

AUGUST 2007

House Beautiful

inspiration!

find your
next great...

see what inspires
top decorators!

COLOR IDEA DETAIL ROOM

\$3.95 US/\$4.95 Canada/Foreign



0 74820 08458 8

QUINTESSENTIAL KANSAS CITY

inspiration!

HOW DO YOU GIVE A HOUSE CHARACTER, WARMTH, AND STYLE? A DISPLAY WIZARD SHARES HIS TRICKS.

LISA CREGAN: A five-bedroom house for a single guy? How did that happen?

DAVID JIMENEZ: I just knew it was the house for me as soon as I saw it. I pointed and said, "This is it!" It looked exactly like what I had imagined a Kansas City house would look like before I moved here. Copper dormers, wonderful symmetry and, to take it over the top, two big beautiful trees on either side, in front.

You've had a successful career in visual merchandising—for the Gap, Pottery Barn, Restoration Hardware, and now Hallmark.

Does what you do in the stores find your way into your homes?

I think it works in reverse. What I did in those stores is what I love to do at home. It's all about nuance. Creating that human element in each room. Filling it up—adding layers and textures. At Pottery Barn and Restoration Hardware I had a set palette of

retail goods and it was up to me to pull together other elements to get the warm, welcoming feel I would want to create in my own home.

INTERIOR DESIGN BY DAVID JIMENEZ
INTERVIEW BY LISA CREGAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSÉ PICAYO

Can you give me examples of how you create that feel?

It's easy to take a sofa and chairs and put a coffee table in between, but the layers are what give a room character. I like a table behind a sofa with big books and a photograph or drawing. I collect sketches and charcoal drawings from the '20s and '30s—nothing with a pedigree, just ones that move me and make me happy. And there's something about a tray on a table that makes things richer. I also love mirrors, because when I put something in front of a mirror, like a drawing or photograph, it makes it feel more collected, so to speak. A lot of what I do has to do with editing. I set up a room and walk away. I come back and take something away, until I feel there's a balance struck.

Do you consider yourself an interior decorator?

I work very differently than decorators. They sometimes have set ideas of where things will be placed. They start with a sofa, pillows, a carpet, and they can put it all together brilliantly. What I do is much more organic. When I start the process, I walk into a room and I think, "What emotion do I want to feel in this room?" I know I always want it to look eclectic—collected and built over time. When I was shopping for this house, I just bought the things I loved, put them in storage, and then when it came time to move in, I moved things around until they felt right. With me, it truly is always about what feels right.



David Jimenez wanted the portico of his 1907 Kansas City house to give "a nod to old Hollywood." To create bold contrast, he installed a diamond-patterned tile floor and added black and white awning stripe pillows to Restoration Hardware furniture. The mirrored coffee table is a flea market find.



THIS PAGE: The living room beautifully illustrates the way Jimenez adds layers and textures to a room to give it character. Unmatched chairs—he likes the added chic of mismatching—mix with loved objects, books, and a collection of midcentury charcoal drawings and photographs. OPPOSITE: The massive moldings and columns in the living room and entry wear their original dark stain. Grass cloth wallpaper delineates the foyer, and Jimenez added a mirror top to the reproduction round pedestal table in the entry.





Where did you buy all those things you loved, and stored?

I went to flea markets, thrift stores, estate sales. I ended up with about nine sofas, 65 lamps... the list went on and on. But these things enter my life for a reason. I wanted the living room to have a '60s Parisian feel—elegant and formal, but also comfortable—and I found exactly the right sofa at an antiques mall in Palm Springs. It was upholstered in tattered orange crushed velvet, but I could see beyond that to its shape and lines. At an estate sale, I found a Ralph Lauren chesterfield sofa that fit perfectly under the windows of my sunroom. I wanted the room to feel clubby, so that led me down the path to that big black dining table. I love a dining table in front of a sofa, I think it's so chic.

And tell me what's up with you and all the lamps?

I'm passionate about lamps. There's something magical about them at night. None of my lamps have anything brighter than a 25-watt bulb in them—in fact most of the bulbs are 15 watts. I get so much pleasure going room to room, turning on the lights and setting the stage for the evening, and then later going through and turning them off—shutting down the house for the night.

You're an unabashed romantic, aren't you?

