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# Home & Garden

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## INTERIOR DESIGN



## Details, details

Wallpapered ceilings and painted floors steal the spotlight at 2011 Decorator Showcase

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SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

There are many rites of spring — the start of baseball season and high school prom, for example. For design devotees, spring is synonymous with the San Francisco Decorator Showcase ([www.decoratorshowcase.org](http://www.decoratorshowcase.org)).

An annual fundraiser for University High School's financial aid program, the month-long event offers a chance to experience the work of established and emerging designers and artisans, as well as pick up some decorating pointers.

Judging from the more than two dozen spaces in this year's showcase, walls, ceilings and floors are apparently having a moment.

*Showcase continues on N4*

In Kathleen Navarra's living room, damask-style wallpaper lines the ceiling; the molding is accented with grosgrain ribbon studded with nail heads.



Grant K. Gibson covered the dining room walls in graphic hemp and had octagons stenciled onto the floor. The table is painted in a faux walnut burl.

FROM THE COVER



# Finished to a high gloss

Showcase from page N1

ment. In its 34th year, an appropriate subtitle might be: "The importance of surfaces."

In the entry of the Pacific Heights residence, after smoothing out the texture on the walls, decorative painter Willem Racké applied glazes in "rich tones of ochre and caramel with hints of Venetian red," he said. "Then we sprayed on many coats of lacquer, which were sanded between each coat to create a beautiful high-gloss finish."

Leigh Edwards devised the design for the entry. The contemporary art by San Francisco artists offsets the classic Italianate architecture of the 8,000-square-foot 1928 mansion.

To the left of the entry, in Grant K. Gibson's dining room, the floors make a bold statement: The wood planks were

sanded, painted with four coats of white deck paint (great for high-traffic areas), and then stenciled with large-scale octagons in black.

**Fog rolls in**

The graphite hemp cloth on the walls "adds depth," Gibson explained, noting that the hue "reminded me of the afternoon fog rolling in, in the nearby Presidio." He injected vibrancy in his palette with Louis XVI-style chairs upholstered in Kelly green leather. A 4-by-8-foot brushed brass Lindsey Adelman chandelier introduces a modern industrial edge, while the table represents a clever technique: a large piece of natural burl wood proved too difficult to source, so Gibson commissioned Katherine Jacobus to faux-paint walnut burl on a Parsons table fabricated by Berger Design Build.



Jeff Schlarb and Lisa Bakamis split one room into two bedrooms with identical floor plans and furnishings in different palettes. A cutout allows visitors to see the full effect.

In the adjacent kitchen, Tish Keys also incorporated textured gray wallpaper (charcoal grass cloth) and a geometric shape (oversize octagon polished nickel knobs — they're actually door knobs — that sparkle against the crisp white cabinetry).

Brian Dittmar turned an alcove next to the kitchen into a cookbook nook with shelving for culinary tomes, as well as a lounge chair and petite

1930s secretary desk. The walls and ceilings are swathed in a cream linen-textured wallpaper — an impressive feat considering the many awkward angles in the space.

The living room's traditional environs were made fresh by Kathleen Navarra — courtesy of modern furnishings, as well as pops of pink (a bench Navarra designed) and green (wing chairs by Dennis & Leen). The striped chairs surround-

ing an Ironies table also enliven the space. The ceiling is lined in a damask-style wallpaper, and the molding is accented with 1½-inch grosgrain ribbon and nail heads — a simple yet stylish decorating idea well worth borrowing.

**Artwork prominent**

Artwork plays a prominent role in Navarra's design, such as a portrait of the Marchesa Balbi, an oil painting by Terry St.

John above the fireplace, and a Stephen De Staebler bronze sculpture on the terrace.

Basements can be dark and dingy, but not in the showcase. Jeannie Praise fancied a craft room in various shades of red — including wallpapers with faux bois and foliage motifs. Curtains with a fun circle pattern and a chevron rug provide even more visual punch. A banquet for projects. *Showcase continues on N5*

**2011 San Francisco Decorator Showcase**

Through May 30 at 2950 Vallejo St., San Francisco. Hours: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Tues., Wed., Sat.; until 7 p.m. Thurs. and Fri.; 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday and Memorial Day. Closed Mon., except Memorial Day. Tickets available at the door; general admission, \$30; seniors, \$25. [www.decoratorshowcase.org](http://www.decoratorshowcase.org)

Photos by Craig Lee / Special to The Chronicle

## FROM THE COVER



In the kitchen, Tish Keys incorporated textured gray wallpaper and a geometric shape (oversize octagon polished nickel knobs) that sparkle against the white cabinetry. A clock is inlaid into the tile behind the stove.

