

DESIGN IN MIND

In New York, interior design is about creating drama and excitement. It's about using trade secrets and scoring the perfect find to add that touch of sex appeal. Here, the local talent shares how it's done

| By *Sophie Donelson, Melissa Feldman and Saxon Holt*

| Photography by *Gregg Delman, Evan Sung and Ben Peiser*



LEADING MAN
Multiple-award-winning designer William Sofield, here in his Lafayette Street studio, believes design shouldn't just look good, it should live well.

WILLIAM SOFIELD

Winning this year's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Award for interior design wasn't an easy task for William Sofield. "I gathered my life's work in a brutally short period of time," he says. That life's work includes boutiques for Gucci, Tom Ford and Bottega Veneta, as well as a Bel-Air house he's currently designing around an A-list art collection. "It's an intense project," admits Sofield, who often finds décor elements while shopping in the West Village. One of his favorite places in the area is Aedes De Venustas, which specializes in home fragrances from around the world. Aedes De Venustas, 9 Christopher St., 212.206.8674

DEBUT

MARISA MARCANTONIO

According to Stylebeat blogger Marisa Marcantonio, the decorator's name on everyone's lips this fall is Martyn Lawrence-Bullard, one of the tippy-top-tier designers whose antics are being chronicled for a Bravo reality show airing this winter. And now the Rug Company, known for its select partnerships (Sir Paul Smith, David Rockwell), recently debuted a Lawrence-Bullard rug called Mamounia. Run your toes across its silky cut-velvet grid while watching Bravo, and you'll almost feel like you're partying with starlets in Marrakech. martynlawrencebullard.com



LOUNGE ACT Maria Pergay's Banquette Brique, made of nicked-aluminum-cast bricks, bronze, stainless steel and leather.

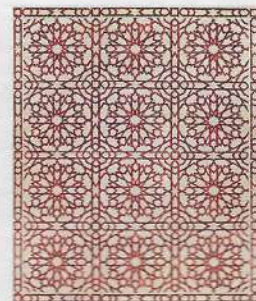
ROBERT STILIN "I use a lot of 18th- and 19th-century pieces in my work, it's fun to mix in 20th-century furniture from **Demisch Danant**," says the designer. Robert Stilin says the gallery that has become the city's top source for wildly creative works. And its new website is now

disseminating expertise far beyond the shop's Chelsea walls, offering designer biographies replete with documentation and images. "They carry collectible-level objects of incredible quality and craftsmanship, and also livable furniture that feels fresh and new." 542 W. 22nd St., 212.989.5750, demischdanant.com



BROOKS ATWOOD

"Amanda Mitchell is a perpetual trendsetter in all things green," says Brooks Atwood, designer and architect with Pod Design + Media. "She's one with the dirt." Since opening **Jungle Design** in 2008, Mitchell has helped transform New York's rooftops with rare and near-extinct plants she sources from Long Island growers. "With native plants, the bugs know each other," Mitchell says. "If we plant a blueberry shrub in Manhattan, and there's another within 5,000 feet, the bees will know to propagate it." 61 Kent Ave., Brooklyn;



SPOTLIGHT



BACHMAN CLEM

Brit Tom Dixon has applied his design talent to all forms of furniture and has found a particularly bright spot with lamps and pendants. His metallic Void lamp, for example, "gives off the most seductive light," says Manhattan-based interior designer Bachman Clem, who used the piece for a project. "And its form is exquisite. It's timeless." Fans of those Space Age-feeling lights should check out Dixon's newest gems, a series of glass-pendant lamps with industrial overtones. The petite fixtures arrive stateside mid-month. \$310 each. abchome.com



RING OF FIRE Elena Colombo's nest of cast bronze branches took more than four months to create in her Brooklyn

TONY INGRAO When former advertising film director Elena Colombo presented her fire-bowl idea to hotelier André Balazs in 2002, he placed an order for his trendy Sunset Beach resort—and her burgeoning company, **Fire Features**, took off. Colombo's latest commission

is a one-of-a-kind bronze inspired by an osprey nest. Decorator Tony Ingrao ordered the \$95,000 work of art for a client's pool in Southampton. "The nest will be in good company," Ingrao says, "surrounded by a de Kooning and a Calder." firefeatures.com

STEVEN LEARNER

"I starting using **R 20th Century** for vintage pieces, but now I've purchased everything from organic-looking Jeff Zimmerman ceiling fixtures to pieces by Brazilian designer Joaquim Tenreiro for residential projects," says architect and interior designer Steven Learner. "They have impeccable displays, and I like the new talent they're showing." The downtown showroom is filled with the collectible works of established designers, and co-proprietor Zesty Meyers has assembled a small stable of younger artists to produce ambitious site-specific works—like David Wiseman's porcelain blossoming branches for the Dior flagship in Shanghai. 82

R GANG R 20th Century owners Evan Snyderman,



THE MANN

his work, Phoenix
ve and architect
id Mann says,
is not always easy,
it's sometimes
fun, but I do
every minute
the process."



