

DC BY Design!

Kips Bay Showhouse 2018

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Sometimes it takes a few days for something to sink in. You think about it, let it roll around in your head, and then come to a conclusion—like a great movie: If you're still thinking about it a week later, you know it's a winner.

That was **Kips Bay** for me this year—it opened May 1 and will run through the 31st. Each of the 22 designers—including luminaries like Alexa Hampton, Mark Sikes, David Netto, Drake | Anderson, Juan Montoya, Alessandra Branca and Bunny Williams—designed their own individual spaces, but distinct themes emerged for me this year, and it was impossible for me to take them out of the larger context of what's going on in our world.

There was a distinct Jazz Age feeling in many of the spaces, where a gilded presence felt quite literal:



Salon by Drake | Anderson. The walls are covered in Lelievre fabric that's hand-beaded by Ankasa.
Photo by Marco Ricca.



Baccarat crystal chandeliers hang over the island in the kitchen by Clive Christian with appliances by Dacor. The The walnut cabinetry is lined with stainless steel and backed with aqua leather. You can put any emblem or monogram you want on the custom hardware. Photo by Nickolas Sargent.



"Room with a View" by Stefen Steil of Stellish Interiors. Lighting by Barry Dixon. Photo by Nickolas Sargent.



The After-Party room by B.A. Torrey. The painting over the bar is by Obama portraitist Kehinde Wiley. Photo by Nickolas Sargent.

The 1980s have been enjoying a style Renaissance of late—you can see it in the clothes high-school kids are wearing, which is mind boggling, since this 80s'-era high school student wore the same stuff!—and it's been coming more and more into residential design. There was no mistaking its influence this year at Kips Bay.



Sasha Bikoff created this playful ode to the Memphis Style across several floor landings in the stair hall. The designs are from The Rug Company, wallpaper by George Venson for Voutsas, and archival paint colors from Farrow & Ball. Photo by Nickolas Sargent.

And then there was just plain pretty. But more than that, some of the rooms spoke to me as a fantastical getaway—a place to retreat where nothing from the big, ugly world outside could get in.

Alexa Hampton and Mark Sikes went so far as creating tents, literally shrouding us from the outside:



"Olympia Folly" by Alexa Hampton—the decorative painting resembles a tent that "opens" on the rear wall (not shown) to reveal an ideal version of ancient Olympus. Photo by Nickolas Sargent.



Mark Sikes' tented entry vestibule to his "Sleeping Beauty" boudoir. Photo by Nickolas Sargent.



There are so many deliciously girly getaways in this house, like this dressing room by Marcia Tucker, with its blushing upholstered walls in Dedar silk and string-of-pearls lighting by Semeur D'Etoiles. Photo by Costas Picadas.

These final rooms are the ones that may stick the most: Brimming with bold color; layered in art, rugs and accessories with no concern for genre; they are curiosity shops of the most luxurious kind.



Philip Mitchell's Drawing Room is a riot of collections. Photo by Nickolas Sargent.



"Art and A La Carte" is a good way to describe this library and dining room, with its Frank-Stella inspired ceiling and 18th-century paintings that live in harmony. Photo by Nickolas Sargent.

All of these rooms have so much more interest than the photographs that were taken here, as they show only one vantage point. What I loved about Kips Bay is that there are 360 degrees worth of interest, with not a single surface left untouched. I'm telling you, it's worth the train ticket to New York and the \$40 entry ticket!

(And if you want to read more on each room before you go, here's [a detailed description](#) of the designers and their rooms.)