

By Andrew Suvalsky

THE ART OF THE REAL

What my clients want is authenticity—décor that says, “This is home”

PHOTO BY MARK BYRON

In this loft in the SoHo section of Manhattan, soft, semi-sheer draperies spanning the full width and height of a dramatically scaled living-room window wall become the dominant elements against which classically arranged and comfortable furnishings, in cobalt and cream, find a natural home.

The interior designer’s job is to create art from mortar and brick. Few other professionals have the chance to work on projects that can give their clients such lasting satisfaction. Your home is your castle, and it is the designer’s very agreeable job to turn your castle into a palace.

Whether I’m asked to do interior designing for a full architectural-gut rehab treatment or I’m called in on a less extensive project, my starting point is always the same: I sit down with my clients and ask them about their lifestyle; then I discover what, visually, pleases them most. Then I have the information I need in order to design a unique interior—one that I hope will be both aesthetically pleasing and authentic . . . a place where they truly feel at home.

First I set out to identify a key element or signature idea. I start with the obvious (favorite colors or styles, or the requirement that the décor be built around beloved artworks or antiques). After I've received that input, I edit the ideas down to those I consider workable. The final décor must, of course, reflect the clients' expressed desires about how they want to experience their home, but in addition it should have a strong artistic concept.

Working in a profession that is rooted in art, I have the enviable pleasure of identifying and working with beautiful objects and elements (and the talented craftspeople who make them) to create beautiful, living environments. My designs are intended for the pleasure of my clients and the people with whom they share their homes. And so I create spaces that are to be actively used and enjoyed. Sofas are meant to be sat on, TVs watched, beds rested in.

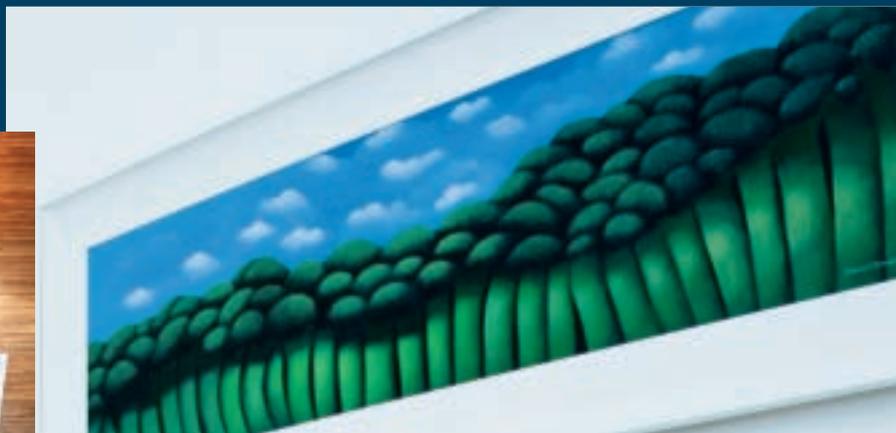
Style is a combination of vision, artistry, and, at times, fearlessness. Real style is inimitable. Therefore, I believe, it is far less important to think in terms of a "look" or to adhere to labels like "traditional" or "modern" than it is to work from a strong personal philosophy that can be applied to all projects. I look at each element—from the fringe on a pillow to the largest artwork hung on the walls—as pieces of a puzzle: The completed design fits all the puzzle pieces together. Each piece, therefore, is intrinsic. Each must be placed carefully, then left to do its job in contributing to the visual whole.

BELOW: This kitchen is the true center of the apartment. Enlarged by the carving of space from the adjoining public rooms (living and dining) and opened fully between it and the foyer. It invites all to gather, naturally and comfortably, around the chocolate marble top and light-splashed center island. BOTTOM LEFT: The warm colors and textures of this bed and wall treatment never veer toward earthy when punctuated by creams, graphic toile, and strong neoclassical forms. BOTTOM RIGHT: Gallery-like placement for a special art piece.

PHOTO BY SETH BOYD



PHOTOS BY MARK BYRON



PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY MARK BYRON



Style is a combination of vision, artistry, and, at times, fearlessness.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: An inversion of scale, the graphic blue upholstery slinks across the full width of the room, acting at once as a headboard and wainscoting. ABOVE TOP: Light from above and below illuminates glass, driftwood, color-rich ceramics, and splashy cut flowers, creating a burst of color in a fresh vignette. ABOVE: A long hallway is transformed into a garden path when a softly rippling drapery, in a silk-screened garden-motif print, adorns its long, otherwise featureless walls. LEFT: Classic, modern furnishings.



Let there be light! Where no natural source exists, a singular, directional light, source splashing over glass tiles in gradated shades, creates shimmer in motion.

Above all else, designing an interior is a process. Creating a home takes time and much collaboration between the designer and the client. But this process can produce magical results—beautiful surroundings and, for the client, authenticity. . . the feeling of home. And this, to me, is the creation of livable art. ❖

Andrew Suvalsky's firm, Andrew Suvalsky Designs, based in New York City, has created interiors for homes in New York, the Hamptons, Palm Beach, Miami, and Puerto Rico. Andrew's work represents an effortless synthesis of architecturally inspired design and an artistically sensitive understanding of the use of color and form. 212.253.0250; Andy@SuvalskyDesigns.com; www.SuvalskyDesigns.com



For his living room, New York interior designer Andrew Suvalsky wanted the color of a warm chocolate brownie for his walls, and turned to Djuric because of his range and dedication in every palette. One of Djuric's many strengths is his willingness to keep creating samples until the exact color and texture are achieved to the client's satisfaction.



OPPOSITE PAGE: The dining room of this Westport resident is rendered in gold Venetian plaster, a color designed to smooth the transition between the leather and wood furniture and the black ebonized floors. THIS PAGE: For this media room, interior designer Andrew Suwalsky and Mile Djuric collaborated through several evolutions of innovative design to hit just the right sparkling note by applying crushed micro-glass to blue-black walls. “We had to find just the right brush, just the right size and softness to accept the glass and transfer it to the surface,” says Djuric.