DAVID MANN "The new architectural moves are pared down and discreet," says architect David Mann, principal of MR Architecture + Decor, referring to his design approach. While residential projects are his mainstay, fashion boutiques like Christian Dior, Tory Burch and Trina Turk have all become part of Mann's minimalist oeuvre. His recent shopping list includes Jim Zivic's Coal table (ralphpucci.net), an Eero Saarinen Tulip occasional table (knoll.com)



SERGIO MERCADO "I love the detail of the arm and how it engages the back and the seat," designer Sergio Mercado says of Poliform's Soho sofa by Paolo Piva. "This makes it an ideal piece to float in a room." Prices available upon request. 150 E. 58th St. 212.421.1800. poliformusa.com

ONS



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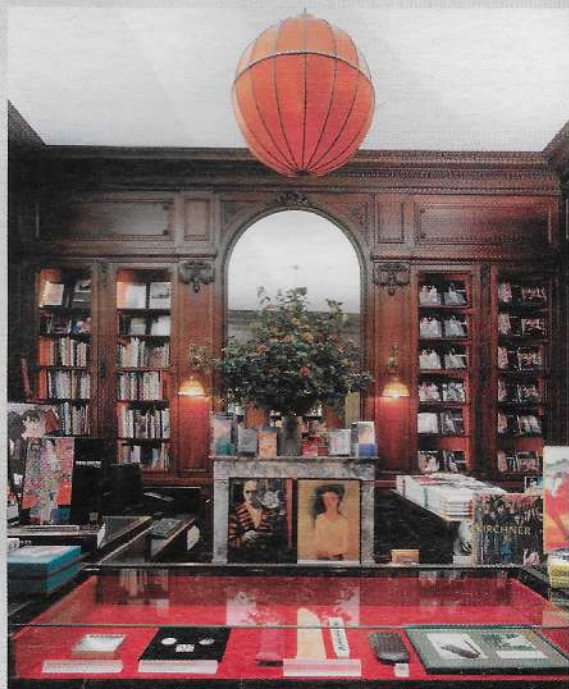
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MODEL STUDENT Laura Kirar's design bent is informed by her sculpture studies at Chicago's Art Institute.

LAURA KIRAR After leaving Ralph Lauren Home, designer Laura Kirar started her own interior-design firm. She now has product licenses with Baker furniture, Ann Sacks tiles and Arteriors Home accessories. But Kirar

has a down-to-earth take on her success: "I'm a struggling gardener stuck in the concrete jungle," she says. "I recently subscribed to the Manhattan-based **H. Bloom** for a weekly delivery of elegant, seasonal flowers." hblooming.com



FOREIGN RELATIONS Austrian art and Viennese coffee come together at Neue Galerie.

AMBRA MEDDA

Not only is Neue Galerie the hottest spot in the city to view early-20th-century German and Austrian art and design, its bookstore and café draw tastemakers like Ambra Medda, the co-founder of Design Miami. Fall exhibitions at Neue include sculptures by Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, opening in September, and colorful postcards by Wiener Werkstätte from the Leonard A. Lauder Collection, debuting in October. 1048 Fifth Ave., 212.628.6200, neuegalerie.org

EDITORS' PICK

In *American Fashion Designers at Home*, Rima Suqi takes readers into the private quarters of Ralph Lauren, Donna Karan and 100 other members of the Council of Fashion Designers of America.

Aside from coveting J. Crew creative director Jenna Lyons's closet, the author relished having Selima Salaun and Peter Som fire up the stoves for her in their respective



FASHION HOUSE Donna Karan's guest home in Parrot Cay, Turks & Caicos.

was Isaac Manevitz's collection of Memphis Furniture (no relation to the city). The Memphis Group drew inspiration from Art Deco, Pop Art and modernism—which is not so different from what

KEVIN CAULFIELD

"A Z table has a dynamic presence, but it's also petite, which makes it a beautiful accent piece that doesn't take away from other design elements in the room," says Kevin Caulfield, an associate interior designer for the Rockwell Group. Hellman-Chang's angular accessory comes covered in purple crystals and sells for \$8,500. Adds Caulfield, "If Nakashima were designing today, I think he'd be creating similar pieces." 304 E. 20th St., Suite LF, 212.875.0424, hellman-chang.com



LETTER OF INTENT Sparkling Swarovski



SELLERS' CELLAR Dowd and Myers (left) at the unit that stores their fa

MICHAEL WHITEMORE Mike Myers and Mary Dowd are auction-house proprietors who summer in the New York City area and winter in Florida, where their Myers Fine Art auctions draw global dealers. "They have a great eye for everything from Americana and folk art to jewelry and prominent antiques dealer Michael Whitemore." The Hamptons—which Dowd says is "filled with sophisticated New Yorkers who know where to shop"—was once a stomping ground for artists like Pollack and his peers. The couple regularly captures the estates of East