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And I don’t believe I told myself what I mean

Maybe someday soon
I can feel this way year round
But it’s summertime...
And summertime is calling me!

-The Catalinas

Roma Collection by Summer Classics
When asked to renovate a historic home in Hillsborough, designer Andrew Howard excitedly tackles the project, paying homage to the home’s rich history.

When the Diefes family found a perfectly preserved ’80s home with good bones, they called on Raleigh-based design firm The Warehouse to modernize it.

Interior designer Susan Tollefsen uses bold hues and intriguing textures to give a Raleigh spec home contemporary flair.
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Highlighting the best and the brightest, there are no wallflowers in this selection of colorful pieces.

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Ever since I was a young girl, I’ve had a penchant for color. I remember being fascinated by the names of the Crayola crayons and wanting to submit my own ideas for new introductions. Not much has changed. Today, I see a color and I want to pinpoint exactly what shade it is – robin’s egg blue, aubergine, chartreuse. Just saying those words aloud makes me happy, so it should come as no surprise that I’m eager to present our first In Living Color Issue – a celebration of living vibrantly.

Here’s to looking on the bright side. Literally. It seems designers let their color wheels spin this season. From textiles to case goods to tiles to even luggage, there are no wallflowers in this selection of new, colorful pieces (page 16). With its vibrant colors, graphic patterns, and bold geometric shapes, the distinctively eccentric design movement of the Memphis Group is experiencing a resurgence and doesn’t appear to be slowing down. Take a look at how contemporary artists and designers are reinterpreting the outrageous trend from the 1980s (page 22).

Throughout our pages, you will see some of the Triangle’s most colorful homes on display. Andrew Howard takes careful measure to give a historic Hillsborough residence a classic update by incorporating color, pattern, and one-of-a-kind treasures found along the way while also paying homage to its rich history and architectural details (page 40). When Zandy Gammons and Liles Dunnigan of The Warehouse were tasked with modernizing a home that looked as if it hadn’t been touched since the ‘80s, they put on their construction caps and got to work – bringing in light, space, and a lot of panache (page 50). For most modern farmhouse-style homes, a simple white and wood palette comes to mind. However, when you bring interior designer Susan Tollefsen into the mix, it’s anything but. With a proclivity for vibrancy and funk, Tollefsen infuses bold colors and contemporary patterns into builder Allen Wells’ newly-constructed home (page 62).

They say do what makes you happy. I say design your happy and do it with color. Together, let’s paint the town!

Ashley Hotham Cox
Editor in Chief
@ashleyhcox on Instagram
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IN LIVING COLOR

Decorating with color takes confidence, but when you fall in love with the perfect piece, confidence falls in line. You won’t find any wallflowers in this collection of the best and brightest in design.

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox
Written by Anne Marie Ashley

RHYTHM & BLUES

The soulful sounds and vibrant beats of the greatest blues recording artists of the ’50s and ’60s have inspired the creative genius of Margo Selby. Her new collection for Osborne & Little, Memphis, is infused with bold colors like jade, fuchsia, and teal alongside softer undertones of gray, sage, and silver. Whether you play it soft or loud, all of them come alive through her woven fabrics, including cut velvets and wool. Available through Osborne & Little, to the trade, osborneandlittle.com

IN VOGUE

With a background in fashion, it’s no wonder that interior designer Robin Baron’s furniture collection is daring and trendsetting. Statement-making pieces including the Chloe console epitomize the motto: “Confidence Begins at Home.” Featuring looped hardware in a choice of satin brass or polished nickel, this table comes in a variety of finishes and colors. Up the ante by pairing it with a set of Robin Baron-designed hardware and the options are endless. Available through Niermann Weeks, to the trade, robinbarondesign.com

CHECKMATE

The Bishop stools from designer India Mahdavi were inspired by chess pieces – which would seem obvious if you weren’t so entranced by the beauty and uniqueness of the design, doubled by the dizzying array of new colors like mandarin, mandarin au lait, and purple rain. The ceramic is drenched in a variety of brightly colored enamels to create another level of eye-catching design, but their versatility is the true star. Available in eighteen- or twenty-four-inch heights. Available through Ralph Pucci, $1,440 - $2,880, ralphpucci.net

HEAVEN SCENT

Matthew Williamson launches his new luxury home fragrance collection in collaboration with Fragrance Group London. Not only are the five signature scents positively intoxicating, but the colorful candles also double as design elements, encased in a vessel crafted from the finest Portuguese ceramic with bold designs and interesting patterns. The line features diffusers and candles with scents, including Summer Siesta and English Garden, that were inspired by Williamson’s travels around the world. Available through Amara, $195 each, amara.com
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Star Power
A perfect place to land as you swoon over the design, the Hayworth bench by Duncan Hughes for Dowel harkens back to an old Hollywood style that once was lost. Alas, the tailored look and substantial feel is the ideal modern take on a classic functional piece. At the foot of the bed, anchoring a room, or as a respite in an entry hall, the Hayworth bench holds its own in any scene. Customize the fabric, finish, and even the measurements for truly luxe appeal. Available through Dowel Furniture, $2,100, dowelfurniturecompany.com

Swing Low
The Charleston-based Urban Electric Co. creates handcrafted lighting with innovative designs and heirloom quality. Impeccable craftsmanship is backed by a lifetime guarantee, but since they use the finest materials, you likely won’t need it. The Audley wall sconce is a perfect bedside companion with timeless appeal dripping from the elegantly angled arm to the three-way touch sensor. Specify paint or finish on the inlay to make it extra personal. Available through The Urban Electric Co., $1,426, urbanelectric.com

