

A True Scarsdale Stunner

cottages-gardens.com/New-York-Cottages-Gardens/September-2013/A-True-Scarsdale-Stunner/

Top home designers took on a 1915 Scarsdale mansion to benefit the Cerebral Palsy Foundation. We have the stunning results!

by Jamie Marshall photographs by Keith Scott Morton



Turn 20 top designers loose on a gorgeous 1915 Colonial Revival mansion, and extraordinary things are bound to happen. Presented by NYC&G and benefiting the Cerebral Palsy Foundation, the third annual Designer Showhouse of Westchester was filled with inspiring ideas. Turn the page to see how this historic home's time-worn rooms became overnight sensations.



"I wanted to make the living room inviting, so people would really want to use it"
— Ken Gemes



Living Room
ken Gemes

"This huge room has magnificent moldings and a stunning ceiling medallion," says decorator Ken Gemes, "but there was very little light, and the marble floor made the space cold. The challenge was to warm it up." Gemes added a hand-woven herringbone sisal rug from Merida Meridian, hung simple linen panels on the windows to let in light, and created three separate seating areas in tones of olive, celadon, and gold.



Foyer
Mendelson Group

"I imagined a socially active young couple inhabiting this room," says designer and firm principal Gideon Mendelson. "We kept the original silvered wallpaper, which dictated our palette—from pale to charcoal gray, with hints of acid aqua and apricot. The furnishings and fabrics are a mix of the expected and unexpected—velvet banquettes, fur-covered benches, English consoles, and space-age lamps. It's the perfect place for drinks before dinner. I named it Martini Alley."



Library
 Karen Houghton Interiors
 “The original pine walls were both a challenge and an inspiration,” says Karen Houghton. “We wanted to embrace their wonderful patina, but also make the space seem more modern.” A warm palette echoes the wood tones, accentuated by neutral hues and strong, contemporary silhouettes in the furniture. “To get a big look in a small room, we even had a Kravet sofa sized to fit within a niche in the paneling.”



Ladies’ Sitting Room
 Last Detail Interior Design
 For this “little jewel box” of a room, designer Carey Karlan employed a window treatment that’s meant to evoke a ball gown, with a velvet valance “cinched” in the middle by a brooch-like stone, and laid a white wall-to-wall carpet and a mohair area rug with metallic silver threads on the concrete floor. She added architectural interest with pink-toned Venetian plaster walls inlaid with abalone and a silver glaze on the carved marble fireplace, all created by Heidi Holzer Design and Decorative Work.



Conservatory
Lillian August

“The biggest challenge was creating a floor plan to fit our pieces in this long, narrow room, knowing that there would be lots of showhouse traffic moving through the space,” says co-designer Angela Camarda. “We painted the white wooden windows and doors a matte black so that they looked like old iron windows, then added a black-and-white striped velvet Chivasso wallpaper on the horizontal for added interest.”



Sunroom
Rachel Laxer Interiors

“I wanted to create a place where you could have coffee in the morning, sit with the kids in the afternoon while they’re doing their homework, and have a drink at the end of the day,” says Laxer, who put Maya Romanoff wallpaper on the ceiling to complement the adjacent hallway’s silver paper. The “gorgeous John Houshmand glass-and-wood coffee table,” she adds, “is the equivalent of adding a wow piece of jewelry to a little black dress—suddenly everything transforms.”



“My favorite part of any job I do is the detailing, the accessories, and the art”
 —George Snead

Upstairs Den
 Wakefield Design Center

“This room spoke to me the minute I saw it,” says designer George Snead. “It has a lot of sex appeal, very Hollywood/Vegas Rat Pack.” The biggest obstacle was the giant wedge-shaped bar (“like the bow of a ship”) that split the room in the middle. Snead removed the rococo trim, painted it white, and replaced the linoleum top with marble, then anchored the space with faux bamboo flooring in a dark cappuccino tone.



Second-floor Bedroom
 Anthony & Olanow Design Group

For an upstairs bedroom, Susan Anthony and Mariana Olanow imagined the type of room their daughters might like: “a girl who is in fashion and lives a somewhat glamorous life in New York, but still has a room at home,” says Anthony. The sheer wool challis drapes are backed with sateen “for an ethereal touch,” and the reproduction antique Mexican horse is “proof positive that good stuff doesn’t have to be expensive.”



