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Cerulean chic reigns supreme in this funky remix of an architectural classic



interiors **GRAHAM VEYSEY, GOOD BONES DESIGN** interview **RIANN SMITH**
photographs **TRISHA ESTILL** art direction **AMY VISCHIO**

How did you meet the client?

I met the client a little over two years ago through a mutual friend and we instantly clicked. Maybe it was because we're both from the Midwest...those ties can be pretty strong! She wanted to put her personal stamp on the home so it better represented her and her family. I could tell she was a warm and open-minded person who wasn't afraid to take risks. The house itself is classically traditional, and our mission was to make the décor funky and fun. The juxtaposition of classic structure with edgier style makes it all feel really fresh and inviting.

What is the history of the home?

James Gamble Rogers built the house in 1920. He was a well-known architect in his day. He designed buildings for several universities, such as Yale, Columbia and Northwestern, along with residences and churches.

Did you make any architectural changes?

No, it has good bones, so we wanted to let the house be the house architecturally and add in contemporary elements that she loves. The overall flow is a true reflection of how the homes were built back in the day. It has a cozy-sized kitchen and sprawling entertaining spaces. We injected her personality into every space without changing the structure or flow. The millwork and dentil moldings in the more formal areas are original to the house, and we didn't want to alter that. Funnily enough, her contractor Frank Uskowski had to repair some of the moldings, and the only way to actually replicate the dentil detail was to use actual marbles!

How involved was the client in the decorating process?

She's really interested in finding pieces that speak to her, but overall, she didn't want to drive the bus. She's not scared to take a chance. It's almost like the wackier we would get, the more she'd be into it.

The dining room is Old World meets mod. opposite: A painted chevron floor livens up the entry. "We found these crazy alabaster and acid green lamps on 1stdibs.com and paired them with a faux bois console by Arte," says Veysey. Acid green and organic forms repeat in the vestibule's Merian Palm wallpaper by Timorous Beasties.



Vintage Venetian-style mirrors, bone-inlay chests from Emporium Home and lamps by Vaughan give the living room quiet glam, while Sandie the sheep looks on. "The whole vignette looks very 40s," says Veysey. "Often when you try to put a lamp in front of a mirror, they fight. Here, they give each other space. You can sit it up or off to the side."





A pair of chairs by Palecek upholstered in Holly Hunt's indoor-outdoor bouclé-like fabric and a trio of tables designed by Good Bones add geometric flair. opposite: The Emil Lukas artwork at right is entirely made of string. The origami table is by Bolier & Co., and Good Bones designed the deco-inspired rug by J.D. Staron.

Give me an example of her fearlessness.

In the living room for instance, the fireplace is way at the front, but there was plenty of room in the back for additional seating, so I was trying to figure out a way to join the spaces. So I designed what we call The Giant Sombrero. It's basically a massive settee that sits in the center of the room. I modeled it off of William Haines furniture from the 1940s. It feels rich and fun, and it's a great congregation place. A lot of that fearlessness comes from trust. She knows that I will make decisions in her best interest, even if they seem a bit "out there" at first.

What was your starting point for the living room?

The walls. They were originally a flat, eggshell gray, and the mill-work was a satin off-white. The goal was to make it feel rich and cozy because it's such a big room. The walls needed to have depth and drama. So we went dark on both the trim and walls. We did not use regular old blue paint; we had to add some funk.

It almost looks like denim.

Yes! It is a strié-wash over the walls. So when you're in the room, it creates this texture that gives the wall movement. It reads like watercolor.

Blue is a constant theme throughout this home.

Yeah, blue tends to be a big theme throughout Good Bones Design [laughs]. I love every color of the rainbow, but that one has me hook, line and sinker. My client was also open to blue, and it became the thread we pulled through nearly every room. Clearly the living room is overloaded with peacock blue, but then in the dining room we added the accents of cornflower blue, and in the family room we went peacock again but in a grass cloth with navy and aqua. Whatever space you're in, you're getting a little hit of it. Or a huge hit! For me, blue is my ultimate neutral.