Family Ties
Made up of North Carolina–based sisters Charlotte Harris Lucas and Liz Harris Carroll, textile brand House of Harris releases its second collection, Avenue II, which continues the company’s Southern story. Highlighted through geometric, floral, and novelty fabrics and wallpapers and infused with subtle textures and bold colors, Avenue II is a celebration of the company’s heritage along with a global flair inspired by the founders’ travels. Included in the launch is Hillside, a 144-inch mural wallcovering. The hand-drawn elements and soothing color palette bring a new large-scale panel option to the collection. Available through A. Hoke Ltd., to the trade, ahokeltd.com
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TILE STYLE
What if your backsplash or shower had dimension or depth? The Dual Glaze Triangle Tile Collection from Heath Ceramics brings new meaning to movement in design. A single tile layered with two textures and two finishes is combined to create multi-shape patterns with depth and motion. Currently in four design options, the patterns are at once familiar and unfamiliar, bringing a sense of wonder to the eye and a delight that reignites every time you see it. From earthy and dramatic tones to neutrals and high textures, the collection brings a fresh take on not-so-standard tile. Available through Heath Ceramics, $72 per square foot, heathceramics.com

SEEING STRIPES
American luxury brand Scalamandre is one of the new collaborators with The Inside – an online retailer making high design available to enthusiasts everywhere. This collaboration with Scalamandre marks the first of, hopefully, many, with an offering of six of their archival fabric designs including its iconic Zebras print, shown here in yellow on the Tuxedo Chair, plus another never-before-seen print called Leaping Cheetahs. These designs can be paired with the furniture of your choice. Custom pieces with fast shipping? What more could a design-lover want? Available through The Inside, $59 - $1,349, theinside.com

TAKE NOTE
Inspired by neoclassical design and then simplified and rendered elemental, the Hunter desk by Bungalow 5 is handcrafted by artisans using custom-cast metal fixtures and hardware – adding the perfect touch of elegance to hand-stitched leather and a micro-suede interior. Whether you choose deep and moody navy or glamorous ivory, this piece will add an unmistakable luxe to any room. Available through Nest Fine Gifts, to the trade, nestfinegifts.com
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Flashback to the future: Memphis design gains momentum in the modern era.

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox

Just one look is all it takes – the vibrant colors, graphic patterns, and bold geometric shapes and figures – and you are immediately transported back in time to the 1980s. Influenced by Art Deco, Pop Art, and 1950s kitsch, the distinctively eccentric movement of the Memphis Group, an Italian postmodern design collective named after Bob Dylan’s song *Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again*, was driven by form rather than function and aimed to produce provocative, outrageous designs – a complete departure from the restrained, minimalist designs of the ’70s. Like all trends, there’s been a resurgence of this distinctively ’80s aesthetic in recent years, and it doesn’t appear to be slowing down. Contemporary artists and designers are carrying the torch by continuing to shock the senses and the status quo with their own take on the movement.

1. Deconstructed Stripe by Miles Redd for Schumacher / to the trade / karensaks.com
2. Nest Studio Geo Colorful Series / price upon request / neststudiocollection.com
3. Kelly Behun Studio Neo Laminati Bench / $8,000 / 1stdibs.com
4. ROYERE V Wall Sconce / $3,790 / editionmodern.com
5. Property Tembo Stool / $1,820 / propertyfurniture.com

Photo courtesy of Angela Chrusciaki Blehm

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox
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“Stairway to Heaven” by Sasha Bikoff; photography by Nick Sargent.

“THE SPACE NEEDED TO BE MORE THAN JUST AN ODE TO THE PAST; IT NEEDED TO BOTH SING THE PRAISES OF THE PAST AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE.”
– SASHA BIKOFF

1. Schoolhouse Electric Mollie Hook in Industrial Yellow / $99 / schoolhouseelectric.com
2. Anna Karlin Pattern Stool / $5,350 each / annakarlin.com
3. CB2 Taylor Bone Inlay Side Table / $499 / cb2.com
4. High Fashion Home Sunshine Tray Table / $117 / highfashionhome.com
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1. Stray Dog Designs Alfredo Ceiling Light / $600 / straydogdesigns.com
2. PFM Ratio Hand-Tufted Rug in Jazz / price upon request / pattersonflynnmartin
3. Kelly Wearstler Cleo Table Lamp / $449 / kellywearstler.com
4. Maggie Cruz Alexandra in Coral Dust / to the trade / maggiecruzhome.com
5. Ettore Sottsass Etrusco Vanity Mirror / $8,598 / suiteny.com
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~ JEREMY DENK
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Interior designer Laura Archibald has been designing for her clients Gracey and Scott Wooster for many years. When they came to her asking for a redesign of the study, she was eager to perform a makeover. The Woosters wanted to take the space from an ordinary neutral room to something bold and different. In fact, Archibald’s client came with a specific request – she wanted all the walls painted in a high-gloss lacquer. The challenge was deciding on the perfect color.

“Not every color is great for a lacquer finish,” Archibald explains. “So it took us a little bit of time to land on a color that was bold and appropriate. We were looking at fabrics, and when we got to the pinkish-purple tone in the Osborne & Little fabric we considered for pillows, that’s when it hit us – magenta.” The paint, which was a high-gloss paint that appears as lacquer, was a custom color mixed by Eastway Paint and is from Fine Paints of Europe. “I must have gone back three or four times to get the color exactly right,” Archibald recalls.

From there, Archibald decided to go for a tone-on-tone look and chose to reupholster the existing sofa in a shade as close to the wall color as possible – a velvet fabric from Pindler. “I thought that sofa would be perfect in the nook between the bookshelves. The paint really sparked the rest of the room,” Archibald says.
A vintage ottoman in white vinyl brings high contrast, and Archibald chose a popular but perfect Stark antelope rug in navy blue. “The magenta and navy blue were really a beautiful combination of colors, and dark tones can still provide contrast without being opposites,” she says. A custom-made console table sits perched beneath the television, painted white with an Ashe wood inlaid on the top. Art by Herb Jackson of Hidell Brooks Gallery brings in the perfect amount of jewel tones to complement the room.

A vintage ottoman in white vinyl brings high contrast, and Archibald chose a popular but perfect Stark antelope rug in navy blue. “The magenta and navy blue were really a beautiful combination of colors, and dark tones can still provide contrast without being opposites,” she says. A custom-made console table sits perched beneath the television, painted white with an Ashe wood inlaid on the top. Art by Herb Jackson of Hidell Brooks Gallery brings in the perfect amount of jewel tones to complement the room.

