



Chris Goddard, Goddard Design Group



Kara Cox, Kara Cox Interiors



Amber Lewis, Amber Interiors



Michael Habachy, Habachy Designs

eye on design

Describe your signature style.

CHRIS GODDARD

Eclectic, elegant, timeless. I love a space that tells a story or evokes a mood.

KARA COX

My signature style is the look of the modern South. I like balance and order, color and glamour. I often pair clean lines and tailored, dressmaker detailing.

AMBER LEWIS

California Eclectic. I love layers of textures and patterns, and am always inspired by nature.

MICHAEL HABACHY

It's hard to give a name to my style, because I like to fuse together so many looks in with my tailor-made interiors. For me, it is about balancing timeless modern spaces with unexpected objects and art pieces steeped in history.

CHAD JAMES

My signature style is mixed with elements of extreme detail and a side order of masculinity.

ERIKA WARD

My signature style is steeped in tradition, yet it introduces color and modern forms in a refreshing way. My personal style, however, is a little different and includes more natural elements and cultural influences.

KRISTIN KONG

I wouldn't say I have a signature style. We have designed spaces that are high contrast and dramatic, and others which are soft and romantic. Style is individual and unique to each client.

CHRIS HOLT

My signature style is classic and fresh, with an emphasis on clean lines. I love mixing traditional silhouettes and antiques with contemporary lighting and art. I enjoy incorporating large-scale photography and artwork.



Chad James, Chad James Group



Erika Ward, Erika Ward Interiors



Chris Holt, Holt Interiors



Kristin Kong, K Kong Designs

What are your go-to colors?

CHRIS GODDARD

I try to never use the same color twice, but every room needs a touch of black to ground the space.

KARA COX

I never tire of pale blue greens and greige. My favorite colors to accent with are citron green or coral.

ERIKA WARD

Any shade of blue, particular navy, will always be my go-to. It punctuates a room, much like black, but it is not as stark of a contrast when paired with white.

CHRIS HOLT

Pale blues and whites.

MICHAEL HABACHY

I love colors, but tend to use them very sparingly. Most of my interiors tend to be layered in various shades of neutrals with a pop or two of color, depending on the mood that I am trying to create.

AMBER LEWIS

White, olive green, black.

CHAD JAMES

I tend to gravitate toward White Dove and Green Black. I love the element of juxtaposition.

KRISTIN KONG

I have some go-to colors that we tend to use more than others: Sherwin-Williams Black Fox, SW Functional Gray and SW Agreeable Grey. These "go-to" neutrals pair well with a multitude of color choices.

How did you earn your first paycheck?

CHRIS GODDARD

I started designing windows for a store while in college, and a customer asked if I could help them with their bookcases. From there it just took off.

KARA COX

My first job was at a gift store in the local art gallery. I still love wrapping beautiful gifts.

AMBER LEWIS

Painting a woman's entire townhouse by myself!

CHAD JAMES

My first paycheck was earned at a local drug store. It didn't last long!

KRISTIN KONG

Scooping ice cream! My first paycheck was from Häagen-Dazs where I fell in love with Belgian Chocolate ice cream.

MICHAEL HABACHY

Not sure if cash counts as a paycheck, but I was cutting neighbors' lawns with my father's lawnmower at the age of 12. I've always had an entrepreneurial spirit!

CHRIS HOLT

My first paycheck was earned at Benetton. To this day, I can fold a sweater like nobody's business.

ERIKA WARD

At 15 years old, I was armed with a work permit and a desire to make my own money. I got a job working at Macy's in Lenox Mall and was salesperson of the month! Imagine that.

WHAT'S HOT? (AND WHAT'S NOT?)

AMBER LEWIS

HOT: White after Labor Day.
NOT: Millennial pink ... SORRY!

KARA COX

HOT: Traditional style, with trims, fringe and layered design.
NOT: Overly formal living spaces; people want to use their whole house and not have a room that is just pretty to look at.

MICHAEL HABACHY

HOT: Goat-skin or parchment-clad furniture, blackened steel. Black is always a timeless and dramatic way to make a statement, but blackened steel especially creates a presence with its surface texture, subtle metallic reflection and heavy metal vibe.
NOT: Highly polished lacquered brass.

CHRIS HOLT

HOT: Rattan.
NOT: Anything Victorian.

KRISTIN KONG

HOT: Bolder and brighter hues, and mixing unusual color pairings, patterns and textures.
NOT: Too much brass, oversized furniture.

