

SCRIBBLES. POSSIBILITIES. DISCOVERIES.



SWEET PEAS DESIGN

susan brunstrum

APRIL 2017

MASTERING A SHOW HOUSE BEDROOM



Photo courtesy of: lakeforestshowhouse.com

"My bedroom is my sanctuary. It's like a refuge, and it's where I do a fair amount of designing - at least conceptually, if not literally." Vera Wang

My master bedroom has always been a unique and special place in my home. It is a safe haven from our chaotic, in-the-moment digital world, a place where I can nourish my soul and check in with my life, past, present and future. I've been contemplating the role of master suites a lot lately because we are creating the master bedroom for this year's 17th biennial Lake Forest Showhouse Saturday, April 29, through Sunday, May 21.

We are so excited that we were given this space - it has sparked loads of creativity! As we developed our concept, I started with the basic premise that a master bedroom is all about us as individuals, unlike kitchens, living rooms or family rooms where we gather with family and friends for conversation and community. I wanted to convey a sense of intimacy and privacy in this master bedroom, to encourage self-actualization, ruminating and problem-solving. At the beginning and end of our days, this is often where we set goals, become inspired, regain

balance and harmony and motivate ourselves to face the coming challenges - sometimes with a cup of tea, a glass of Prosecco or a pint of Jeni's ice cream (my new favorite- ylang ylang and fennel). The star of the room is the bed. We custom designed an upholstered bed with curved wings at the head and foot, and positioned it in the middle of the room to facilitate my vision of a swirling vortex of dreams, ideas and imagination! As a nod to those creative spirits, we custom designed most of the furnishings, including a glass-topped table supported by stacks of acrylic blocks, a pair of suede chairs with pearl trim and a fabulous artist-inspired rug (think Impressionism plus). I also have commissioned original artwork by Chicago artists Sally Ko, Lynn Basa and Judi Melnick. I could easily spend many wakeful hours in this room recharging, meditating, reading or just daydreaming!

Please stop by, and hopefully, you will find inspiration too. Ticket and parking information, details on special events and more are available at www.lakeforestshowhouse.com. All proceeds benefit the Infant Welfare Society of Chicago, sponsor of the show house. The society's full-service community health center serves some of Chicago's neediest children and their families. We are very honored to have the opportunity to participate for the third time. Please stop by our room and say hello!

Sincerely,

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

WHAT'S IN



From upper left photos courtesy of: desiretoinspire.net, brabbu.com, housebeautiful.com, brabbu.com, therugcompany.com, elitelinks.co.uk, lonny.com, olystudio.com, lacornue.com, abt.com



1) GREENERY ON THE SCENE(ERY)

Pantone's color of the year, Greenery, is so refreshing, crisp and organic it could be the official color of the "green" movement. This yellow-green hue whisks us away from our techno-world and connects us with nature. It reminds me of healthy things like leafy salads and going for a walk in spring as the plants are just sprouting from the earth. Of course, it's

pretty too and very versatile. If Mother Nature can mix every color of the rainbow with green, so can we! My favorite combinations include pairing it with charcoal gray, navy, blush white, ivory, black and orange.

Photo courtesy of: italianbark.com

2) IN THE RAW

OK, don't go there... not that kind of raw! I'm talking about the earthy, natural color, raw white. It has a handmade, artisanal look that I love on furniture, light fixtures and sculptural elements. For my new studio I selected an Oly table with a raw white base that resembles a tree trunk. The organic element is welcome in the middle of an urban setting, especially because we juxtaposed it with an over-scaled teal and brushed gold, Urban Electric chandelier and acrylic Z chairs.

Photo courtesy of: restorationhardware.com



3) WALKING ON ART?

Normally, I wouldn't recommend it, but I make an exception for today's artsy rug designs that resemble Impressionist canvases by Monet or the abstract expressionism of Motherwell. The fluid, irregular patterns break up the grid of rectangular rooms and furniture. The mix of colors can provide inspiration for the rest of the room, too.

Photo courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design

4) RANGE ROVER

Junior designer Lauren Benditzky and I have been drooling over the newest ranges from La Cornue, the French appliance makers since 1908. These beauties look more like a piece of furniture than a practical cooking device, and they come in an array of standard or custom colors including eggplant and aquamarine, and several metal trim finishes. The level of detailing and engineering brings to mind a luxury car - the Grand Palais 180 model is 6 feet long and has one vaulted gas oven and one vaulted electric oven beneath one of seven optional range top configurations. Vroom vroom! Our advice? Keep the other appliances simple so your La Cornue is the "hot spot" in the room.