“I wanted to create something fun and livable, while reflecting today’s design trends” — Barbara Bell

Master Bedroom

Barbara Bell Design Group

“When people see paneled walls and marble fireplaces, they immediately think 18th or 19th century, but that’s not how people live anymore,” says Bell. “I wanted to create something fun and livable for a young family, while also reflecting today’s design trends.” Because she wanted to maximize the room’s square footage, Bell bucked convention and put the bed in front of the window, creating separate sleeping and sitting areas in the process.



Master Sitting Room

Jacqueline Hosford Interior Design

“I had to ask myself how to take something so traditional—the room’s boiserie—and allow it to shine but not overwhelm,” says Hosford. Two mirrored niches provided inspiration. “I’m mad about matte finishes, and decided to play shine against matte and then add in some warmth with antique brass fixtures and the gold-bronze pots on the window ledge.” The centerpiece, a large ottoman covered in a richly embroidered silk botanical, completes the picture.



Second-floor Bedroom
Gail Green Interiors

At the end of a long hall, this room features a beautiful view of the grounds. “I didn’t want a modern motif with the pastoral landscape, so I decided on an 18th-century Gustavian aesthetic,” says Green, who positioned the top of the bed smack dab in the window. A deep sand Farrow & Ball paint on the walls and a lighter hue on the ceiling provide “an air of serenity, with bold turquoise as a contrast.”



Child's Bedroom
Rooms by Zoya B

"A showhouse lets your inner design child run free," says Zoya Bograd, **"and as a true lover of fairytales, I adapted the story of Sleeping Beauty. The biggest challenge was how to make the room both beautiful and functional, with a space saving day bed and trundle, plus several princess chairs by the fireplace."** Cascades of douppioni silk fall from the coronet above the classic princess bed from Bograd's own collection.



Office
Dunn & Tighe Interiors

"This attic room doesn't have the beautiful details found elsewhere in the house," says co-principal Leslie Dunn, **"but we knew we could make this space dramatic, too."** She and partner Ann Tighe disguised the closet door with wallpaper and a pair of bookcases from Dovecote, then added texture with a Phillip Jeffries grass cloth on the walls, gray lacquer on the ceiling, and a charcoal sheer on the window, maximizing the light.

“When the wallpaper went up, the room came to life” —Debra Funt



Guest Room
Debra Funt Interiors

“The dormers are recessed six feet, so there’s very little natural light, and the room was very unbalanced,” says Funt. “I thought about creating a guest suite that was far away from the main rooms, a space not so much about the ‘wow’ as the ‘ahhh.” Translucent glass lamps, a chandelier with glass beads, and a mirrored desk make the room light and airy. **“It’s a mix of precious and casual, without being untouchable.”**



upstairs LOUNGE
Donna Benedetto Designs

“This room is all angles and little window niches,” says Benedetto, who cut bookcases in half in order to fit them up a narrow stair, then had them reassembled. “The wall paint is quite light to minimize the angles, and high-gloss white floors keep the space fresh.” A glamorous spin on a get-away-from-it-all retreat was born, complete with a heady mix of vintage Art Deco and contemporary pieces.



“The challenge was how to take a dark and dated space and turn it into a



warm, adult hang-out” —Elissa Grayer



Rec Room

Elissa Grayer Interior Design

“This room is unusually large for a basement,” says Grayer, “and there was a beautiful wood bar, which needed refinishing. I asked my contractor to build a fireplace around the existing one to provide depth, completely changing the look of the space and creating a focal point.” Grayer drew further inspiration from the graphic knit-stitch pattern on the Brett Design wallpaper. “All the colors in the room come from it,” she says.



dining room

finelines interiors

“Something old, something new.” This elegant and gracious room’s design theme was inspired by its abundance of delicate details, reminiscent of icing on a wedding cake. Antiques from 1915, the year the house was built, marry blissfully with modern accessories to create a sumptuous space.