"This house isn't a museum...
it's really **DESIGNED FOR LIVING.**"

—GRAHAM VEYSEY



above and opposite: In the sunroom, a favorite gathering spot for the family during winter, Restoration Hardware outdoor furniture gets a lift with high-gloss black paint. The zebra pillows are from Schumacher, and the multicolor pillows are by Missoni. The bride's veil stools and the two-tier table are by Phase Design. A vintage horn coffee table from Circa Who is topped with handmade baskets found by the client on a trip to Morocco.

It was a bold choice to do both the living and family rooms in blue. I'm never afraid to use similar colors in living spaces. It's about creating a thread. It can feel dated to have "the red room" or "the yellow room." These rooms are distinct because the living room has a luxe French 1940s vibe, while the family room feels casual and inviting. I wanted the family to feel cozy and relaxed in this room since it's the hub of the home.

Was wallpapering the family room's ceiling your first decision for the room?

It was the last, actually. Once we painted the trim and put the Philip Jeffries grass cloth on the walls, the ceiling felt so bare because every other surface had been touched except for that one. It was screaming for something. The client isn't scared of pattern or color so we put David Hicks's La Fiorentina wallpaper by Lee Jofa up

there. It's bright and cheerful to look at but pulls from the same color palette we'd woven throughout the room. It also plays off of the J.D. Staron rug. We went with a Moroccan Berber-style rug as far as the texture, and we put a really contemporary geometric pattern on top of it and dyed it fun colors—deep Hague blue and turquoise seafoam blue.

What guides you design-wise as you pull a room together?

What I like to do in every room, if I can, is create a push and a pull. Masculine and feminine is a big theme I like to play with. I love masculine details to be offset by some sweet details. For instance, I really like all the geometric pieces we used in the living room, like the two Palecek wood-backed chairs and the Bolier origami-esque coffee table, because they have a masculine feel. They look significant. But throwing in pops of purple and curvaceous



A cornflower blue mirror from Color & Mirror flanked by vintage sconces from 1stdibs.com makes the dining room's de Gournay wallpaper sing. Groovy vintage chairs surrounding a custom contemporary table nestle in an alpaca rug by J.D. Staron. The chandelier is by chandelierfinelighting.com.

"Everything is
A LITTLE OFF, but that's
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"I was pushing for deep blue, but once the old kitchen wallpaper came off, the original pale green color of the cabinets got better against the handmade subway tile," says Veysey. "It looks great with the brass accents. We ran the tile floor to the ceiling wherever we could to give it a nice reflected surface." The globes are from Lumfardo Luminaires; the chairs are from Restoration Hardware.



A pink hide rug by Landry & Arcari adds feminine flair to the wood-paneled study and texture beneath a pedestal table by La Lune Collection. The mantel and shelves are home to an eclectic collection of curiosities; the Mickey Mouse phone is the client's from childhood. opposite: A vintage desk and raspberry Eames management chair by Hive Modern create a clean-lined counterpoint to the glam gilded mirror by Made Goods and larger-than-life painting by Ryan Sullivan.

upholstery makes it more feminine. In the sunroom off of the living room, we offset the heavy black lacquered sofas and chevron hide rug with deep fuchsia velvet on the stools and swivel chairs. It keeps everything from being too serious. I'm serious about the design process but I don't think the design has to be serious. I want to deliver my clients a fun, approachable, livable, well-edited home. I want them to end up with the home that they never knew they wanted. I want it to surprise and delight.

Speaking of not being serious, what was your quirkiest find?

Definitely the brass-and-shearling sheep I came across at Brimfield, an antique flea market. We knew instantly this was perfect for her living room. I texted the client a photo and while waiting for a response, someone who had seen it prior came back and said they wanted to buy it. Luckily she texted back "YES!!!" in the nick of time, so it was ours. We had no room left in our U-Haul driving home, so she sat in between us in the front seat. We named her Sandie. She is heavy but moves around the room like a party guest. Sometimes Sandie's by the fireplace, sometimes she's over in the corner.

How did you choose the art?

