ground-level office welcomes more intimate meetings. There, Werner privately consults with clients at a slender writing table topped by a hand-colored red leather inset and accompanied by a pair of Greek-inspired, red sable-upholstered beech lounge chairs. All come from the Baker Furniture collection of Thomas Pheasant, who worked closely with Werner to create this masterpiece.

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Above: Melanie Werner on the wrought iron and oak spiral staircase that connects her office to a mezzanine library.

Below: A Christian Liagre Madagascar ebony round table accents a pair of governor chairs from the collection of French designer Phillippe Hurel in the gallery.

Opposite page: Melanie Werner's English Romantic Tudor home in Sewickley is also the home of her art gallery — Galerie Werner.



# AT HOME

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Behind the office's raised mahogany paneling, doors leading to the living quarters seamlessly blend into the wood's dark, rich grain. Built-in bookcases along two walls hold art reference books. A 21-foot window stretches from floor to ceiling and brightens the space when the plush velvet burgundy drapes are drawn. A wrought iron and oak staircase with a brass handrail spirals to the mezzanine library, where husband Eric's *National Geographic* collection rests on shelves beneath a coffered ceiling with handset leather inlays. And behind yet another concealed door is the home's master bedroom.

"I wanted to have the world's shortest commute," Werner says.

Indeed, her morning stride time is minimal. But several times a year, she jets to France to scour the continent in search of art for her clients. During those expeditions, Werner shares a Left Bank flat with her two children, who have been her traveling companions since they were infants. While juggling a rewarding home life with a fulfilling business venture can be demanding, the rewards are worthwhile.

"There are easier ways to make money," Werner says. "But working from home allows me to be with my family, travel and do what I like best. I can't think of a more beautiful and enjoyable life." **F**

For more information about Galerie Werner, call 412-716-1390 or e-mail [Melanie@GalerieWerner.com](mailto:Melanie@GalerieWerner.com).

Top right: A trio of standing bronze figures by Hungarian artist Laszlo Taubert grace the American walnut pedestal table.

Bottom right: A contemporary sofa provides the backdrop for a pair of Puiforcat "Pompei Rouge" coffee cups and silver creamer set on a red-lacquered serving tray from the Piper-Heidsieck champagne company in Werner's office.

Bottom left: Floral connectors hold the framework for the gallery track lighting while a Stephen McKay hanging shade provides additional illumination.

