



>photo courtesy of: pickthebrain.com

Connecting the Dots

Call me a connecting maven! There's something extraordinarily satisfying about making introductions for people who can really benefit from knowing each other. It's a way to "pay forward" the assistance I have received while building my studio and it's exciting to contribute to someone else's success. Connecting is all about others, it is not about yourself. I don't connect people because I think, gee, what will I gain from this? I connect people because I love to solve problems. I think every good connector enjoys puzzles.... You just know the perfect piece that fits with the others around it.

My connecting mentor was and will always continue to be Stacy Wallace-Albert, the former fashion editor of Chicago Magazine and now principal woman's stylist extraordinaire at Brooks Brothers throughout the country. I met Stacy 12 years ago as I was launching Sweet Peas Design. I read an article and found out that she too was launching her own business as a personal stylist. A second act for both of us. I enlisted her assistance, made a life-long dear friend and continually thank her every day I stand in front of my closet, because guess what? I no longer ponder what to wear. I trusted her expertise and still do! Stacy connected me with fashion designer Basia Frossard, handbag designer Diego Rocha and hairstylist Jeri Delgado (all of whom I am still in awe of and still count on), not to make money but because she believed in their craft and knew how talented they were. Stacy elevates those she believes in just for the reward of seeing them grow and succeed, and I enjoy doing the same. Consider this little game of connect-the-dots: I connected Julie Dasher, our go-to favorite custom rug supplier with Holli Caulfield, one of my favorite top-notch Chicago manufacturer's reps, and then connected Julie with Skip Sroka, my dear friend and favorite

Washington D.C. interior designer. Skip in turn connected Julie with a rep in Washington D.C. Hmm, maybe I should consider a career change and become a match-maker.

Of course, follow-up is key to connecting. When I make introductions I typically circle back to both people to find out how it went, and when someone connects me I circle back to thank them and tell them how it went. Does this sound a little like networking? I don't see it that way. When you network, you expect something will come from it that benefits you directly. Connecting is when I choose to help others, and if it benefits me, that's just the whipped cream on my hot fudge sundae.

