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DESIGN

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THE FUTURE

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WE LOVE

AND...YES,  
YOKO ONO

GERARD BUTLER IS HOLLYWOOD'S MOST

**WANTED**

(AND OURS TOO)



# LUXE BE A LADY

**A spa owner creates her own retreat,  
with the help of interior designer Jay Jeffers.**

by Jennie Nunn photography by Cesar Rubio





**PARISIAN PRALINE**, left right, Seattle, 2008. The Douglas Fir case (captioned with four for columns) and both bases from First Product (captioned with image below) (shown right) in 1998 design. I told Umansky sitting in an art studio reception. "I love the look. Really rock it for me!"



**W**hen Angelina Umansky drove past an open-house sign in the Outer Richmond two years ago, she never would have predicted the 1910s two-flat building behind it would soon become her home. "I didn't want to live in the Richmond at all, because it's more for small families and I wanted to be able to walk places," says Umansky, who co-owns Spa Radiance in Pacific Heights with her mother, Galina Kovner. Still, she pulled over and went in to take a look. "As soon as I saw the windows in the living room—without even seeing the rest of the house—that was it. I knew I had to live there, because they reminded me of France." Despite their unlikely location, the arched window frames—characteristic of Parisian homes built in the same era—fulfilled Umansky's passion for historic architecture, which had been fueled by frequent trips to Europe. After purchasing the building, the Moscow native—along with her 17-year-old son, Eric—set out to make the home her own.

First, Umansky focused on the upstairs space, a 1,600-square-foot flat. "It had good bones, but it looked like it hadn't been touched since the '40s," she says. "It wasn't updated at all." To create her ideal light-and-airy living space, she hired a contractor, Ching Pang, for the yearlong structural transformation, which included removing a service door separating the dining room and kitchen and reconfiguring a small hallway between the master bedroom and what became the master bath. Hardwood floors were refinished, and the kitchen was remodeled with new appliances and mahogany cabinets.



First, however, Umansky had to think about the interior design. She knew just the person to ask to help create her dream home: designer Jay Jeffers, of the Jeffers Design Group in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The two first became friends in 1997, when Jeffers designed Spa Radiance on Fillmore Street, and now have the ideal client-designer chemistry, though, jokes the ebullient Umansky, "Jay was scared of me when he first met me. I know exactly what I want, and I don't beat around the bush. Jay will say that he wasn't ever afraid of me, but I think he was."

Jeffers, who grew up in Dallas and was named one of *House Beautiful's* top 125 designers of 2004, had also designed the interior of Umansky's previous home, a rental in lower Pacific Heights that was Asian-inspired, awash in rich golden browns. This time, he saw a chance for her to take more chances with color, experiment with patterns and textiles and begin a collection of artwork. "She's always been adventurous with color," says Jeffers. "This is the third project I've worked on with her, and it's a complete departure from how she was before, which just shows how one's taste changes."

Umansky originally had envisioned a neutral palette of white, beige and taupe for the walls and furniture that would play off the light that streamed through those living-room windows. "When I saw the neutral color swatches together, though," she says, "some were just too muddy, and I couldn't live with that. I wanted colors that made me happy." After that epiphany, Umansky and Jeffers decided upon a color palette of blues and pinks—coats of robin's-egg blue with a hint of light green layered on the



**ARTFUL CHOICES:** Hanging on either side of the living room's glass mosaic fireplace are *Silence II*, an acrylic-on-paper work by Kim Proffen, and *Garat*, a drawing by Stephen Westcott. Both pieces are from the Cobby Chalkley Gallery, far right in Sprague's bedroom. A *Bea* Air lamp by Jonathan Adler sits on a distressed table from Downtown, a store in L.A.

**PRETTY IN PINK.** "It's really important to love your designs. And I love my 15th projects of her in this house," says the lady in the dining room, a vintage "Cherished" floor of the a living 210 to L.A. being over a retro accent table designed by Jeffers, a limited glass vase and Trojan chairs designed to work with the faux-urge theme, offers these a pink-print suede fabric for the console, candlesticks from a 1950s, red lacquered nutcracker eggs from Australia and a 1950s vintage treasure, a lantern-style



window frames in the living room; an eye-popping pink for the ceiling in the dining room; and baby-blue walls in the master bedroom. "The window arches and the architecture of the house set the tone for the design," says Jeffers. "Angelina can be very glamorous, but she also loves to relax and entertain, so we did a lot of work together looking at color. But in the end, she really let me roll with it and trusted me."

In the flat's pièce de résistance, the dining room, Jeffers juxtaposed walls the color of coffee ice cream with a bold pink ceiling. (Umansky admits that seeing the bare room with the bright ceiling before her furniture arrived was the hardest part of the process.) "I had to put all my trust in Jay while my friends were saying, 'Are you crazy? What are you doing!'" Now, Umansky can't imagine it any other way. The room—whose focal point is a vintage glass chandelier with dozens of baubles hanging over a custom-built white lacquer dining table designed by Jeffers—is accented with dining chairs upholstered in rose-hued fabric and a console table covered with a zebra-print suede cloth. "The chandelier reminded me of the bubbles I see underwater—I had to have it," says Umansky, an avid scuba diver. Additional details include translucent bar stools, taupe vinyl chairs and a collection of red lacquered ostrich eggs from the Hayes Valley boutique Alabaster. "It's definitely a feast for the eyes," says Jeffers. "Everywhere you turn, there's something really interesting to see, which I love."

Adjacent to the dining room is the living room, which Jeffers has outfitted with a light coffee-colored mohair daybed, a tufted sofa, vintage glass lamps, a Charles Hollis Jones coffee table and an elegant fur throw. The walls are a light blue, and the floor is



covered with a custom-fitted ice-blue carpet bound with brown leather. The fireplace surround and hearth—both tiled in sea-foam-green, light blue and silver mosaic glass—were designed by Sonoma-based artist Ellen Blakeley, who also crafted the sign at Spa Radianca's entrance. "I cried when I first saw it—it was so beautiful," says Umansky. "My dream is to have her make a shower in light blue and silver so that it looks like

water." An abstract sculpture hangs above the mantel, while a portrait of Umansky by René Garcia Jr. is on the opposite wall.

In the master bedroom, Jeffers created a serene, Moroccan-inspired sanctuary. The baby-blue walls were stenciled in white by one of Umansky's spa clients in a pattern inspired by a Fortuny lamp that Umansky had found in Italy. Matching midcentury mirrored bedside tables and Jonathan Adler Bel Air lamps anchor a white lacquer bed—custom-built by Jeffers—which sits atop an old Pakistani rug. For the extra closet space needed to house an impressive 100-pair shoe collection that even Carrie Bradshaw would envy, two mirrored closets were added to the hallway linking the bedroom to the master bath. "She has some serious shoes," says Jeffers. Umansky readily admits to indulging her footwear fetish: "I don't care if there are scratches on the new hardwood floors. It adds character."

Umansky's next project will be the downstairs flat, but for now, she's at peace at home, spending time with her son and hosting dinner parties for friends, including, of course, Jeffers. "Every day, when I come home, I'm happy," she says. "After taking care of other people at the spa all day, I come here and feel like I'm being taken care of." ■

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## design

*"I love the shape of the eggs and the shiny lacquer. The room is like this little faux-jungle, and they fit in with the theme."*

—Jay Jeffers



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