Vintage chairs flank the sofa that is covered in a Robert Allen cut velvet fabric, and hardware by Charlotte-based Addison Weeks was chosen for the built-in desk. “I thought the brass hardware with a turquoise stone was an ideal match for the bold colors in the room,” Archibald says.

“The colors in this room are jewel tones, redefined,” she continues. “Normally, I hear ‘jewel tones’ and see red, navy, and hunter green, but these are today’s hues, and it’s exciting to design with so much color.”

“The colors in this room are jewel tones, redefined.”

– LAURIA ARCHIBALD
This placid whisper of blue-green encapsulates the meeting of sea and sky.

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox
Written by Christina Spratt Spencer

Vitreous and fluid, the gradients of this tint reminisce gossamer and glassy rays of light filtering through the dynamic depths of the ocean, making it as refreshing and serene as its namesake. Completely unclouded, aqua is assured, poised, and composed, a limpid drop of soothing clarity. A neutral of its own right, aqua kindles a tranquil and timeless sense of balance – clean and crisp when paired with cotton whites, invigorated with tropically inclined coral or citron, or smoky and sophisticated with muddled and murky neutrals, maroon, or mauve.

1. SFERRA Celine Throw in Aqua / $89 / shopquintessentials.com
2. Maggie Cruz Juliette Dining Chair in Swept Away / to the trade / maggiecruz.com
3. AERIN Calinda Round and Tall Vases / $295 - $350 / aerin.com
4. Barrie Benson for Highland House Norris Bedside Table in Benjamin Moore Warm Springs / to the trade / ahokeld.com
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With a penchant for infusing femininity, sophistication, and a bit of edge into her work, interior designer Kristin Tharpe of Parker Tharpe combines her love of unique objects with her signature aesthetic to create thoughtful, collected, and always one-of-a-kind designs.

“I find inspiration in travel and fashion both influence my work. Each provides fresh perspective and opens my eyes to new ways of seeing or experiencing things,” Tharpe says. “They have a way of freeing my mind of overthinking and seeing the beauty in what’s before me.”

“Sometimes I just need to get out of my own head,” Tharpe says. Books provide the perfect escape. “Stepping back often helps and allows me to come back reengaged, ready to design and create.”

“Authenticity also inspires me – people, places, and things,” she says. “On a recent trip to Vietnam, I spent time observing and experiencing the culture, architecture, and open-air markets. And the textiles and attention to detail were amazing!”

“There’s still so much beauty and authenticity surrounding us. Sometimes it just requires a step back to widen your view.”

1. Vintage Turkish Anatolian Rug / $3,500 / 1stdibs.com
2. Dani Schafer, Untitled, 2018 / danischafer.com
3. Ochre Coco Mirror / $1,500 / ochre.net
5. Giambattista Valli / $100 / rizzolibookstore.com
6. Laresphere Pair of Vintage Tibetan Snow Lions / $850 / etsy.com
7. Morris Lantern in Gilded Iron by Suzanne Kasler / $929 / circalighting.com
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McKenzieRidgeApex.com
Color Theory
Page 40

Balance in Motion
Page 50

Color Continuum
Page 62
Interior designer Andrew Howard used a floral print by Lisa Fine Textiles as the springboard for the living room’s design. Bold doses of color abound with the addition of a custom settee in a LuRu Home fabric. A custom chair is swathed in a Sister Parish design while custom wing chairs feel a touch modern in a playful green.
COLOR THEORY

DESIGNER ANDREW HOWARD MODERNIZES A CENTURIES-OLD HOME IN THE HEART OF RALEIGH-DURHAM’S HISTORIC DISTRICT.
Howard felt it was important that the home feel happy and comfortable and knew that color would help to achieve that.

*Opposite:* Bold Anna Spiro Textiles draperies and a chair with matching fabric accentuate one of the bedrooms. An adjacent chair in a Palecek fabric brings an opposing hue that helps balance the monochromatic green.
When Andrew Howard got the call from a potential client back in 2017, he was elated. The client, her husband, and their five kids were based in New York City and planning a move to the Raleigh-Durham area. The client’s request was simple; she wanted her 200-year-old home located in the quiet suburban town of Hillsborough to pay homage to the home’s rich history while also modernizing it.

Jacksonville-based Howard, whose trademark design is a modern, updated take on traditional beach chic, was excited at the opportunity to tackle a project with such deep-rooted history. "It was an extremely special property," Howard says. “To do this home justice, we couldn’t fill it with all new furniture and accessories. It had to be done right.” And so, Howard began scouring and digging through antique stores and vintage markets up and down the East Coast to find pieces that would complement the home's rich architectural details but could also be modernized with new upholstery or hardware. “I definitely did not want a home filled with items we picked out of a catalog,” the homeowner says.

So Howard and the client teamed up, spending time in Stanford, Connecticut, shopping through antique stores and markets, then in Charlotte and Atlanta, where they scooped...
up vintage and antique one-of-a-kind pieces, including artwork that, when coupled with Howard’s modern sensibility, resulted in a stunning interior design throughout the home. “We wanted the interior design to play a supporting role to the home itself,” Howard says. “The home was to be the centerpiece, and everything else was added to allow the home and its history and its architectural details to shine.”

But the home’s original interiors were lackluster. “The house didn’t feel approachable,” he says. “It felt too stiff. I thought the way to bring it back to life and make it feel more friendly, a place you want to sit with your friends and spend time with family, was to add a lot of color to it.”

Howard began in the dining room, easily the home’s centerpiece. Ironically, it was also one of the most unique and challenging rooms for Howard to design. “It has no exterior windows,” he says. “I’d never designed a major room in a home that had no windows at all. Curtains are like the finishing touch to a room, but when you’re unable to use them, you need to bring your A-game to the design.” So Howard began with the walls. “They needed to be extraordinary but also look like they may have been
there for two hundred years,” he says. A stunning hand-painted floral wallpaper by Gracie instantly elevated the design of the room and served as the base for the rest of the space’s design. An approximately one-hundred-year-old dining table left behind by the previous owner was inherently traditional and complemented the antique crystal chandelier. But when coupled with the more modern lines of the Hickory Chair host chairs in a John Robshaw fabric, Hickory White dining chairs, and a Baker chest, the room felt updated and modern.