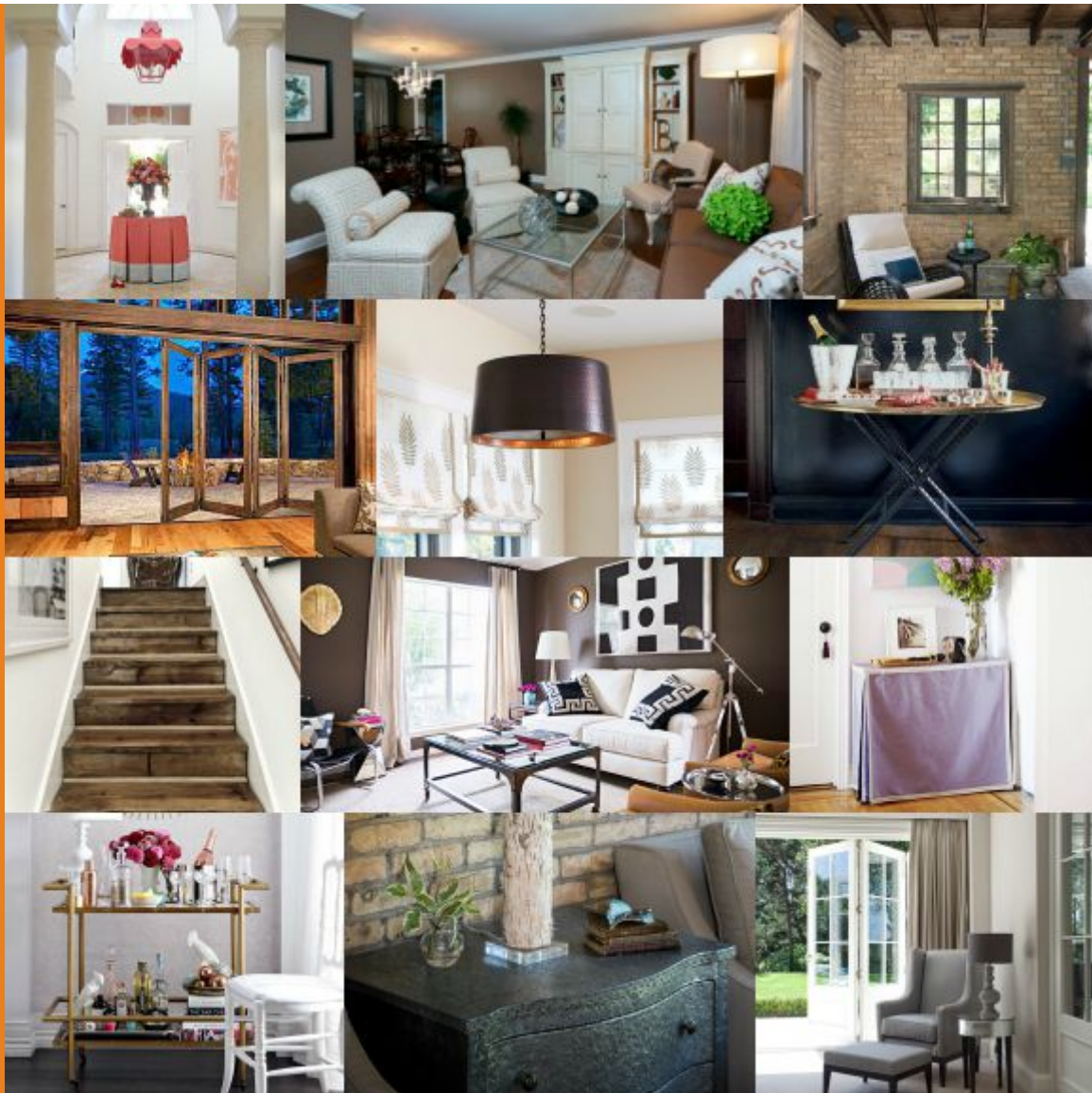
I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter, and if you do, please "connect" us with your friends by sharing it!

Sincerely,

Susan, Beth, Jennifer, Tod, Lauren
The Sweet Peas Design Team

what's **in** what's *out*

WHAT'S IN



1. Hammered Metal It sounds like a great name for a hard rock group, right? The Hammered Metals. But in the world of design, hammered metal is a technique that gives a stark, industrial material a rustic complexity. It builds interesting texture, offers contrast to fabric and wood elements as well as other metals, and conveys an artisanal, man-made feel that is very appealing. We love to use it combination with more glamorous pieces. It is perfect for sinks, lighting, lamps and table bases.

2. Folding Walls Love to bring the outdoors indoors? Folding glass walls are a dramatic way to showcase a spectacular view, allow maximum light to flood a room and to provide a seamless transition from interior to exterior. They are beautiful architectural elements as well and work with any style home, whether ultra-mod, rustic or anywhere in between. However, they are best used in certain climates and areas of the country. And sadly, the Midwest is not the best spot due to mosquitoes and our extreme temperature ranges in the past few years!

3. Reclaimed Barn Wood Old McDonald isn't the only one who values good solid barn wood. Suburban and urban dwellers continue to embrace the vintage worn texture and tones of this reclaimed resource for their homes. It's not only an opportunity to reduce, reuse and recycle but a way to give timeless character to your rooms. Combine barn wood

with more sophisticated elements to bring down the formality of a room and make it more inviting! Plus, it is indestructible so perfect for kid friendly areas of a home.

4. Skirted Tables Skirted tables remind me of the woman in the Nutcracker Suite with the big skirt and all the little kids pop out from under it! This feminine yet, structured "garment" can give new life to a table that has seen better days, no matter if it's got a round or rectangular figure! Give it some box pleats or a snazzy border of trim, choose a bright color and watch that table perk up like a gal with a brand new outfit. We like the whimsical side of a skirted table, too. Perfect for foyers or as an accent in a dining room or master bedroom where furniture might be all wood and matching.

