

A room of their own

Showhouses always have a whiff of unreality about them. After all, they're meant to let designers create spectacular spaces unfettered by concerns about price tags or finicky clients. The Boston Design Center's second annual Dream Home, on view through July 31, is no different. But this year, the fanciful touches — sliding lacquered teak cabinets, bath vanities with sinks so shallow they're almost invisible — have here and there been tempered by designs that feel a bit more down to earth. So while Jill Litner Kaplan's study features an elegant accent wall paved with capiz shell, the smallish scale of the furnishings makes it feel homey. Likewise, Leslie Fine's family room, with its citrus walls and bamboo floor, could house a pack of teens and an Xbox, no problem. That said, some of the Dream Home's loveliest details are its most fantastic: The glowing lights that float like fireflies in the entry, designed by Cheryl and Jeffrey Katz; the delicate, silvery wallpaper Gerald Pomeroy uses in the dining room. Because designers can dream too, can't they? — HAYLEY KAUFMAN

CHERYL KATZ, C&J Katz Studio, designed the entry

We love things related to nature and garden-esque kinds of things. The wallpaper was the first thing we found. Because it was an entry, you could imagine kind of an inside-outside kind of thing. We wanted to create light that was interesting, so [we used] standard parts — a cord and a bulb — and flat discs covered in linen with a hole in the center. Then we dropped the cord and bulb right through. We used Edison bulbs, which we love, they're so romantic. I hate the word "eclectic," but there's something we love about that. The vagaries of fashion are such that a design can become quickly dated, but if you can choose freely from what's out there, it makes sense to us.



PHOTOS BY PAT GREENHOUSE/GLOBE STAFF



JILL LITNER KAPLAN, Jill Litner Kaplan Interiors, designed the study

Small spaces exist in houses or apartments of any size and scale, and it can be very challenging to configure it into a space that works for the owner. But in a smaller space you can really get up close to objects and walls and textures and see the details. So for the [shell] wall, I felt that again in a smaller space, you need to have something luminous and exciting and dynamic to look at. At the opening of the Dream House, people would walk into the room, they'd look to the left and they'd look to the right, and they'd walk toward [the wall]. Nine out of 10 times they would reach out and touch it.



GERALD POMEROY, Gerald Pomeroy Design Group, designed the dining room

This was my interpretation of a new classic. It's very clean, very edited. I wanted to be able to mix it up and show how you can have a very fresh, very new approach. The stenciled floor, that was influenced by an old Billy Baldwin design that feels very modern in the space. The only color in the room was going to be the peonies. I was working with Winston Flowers to match the wall covering. That wallpaper could easily go over the top, and we managed not to.

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