## Showcase from page N4

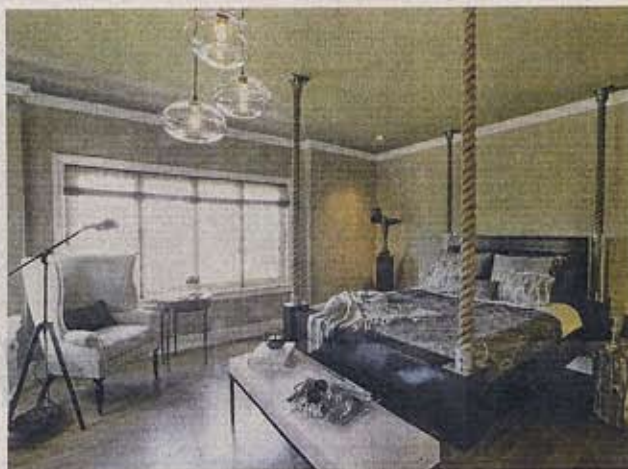
low table with a chalkboard top, and closet-cum-reading spot could keep kids occupied for hours.

The calming gray, cream and camel scheme in the nanny's suite designed by Emily Taylor is a stark contrast to the craft room. A bathroom wall composed of smooth, white rocks beckons visitors to reach out and touch it.

Alison Davin's space was once a walk-in safe with a concrete interior. Now it's a Champagne cellar enveloped in reclaimed wire-brushed oak. Bench seating and a buffet are functional additions, while a neon sign that reads "ssissippi" inserts whimsy.

Upstairs, on the second floor, Matt Murphy's master bedroom is an homage to mid-century designer Tommi Parzinger. "Many of the pieces in the room are custom Parzinger designs, including the vanity and vanity chair, and the four-poster bed," said Murphy, who also integrated his own designs (the rug, vanity mirror, ceramic lamps, window benches).

In the library, Heather Hillard retained the wood-paneled walls, which had been treated years ago with a green glaze, she said. (Decorative painter Racké touched up some areas.) Custom pieces dot the room, including the round ottoman with



embroidered band, wool rug with topstitched leather border, and benches upholstered in horse hair. (Wallpaper also makes a cameo here, in the back of the built-in bookcases.)

## A trip to the bedroom

On the top floor, Green Couch Inc.'s bedroom, dubbed "Two Sides to Every Story" is, well, trippy. Designers Jeff Schlarb and Lisa Bakamis extended an existing wall to divide the room into two spaces with identical floor plans, furnishings, patterns and textures — right down to the leather tiles underfoot. The palette, however, differs; one side subtle, the other colorful. A "mirror" on the wall — a cut-out with a frame around it — allows visi-

tors to achieve the full effect of Schlarb and Bakamis' vision.

In Philpotts Interiors' tribal-influenced rumpus room, the standout furnishings include a quartet of De La Espada chairs whose design evokes a bird cage, and what designer Jonathan Staub referred to as a "sculptural hammock"; the metal Satala lounge by Aqua Creations; one end mounts to a wall, while the other end rests on a rubber ball.

The top floor is also home to the penthouse. The en suite bath by Mark Newman features limestone tiles carved with a leaf motif for tonal and textural contrasts. "I worked with Willem Racké to develop the concept," said Newman, "and we decided to go

with a stenciled Venetian plaster to achieve the best effect." The hand-finished teak vanity, with its half-inch domes, brings to mind a giant jewel box.

Just a few months ago, the penthouse bedroom was pink with white garden trellises. Cathleen Gouveia has transformed it into "an urban organic oasis in a loft-like setting," she said. Since the room lacked a closet, she designed built-in millwork that Mitchel Bertram executed. The walls were refinished with a "glass-like form of Venetian plaster that adds modern sheen."

The panoramic views from many of the showcase's rooms are spectacular. So it's no surprise that the vista — encompassing the Golden Gate Bridge, Marin Head-



Photos by Craig Lee / Special to The Chronicle

Cathleen Gouveia's loft-like penthouse bedroom, left, with suspended bed positioned to take in a view of the Golden Gate Bridge. Above: Willem Racké's lacquered walls in the mansion's foyer.

lands, Palace of Fine Arts and Alcatraz — served as Gouveia's inspiration. Echoing the suspension of the bridge, she conceived a bed that "in essence," she said, "will float in the space as it defies gravity while hanging from nautical

ropes."

She added that the bed is positioned "to take in the view of the Golden Gate Bridge by day or by night." How quintessentially San Francisco.

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