5. Chocolate Brown Chocolate brown makes me think of chocolate pudding or hot chocolate. Both comforting! Quiet, calming and cozy, chocolate brown is a sweet way to warm up contemporary or traditional spaces. Pair it with crisp white, orange, neutrals or apple green, it is more enveloping and warmer than gray, softer than black and can be moody, sexy or cozy depending on the way you finish the room. Talk about versatile!

6. Bar Carts If you don't have teenagers in the house, flaunt your inner mixologist with a fashionable bar cart for home entertaining. We think of them as accent tables with a purpose, and they make entertaining in small spaces easy. Better yet, they are mobile, so you can move the party wherever you like.

> clockwise photos courtesy of: summerfelddesign.wordpress.com, Sweet Peas Design, Sweet Peas Design, elledecor.com, domino.com, interiorsbystudiom.com, Sweet Peas Design, styleathome.com, creativejuicesdecor.com, sierrapacificwindows.com, Sweet Peas Design, domino.com

WHAT'S OUT

If there's one trend we are truly over, it's got to be natural oak.

So many homes of the 80's and 90's went overboard with natural oak on flooring, cabinetry, trim, stairs and doors. Not only was it matchy-matchy but over time it has yellowed or become orange-y in color due to the sun. If you're ready for an update, don't despair, you might not to start over completely and rip everything out. Try refinishing oak floors in a darker, richer stain or even a grayish barn wood hue. Paint trim, casing and even cabinetry. You'll thank us later, we promise!

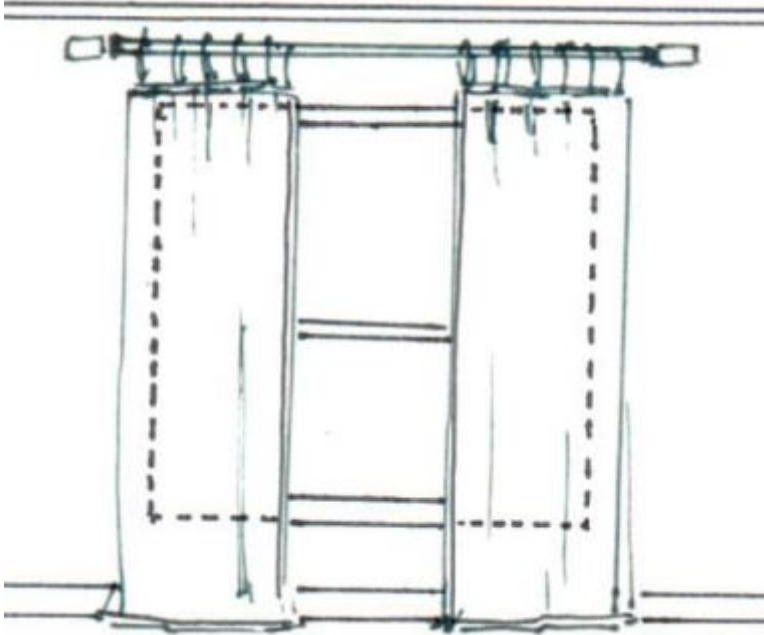
sweet
tip

Drapery Panels Dimension Guide

Go-to Guide:

1. HEIGHT

In a standard 8 FT or 9 FT height room, we like to mount the drapery rod/hardware approximately halfway between the top of the window casing and the ceiling. This draws the eye upward and the rod does not compete with the window casing and or crown molding.



2. WIDTH

Drapery panels should be designed and created using a width and a half of fabric, so the finished panel is approximately 20" in width. Panels should be installed 8 to 10 inches beyond the outer edges of the window casing on each side to give the illusion of a larger window.

