

HOW RICHMOND LIVES

R·HOME

Interior
Designers

Tell All!

**SPICE UP
THE KITCHEN**

for Under \$50

Night-Blooming
GARDENS

ENTERTAINING
with Helen Reed

Design Icon
BILLY HAINES

Plus:
**TOUR
THE RENTZ
HOUSE!**
Details on
p. 52

Designer Robert
Rentz takes us
into his home.

\$3.95 SEPT./OCT. 2009

rhomemag.com





In-terior Treatment

BOUTIQUE HOTELS AND
RESTAURANTS FUEL
SUSAN JAMIESON'S
DESIGNING MIND

By Jessica Ronky Haddad

Interior designer
Susan Jamieson compares
some facets of her profession to
the work of a psychologist. In both
fields, the successful practitioner must listen
carefully to her clients' motivations, wishes
and fears and then develop solutions to their
problems and help create a better life. But just as
no single prescription suits all patients, no interior
design suits all clients. "I try not to do the same
thing on every job," Jamieson says. "It's all about
pulling together the client's wishes and style
with their house and my vision for the space."
Bridget Beari Designs, the full-service design
firm Jamieson founded in 1992, specializes
in residential design and serves clients
from New York City to Palm
Springs and throughout
Virginia. ➔

← Jamieson's projects have been covered in the pages of national shelter publications. In 2005, her own Greek Revival home, built in 1924 in Ginter Park, was featured in *Traditional Home* magazine. Most recently, she appeared on TLC's *Restorer Guy*.

Known as "the queen of color" to clients, Jamieson has a knack for choosing that elusive, just-right shade for any room. While some clients hire her only for an hour-long color consultation, many more enlist Jamieson's services to redecorate a room or for full-home renovation projects.

She describes her personal style as "classic and sophisticated," with a penchant for neutral colors and a "calm, classic look," but she loves a good design challenge.

"I can do contemporary, traditional, whatever is asked of me," she says. "Good design is good design. I'm up for being creative, and I like to push people to see how far they will go."

Aside from consulting the usual decorating magazines, Jamieson loves to travel and visit hotels and restaurants for design inspiration, even asking hotel housekeepers to allow her to see unoccupied rooms.

"Wherever I go and whatever I do, I am always looking for inspiration and sketching ideas," she says. "Out to dinner it might be colors on the wall or a bar design, or [out] shopping it might be fabric combinations or styles."

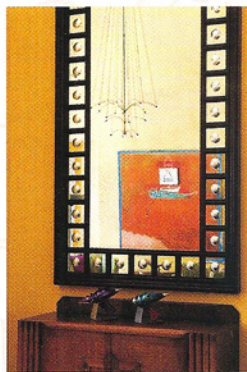
She also loves antiques shops, but not just to buy furniture. "I'll see something old and expensive and have a furniture maker create something with a similar motif," she says. "It may be a chest with an interesting inlay pattern, and I'll use that pattern for a stencil on a wall design."

Jamieson shared with us three recent projects that showcase a range of styles and design challenges. From a contemporary overhaul of a traditional home to the creation of a new basement rec room, the same basic design principles apply. It's the style, color, fabric and furniture choices, art, and accessories that add personality and set these rooms apart.

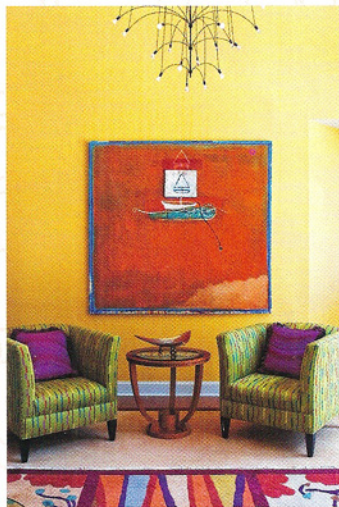
Spangler Living Room

Mike and Shannon Spangler relocated from San Francisco and are fans of contemporary design. The challenge here was to transform their transitional Colonial-style home in Reed's Landing into a contemporary showplace by stripping away all vestiges of traditional style. Because the home already had an open floor plan, it lent itself well to a fresher, more modern style, Jamieson says.

