

Nickolas Sargent

Here's an Exclusive Look at the 2023 Kips Bay Decorator Show House in Dallas

This year's Show House proves that the future of design is all about livable luxury with a welcome hint of nostalgia.

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Melissa Gerstle Design's "The Garden Arrival"

Melissa Gerstle was tasked with reimagining the front landscape and thus establishing the show house's first impression. Its design centers around a striking sculpture: *Gone* by Carolyn Salas, which depicts a feminine figure departing a disorderly, chaotic place. But where is she going to find order and peace? Gerstle has just the destination.

"The gardens are really a place for gathering," Gerstle says. "Each space is enclosed and almost hugs the environment and the people that are in it to help them feel safe and calm. That hedge wall around the sculpture embraces you, and the shade garden surrounds you with all these luscious plants."

The landscape was designed in response to the site itself, which is an important aspect to Gerstle in every project. She employed a "very controlled, edited plant palette" with varying shades of green that is also reflected in the clean-lined stainless steel seating by



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KMNelson Design's "M memoir of Marrakech"

Vogue's January 1970 issue featured a spread of John Paul Getty, Jr. and Talitha Getty on display at their Marrakech home, and those images of "bohemian decadence" continue to inspire Kristi Nelson today after discovering them in childhood. After noticing a resurgence of bohemian trends at High Point this past spring, Nelson decided it was finally time to explore this idea of 1970s Marrakech in her secondary bedroom and bathroom.

While she's quick to say this space is her romanticized version of the iconic design capital, it's certainly one that will have guests fighting over who gets to immerse themselves in it for the weekend or longer. Visitors are first welcomed with a hand-painted silk wallpaper by Fromental that evokes memories of a sandy desert sunset, while the deep drape of linen velvet fabric by Cowtan & Tout and the Roman shade's subtle ocean-inspired pattern (both fabricated by The Shade Store) bring a sense of "hedonistic privacy," says the designer. Add Soane Britain's Owl Lantern with teardrop-shaped openings, an architectural headboard covered in a sumptuous teal Perennials velvet, plus an audio system by Christopher William, and you just might be convinced you've been transported to Morocco.



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Dodson Interiors' "Traditional Today Room"

Dodson Interiors's Julie Dodson leaned into the coziness of the windowless upstairs den while creating a sophisticated destination fit for parents and kiddos alike. She imagines it being a respite for the adults to wind down with a cocktail and conversation in the evenings or for the whole family to pile in and watch a favorite movie together. After perusing former rooms of favorite designers David Hicks and Suzanne Rheinstein, then coming across a gorgeous new floral fabric from Zoffany (which she used for the draperies), the pieces started coming together.

"I really stuck to who I am on this one and didn't want the room to be this over-the-top space, though there are some pretty special details," says Dodson. "The little subtle elements are what I love most because those are the things that end up making an impact in just the right way."

Dodson collaborated with The Shade Store to create custom drapery treatments that would work with the circular details in the valance around the room (a nod to a favorite design by David Hicks). She brought in touches of modern art from C2 Art Advisors to make the somewhat traditional space more contemporary. The designer also teamed up with Dallas' Larru Leathers to add hand-tooled leather in the bookcases and found stunning antique pieces from Wolf Hall Antique Collective that felt hand-picked by Rheinstein herself. Applying a chocolate Perennials stripe fabric on the walls added a chic yet comfortable finishing touch that is sure to have family and friends finding their way back into this space time and again.



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Chad James Group's "A Nostalgic Reverie: The Fox Den Suite"

Design is always personal, but in this case, it's deeply interlaced with nostalgia. Designer Chad James says the original inspiration for this space is his sister's 1980s bedroom from their childhood home in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, and it is peppered with references to loved ones, from the lampshades to the original Andy Warhol artworks.

"Design is cyclical, and I wanted to give new life to this peach and blue color palette, which I think is about to hit mainstream again, as I'm seeing it in trims and fabrics and tile right now," James says. "Though I wanted to make sure it honors my sister with some feminine moments, there are masculine undertones, and it's part of this waltz that I do to ensure that things feel classic, timeless, and comfortable to anyone who may stay there."

Case in point: The room is enveloped in a moody blue Vervain fabric, while the bed receives a billowy, decadent Fabricut treatment in a peachy pink (fabricated by The Shade Store), along with a Tibetan-knot area rug from Perennials.



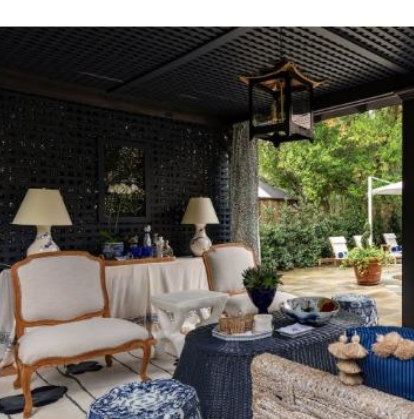
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Todd Events' "Sharon's Terrace"

Todd Fiscus is famous for planning luxurious celebrations from South Carolina to San Miguel de Allende, and the Dallas-based event planner was thrilled to try his hand at a permanent interiors project. The Todd Events team was assigned the home's generous terrace and pool pavilion, which he transformed into an entertainer's dream space for hosting. The space is also an homage to Fiscus' late mother, who had a penchant for blue-and-white porcelain and loved traditional design.

"My original thoughts on the space were that it offered lots of square footage but had zero flow, and it felt unusable because there was no real connection to the house, which was so sad," Fiscus says. "I tend to be a little Palladian and like something north, to east, and west—all at a relatively similar scale—to create balance and give more spaces for people to live in."

Fiscus took one end of the terrace's empty space and created a fireplace painted in Benjamin Moore's Midnight Oil to establish a central living room. On the other end, he created a more private sitting area with a water feature for a serene start to the day. An expandable teak-topped table (Sutherland) invites outdoor dining, while the fabric on the dining chair cushions (a leafy Morris & Co. fabric) echo the terrace's surrounding verdure.



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Todd Events' "Sharon's Terrace"

A pool folly and lounge area is bedecked in indoor-quality creature comforts to ensure this alfresco room is ready to be enjoyed to the utmost. It's grounded by a floral Tibetan-knot rug (Perennials) with French-inspired teak-frame lounge chairs (Sutherland), a skirted bar, and curtains (fabric, Morris & Co.) that can be drawn for additional privacy.

"As someone in the party business, I live in the world of 'temporary' and I got to push myself in terms of what's going to live and last and be practical," says Fiscus. "I tried really hard not to be 'the party guy' and layer the space with too much stuff and am proud of how livable it is."



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From the Ground Up's "A Preston Hollow Shire"

From the Ground Up's Dan Houchard is returning to the Kips Bay Decorator Show House Dallas for a second time and has given new life the home's back landscape. While he was appreciative of the blank canvas and native areas to work with, Houchard says the biggest challenge was determining how to draw people out, how to create destinations and focal points one could see from the house that would make them drop what they were doing and get outside.

"When it was decided that the house would be painted black, it literally set the tone for us—it needed to feel seamless," says Houchard, adding that he wanted something that would be an experience. "The area was really flat so we created these large mounds with mass plantings of boxwoods surrounded by ornamental grasses, and it just felt like this magical place where hobbits would live."

The From the Ground Up team found their common thread and installed a custom moon gate, which created an enticing, if not mystical, entry into a series of cozy destinations along a winding pathway. Visitors first find a seating area immersed in a woodland garden, with cocktail hour-ready chaises, lounge chairs, and dimpled stone stools (all by Sutherland) just off a stone pathway.