

scribbles. possibilities. discoveries.



SWEET PEAS DESIGN

susan brunstrum

SEPTEMBER 2016

STAY YOUNG. LEARN!

"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young." -Henry Ford



If learning is the fountain of youth, as Henry Ford says, then I will stand outside in a rain shower - no, make that a thunderstorm - and get drenched! All the greatest minds for hundreds, if not thousands, of years have extolled the virtues of life-long learning, from Socrates to Abraham Lincoln and Mahatma Gandhi. I'm a big believer! Late summer always makes me think about education as I watch the little ones go off to school. We are so fortunate that education is one of our rights in this country and accessible to everyone. Sometimes, I am a little envious that I am not heading back to college with a schedule full of new classes, but then I take a deep breath and get over it as I realize... I'm totally done taking tests and writing term papers! And have

been for quite some time. However, education as an adult (in all forms) is so much fun! It's a thrill to learn something new about an artist whose work I've never seen, the history of a city I've never visited, a difficult new workout with my trainer or an interior design idea that evolves out of team work here at the studio. Education fires up our synapses and helps keep us healthy and hopefully young in heart and mind! I like what Zig Ziglar said about learning: "Life is a classroom. Only those willing to be lifelong learners will move to the head of the class." Maybe I should think about signing up for that yoga class, sailing lessons and painting class that I've been thinking about...

Sincerely,

Susan, Angela, Jennifer, Lauren, Laura, Caitlin and Lauren
The Sweet Peas Design Team

WHAT'S IN



Clockwise from upper left photos courtesy of: housebeautiful.com, brabournefarm.blogspot.com, laylagrace.com, petrweigl.com, marthastewart.com, sawdustgirl.com



1) MIGHTY METAL

Can you guess which type of metal is most reflective? No, it's not gold, it's silver! That lustrous shine makes this precious metal a favorite for bringing a touch of glam to home décor, particularly as wafer-thin sheets of silver leaf. We love the way silver reflects light and evokes warmth and luxury. It is particularly dramatic on a ceiling, where it becomes a focal point in a room, but we also like it on walls as

well as case pieces (chests, sideboards and buffets) and mirror frames too. Did you know that silver is one of the seven metals used by humans since prehistoric times? The technique of pounding metal to create leaf has been around for more than 5,000 years. Now that's heavy metal and it doesn't hurt your ear drums!

Photo courtesy of: architecturaldigest.com

2) KHAKI IS BACK - Y

Khaki is the new black in fashion, and we like it for interior furnishings too! Khaki was introduced in 1848 as a dusty shade of brown for military uniforms. It comes from the Hindustani word for "soil-colored." Today there are many shades of khaki - some yellowish, some tan and others with a green hue, so it

can paired with just about any color. It is at home with any style of décor, too. Try it with simple and elegant whites, creams and blacks or warm it up with soft reds, blues and greens.

Photo courtesy of: roomdecorideas.ed



adding the stems or even a single leaf.

Photo courtesy of: bloomingcreationflorist.com

3) FLOATING FLOWERS

From hotels and restaurants to private dining room tables and photos in shelter magazines, floating flowers in bowls of water are everywhere and once again are on-trend. There's something very fresh and simple about this look! Perfect for dining and breakfast tables because these arrangements tend to be low-profile so they don't block anyone's view at the table. Think beyond the blooms or flower heads -mix up the type of flowers or the colors and consider

4) ROCKIN' METAL ART

Metallic art is unexpected, and yet often quite textural! The right piece can be a knock-out accent and vastly different from your other artwork. Metal artwork doesn't have to be industrial looking - though we like that too! It can be delicate and intricate, simple and modern, geometric or vintage. The key is to find a piece you love and want to live with for many years. And remember, art is not just for your walls.

Photo courtesy of: phxartgroup.com



5) COLORED CABS

Choosing colored kitchen cabinets can be a leap of faith! Stained wood and white cabinets are tried and true and so predictably safe! But I really think NO color is off-limits for kitchen cabinets, as long as the chosen color is integral to the rest of your house. I've seen beautiful installations in muted pastel colors, rich jewel tones, black and navy blue or if you don't want that much color try charcoal grey or dove grey. I usually opt for a middle-of-the-road satin finish - not

too much shine - but for a more dramatic effect try a high gloss or lacquer.