Color was the main focus. Jamieson looked to the Spanglers' vibrant artwork and rug for inspiration, choosing Benjamin Moore's Lion Heart for the walls and mixing in other brights via accessories and pillows. "Your eye follows from one color to the next because the tones are all equal in strength," she explains. The result is a wholly unexpected surprise within a traditional home and neighborhood. "That makes good design," says Jamieson.



Symmetry and repetition are important elements to consider when designing a room. Identical mirrors flank the fireplace, matching spider light fixtures provide symmetry from above, and three identical planters draw your eye to the hearth.



Many different colors in the same space can sometimes create a carnival-like effect, but here all the colors tie back to the painting and rug. The black sofa, piano and frames on the mirror help to anchor "the parade of colors," Jamieson says.



Jamieson designed a steel mantel fabricated locally by Michael Nolte to replace the existing Colonial-style fireplace. The hefty scale of the design helps to balance the room, and the sleek metal adds shine, reflecting light that streams in through the large windows.





Solid fabrics don't have to be boring. Textures such as ribbing and soft velvet add visual and tactile interest to this room and complement the graphic design of the rug. The sheer, neutral draperies add softness.



Drummond Living Room

This Fan home was a total fixer-upper, and Jamieson's task was to create a sophisticated living space for clients Jeff and Kim Drummond, who have minimalist tastes. They wanted a room that was subdued but warm, and Jamieson used various tones of the same colors to create a harmonious, calming environment. The neutral color palette of taupe, blue-grey, silver and white is soothing yet stylish. These colors repeat throughout the room, in the furniture, in the custom-made Tibetan rug, and in the draperies in various shades and intensities. The walls are painted in Duron's Tavern Taupe. A crisp white highlights the room's many interesting architectural elements.

Because the room is long and narrow with little wall space because of the windows, fireplace and doorways, Jamieson placed the furniture in the center. While the sofa is centered on the rug, the chairs float off of it, creating a less formal look. "You can move the chairs around so it's not so stiff," she says.

This arrangement allows for traffic flow around the room and creates a cozy area for conversation, with the fireplace as a focal point.



The painting by Kazaan Viveiros above the mantel was purchased from Page Bond Gallery. The artist customized the colors in the painting to reflect the room's subdued color scheme.



The two desks at the end of the room create symmetry, as do the matching lamps, the two club chairs and the accessories on the mantel. The creamware collection inside the bookcases provides a graphic punch to the room.



The home theater was built on a raised platform and enveloped in substantial drapes to help create a plush cocoon for gaming and movie watching.



Because this space is used for entertaining, Jamieson was able to have some fun with the design. A broken-mirror backsplash adds sparkle and texture, and is a surprising, head-turning touch.



Dark, faux-wood-paneled rec rooms are a relic of the past. Durable fabrics and finishes ensure that the room will withstand many years of use.

Morris Game Room

For Craig and Raegan Morris in the West End, Jamieson created a multifunctional recreational space from an unfinished concrete basement, transforming it into a home theater, game room, bar and wine room for this family with teenage boys.

The long, narrow room presented a challenging template, and Jamieson divided it into different spaces through the use of lighting, giving each area its own fixture and lighting controls.

To unify the space, the walls and rug are a similar shade of taupe, Benjamin Moore's Manchester Tan, while the two-tone cork floor adds depth. The owners' collection of artwork adds an unexpected flourish to the décor.

With only one window in the space, it was a challenge to make the basement inviting and warm. "The mixtures of textures, from shiny to slick to the softness of the cork, keeps it from looking and feeling so cold," Jamieson explains.