Left: A Lee Industries sofa layered with Heather Chadduck and Schumacher throw pillows serve as the building block for this television space, which features curtains by Radish Moon Textiles. Right: The homeowners converted the attic space into a bathroom, laundry room, and three bedrooms, one of which features a vintage bed and end table.
Hand-painted floral wallpaper by Gracie serves as the inspiration for this interior dining room with no windows. "I'm absolutely mad about that wallpaper," the homeowner exclaims. She fell in love with it as soon as the designer presented it to her.

"THE HOME WAS TO BE THE CENTERPIECE, AND EVERYTHING ELSE WAS ADDED TO ALLOW THE HOME AND ITS HISTORY AND ITS ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS TO SHINE."

ANDREW HOWARD
Schumacher curtains complement the yellow walls in the breakfast room while Hickory White chairs in a Peter Dunham fabric coupled with Serena & Lily dining chairs add a small dose of modernity to the traditional space.
Howard wanted the traditional lines of the home to play a leading role in the home’s design, while subtle, modern touches such as the vintage-inspired double farmhouse sink by Kohler and the industrial light by Barn Light Electric were supporting elements.

Custom curtains in an Elizabeth Eakins floral pattern pair well with the crisp white bed linens, the white and blue chest, and the bench by Sherrill Furniture.

The living room, though not nearly as much of a challenge as the dining room, was another space Howard loved designing. “It’s the biggest room in the home, and it’s where everyone gathers as a family or when entertaining,” he says. “So it had to be comfortable but also beautiful.” Using the Lisa Fine drapery fabric as the springboard for the room’s design, “We really jumped off the deep end,” Howard laughs. “It was one of those things that I was nervous about – all of the colors in that one space – but we stuck to our guns and knew it’d be great.” Bold doses of color abound in the room with the addition of a custom settee in a Lulu Home fabric. A custom chair is swathed in a Sister Parish design while custom wing chairs feel a touch modern in a playful green. “For five children to move to an entirely new home and city, it was important that the house feel really happy and loved,” Howard says. “I thought color would do that and make it feel more approachable and comfortable.”

In one day, Howard installed his entire vision for the home so that once the homeowners returned, everything was in its place. And the reaction was just as the designer had hoped. “It was so exciting to walk in and see how beautiful and colorful everything was,” the homeowner says. “It was everything we had wanted in the home.”

Top: Howard wanted the traditional lines of the home to play a leading role in the home's design, while subtle, modern touches such as the vintage-inspired double farmhouse sink by Kohler and the industrial light by Barn Light Electric were supporting elements.
Bottom: Custom curtains in an Elizabeth Eakins floral pattern pair well with the crisp white bed linens, the white and blue chest, and the bench by Sherrill Furniture.
The powder room boasts Clarence House Tibet wallcovering along with beautiful Addison Weeks malachite hardware and a Mirror Image Home mirror.
RALEIGH-BASED DESIGN TEAM BRINGS A 1980s-STYLE HOUSE INTO THE MODERN ERA WITH VIBRANCY AND PANACHE.
When Hunter and Katie Diefes started searching for their dream home, many of the homes they walked through exuded the cookie-cutter concept. Preferring instead to create a space with character and originality, and one that would ultimately accommodate a growing family, they came across an older home. The only trouble? It was perfectly preserved in the 1980s, before the birth of the open floor plan and when pastels and florals reigned supreme.

“I remember looking at pictures of the home, and I said, ‘Absolutely not,’” Katie Diefes recalls. “But Hunter said, ‘Just trust me.’ We walked through it, and I could see that it had really good bones. I could see the potential.”

Though the home was structurally sound, the project was “almost a full gut job,” Hunter Diefes says. “There wasn’t a wall in the home that we didn’t touch,” he adds. The couple partnered with Zandy Gammons and Liles Dunnigan of The Warehouse, a full-service interior design firm based in Raleigh. They replaced the ’80s touchstones, and spaces that were originally designed solely for functionality became gathering spots that are at once aesthetically pleasing and fully functional.

The kitchen is a prime example. They tore down a wall between the family room and kitchen to open the space, and they extended the latter’s hardwood floors into the family area, removing old carpet. They expanded and reconfigured the island. Finally, they raised a steel beam and the ceiling itself so that the new glass-fronted cabinetry can soar higher, making both the cabinetry and the room feel bigger.

In terms of the color scheme, Katie Diefes didn’t want the sterility of all white, but she did want something neutral, given the pops of color throughout the rest of the house. “Grays and whites were first choices for us,” she says. “We achieved all of our goals in terms of color scheme and navigability.” As an avid cook, Hunter Diefes was also focused on the result in the kitchen, citing one of...
Fiesta Yellow paint by Benjamin Moore complements both the vintage and new furnishings in the formal dining room.
Counter-to-ceiling subway tile in a chevron pattern serves as the kitchen backdrop along with Visual Comfort light fixtures and a vintage rug.
Top: Artist Allison Chambers created the entryway’s painting, which rests above a refined cabinet from Woodbridge Furniture.

Bottom: A thoughtful array of antique books, family heirlooms, figurines, and other decorative objects rest in the family room’s lined built-ins, which give the space a layered and collected feel. The burlwood coffee table is by Society Social.

his favorite features as the pot filler, which he says is “a must-have in any kitchen renovation.”

The must-have in the adjacent family room is light. Previously, Hunter Diefes says, it felt like an old smoking room, with a dark brick fireplace, raw wood, and no natural light. Sunlight now pours in from the kitchen, illuminating everything from the calming serene blue on the walls to the coffered beams of the ceiling. The Diefeses painted the fireplace and the built-ins a lighter shade, expertly blending the neutrals with bolder hues. “I love the way the darker emerald greens blend well with the colors we put on the walls,” Katie Diefes says. Deep greens are also found in the club chairs and some of the pillows, complementing the deep greens in the painting above the fireplace, which belonged to her mother.