I'm inspired by so many things. Something in a magazine spread or on a friend's wall can move me, and I'll remember the specific detail. The way a piece of coral looks on a stack of books, the way a throw is folded at the foot of a bed. I go back to my house and try to find a way to use that thing that spoke to me, so my palette keeps evolving. That silver lamp in the living room was first in a guest bedroom. I was walking down the stairs one day and I was reminded how smart a lamp looks behind a sofa. I grabbed that lamp and set it behind the sofa and just stood back and admired. It's the little things I celebrate with myself.

PRODUCED BY DAVID M. MURPHY STYLIST GREGORY BISSONNETTE



Jimenez reclaimed the previously unused attic (he calls it "the loft") and filled it with casual upholstered pieces from his former San Francisco house and a grand piano from a Kansas City thrift shop. LEFT: In the sunroom, big banana-leaf wing chairs and wall-to-wall sea-grass carpet complement a Pottery Barn pedestal table—perfect for sunset cocktails. BELOW LEFT: Brown silk chairs from Jonathan Adler flank a Williams-Sonoma Home leather ottoman in the library. The turquoise lamp is one of a pair from the 1960s.







THIS PAGE: In the master bedroom, Jimenez's neutral color palette is enhanced by the surprise of all-black flea market chairs. Secretary is Williams Sonoma Home. **OPPOSITE, TOP AND BOTTOM:** The tiny guest bedroom is the only room in the house given a deep wall color, Benjamin Moore's Starry Night Blue. For contrast, Jimenez upholstered a wing chair in white leather, and painted a vintage Chinese stool in high-gloss white. The sleigh bed is Ralph Lauren and a Restoration Hardware desk lamp serves as a bedside reading lamp.







For his dressing room, Jimenez rejected built-ins in favor of a large antique armoire. The double pedestal table is a Palm Springs thrift shop find that he painted black. OPPOSITE, TOP: In the master bath, a Swedish-style chair covered in white vinyl substitutes for a towel bar. Walls are tiled from floor to ceiling in beveled-edge subway tile. OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: "I love the idea of stepping into a bathroom and having it feel like a spa," says Jimenez. Counters and floor tiles are Calcutta Gold marble.

FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES.

WHERE I GET MY IDEAS: **David Jimenez**

inspiration!

DESIGNER'S NOTEBOOK



1. "From the first day, I've been immersed in the culture of Kansas City." Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority alumnae asked Jimenez to open his 1907 house for their annual **HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR**, even though tradesmen were still working on it. He decorated all four floors in less than a month—for charity.

2. Jimenez loves to entertain. He has more than one favorite spot in the house, and each sets a different stage. **THE LIBRARY**, for instance, is "dark, warm, and the sound of the stereo is very bass-y."

3. PALM SPRINGS is a second home where Jimenez "escapes with friends to relax and unplug from work." Nostalgia for midcentury design first drew him there.

4. Jimenez left San Francisco to work for Hallmark in **KANSAS CITY**. "It's been a seamless transition. Everything that resonated for me there, I've found here." Architect Steven Holl's luminous **ADDITION TO THE NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART** is the city's newest civic star.

5. All genres of **MOVIES**, from *Cinema Paradiso* to *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge*.

6. Candles with interesting fragrances. **DIPTYQUE'S BAIES** (black currant leaves and Bulgarian roses) is great in bedrooms and baths. Another favorite is Esteban Spices Fauchon (chocolate).

7. Visual merchandising and interior decorating have much in common, and influence runs back and forth. Years of experience at the Gap, Pottery Barn, and Restoration Hardware—and a few houses under his belt—were an education for Jimenez. His new look for many **HALLMARK STORES** will soon debut.

4



don't forget...

- Thrift stores, flea markets, and estate sales are always on his radar
- The photography book by Eliot Elisofon, Hollywood Life
- A music collection of 2,000-plus CDs—Amy Winehouse to John Coltrane to Mary J. Blige—fills a closet, and is the “soul of the house”
- Interior designers Thomas O’Brien and Kelly Wearstler. He has a flawless mix of styles and periods and she has an eye for dramatic colors and details
- Closets filled with lamps and mirrors, not to mention the ones used throughout the house
- Photography and charcoal drawings, but they don’t have to have pedigrees. Some images just move you