Photo courtesy of: elledecor.com

6) MORE POWER TO YOU!

Feeling powerless when it comes to charging all your tech gear? It seems there are never enough outlets nearby when our gadgets thirst for fuel, but we've got the solution: USB outlets. These handy devices have been around for a while but most homes aren't outfitted with them yet, so we've been adding USB outlets for many of our clients lately - particularly the members of KKG sorority house at Northwestern in Evanston where we had them installed in their hardwood floors in their study and informal living



room. USB outlets can combine regular prong-style plug-ins with USB ports so you can connect anywhere in your house. We think they're most handy built into a nightstand where our gadgets rest at night, in family rooms and mudrooms - pretty much everywhere! So if you're thirsting for more power, it's time to get wired!

Photo courtesy of: consumerreports.com

WHAT'S OUT

STORING THE GOOD STUFF

You would be surprised at how often we help clients unearth family treasures from their secret hiding spots and find just the perfect spot to showcase them in their homes. At times we refinish a piece, frame a work of art or just polish an antique, but everyone is happy that the piece is no longer stored away or collecting dust. And that gives us a lot of satisfaction! I remember helping one client pull her collection of African art and artifacts out of the crawl space, and we resurrected a collection of brass horns for another client and created a wall display. Recently we framed and mounted a Japanese print of a horse for a client whose father brought it back from Guam during the service. It had been languishing in the basement for many years. We have always said that each home should tell the story of the people who live there. What better way than to display items that have special meaning to you, whether they are souvenirs of travel or pieces handed down for generations? Think of it as rescuing a dog or cat from the pound. Maybe it's time to give your stored treasures a good home!

FABU FABRIC



From left photos courtesy of: bhg.com, modcloth.com, lonnymag.com, we-are-scout.com

MYSTERIOUS FLORALS

Traditional floral patterns are the "chick flicks" of interior fabrics - they're soft and girlie, reminiscent of mountain wild flowers or disciplined English garden roses. But there's a whole world of deep, dark, mysterious florals that have a distinctly masculine and feminine vibe, and for the right room we love that moody palette. Especially since my trip to Amsterdam, Ellie Cashman's stunning wallpaper patterns are resonating with me - they were inspired by old master paintings of the Dutch Golden Age. Her "Dark Floral" pattern of light-colored flowers on a shadowy backdrop would be gorgeous as an accent wall in a powder room with elegant sconces. I'm seeing fabrics too in pretty pink and white roses on a black or gray background too - a bit like a woman in a floral dress standing beside a man in a dark suit. Talk about drama!

SPOTLIGHT ON A FAVORITE



From upper left photos courtesy of: juinho.com, ambianceblog.blogspot.com, jessicacharles.com, olystudio.com, elledecor.com, bakerfurniture.com

MUSICAL CHAIRS

We're not playing games - we just like to mix things up when we're choosing head chairs for a dining room table. It's more style-savvy when the head chairs aren't carbon copies of the side chairs, and I'm not talking about just arm chairs versus no-arm chairs. We like to mix fabrics, wood finishes, height or shape - such as curved back versus straight - though not necessarily all of those at once! We have done two-toned finishes for the head chairs and a single finish for the side chairs, and skirted head chairs and non-skirted side chairs. Because tables typically (but now always) accommodate only two head chairs this is the place to do something special. Remember, too - your dining room chairs can do double duty for extra seating in your living areas. Or consider all head chairs around your table or even four head chairs... two in the middle of the table and one at each end. So, why not play musical chairs?

WHAT'S UP

WHAT AN HONOR!

We were all so thrilled this month to receive the 2016 ASID-Illinois Award for best Residential Project Under 3,000 Square Feet for my new condo in Chicago! It is such an honor when peer judges from ASID chapters (American Society of Interior Designers) across the country recognize our work - I am so proud of my entire team. I was unable to attend the annual ASID-Illinois Celebration of Design, but Junior Designer Lauren Benditzky accepted the award on behalf of me, Senior Designer Beth Kweton (now retired) and Architectural Associate Jennifer Cioni Tarello. As if that weren't enough excitement, our project also is being featured in Modern Luxury Interiors Chicago next month! Congratulations to all the winners, and thanks to everyone at ASID-Illinois for this amazing honor.

