

THE DECOR

A modern living room with a white fireplace, a large vase of white flowers, a white coffee table, and a bright green armchair. The room is decorated with a mix of contemporary and classic pieces, including a large mirror and a bookshelf.

THE A-LIST ISSUE

101 PAGES
GORGEOUS ROOMS
BRIGHT IDEAS &
GREAT FINDS

*decorating
demystified*

**WHAT IT'S
REALLY LIKE TO
WORK WITH
A TOP TALENT**

BEACH
CHIC
THE
ULTIMATE
HAMPTONS
HOME

Get Inspired!

THE ELLE DECOR A-LIST

The Designers Who Inspire Us Most

AMAN & MEEKS
B FIVE STUDIO
BASSAM FELLOWS
JEFFREY BILHUBER
ALESSANDRA BRANCA
MURIEL BRANDOLINI
SHEILA BRIDGES
BROCKSCHMIDT & COLEMAN
MARTYN LAWRENCE BULLARD
DARRYL CARTER
ERIC COHLER
ROBERT COUTURIER
MARK CUNNINGHAM
ERNEST DE LA TORRE
JAMIE DRAKE
WALDO FERNANDEZ
THOM FILICIA
FISHER WEISMAN
PAUL FORTUNE
STEVEN GAMBREL

VICTORIA HAGAN
ALEXA HAMPTON
STEVEN HARRIS ARCHITECTS
HAYNES-ROBERTS
JAMES HUNIFORD
KATHRYN M. IRELAND
JAY JEFFERS
SUZANNE KASLER
CELERIE KEMBLE
DAVID KLEINBERG
RICHARD KEITH LANGHAM
JEFFREY ALAN MARKS
McALPINE BOOTH & FERRIER
RICHARD MISHAAN
JUAN MONTOYA
CHARLOTTE MOSS
JOE NAHEM
THOMAS O'BRIEN
ALEX PAPACHRISTIDIS
EMMA JANE PILKINGTON

J. RANDALL POWERS
MILES REDD
SUZANNE RHEINSTEIN
KATIE RIDDER
ROMAN AND WILLIAMS
TODD ALEXANDER ROMANO
DANIEL ROMUALDEZ
SHELTON, MINDEL & ASSOCIATES
STEPHEN SILLS
MICHAEL S. SMITH
MATTHEW PATRICK SMYTH
WILLIAM SOFIELD
ROBERT STILIN
MADELINE STUART
STEVEN VOLPE
KELLY WEARSTLER
TIMOTHY WHEALON
BUNNY WILLIAMS
VICENTE WOLF
YABU PUSHELBERG

