

LUXURY HOME

quarterly



The [new] Glass House

*FRANK HARMON ARCHITECT
creates a modern oasis among the trees*

+ *A PEEK INSIDE Jeffrey Hitchcock's
gallery-style design at the Plaza Hotel*

DESIGNER SHOWCASE



COLOR CONTRAST

In the dining room of the Pacific Heights Glamour home, the high-gloss macassar wood and black-and-white photography help ground the otherwise light and airy palette of mother-of-pearl shell tiles and silk window treatments.



A HINT OF FLASH

The living room at Pacific Heights Glamour displays a fairly monochromatic scheme of soft saltwater blues and taupes, focusing on silky textures and incorporating ebonized-wood accents.



Kendall Wilkinson Design & Home

CAREER CHANGE LEADS FORMER FILM PRO TO DESIGN SUCCESS

Today, Kendall Wilkinson is one of her region's top interior designers, yet more than two decades ago she was in another industry altogether. At the time, working in development at a Hollywood film studio, the young professional felt unfulfilled. But when she returned to her native San Francisco for dinner with her mother (an interior designer), an epiphany struck.

TEXT BY ZACH BALIVA



Pacific Heights Glamour

Designed to reflect classic Hollywood elegance, Pacific Heights Glamour was also made for entertaining. Wilkinson toiled to provide a space plan that would work equally well for a group of four or 40. Chairs that face the fireplace pivot to join other seats, and nesting tables unstack to accommodate other guests. An oval dining-room table seats just four but easily expands to host an entire dinner party.

“WHAT SHE DID AS A DESIGNER intrigued me so much,” Wilkinson says. “I loved the idea of making people and their surroundings both aesthetically and functionally pleasing because it’s such a big part of our lives.”

That realization set Wilkinson on a new path. She went and received her second degree, traveled abroad, and returned to open Kendall Wilkinson Design & Home in 1992. In the nearly two decades since, Wilkinson has emerged as a leader in her new industry. Contributions to the San Francisco Decorator Showcase, awards from California Home + Design, and appearances on HGTV have helped solidify her reputation, and Wilkinson’s company has gone from a hot start-up to a boutique studio to finally a retail store today. Wilkinson continues to be well received in the industry—in 2010, she was featured in *Luxe Interiors + Design*, *Elle Decor*, *Gentry*, and *House Beautiful* magazines along with websites such as Williams Sonoma Home, 1st Dibs, Decorati, One Kings Lane, and Ronda Carmen’s “All the Best” blog.

Wilkinson credits her success in part to the inspiration found in her youth. “I was always surrounded by very creative women like my mother,” she says. “I had a knack for design and was encouraged to be creative.” Her travels in Europe brought more inspiration. “I fell in love with the history of architecture and how it fills your senses,” she says. “It is important to me to be in a place that feels inspiring, and I want to do that for my clients.”

Kendall Wilkinson Design & Home is a full-service interior-design firm. Wilkinson helps clients pick fixtures, finishes, tiles, stone, lights, colors, draperies, carpets, and all other materials. She also designs furniture and offers her own custom line of home furnishings. The approach, she says, is to fill a canvas (floors, walls, and ceilings) with the right treatments while “perfectly addressing space-planning and scale.”

Designers often develop a signature, and Wilkinson is no exception; she is known for pulling all elements together in a fluid way to give a space or house better continuity among items such as wall color, furniture, art, and photography. That talent, along with an eye for color (Wilkinson often designs her own palettes) serves clients well because it addresses all areas,

PHOTO: PHOTOS: DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON



Seacliff Southern

Wilkinson's sophisticated design of this home in an area known for dramatic ocean vistas takes advantage of natural hues. Her palette of melons and turquoise complement strong oranges (from Golden Gate Bridge), greens (from the inland mountains), and blues (from the Pacific Ocean) that filter in through many oversize windows. Ample natural light makes the space playful and bright, and a sunroom and lounge done in blue and white is especially striking in the way it works with the adjacent seascape. At night, an antique Parisian fireplace in the living room takes center stage.

Part of Wilkinson's success comes from her ability to make a space both timeless and fulfilling. "Timelessness is about not being trendy," she says. "A space should be unique and sustain itself through decades. That has to do with the classic-ness of a design even when a space is modern or contemporary." Many great designs are based on established traditions. A beautiful English Arm sofa, Wilkinson says, never goes out of style and can be updated with various fabrics. Listening closely to clients helps her provide fulfilling spaces. "Each person has specific functional and aesthetic needs that a designer must respect," Wilkinson says.

At Seacliff Southern, a home in a high-end San Francisco neighborhood, Wilkinson provided a design matched perfectly to her client's lifestyle and



LIGHTENED LIBRARY

The library in Seacliff Southern is done in light blues and browns, and classic wall paneling channels a vintage atmosphere. Also, the zebra rug creates a chic vibe below the traditional sofa.



personality. "The client has very strong southern roots and wanted to bring that to San Francisco," she says. Wilkinson selected a color palette of melon and turquoise that guided the selection of furniture and fabrics. Because the house overlooks the Pacific Ocean and the Golden Gate Bridge, the views are daytime focal points. Wilkinson avoided window treatments and designed remote blinds to shade the sun. She traveled the world to find antiques in Atlanta, New York, and Europe, including an imported Parisian fireplace that became the home's evening centerpiece.

A second project, Pacific Heights Glamour, shows Wilkinson's versatility. The house was designed for a client who wanted a "Hollywood glam" feel—but with muted colors. Wilkinson chose smoky hues of grey, blue, platinum,

ivory, taupe, and black and filled the space with Art Deco mirrors, glass, and Lucite pieces. Tone-on-tone designs, she says, require texture for dimension. She accomplished that depth through varied fabrics and Venetian plaster.

Seacliff Southern and Pacific Heights Glamour are two very different projects, which is not unusual at Kendall Wilkinson Design & Home. "We do traditional, modern, contemporary, and everything in between," Wilkinson says. "The important thing is that our designs are as unique as our clients." Great design evolves when clients have strong visions and designers implement them well. When that happens, the client walks away with a truly timeless and fulfilling space. ■



Top Design Elements of Seacliff Southern and Pacific Heights Glamour

1. **Designing around the client's interests:** Spaces at Pacific Heights where people can congregate and where kids can play allow the client to entertain guests.
2. **Sparkle:** Touches of crystal, mirrors, and glass at Pacific Heights add life, energy, and glamour.
3. **Bringing the outside in:** A color palette of blues, dusty oranges, and terra cotta at Seacliff Southern mirror the stunning views of the bay, Golden Gate Bridge, and beyond. Also, a crisp white is accented throughout to create a brightness that balances the gray tones of the San Francisco sky.
4. **Mixing old and new:** Juxtaposing lacquered pieces with 19th-century antiques from the client's hometown contemporizes the space at Seacliff Southern.
5. **Color:** A saturated color palette contrasts with the cool exterior at Seacliff Southern. Painted ceilings add warmth to a home with large windows.

ALL AGLOW

The combination of an antique mirrored vanity and a Venetian mirror create a delightful powder room in the Seacliff Southern home.

