

Contemporary Influences

Shows in Review:
High Point
Westweek

Destination: New York



Contemporary Influences— A New York State of Design

By Annette Stramesi

“If it’s made, you can find it here,” says one California transplant. “The streets are full of visual stimulation,” says a native. “It’s the center of the universe,” says another.

Unique ideas, solutions, and ambitions: whatever qualities it takes to be a successful designer, it takes more of those qualities in New York City. Talent, hard work, patience, clients, and cash flow, as well as a few courses in design, economics, and psychology won’t hurt either.

Impressive designer showhouse rooms or celebrity clients, strategic magazine stories, or television interviews help a designer achieve success. And a reliable, devoted contractor is a must, as is some knowledge of real-estate law. And newcomers soon learn about the work rules (seasonal renovations only, service-elevator access restrictions, etc.) imposed by the over-vigilant boards of co-operative apartment buildings.

A constantly shifting population, a sizzling real-estate market that shows no signs of cooling, and the city’s enormous wealth can keep the projects coming...some of the reasons why this foursome of New York City designers is not likely to be pulling up stakes any time soon.

Eve Robinson

Eve Robinson seemed almost destined to find a career in design. This native New Yorker has always found the city an incredibly rich visual resource: from industrial patterns like the overhead grates of subway tunnels to natural colors—spring shades of Central Park greenery come to mind—there’s always something to inspire her creativity.

Encouraged by her husband, Robinson started her own firm in 1990, and currently maintains a staff of ten. Since the beginning, she’s burnished her reputation in print and through designer showhouse rooms. In 2004, she transformed a study into a family room for the Kips Bay Showhouse in Manhattan.



Eve Robinson. Photography by Laurie Lambrecht.





Eve Robinson questions accepted notions about decorating family rooms with this sophisticated, yet user-friendly space at the 2004 Kips Bay Showhouse. Against darkly beautiful woodwork, Robinson posed creamy plump and sleek seating around a Berlin book table she designed with Stephen McKay, who also fabricated the piece. A wool-and-silk rug adds softness; pattern appears in the window shades and on the ceiling where circles echo the ceiling pendant's shape. And, if books fail to entertain, a flat-screen TV over the mantel might amuse. Odegard rug, Galbraith & Paul window fabric, Torino swing-arm sconces by Eve Robinson and Stephen McKay. Photography by Peter Margonelli.