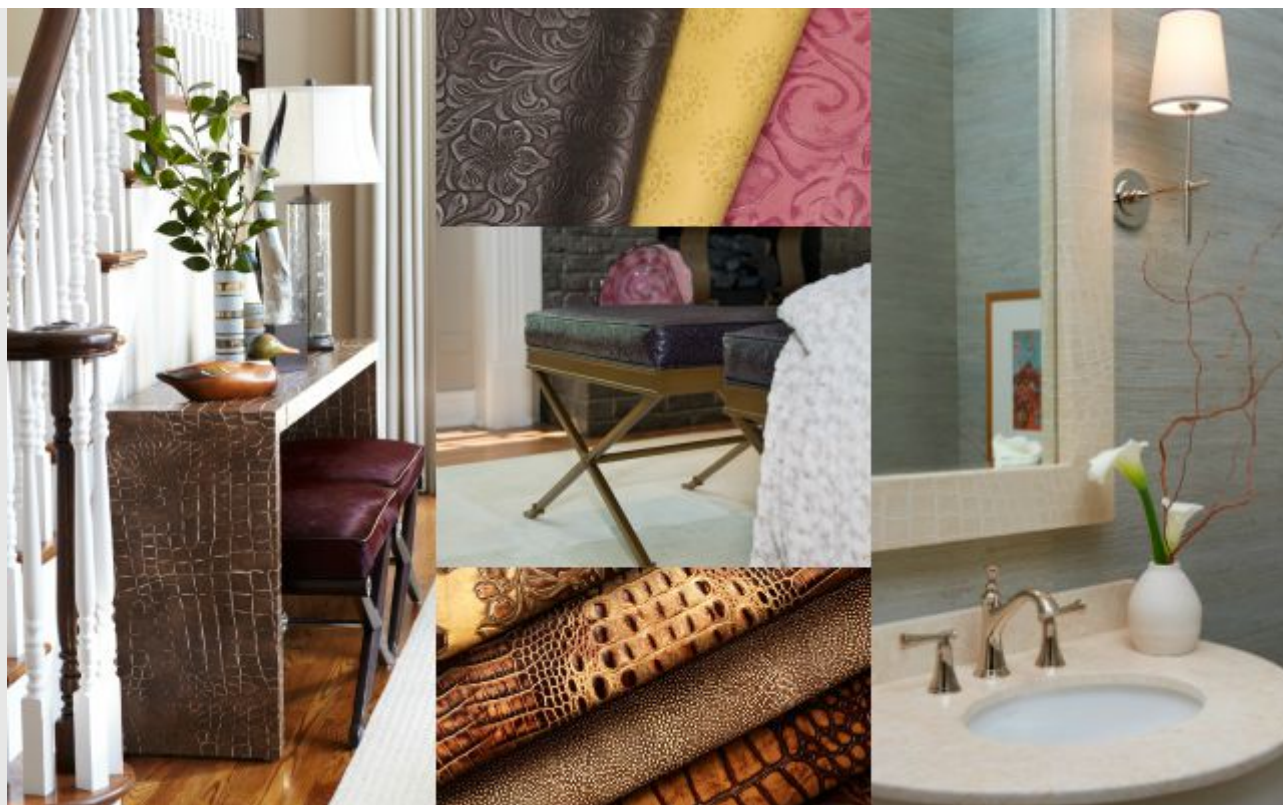
3. LENGTH

Drapery length is subjective. We prefer two options depending on the look you're going for.

- Hover - For a straight, clean look drapery panels should hover slightly above the surface of the floor - leaving about a ¼-inch gap. This style is perfect if you have cats, dogs or small kids that like to play in your drapery panels and or if you have a floor vent under the panel.
- Slight break - For a more formal or traditional look, the length of your drapery panel should break about 1 to 1-1/2 inches on your floor. Think of the break on a pair of men's pants. This does NOT mean a puddle of fabric! Just a subtle curve or fabric resting on your floors.

>sketch courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design

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EMBOSSSED LEATHER

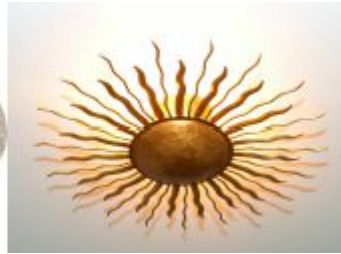
We are crazy for leather of all varieties on practically any surface - upholstery, tables, walls, case goods and mirror frames. But lately we've been obsessing over embossed leather, a method of creating a pattern or design on the hide using heat and high pressure. The possibilities are endless, ranging from alligator and ostrich to flowers and geometric or Indian designs. Our go-to and all-time favorite embossed leather is Connecticut-based Edelman's Croco Loco Grande and we have included it in many projects of all colors. So funky but versatile! Take a look for yourself. Are you falling in love with embossed leather?