More of her mother’s heirlooms can be found in the dining room, including the elegant sideboard and mirror. Gammons and Dunnigan skillfully combined traditional Southern antiques with features that are more modern and contemporary. The eye-catching yellow on the walls – Benjamin Moore Fiesta Yellow – is undoubtedly contemporary, and it served as the springboard for the rest of the room. “We told Katie that it was a bold choice and that if she was afraid of the color, we could do something else,” Gammons recalls. “But she said she loved it.” The deep navy and white hues of the Schumacher draperies contrast perfectly with those bright yellow walls.

The chinoiserie dragon wallpaper in the downstairs powder room, Tibet by Clarence House, served as part of the initial inspiration for the whole concept of the home. “That’s a small space with a lot of impact,” Gammons says, “and the fun paper embodies Katie’s style.”

Moving into the formal living room, there are more heirlooms from Katie Diefes’ mother, integrated nicely with newer pieces. Gammons and Dunnigan recommended recovering the sofas in a soft cream, which Katie Diefes says, “is a nice neutral and allows the colorful pieces like the rug and painting above the fireplace to be the places the eye really goes to first.” Bright and bold pillows, a quartzite coffee table with a gold base, and draperies made by Peter Dunham Textiles complete the look.

Finally, the master bedroom and bathroom are unrecognizable from the partitioned and dated spaces they were previously. By reconfiguring and eliminating
The master bedroom’s soothing duvet cover is by Raleigh native and artist Laura Parks.
dead space, the bathroom now accommodates a massive soaker tub and spacious shower. Katie Dieffes ended up with a second walk-in closet in the expansive bedroom, which boasts a fireplace. Lavender shades and linen lavender draperies on the windows create a soothing retreat feel.

The kitchen might be called a retreat in its own right, and it’s the room the Dieffeses consider their favorite. “It’s a well-appointed, well-decorated space but it also feels comfortable,” Hunter Dieffes says. “It all magically came together in a really great way,” Katie Dieffes concludes.
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The kitchen showcases modern features including marble countertops and backsplash in a herringbone pattern while the tongue-and-groove ceiling is made of old, distressed wood that was salvaged from an old house and then painted a light aqua blue. Brass hardware and fixtures, including pendant lights from Visual Comfort, are on-trend and classic at once.
COLOR CONTINUUM

INTERIOR DESIGNER SUSAN TOLLEFSEN INFUSES HER VIBRANT FLAIR INTO A BUILDER’S OWN MODERN FARMHOUSE.
The custom high-back banquette upholstered in a fun, graphic fabric acts as the centerpiece in the breakfast area. Cerused mid-century chairs provide additional seating around the Saarinen-style tulip table, while a nautical-inspired pendant by Thomas O’Brien for Visual Comfort hangs above.

Opposite: The bar located adjacent to the breakfast nook features Schumacher’s iconic Queen of Spain wallcovering.
They say two is better than one. For builder Allen Wells, who tore down one downtown Raleigh home and built two in its place, two has proven to be a good number indeed. Infill projects such as these can be tricky, but Wells, who partnered with Tony Frazier of Frazier Home Design, was able to complete the project with limited impact, and the result is two homes that honor the heart of the original structure and embrace today’s modern amenities. It’s the best of both worlds, and Wells liked it so much, he and his wife, Jen, moved into one of the new homes.
For the interiors, the couple called on interior designer Susan Tollefsen to take their classic farmhouse with its neutral palette layered with natural wood tones and give it a contemporary flair. With a penchant for color, Tollefsen infused eye-catching hues and intriguing textures and patterns to add visual interest.

“Both Allen and Jen are big color people, and I’m a big fan of color and anything that can make a house look interesting and soulful,” Tollefsen says. “That’s why you see the bright blues, navy blues, and chartreuse greens.”

Case in point: The entryway has a shiplap wall painted a dark, distinctive hue, which juxtaposes nicely against the warmer tone of the mahogany door, wood floors, and wallpaper hanger’s table. Two modern lamps illuminate the antique table, as well as the hoofed leather stool sitting beneath it. “I love the idea of old mixed with new,” Tollefsen says.

The living room continues several of the themes: wood tones, navy shiplap, and a historical ambiance with modern touches. The latter is Wells’ signature look for many of the downtown homes his company, Hayes Barton Homes, works on. The blue shiplap – Hale Navy from Benjamin Moore, chosen by Frazier and repeated on the exterior shutters – is more dramatic than the traditional white-on-white shiplap, and the wood tones lend a rustic element to the room.

“Allen likes to see wood tones and natural elements, and I try to twist it around and say, ‘I know you want a barn door, but how
about a barn door with a modern color to it?” Tollefsen laughs. “It’s good to make it a little different, so it’s not like all the other farmhouses with just white and wood.”

Moving into the kitchen, the tongue-and-groove ceiling is old, distressed wood that Wells painted in such a way that it still shows some cracks; he salvaged the wood from an old house. For the modern touch, marble countertops and backsplash in a herringbone pattern provide a serene backdrop, while dark window trim adds punch.

The kitchen opens up to the adjacent banquette and bar, which Wells considers among his favorite spaces in the home. The black-and-white Schumacher Queen of Spain wallpaper creates visual
The white shiplap in the mudroom is the perfect backdrop to the bright window seat cushion and vintage silk velvet pillows.
Top Left: The dining room boasts a spectrum of blues and greens, including a Galbraith & Paul wallpaper that’s displayed across the ceiling. A Worlds Away drum pendant provides additional lighting while the black lacquered Bungalow 5 chairs offer a simplified version of Thomas Chippendale’s chinoiserie design.

Top Right: Designed by Tony Frazier of Frazier Home Design and built by Allen Wells of Hayes Barton Home, this modern farmhouse is the ideal blend of modern and traditional elements.