Photo courtesy of: decorpad.com



5) SALUTING NAVY

Everyone from fashion forecasters to style spotters and Pinterest editors are pinpointing navy as one of the biggest trends of the year. I know, there's nothing new about this classic, versatile hue, but it is back in a big way. Navy is a shade softer than black, and it can be preppy and nautical - think Polo, Lauren and Nautica - but it can be corporate- think men's suits or healthcare institutions' logos - or elegant enough for a

mother-of-the-bride dress. Navy is so versatile it pairs well with a wide range of colors, from whites and ivories to caramel, cinnamon and my favorite, black. The color combo of navy and black is oh so Coco Chanel!

Photo courtesy of: elledecor.com

6) PENGUINS, CRANES AND A TEDDY BEAR

What's the connection, you wonder? These creatures have all been "sculpted" in plant form as topiaries in the semitropical greenhouse at the Chicago Botanic Garden. But you don't have to be an expert to

maintain topiaries. They are popular again in home décor, more evidence of the every-growing green movement. For Midwesterners, indoor topiaries give us a taste of Mother Nature, even during winter. You can choose a classic, formal shape or something playful, like a monkey! Bathrooms and kitchens are a great place for topiaries because they add a soft, natural element to all the hard surfaces. Don't worry about sculpting them yourself; topiaries grow in pre-made metal frameworks and just need to be trimmed and coaxed into shape. Think of it as a soothing way to manage stress!

Photo courtesy of: homebunch.com



WHAT'S OUT

INSTANT INTERIOR DESIGN

In today's world, where we have overnight package delivery, global access to information and entertainment in a nanosecond and an espresso on every corner, instant gratification is the expectation and the norm. But that's not true for quality interior design. Beautiful custom rooms don't happen in a matter of weeks or days. Trust me, if I could just wiggle my nose like Samantha on "Bewitched" and complete a client's home in a matter of minutes, life would be easier for all of us. But would it reflect you or be beautiful? Just like building your wardrobe or financial portfolio, the best interior design takes time, patience, a lot of thought and a desire to find just the right furnishings, artwork and accessories - things that are perfect for your lifestyle and personality. Give yourself the luxury of creating a plan and taking time with the process and I promise, you will enjoy the results for years and years.

FABU FABRIC



From upper left photos courtesy of: ochsundjunior.swiss, williams-sonoma.com, ochsundjunior.swiss, arteriorshome.com, restorationhardware.com

SUEDE

"Well it's one for the money, two for the show, three to get ready, now go cat go!" I kept hearing that old rockabilly classic, "Blue Suede Shoes," in my mind this past winter as I watched many a pair of chic suede booties parade down the sidewalk. Suede is a velvety leather and still a fashion favorite, but we love its touchable texture for home furnishings, too. In fact, we're designing a pair of completely upholstered chairs in Edelman suede - even the legs are wrapped in suede! - for our master bedroom in the Lake Forest Showhouse. We like the texture and richness of this sensuous fabric and pair it often with linen, mohair, wool and or leather. There are a lot of faux suede knock-offs, but the real deal is made by rubbing the underside of a lamb, goat or calf hide to make a buttery-soft nap. This type of leather is popular for sofas, living room

and dining room chairs, ottomans and pillows. And here's an interesting factoid: The word suede comes from a mid-century French expression, "gants de Suede," which means "gloves from Sweden". Just the thought of suede gloves puts me in the mood for a shopping trip, even in spring!

SPOTLIGHT ON A FAVORITE



From upper left photos courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design, huffingtonpost.com, decorpad.com, domino.com

POWDER ROOMS

Have you ever escaped to the powder room during a party for a quick moment of peace and quiet? I have! Lingering in front of the mirror to check my hair, swipe on some fresh lipstick, and perhaps text my kids, always gives me a little boost, especially if the powder room has a wow factor. For me, powder rooms are the "jewel boxes" of a home, a place to make a major impact with minimal square footage. Though it seems counter-intuitive, you can be more colorful, glamorous, dramatic or bold in your powder room. Go outside your comfort zone. Why not? You might not want your entire home to have that kind of energy, but in this small space, anything is possible! Try adding a statement mirror or a custom painted pattern on one wall. Splurge on a drop-dead gorgeous chandelier, a dramatic vessel sink or a pedestal sink that's almost a work of art. Of course, don't be surprised if you have a queue outside the powder room door at your next party!