GRAND MASTERS

Eight Decorators Who Have Defined American Style

THOMAS BRITT
MARIO BUATTA
DAVID EASTON
MICA ERTEGUN

MARIETTE HIMES GOMEZ
WILLIAM HODGINS
JOHN SALADINO
ROSE TARLOW

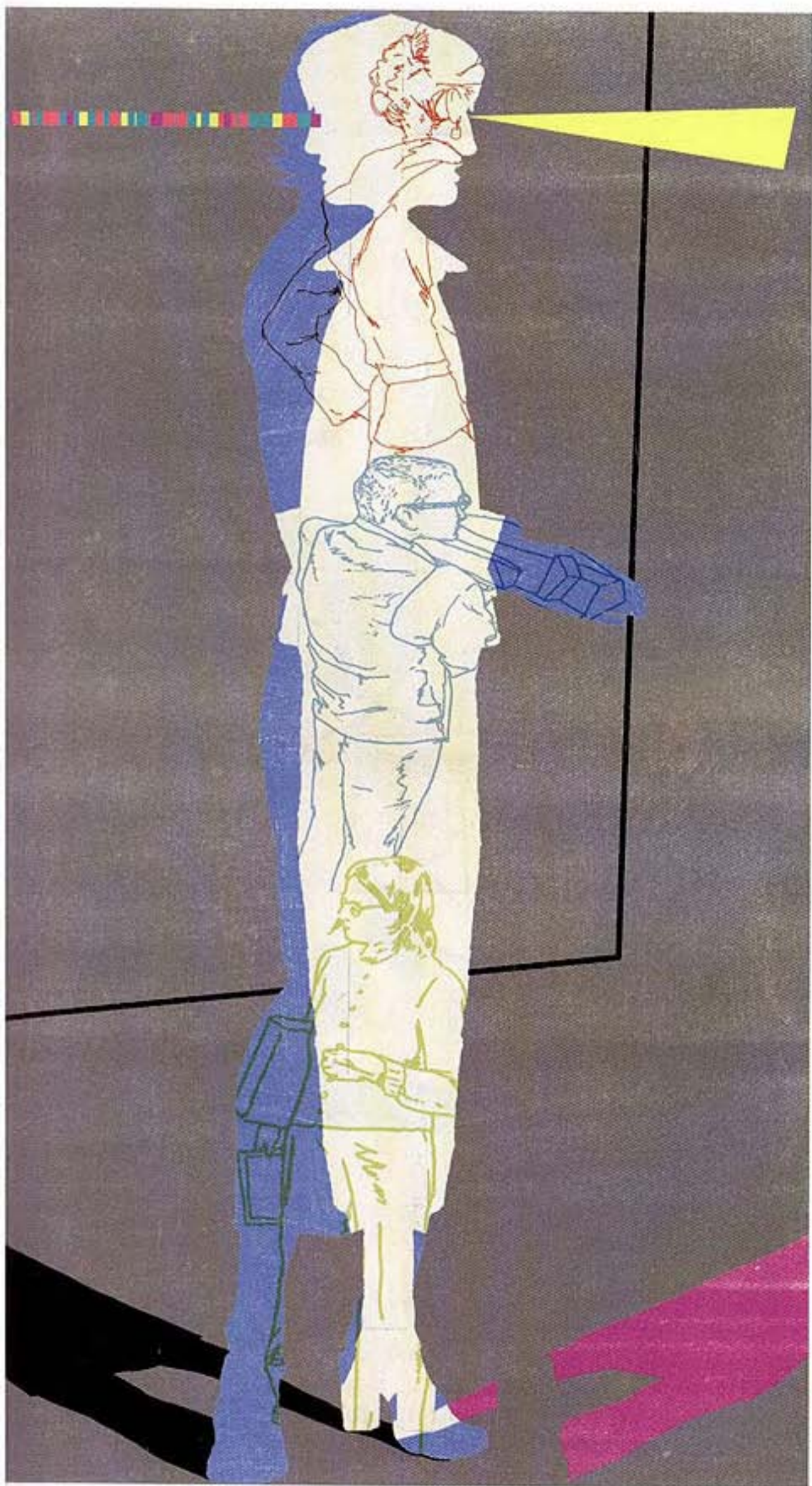


Thank you to Baccarat
and Michael Aram
for the A-List award.



SUCCESSING BY DESIGN

When you hire a designer, you open up your life—and your dreams—to interpretation. It's an intimate relationship, but it can be a fraught one. So how do you guarantee that the collaboration will be a success? We've asked clients of several of our A-List designers to share the risks and rewards of working with top-flight talent, what lessons they've learned along the way, and why they find the process so compelling that they are willing to undertake it again and again.



DON'T PIGEONHOLE YOUR DECORATOR

Roxanne Bok and her husband, Scott, an investment banker, have seen firsthand how a good designer can make a major impact on a space—regardless of the budget. They first hired **MATTHEW PATRICK SMYTH** about 10 years ago to renovate an 1853 farmhouse in Connecticut. The budget “was no-holds-barred on materials and antiques,” says Roxanne, and Smyth created a historically appropriate home that thrilled the couple. When the Boks later bought a condo in Palm Beach, however, they had a very different request. “We told him to do it as cheaply as he could,” says Roxanne. “He kept telling us about the pieces he was buying at Target, and the art he found on the Internet, and we thought, ‘Oh my God, what’s this going to look like?’” But the end result still made the Boks swoon. “Matthew said, ‘I have just as much enjoyment shopping at Target.’” Roxanne remembers. “Sometimes it’s more fun doing something with less money than with more.”

CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING

Building their dream home in Montecito, California, Siri Marshall, a retired corporate executive, and her husband, Bob, enlisted **SUZANNE RHEINSTEIN** as the interior designer. “I had some trouble,” says Siri, “especially at the beginning, understanding what Suzanne was trying to do. It’s easy to reject an idea if you’ve never seen it before.” Rheinstein selected gray, stone, and earth colors for their California kitchen. “I got the sample when I was in my white French kitchen in Minneapolis, where I was living, and I thought, ‘Oh, I don’t think this looks like a very happy kitchen.’” But I took them to the house in Montecito and held them up, and suddenly I understood that they were exactly the colors of the landscape. It was all part of the indoor-outdoor flow she was trying to create. I made some of my best decisions when I let Suzanne push me.”

ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE SURPRISED

Drew Katz, a media company CEO, first hired **ERNEST DE LA TORRE** for a major loft renovation in SoHo. He was so pleased with the results that he enlisted the designer to work on a home in Vermont and two apartments in Philadelphia. But some of de la Torre’s quirkier suggestions initially gave Katz pause. “For my house in Vermont,” Katz remembers, “Ernie proposed a ceiling fixture that was like an eight-foot motorized zeppelin. It was shaped like a dragon, with a tongue that goes in and out, and I thought, ‘I don’t know about this.’” But it’s turned out to be everyone’s favorite ▷