Bottom: Homeowner and builder Allen Wells heads to work in his prized 1966 Chevrolet pickup truck along with his trusty four-legged sidekick, Waylon.
Natural light pours through the mahogany front door and windows, while a pair of Kelly Wearstler table lamps add a soft glow. A claw-legged saddle stool provides extra oomph.
“WITH A PENDANT FOR COLOR, TOLLEFSEN INFUSED EYE-CATCHING HUES AND INTRIGUING TEXTURES AND PATTERNS TO ADD VISUAL INTEREST.”

interest in the bar, as the upholstery does in the banquette. “The fabric pulls in all the colors used throughout the house: pink, black, navy, and greens,” Tollefsen says. “And the chartreuse pleather seat bottoms of the chairs are easy to clean and care for.”

Bright colors continue in the dining room, which Wells says was inspired by a photo of racecar driver Jimmie Johnson’s dining room. Bright aqua walls and trim contrast nicely with the chartreuse curtains and Worlds Away light fixture. Tollefsen covered the ceiling in handprinted Galbraith & Paul wallpaper. “They always do great, intense colors,” she says. The chinoiserie Bungalow 5 dining room chairs lend an Asian flair to the room while the painting by local artist Adam Fester pulls all of the colors together.

The master bedroom is a bit more subdued than the rest of the house, the better to get restful sleep in, though there are matching Mr. Brown lamps with bases composed of etched-out glass. “It’s like mercury glass but reverse painted,” Tollefsen explains. “They’re interesting, sort of a deep purple and silver.”

The dark shiplap continues behind the tub in the master bath, and Wells opted to install wood floors. The wood planks work because they’re warm versus cold, as tile would be.

Finally, the home’s exterior continues the theme of an older home mixed with modern touches, featuring timber porch columns, a gas light, and exposed rafters under an overhang. The painted brick, although light, continues the theme of using color. Tollefsen acknowledges that neutral colors such as gray, which she refers to as the “uncolor,” are on trend today, but says, “We are also working in a lot of that marigold yellow. And we love peacock blues and hot pink. Basically, anything that makes you smile when you look at it is fun!”

Left: The master bedroom boasts a softer color palette than the rest of the house. A Greek key nightstand flanks the wooden panel headboard. Right: Homeowner and builder Allen Wells opted to have the same navy shiplap upstairs in the master bath, where it provides a nice contrast from the white and gray bath fixtures, including the freestanding soaker tub.
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In an industry dominated by the streamlined, uncomplicated aesthetic of contemporary design, it seems all too possible that comfort must be considered a thing of the past. For many years, opting for convenience and comfort while furniture shopping meant sacrificing style and sophistication. Just mentioning the word “recliner” conjured up images of big, bulky, and sometimes cumbersome pieces, specifically suited for lounging in your private family room. But as Bob Dylan put it, “The times they are a-changin.” “The market over the past few years has trended to more of a casual setting, and there has been a significant increase in consumers wanting power motion in their furniture,” Andre Haugaard, owner of Ambiente Modern Furniture, says. “With this in mind, Ambiente has expanded its selection of sofas and sectionals with motion.”

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Today’s power motion furniture packs more punch than ever before, moving beyond simple reclining functions to power...
headrests, and doing it all in beautiful, streamlined pieces that won’t be relegated to the basement or man cave in your home. Many models have also “cut the cord,” using wireless battery units instead so furniture can be placed anywhere in the room without having to deal with those unsightly electrical cords, and some even feature onboard USB outlets for the added convenience of charging your electronic devices.

And, in trend with consumers’ demand for more contemporary, sleek furniture, today’s power motion pieces are fit to be seen in any room in the house, boasting slimmer silhouettes and a plethora of upholstery and color options to accommodate any decor. Ambiente carries several power motion options from trusted high-end furniture lines from USA-based and international manufacturers, including Fjords (Norway), American Leather (USA), Ekornes (Norway), and MaxDivani (Italy). These recliners and sectionals offer sleek lines and functional contemporary styles that feature comfortable seating, configurable designs, and an extensive selection of leathers and fabrics.

Haugaard says blue is the top trending color of choice this season. “From deep royal to dark navy to ethereal lighter hues, blue, in all shades, is currently in high demand.”

For homeowners looking to outfit their home with new furniture or who are considering adding power motion pieces to their decor, Ambiente’s new showroom, with its abundance of light, high ceilings, and brick walls, affords them the perfect setting in which to gauge the look and feel of each option.

In addition to staying on top of the current trends and offering an elite selection of furniture crafted from around the globe, Ambiente offers customers the expertise of its talented design team, led by store manager Walter Rigsbee, to assist customers in creating the perfect room or curate an entire residence, whether by adding an end table or furnishing a complete home.

“There has been a significant increase in consumers wanting power motion in their furniture.” — Andre Haugaard

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- CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY -
Buy and sell what you love. That’s the mantra owners Beth Bridgers and Susan LaFera of BeyondBlue Interiors live by.

When they opened their doors fourteen years ago, they noticed the national furniture trends weren’t keeping pace in the Triangle area, so they dreamed of becoming a trusted, local source for modern furnishings in the region.

“When we opened BeyondBlue in 2005, the concept of modern furniture in the more traditional South was new for many people,” Bridgers says. “But, over time, we have seen an increasing number of customers who are searching for modern furnishings to bring simpler, clean-lined furniture into their homes.”

The desire for a more streamlined and sleek aesthetic of modern-inspired furniture has continued to grow over the years, from families looking to conserve precious space to empty nesters downsizing to smaller square footage.

“We have many customers who are downsizing and need physically smaller-scale and visually less complicated furniture for their new home,” LaFera says. “Also, with the crazy pace of our current lives, people want their homes to be calm and comfortable, and the clean lines of today’s modern furniture can help achieve that goal.”

But can modern pieces work in any home?

Bridgers says the number one question they receive in the store is, “How do I introduce modern pieces into a more
traditional space without starting from scratch?” For many, the idea of introducing some on-trend furnishings into an existing space is a daunting challenge. After all, a piece can be beautiful in the showroom, but will it mesh seamlessly with their home’s current decor? BeyondBlue has an easy answer – their in-house design team.