WHAT'S UP

HOW GRAND

We had a wonderful turnout and lots of fun at the Grand Opening party for my new studio at 1242 N. Wells St. in Old Town. Nearly 150 people stopped by to help us celebrate and to wish us well in this new adventure. Thank you to all the clients, media, vendor reps, friends and family who took time to celebrate with us. If you couldn't join us then, please feel free to visit us if you're in the neighborhood!

WALL (AND RUG) POWER

Great walls and rugs do attract attention! Thanks to the Dering Hall team for spotlighting one of our most stunning powder rooms and the custom rug from one of our favorite dining rooms on their popular interior design website. The powder room, from the Lake Forest Showhouse 2013, [30 Bathrooms with Brightly Colored Wallpapers](#) featured intricately hand-painted walls with a vintage, wallpaper-like design. Our specialty painter created the look by individually applying more than 130,000 paint dots to the walls with a syringe. The custom dining room rug makes an

elegant statement with a large-scale pattern in muted colors. [21 Dining Rooms Featuring Statement Rugs](#)



Photos courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design

GET THE LOOK



Photos courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design

TRAD - S I T I O N A L

What do you get when you update your traditional décor with some transitional pieces? I call it trad-sitional living, and it's perfect if you're a fan of traditional, but want it to feel less "Downton Abbey formal." Traditional décor dates to 18th century England, the French countryside and the more exotic East, while transitional décor is the mid-point between that old world elegance and the chrome and glass of modern design. Combining the two requires careful planning so the result is harmonious, not a discordant hodgepodge of styles. We pulled together a trad-sitional look recently for retired clients who wanted a more casual look for their traditional home, but didn't want to start all over. Here's how we accomplished their trad-sitional living room-

- We custom designed a pair of tailored, transitional sofas in a solid fabric that's similar in color to the existing pair of traditional chairs.
- We layered traditional pillows on the sofas and transitional pillows on the chairs.
- We anchored the seating area with a transitional, hair-on-hide rug in a subdued latte color with herringbone pattern.

- We updated their accessories to be a bit more eclectic and not so overly traditional and matchy-matchy.

The finished room is an updated classic, comfortable home that respects the past and welcomes the present.

SWEET TIP



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IT'S SPRING! TIME TO WEED

Accessories and artwork can multiply like weeds-gone-wild in a home. We often add to our collections - family photos, treasures from vacations - but it's easy to forget that we need to subtract items as well. Editing is an important yet difficult task. After 14 years as a designer I have created an 8-step process to help clients decide what to keep and what to toss. Maybe it will help you!

- Step 1- Start by gathering all the accessories and artwork in your home in one room. I prefer the kitchen if you have lots of counter space and an island or the dining room if you have a large table. Pool tables and ping-pong tables work well also! Remember your items in storage and to empty out all your drawers, shelves and hidey-holes.
- Step 2- Sort into - THROW-AWAYS, GIVE-AWAYS, MAYBES AND MUST-HAVES
- Step 3- Toss the throw-aways in the garbage immediately.
- Step 4- Box the give-aways and label what is inside. Call a charitable organization for pick up. Do NOT put the give-away box(es) in the garage or basement. Keep them in plain sight and underfoot so you actually donate them.
- Step 5- Place the maybes in a box. Invite your children, family members or friends over the next day and gift them any of the maybe items. Those that are left, become give-aways. Box these give-aways, label and donate to a charity.
- Step 6- Keep the must-haves. Must-haves are items that you love, call your name, have meaning to you or evoke a memory.
- Step 7- Now for the fun. Start to place the accessories and artwork in your home. Make sure to find a new spot. Don't put anything back where it was as that would be boring. For artwork, I lean it against the wall where I want to hang it, but wait to install until all the other accessories are in place.
- Step 8- Notice where you have "holes" and or blank walls. Purchase and place new accessories and art as needed.

This 8-step process helps clients realize they do not need to keep everything they have and it gives them a timeline to sort through it. Putting all of their accessories in one room also reveals duplications - too many vases, clocks or faux plants - and it helps clients realize that accessorizing is hard. It is not a science, it is an art. If we are accessorizing for a client (and we really prefer to do so), we ask that they complete steps 1-6 and then we handle steps 7 and 8!

It's like weeding your garden so you can focus on the gorgeous flowers!

UNTIL NEXT TIME!

susan



LET'S CONNECT

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CARE TO SHARE?

Most of our clients come from referrals. Please tell a friend about our studio and share my email address with them. susan@sweetpeas-inspired.com

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