ERIKA WARD

HOT: Natural materials, statement lighting, anything made from alabaster or quartz, wall sculptures, trim molding, mixed kitchen cabinetry (i.e. wood and painted cabinetry in same kitchen)
NOT: Museum-like homes, carpet, generic lighting.

What's the first piece you like to begin a room design with?

AMBER LEWIS

Sometimes a piece of furniture, or a decorative item can be the inspiration for the entire home. I don't always start with furniture, though, sometimes we find a rug or a fabric and build from there.

KARA COX

I often start a room with a great piece of art or a one-of-a-kind rug.

CHRIS GODDARD

I start with the client's inspiration piece, such a piece of artwork, heirloom or favorite chair, and then build around it.

MICHAEL HABACHY

Ideally, it would be something special that means a lot to the client we are designing for. It could be a large painting, which would be a major focal point, or a luxurious rug. It is easy to pull a color palette together using complementary shades and hues when you have that as a starting point.

CHAD JAMES

Honestly, design always starts when the graphite meets the paper. It all begins with a drawing.

CHRIS HOLT

The first piece I like to design a room with is a rug or a fantastic printed fabric.

KRISTIN KONG

It could be anything ... an amazing fabric, rug or piece of art. There is no formula and we never know when inspiration will strike!

ERIKA WARD

Fabrics are my jam. Fabrics are one of the most versatile design tools, in my opinion. Textures, pattern, color, and the hand of the fabric work together to evoke a particular mood.

Favorite AmericasMart destination showrooms?

CHRIS GODDARD

I am a big believer in walking through every showroom on every floor. Just because the items in the window don't grab your attention doesn't mean there is not a hidden treasure inside.

AMBER LEWIS

Noir, BoBo Intriguing Objects and Aesthetic Movement.

CHRIS HOLT

My favorite destinations at AmericasMart are J.Douglas and CODARUS.

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ERIKA WARD

Cyan Design was my first favorite and still is to this day. Caracole, Aidan Gray, Currey & Company, and J. Douglas are close seconds.

MICHAEL HABACHY

I love to find special, one-of-a-kind pieces, so the key to achieving that is hitting the showrooms on the first morning of the show or even the day before if you can arrange it. Some of the showrooms that have these special pieces are GO HOME, Blue Ocean Traders, Europe 2 You, BoBo Intriguing Objects and Design Legacy.

CHAD JAMES

BoBo Intriguing Objects, Currey & Company, and the Antiques floor.

KRISTIN KONG

I love visiting AmericasMart and look forward to new showrooms to discover. Some of my favorite destinations include Loloi, J. Douglas, Leftbank Art, Wendover Art and Jaipur Living.

KARA COX

I always love the Currey & Company showroom for great lighting selections, Loloi for rugs and CODARUS for a great assortment of fashion-forward décor.

What are the design “rules” you love to break?

MICHAEL HABACHY

I think breaking the rules in design is what sets you apart from all of the others out there. I love creating dark moody spaces which are believed to make a room feel small, but I feel quite the opposite. I also think it's fun to occasionally throw in a piece which is oversized and out of scale to make a statement.

KARA COX

By nature I am a rule-follower but one thing I love to do that is a little outside the lines is mixing eras of vintage art, furniture and accessories.

CHRIS HOLT

It's okay to mix it up. Old and new, high and low. Scale and proportion are always key. One rule I consistently break is that I love to overscale lighting fixtures. Go big or go home!

KRISTIN KONG

I don't follow rules. I follow my gut.

CHRIS GODDARD

Rules are made to be broken. I love layering the unexpected—mixing the old with the new. A room should tell a story!

ERIKA WARD

Rules, oh, there are rules to this?

WHAT ARE YOUR GUILTY PLEASURES?

AMBER LEWIS

Wearing sweat pants all day and **watching re-runs** of Arrested Development.

KARA COX

I'm a **total candy addict**. Jelly beans are my favorite pick-me-up on a bad day!

CHRIS GODDARD

Other than fast food, I am an **avid collector** and if one trinket is good, 10 are better. My favorite thing is for someone to say, “Where in the world did you find that?”

CHRIS HOLT

Guilt pleasures include **dark chocolate and red wine**—and lots of it.

CHAD JAMES

There are simply too many to list, but to give you a little hint ... it rhymes with Chummy Pairs. Also, **ordering a movie in my hotel room** (I never allowed myself to do it until a year ago).

KRISTIN KONG

See question #1 ... **Belgian Chocolate ice cream**.

ERIKA WARD

Perfume, long vacations, anything relating to essential oils, and, of course, **Mexican food!**