“Our designers are terrific at listening to our customers, assessing their needs, and then translating that into a comprehensive design plan,” LaFera says. “They can assist in selecting pieces that will work with the personality and scale of the existing furnishings, and they excel at ensuring each selection will look great in the home and complement the overall aesthetic.”

For homeowners considering the procurement of a few great pieces to add flair to their home, Bridgers encourages customers to opt for neutral and stain-resistant options for major upholstery pieces. With the advent of a wide variety of comfortable and attractive performance fabrics in the market, consumers can enjoy their furniture for many years without growing tired of too-trendy hues. She suggests they insert drama and interest through smaller accessories. “Customers can bring in vibrant pops of color with smaller items that are easier to swap in and out of the room. We also encourage homeowners to purchase special pieces that speak to them, such as unique and special wall art or interesting tables.”

And, to add to that modern Southern feel, BeyondBlue proudly sources from North Carolina furniture manufacturers who share a long tradition of craftsmanship and quality. “In addition to several North American manufacturers, we work closely with regional companies such as Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, Lee Industries, Thayer Coggin, Precedent, and Charleston Forge to source furniture our customers will love and embrace in their homes.”

“PEOPLE WANT THEIR HOMES TO BE CALM AND COMFORTABLE, AND THE CLEAN LINES OF TODAY’S MODERN FURNITURE CAN HELP ACHIEVE THAT GOAL.”

— SUSAN LAFAERA

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COLOR **it** CRAPE

Keep the blooms coming all summer with a variety of colorful crape myrtles.

Written by Dana W. Todd

Maybe Northerners have their lilacs, but here in the South, we have gardens bursting with colorful crape myrtles. A warm-climate tree or shrub, depending upon the variety you choose, crape myrtles are a shot of color in the midst of a green lawn or a showstopping hedge of pigmented personality in the summer landscape.

Crape myrtles can infuse color at three levels, as they come in dwarf shrub, midsized tree, and large-tree sizes. Working with a knowledgeable landscaper is imperative to ensure the desired color, in the desired size, is put in place to complete a garden.

“Several varieties of crape myrtle are tried and true in North Carolina because they are widely available in our area and do not suffer from humidity-induced powdery mildew,” David Payne of Home & Garden Landscapes says. “These are the ones to consider to complete a successful landscape.”

If a large tree is the answer to adding color to an expansive green lawn, check out the Natchez crape myrtle, which has pure white flowers and grows up to thirty feet tall, has interesting autumn leaves that are yellow and orange-red, and a cinnamon-colored bark that adds interest all year. Perhaps a light-lavender Muskogee, named after an American Indian tribe, is more in line with the existing colorscape. Its leaves also turn orange and red in the cooler months, with cinnamon-colored bark that flakes off to reveal a smoother light-gray bark in the wintertime. These larger varieties of crape myrtles can also serve as background color in the garden.
“Midsized trees, such as the watermelon-hued Tuscarora, serve as foreground color and make a good hedge-like privacy screen when several are planted in a row,” Payne says. Tuscarora grows vigorously to be up to twenty feet tall. It bursts forth with new red leaves in the spring and when finished growing is a multitrunked, vase-shaped tree. The pinky-pink of the Miami variety or the dazzling reds of Red Rocket and Dynamite are a little slower growing but still top out at twelve to fourteen feet tall. Even smaller, the purple flowers of Catawba bloom on eight- to ten-foot-tall branches, with orange and red fall leaves. Catawba exhibits a shorter, denser growth pattern, so it’s a good screening plant for a yard.

Crape myrtles even come in dwarf sizes. The newer Pocomoke has deep-pink blooms on plants that only grow two feet tall. They are even exceptional bloomers when placed in pots and can be moved around the landscape to fill in with color where needed throughout the summer.

“These are just a few of the many varieties of crape myrtles. No Southern garden is complete without at least one crape myrtle – a true symbol of the South – although it’s hard to stop at just one with so many varieties in the marketplace,” Payne adds.◆

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There’s nothing more peaceful and tranquil than stepping into an Asian-inspired landscape and feeling the perfect and harmonious balance of nature. From a plethora of Asian-indigenous plantings to meandering garden pathways to the soothing hum of water features, the relaxing atmosphere is the perfect place to find zen.

When a Hope Valley resident contacted Old North State Landscape Development about refurbishing her existing Asian-inspired backyard, landscape designers Bill Strope and Whitney Gilbert jumped at the chance to design an outdoor living space to augment the homeowners’ quality of life while also infusing their love of the Orient.

“The clients frequently traveled throughout Asia for work and fell in love with the amazing landscapes installed in China and Japan,” Gilbert says. “They liked the rustic Japanese eclectic style and wanted to construct an open-space zen area, as well as implement landscaping that made the yard more aesthetically pleasing and functional.”

With several basics already in place – a koi pond, a small water feature, a few stepping stones, an old fence, and a square concrete patio – Strope and Gilbert sat down at the drawing board to brainstorm ideas, most of which began with broad notions of boulders, shapes, and terraces. From there, these initial focal points were fine-tuned into a comprehensive design that not only took the yard’s functionality to an extreme but also created a beautiful “slice of Asia” the homeowner could enjoy any time of day from the yard itself or from the master bedroom’s windows overlooking the garden.

“Our vision was to build upon what the previous homeowners started, adding our own spin, inspired by our Asian travels,” the Hope Valley homeowner says. “The talented designers of Old North State Landscape Development truly understood the vibe we desired and designed a tiered garden that is both beautifully authentic and easily maintained in our climate.”

Inspired by the traditional Asian balance of positive and negative space, Gilbert incorporated separate outdoor “rooms” into the area, including a pond and expanded water feature; a multipurpose patio to be utilized as a space to entertain overflow company or where the homeowner (an artist) could paint; and a large firepit patio within the confines of the side fenced area. Keeping the concept of balance in mind, the design draws on the connection between water and fire – the patio includes both a
rock channel water feature and a fire bowl to infuse the ambiance of a secluded patio.