> clockwise photos courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design, illuminairestudio.com, Sweet Peas Design, barbarossaleather.com, Sweet Peas Design

SPOT LIGHT ON A FAVORITE

Flush Mount Light Fixtures

The oft overlooked and least memorable light fixtures in many a home are flush mount light fixtures. Think hallways, mudrooms, laundry rooms and closets. Most are boring or look like the proverbial "boob" fixture, but they don't need to be! Inject sparkle and style in your home by replacing or updating these often ignored, low-grade and low-priced fixtures. And no worries, they don't need to break the bank. But do remember, keep all the same in your hallways for a consistent look. Here are some outstanding examples that will get your creativity powered up.



>photos courtesy of: visualcomfort.com, et2online.com, [Sweet Peas Design](http://SweetPeasDesign.com), hinkleylighting.com

At Sweet Peas Design no matter what the weather, sunny and humid or just sunny, we just keep getting it done!



FASHIONISTA'S RETREAT POSTED ON MYTRENDS

We don't know if editor Paul Taylor at Trends magazines is a fashion hound, but he did like our Fashion Blogger's Retreat from the Lake Forest Showhouse. Look for the photos in the myTrends online newsletter, which you can find here:

<http://trendsideas.com/profiles/your-guide-to-whats-new/collections/c2191434685624589/photos/7181434685645829>

Thanks, Paul!

HGTV INTERVIEWS SUSAN

Thanks to writer Liz Gray from HGTV's "Design Happens" for the fun interview that ran recently on the network's popular design-related blog. We covered all the hot issues (haha!) such as my favorite colors, designers and my must-have coffee shop order. Check it out here:

<http://blog.hgtv.com/design/2015/07/29/design-happens-interviews-susan-brustrum>



WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FORUM

It was an adrenalin kick to be one of the 700 business women who attended the William Blair Women's Leadership Forum this summer to hear fashion designers Cynthia Rowley and Maria Pinto discuss the business of design. Some of the take-aways: Success demands singular focus, diligence, hard work and a can-do attitude. You have to believe in yourself when no one else believes in you, and dare to be different. Great motivational words from two amazing women.

Thanks to Nina Winston and Jackie Moss for the invite!

GEMINIE LOOK



Boho Chic

Stray from the ordinary and release your inner hippie with the Boho Chic look. Think of this as a cross between bohemian and hippie influences, a style that has been ebbing and flowing since the mid-to-late 19th century. To get this look:

1. Use a bold color scheme.

Boho Chic interiors are known for their rich hues with no prescribed color palette. Colors are often deeply saturated and visually stimulating.

2. Mix patterns.

Layer in textiles from different cultures such as Oriental rugs, Indian Saris, batik prints, Native American wovens and tribal block prints.

3. Mix textures and metals.

Combine varying textures such as quilted fabrics, vintage wood and metal pieces, worm velvet, wicker, leather, silk, linen and sisal. The more contrast, the better. Combine hemp

with silk. Adorn windows with multiple layers.

4. Incorporate specialty lighting.

Unusual and detailed pattern lighting is key. Try a Moroccan-inspired lantern, a vintage crystal chandelier, or an industrial floor lamp.

5. Add vintage pieces.

Timeworn and distressed furniture will give your boho-chic space a well-lived, well-traveled appearance.

6. Fill the room with unconventional accents.

Display your collections or travel souvenirs. Combine artwork with contrasting styles, colors, and media, and don't worry about matching the frames...the more different, the better! The keys are comfort, livability and more layered or cluttered effect.

Remember - the goal with Boho Chic is to express your individuality and uniqueness!

> clockwise photos courtesy of: [bloglovin.com](#), [bloglovin.com](#), [issuu.com](#), [apartmenttherapy.com](#), [2014interior.com](#), [eastcoastcreativeblog.com](#)

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