

MODERN LUXURY

Interiors

CHICAGO



BEST IN DESIGN

CHICAGO'S BRIGHTEST STARS

FASHION HOUSE! SEAMLESS BLENDS OF STYLE & DECOR
FAB FIVE: A PREVIEW OF THE CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE BIENNIAL
INSIDE SCOOP: ART BASEL, DESIGN MIAMI & BOLOGNA TILE FAIR
LEO DESIGNS, JAMESTHOMAS & TOM STRINGER'S INTERIOR REVAMPS



EARTHY INTERIORS
Designer Michael Del Piero
in her Damen Avenue
boutique and studio

Vern + Vera

The sensational e-shop is now Broadway Street's biggest star. That's right—Vern + Vera, known for fine vintage furnishings from the 1950s through the 1980s, is now a brick-and-mortar showroom that also offers design services. Here, owners Eric Silverstrim and Sean Cowan show off their signature juxtaposition of masculine and feminine styles within a minimalist expanse. Even with years of assessing quality and craftsmanship, and an encyclopedic knowledge of antiques, the guys' barometer is still their gut.

"It's all about clean-line minimal and timelessness," Cowan says. "It's amazing to me that items designed in 1930 are just as current today. Good design can live forever, is always current and always appropriate." Passionate about products that have lived a past life, the duo only dedicate square footage to things that speak to them. And they are just as selective about the buyer.

"It's very important that we know where every piece came from and where it'll be going," Silverstrim says. "Our job is to make sure that the piece's life continues." One recent success story? A Paul Evans coffee table the duo saved is now housed in the Louis Vuitton showroom in Paris. "Who knew that piece would live on and be rescued," Silverstrim says. Talk about a cush landing. 5856 N. Broadway Ave., vernandvera.com

Michael Del Piero

Michael Del Piero is going organic. After a recent reno, her Good Design home furnishings boutique in Bucktown is fresher and cleaner than before, with black-and-white walls; bleached-top, iron-based tables; funky upholstered chairs; and tons of new paintings to bring a bold, graphic element to her usual aesthetic. "I have always savored mixing ancient with modern," Del Piero says. "The renovation, though, embodies a combination of mod and organic." Not to worry—her affinity for naturalistic items is still present in the ethnic textiles and ancient pottery scattered throughout the reopened space. A few of the interior designer's new favorites include a leather Biedermeier chair, salvaged metal light fixtures by Lucy Slivinski, hand-stitched upholstery textiles from local fashion designer Agnieszka Kulon and paintings by Joe Boudreau and Connie Noyes. While working on a few local projects, Del Piero will also keep busy creating a private-label collection that'll include furnishings, lighting and accessories—coming to her storefront this spring. 1914 N. Damen Ave., michaeldelpiero.com



MODERN MASTERS
Vern + Vera co-owners Sean
Cowan (left) and Sean
Michael Design and Eric
Silverstrim

BEST IN DESIGN

AT HOME

BEST LIVING SPACE// SWEET PEAS DESIGN

The theme of the 2014 Gracious House Interior Designer Showhouse (supporting the nonprofit organization Prevent Child Abuse America) was Boutique Hotel. Taking their cue from hip, international hotel lobbies, Susan Brunstrum and her team at Sweet Peas Design created an intimate yet airy family room with two distinct areas in which to lounge. One of these seating arrangements is delineated by an ivory patchwork hide rug with a linen sofa flanked by two Andrew Martin chairs. A modern, statement-making chandelier by Baker features Murano glass and brushed gold, a theme which is carried throughout the space by mixing metals with natural, textural elements. The Harlequin wallpaper was hung in a deconstructed, semirolled effect to add an urban edge. The colorful glass-bust sculptures by Chicago artist Pearl Dick of Ignite Glass Studios on the Bradley cocktail table were chosen to represent a global



BLISSFUL LIVING
With a calm palette punctuated by a few pops of color, Sweet Peas Design curated a serene setting for the Gracious House show-home benefit.

clientele who would stay in this stylish spot during their travels. **What We Love:** The room feels both comfortable yet refined: Expertly edited modern pieces are balanced with eclectic finds for both luxury and livability. 1100 E. Bellevue Place, sweetpeas-inspired.com

READERS' CHOICE

BEST KITCHEN// CANNON FRANK A few years after a shabby remodel, the owner of this North Michigan Avenue high-rise residence was unhappy with her kitchen's discolored and shrunken cabinetry, fragile countertops and cramped layout. The project: Gut the existing space and create a functional and glamorous kitchen from scratch in the seven months the homeowner is away on business. Designer John Cannon hit the ground running, reaching out to Neff of Chicago for premium-quality custom cabinetry. After perusing the company's 87 different door styles, Cannon worked with Neff to create a never-before-seen door design, which sets the sleek and sophisticated tone for the space. Despite some setbacks due to the previous contractor's oversights, Cannon managed to pull together the stylish kitchen just two days before the client arrived home. **What We Love:** Cannon has an architectural eye, so he sees spaces with a holistic angle (and he's an expert when it comes to displaying art of any kind!). Cannon Frank, The Merchandise Mart, Suite 1530B, cannonfrank.com



A LA CUCINA
How to deliver full-on glam in a flash: Ask John Cannon of Cannon Frank and Neff of Chicago (here, their remastered Mag Mile kitchen).



COZY AND CLEAN
Earthy organic accents play with mod light fixtures and luxury hotel-like furnishings in Michael Del Piero's guest room design for the Lake Forest Showhouse.

BEST BEDROOM// MICHAEL DEL PIERO GOOD DESIGN

This multifunctional guest room packs a whole lot of amenities in one small space. Designer Michael Del Piero worked with the "client" on this show house in Lake Forest—a single man who desired a serene respite for overnight guests. The once dark and dreary space was transformed after the Bucktown interiors diva splashed the dark-wood-paneled walls with fresh, high-gloss white. A pair of custom-designed daybeds were made the focal point, floating in the center of the space to do double duty as a sleep station or cozy sitting area by the fireplace. These highly flexible pieces will be included in Del Piero's furniture collection, debuting this spring. **What We Love:** Del Piero's mix of the natural and unnatural always makes us feel transported to an exotic locale—even in the dead of winter! 1914 N. Damen Ave., michaeldelpiero.com

MICHAEL DEL PIERO BEDROOM PHOTO BY JANET MESIC-MACKIE; SWEET PEAS DESIGN FAMILY ROOM PHOTO BY WERNER STRAUPE; CANNON FRANK KITCHEN PHOTO BY NORMAN SZEMORE