The Asian elements were not specific to any country or custom but instead pulled from many different Asian garden styles. The water features drew inspiration from Japanese stone water baths used traditionally as a place to wash before a tea ceremony. Pebble walkways, large boulders, and stepping stones in a variety of materials, including bluestone, limestone, and travertine, expertly accent the lush mix of trees, shrubs, and perennials. Japanese maples, Yoshino cherries, azaleas, mondo grass, and pine tree topiaries are just a few of the selected plants used in the yard’s design.

“Outdoor living is an important part of entertaining and a key to happiness in life. Being able to draw upon our clients’ interests and experiences to design a backyard space that perfectly suits them and their home is our goal. Here, we were truly creating zen, a space to come and relax where with one breath troubles fall away,” Gilbert says. “The balance of natural elements and carefully selected plantings creates a space as beautiful as it is tranquil. This is what Old North State Landscape Development created in Hope Valley.”

“For more information, call OLD NORTH STATE LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT, INC. at 919-384-1800 or visit ONSLANDSCAPE.COM.”

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DONATELLO DREAMS
By Sunny Surana
Photography courtesy of Brasigran

Like Donatello’s famous *David* sculpture of Italian Renaissance fame, Donatello marble is destined to be remembered as a dynamic addition to a kitchen, bath, or fireplace.

With its swirling, misty movement of thin white veins on a gray background, this dolomitic marble, also known as hard marble, adds luxe elegance and a touch of warmth to a home while also providing a higher degree of durability. Just as happy in a contemporary, transitional, or rustic setting, Donatello appears timeworn and stylish all at the same time.

With CRS Marble & Granite’s laser-focused attention to choosing only the highest-quality stones, Donatello marble fits our standard of how a fine natural stone should perform in residential and commercial settings. For this reason, we have formed a working partnership with Brazilian quarry Brasigran to bring this stone to the North American marketplace. Brasigran has been quarrying granite and marble since 1986 and is one of our trusted suppliers that seek continuous innovations in the ornamental stone trade.

Brasigran describes Donatello as semi-exotic and harder than Italian white marble. As such, it holds up a little better,
with less scratching and acidic etching than what can happen on traditional Italian marble kitchen countertops. Since the gray and white kitchen trend appears here to stay, our quarry has gone the extra mile to meet the need for color-appropriate stones such as Donatello. Considered a hybrid stone, it contains a small percentage of less-porous material such as dolomite or quartz, making its surface overall more durable and an excellent choice for homeowners. In fact, dolomite is often used for acid neutralization in the chemical industry, so its properties are on display in a hard marble like Donatello.

Even though Brasigran is a high-tech facility, each stone is still individually touched, inspected, and processed by a person, which is in keeping with CRS’s high standards. Stones are processed in one of several ways – polished, sawn cut, sanded, rock-faced, sandblasted, or tumbled – providing a variety of looks to the marketplace to suit any homeowner’s style.

See Donatello on display in our showroom. Do you see a misty sky? A storm brewing? A swirling pool of ocean water? Regardless, you will find it will blend with almost any existing design style in your home.

SUNNY SURANA is president of CRS MARBLE & GRANITE. Visit the Raleigh showroom at 7521 Exhibit Court, see CRSGRANITE.COM, or call 919-784-9282.
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ESTIMATION ANTICIPATION

By Evan Bost
Photography by Chibi Moku / Courtesy of Bost Custom Homes

Determining the total scope of work and estimating a price to build a custom home is a complex and tedious process.

Because of this, accurate, comprehensive estimates do not happen overnight, and if they do, buyer beware! Every home is an assembly of thousands of components that range from large engineered systems like open-web truss floors to miniscule products like shower drains and closet rods. A builder must consider all of these various components when estimating cost and time to complete the home. A thorough understanding of the architectural plans, site plan, engineered plans (if available), and home specification documents is paramount in order to estimate correctly – a familiarity that does not come quickly.

Tract builders can typically price homes per square foot or per plan because they build the same floorplans repeatedly on nearly identical lots with only minor variations available to homeowners. Teams of purchasing managers and estimators make this possible. This is vastly different from the world of building unique homes, where there is no precedent to generate an accurate price-per-foot comparison. Instead, custom builders must use formulae and competitive bidding to arrive at an estimate.

Competitive bidding is a process of soliciting dozens of proposals from subcontractors for various scopes of work, from
excavating and pouring the footings to installing frameless glass shower enclosures. After all bids are in, the builder analyzes the proposals to ensure the subcontractors accounted for all the work, and to ensure an apples-to-apples comparison when looking at two subcontractors’ bids for the same scope of work. Soliciting bids take time, but it builds confidence into the project estimate because the categorical budgets represent quantifiable products and services as opposed to conjectures.

It may take several weeks for a custom builder to provide a comprehensive estimate to construct your uniquely designed home. However, taking the time to ensure precision on the front-end of the project can save you from experiencing financial frustration, mistrust, and delays due to insufficient categorical budgets. We believe being accurate and transparent from the onset is the only way to ensure smooth sailing throughout the course of construction.

During the estimation phase, patience pays off.◆

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South African artist Wim Botha’s works are a study in contrasts: seductive yet displeasing, sacred yet profane, heavy yet light, and stable yet unsettled. Through his varying materials and subject matter, Botha explores issues of history, status, power, and religion with a focus on Western art history. Botha’s take on classical or conventional art history, however, is blurred, deconstructed, or fractured. Though his works refer to the original meaning of a work of art, that meaning is equally subverted.

**Borderlands: Evidence from the Rio Grande**  
**Gregg Museum of Art and Design**  
Through July 28  
gregg.arts.ncsu.edu

*Borderlands* is Susan Harbage Page’s testimony and commemoration of the courage, fear, hope, and determination that continues to drive countless people to risk everything in search of a better life. For more than a decade, she has traveled to the United States-Mexican border near Brownsville, Texas, to record the journeys of immigrants entering the United States. By collecting images with her camera and gathering found objects at the scene, she has created what she calls an “Anti-Archive” that documents this still-unfolding event.
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