

HOME



Thursday, January 5, 2006

latimes.com/home

SPECIAL ISSUE

FACES OF 2006

Creative minds are redefining the California look: an idiosyncratic mix of nature and artifice, the classic and the contemporary, that will set trends here and beyond.

Designers to watch



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

INTERIORS

"Eclecticism" is a decorating platitude until Anna Hackathorn, left, and Schuyler Samperton inject their brand of West Coast attitude. **PAGE 7**



Up-and-comers, designing L.A.

This decorating duo uses patterns and prints to create a sumptuous blend of traditional and Modern.

By DAVID A. KEEPS
Times Staff Writer

THOUGH they have designed the handsomely tailored offices for Imagine Entertainment and the interior of Jerry and Jessica Seinfeld's Los Angeles home, Schuyler Samperton and Anna Hackathorn are by no means celebrity decorators. Not quite yet, anyway. Poised and polished, the camera-ready duo joined forces in 2003 after working for decorator-to-the-stars Michael Smith. They quickly won raves for their luscious yet unpretentious rooms.

"We had great training," says Hackathorn of working with Smith, who is known for luxurious old-world-for-new-money interiors. Although the two women came from different backgrounds, Hackathorn says, "We discovered that we shared a similar point of view."

Samperton, an East Coast native, describes her personal interior style as "Anglo-Indian crusty, the kind of thing you'd see in an English gent's study, with tons of pattern and color." Santa Monica-born Hackathorn drifts toward what she calls, "the beachy, bamboo tropical look." At work, however, they agree on one basic tenet.

"We do not impose what we like per-

sonally, we take our cues from the client and the architecture," says Samperton. "We don't believe in having a signature style. That's boring."

Their interiors are anything but. Working with families looking for comfort and durability as well as entertainment industry bachelors seeking a refined sex appeal, Samperton and Hackathorn express the somewhat overused and hard-to-pin-down notion of worldly eclecticism with vibrant décor schemes that exude the laid-back allure of the California lifestyle.

Often beginning with vividly colored walls, the team then mixes its own upholstered designs with midcentury furniture and Asian antiques from local galleries including Emmerson Troop Inc. and JF Chen. With '60s London designer David Hicks as an influence, they create visual texture using pattern and print — mixing traditional Italian embroideries and bold, geometric, contemporary Suzani tapestries.

"Adding a delicate needlepoint pattern or a large-scale ethnic print, even on something as small as a throw pillow, adds punch to a room, whatever the budget," says Samperton. Indeed, for a friend on a small budget, the pair transformed the West Hollywood studio apartment shown here into a stylish bazaar, with Chinese and Moroccan furniture and Turkish tapestries mixed with Southwestern-style upholstery.

In all their work, Samperton and Hackathorn are particularly attentive to lighting. Last summer, they bought Broad Beach, a lamp design firm founded by Clark Collins, a fellow Michael Smith alumnus.



FRECK BYERS

IN TANDEM: Textures and color add vibrancy to a bedroom designed by Schuyler Samperton and Anna Hackathorn.

"It was a line we had used often because it works well in both traditional and Modern environments," says Hackathorn.

They have already supplemented the existing collection with their first new piece. The elegant Cairo lamp, a 26-inch-square column of natural travertine with brass hardware, is sold through Silho Furniture, the Los Angeles showroom for Broad Beach (www.broadbeachdesign.com; www.silhofurniture.com). It is a worthy companion to a line of Modern classics that include lamps made from slate, cork, marble and pony skin.

"Broad Beach offers us a great op-

portunity to become product designers," adds Hackathorn, "and it's a real problem solver when we can't find certain kinds of lighting fixtures, like a simple flush-mounted ceiling light, that we always need for clients."

Lighting design is the least of their aspirations, however. This year, Samperton and Hackathorn will tackle their first ground-up residential projects, working with the architects to design products such as floor coverings and doorknobs. And there is one pet project so present in each of their minds that they talk about it as one:

"In 2006," they say, "our goal is to design a hotel."