This is my client's domain. She finds incredible pieces and has a ball doing it. The geometric squares-within-squares by Leo Villareal is my favorite piece of video art I think I've ever seen. It pulsates and changes color and size. It's so beautiful, and in the room the colors look electric. The massive piece on the opposite wall is by Emil Lukas. When you look at it up close, the entire thing is made of string. The funny thing about the Edie Nadelhaft pill sculptures in the dining room is that I saw these on 1stdibs.com and knew they'd be hysterical for her. It's hard to see, but they each have a funny abbreviation, like LMAO or WTF. A week later, in the middle of one of our meetings, she says, "Wait, Graham, you have to check these things out," and she pulls up the exact same pills on her computer. Needless to say, we were on the same wavelength.

What was the evolution of the dining room?

The dining room already had the de Gournay wallpaper. It's beyond stunning. But I wanted to push against the traditional aspect so I said, "Let's shock it with some bright blue," which probably didn't come as a surprise! We started with blue drapes by Maharam and



Ottomans swathed in yellow hide by Kyle Bunting brighten the room's moody blues. The sofa is by Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, and the chair and ottoman are from Suite NY. "The whole family fights over this chair, but the winner is usually their dog, Birdie." The yellow pillows and blue geometric pillows are from Flock; the blue cross pillow is by Wisteria. The table by Rotsen was a labor of love. "End grains of wood were chopped into little pieces to make a square table. We bleached and whitewashed it then gave it a natural stain. It fits together like a jigsaw puzzle."



found this fabulous mohair fabric called Palermo by Schumacher for the dining chairs. After that, it was a patient wait for the perfect chairs to upholster and finally, this midcentury set appeared through a vintage dealer I work with in Texas. The room is a mix of extremely contemporary, vintage and Old World. Everything is a little off, but that's what makes it all work.

The study is a real color riot. What made you "think pink?"

The millwork in this room is masculine so I wanted to tone that

down, and what better way than pink? The vintage glass-and-brass desk I found on Chairish and then had the drawers repainted pink. I liked adding a sweetness to the modern desk. What sealed the deal was when the Ryan Sullivan painting found its home in the office. It has pink but also shows threads of a rich blue. It's so monumental and bold. I'm glad we had sourced a vintage glass-and-brass desk so that your eye would travel past it and see the art. The brass and gold accents have a modern feel to keep it from feeling too traditional. The client actually brought home the brass disk from her travels



A deco-chic J.D. Staron rug and playful David Hicks ceiling pattern are softened by curtains by Pindler & Pindler with Maharam wool fabric and trim by Samuel & Sons. Soulful touches come in the form of a painted portrait collection and family photographs. The end tables are by Noir Furniture.





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The pale gray master bedroom is a study in serenity. The bedside lamp is by Hwang Bishop, the vintage chairs are in Rogers & Goffigon fabric and the mirror is by Anthropologie. opposite: A coffee table by Glas Italia anchors the Hex light by Resident Studio. A vintage sofa and chairs covered in Designers Guild wool create a plush cocoon with custom pillows in Schumacher linen and Samuel & Sons trim. The pear-shaped floor lamp is by Arteriors.


and we knew instantly that it needed to go up on the wall! We wanted to let the majority of the herringbone floors show though so we used a pink hide area rug from Landry & Arcari. Again, I go back to the push and the pull, but the pink hide is a contrast in and of itself.

What is that secret lair off of the master bedroom?

We call this the "wind down room," or the "wine down room" as the case may be! It's the room where they can cuddle up and watch a show. Those vintage chairs are some of my favorite chairs I have ever come across. When I found them they were broken and upholstered in some pretty bad fabric. I'm surprised my client didn't run for the hills when I presented them to her...but she saw beyond the terrible upholstery and gave it a shot. The chairs were reupholstered

in a Designers Guild wool flannel that we used on the sofa. We used the same rugs here and in the master bedroom. The hexagonal light and the coffee table added some fun geometry.

The coffee table is like one giant, chic Lego.

My office thought I was losing my mind when I told them I fell in love with an acid yellow coffee table! But against all of the soft textures, it just works. We originally played around with the ottoman idea, but she wanted a table she could easily wipe down if there were spills. This house isn't a museum...it's really designed for living. 

RESOURCES

Interior design: Good Bones Design by Graham Veysey, Greenwich; 203-340-9147; goodbonesdesign.com