MARKETING MAGIC

Thanks to the judges at PHS Stellar Sales and Marketing Awards for honoring Sweet Peas Design for two projects in its first annual competition for interior designs and contractors. Our marketing efforts took Honorable Mention in the "Stellar Showhouse" for our room in the Gracious House Showhouse and in the "Pro Bono" category for our work on "George to the Rescue," the NBC/LXTV show during which we updated the home of a Waukegan family. Congrats also to our design colleagues Michael Del Piero, Susan Fredman and Donna Mondri for their honors in this competition. Very much deserved, ladies!

SHOPPING FOR CHARITY

Need a good excuse to go shopping? How about checking out Randolph Street Market's Annual "Editor's and Designer's Choice for Charity" event Saturday and Sunday, September 24th and 25th? I've been invited for the second year to tour the market and "tag" my favorite items with ribbons. Look for me very early Saturday morning.... If my chosen items are sold, a portion of the proceeds will go to the charity of my choice: Lake County Cares. Wear your comfy shoes because there are eight acres of shopping, eating and drinking and 250 vendors of vintage, antique, indie designer and global goods and fancy foods. This Market is considered one of the top 10 festivals of its kind in the United States. For the whole scoop on hours, tickets, location and more click here: <http://www.randolphstreetmarket.com/>



Clockwise from upper left photos courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design, houzz.com, randolphstreetmarket.com, powerhousesmart.com, Sweet Peas Design, Sweet Peas Design, Sally Ko

COZY DREAMS

Thanks to HGTV for including one of Sweet Peas Design's coziest master bedrooms in the 28 Ideas for a Cozy Bedroom gallery recently. (We are #24.) You will discover a lot of great ideas for updates among these fabulous bedrooms. I really like the vintage Singer sewing machine console standing in as a night stand and the sweet baby outfit framed and mounted above a bed. The heirloom suitcase perched on a stool makes a clever night stand, too. Sweet dreams!

5K IDEAS? WOW

It's hard to imagine, but those of you who visit the Houzz online design community have saved our portfolio photos to your ideabooks 25,000 or more times! That's a big number and it makes us feel like a million. Houzz has awarded us a special badge that says "25K Saves" that we can post on our website. Kind of like earning a Girl Scout badge! Thanks to everyone who visits us on Houzz, and thanks to our friends at Houzz for keeping tally.

GA-GA FOR GALLERY WALK

Bravo to River North Design District for another fabulous Gallery Walk this month. Angela, Lauren, Lauren Elizabeth and I spent the evening meeting artists and seeing new artwork in an unpretentious, no-pressure environment. I loved chatting with Chicago pastry chef Gale Gand, who was exhibiting her work for the first time, and Sally Ko, another local and very talented abstract expressionist! Now, I need to find a home for some of their work....

GET THE LOOK



From left photos courtesy of: domainehome.com, architecturaldigest.com, elledecor.com

GLAMILY ROOMS

The name says it all - Just combine glamorous and family room and you get "GLAMILY" room, the sexy but hard-working family room that's starting to attract a lot of attention. We're talking about a combination of comfort and luxury, function and fashionable design that's a bit more extravagant than the typical work-horse family room. Glamily room furniture is more curvaceous and the accessories have a bit of sparkle and shine. Fabrics are designer-level fabulous but still durable and stain resistant - after all, you will be hanging out in this room and perhaps hosting guac-and-beer football Sundays! Sure, you could have this look even if you have young children, but we think of it as adults-only!

SWEET TIP

BINDING AGREEMENT

The right rug can transform a room, and it doesn't have to be pricey. Our secret? We order a piece of beautiful broadloom carpeting and then select a handsome binding for the edges in leather, linen or perhaps canvas. Sometimes, we opt for a contrasting edge, pulling one of the accent colors in the room, or we might match the binding to the rug color or just go a little darker than the rug with the binding. You can "have it your way" and choose any size rug or style, whether patterned or solid, and select the material and texture. It's a way of customizing a standard rug, and the results will floor you!



From left photos courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design, lucywilliamsinteriors.com, homebunch.com

UNTIL NEXT TIME!

susan



LET'S CONNECT

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