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Vivid Hues and a Fresh, Modern Style

Jay Jeffers of San Francisco
Brings Graphic Patterns to His Color-Infused Interiors

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Opposite: Cabin Retreat For a client's guest bedroom, Jay Jeffers designed a headboard upholstered in taupe linen-cotton blend fabric. The walls are covered in hand-blocked Elizabeth Dowd wallpaper in variations of taupe tones. The moldings and trim are painted a rich rust red color.

Left: Jeffers pulled together a Telegraph Hill apartment by taking out the dull industrial gray carpet and covering the floor with mata-finish bamboo with a pale cinnamon tint. Shelves were added to the contemporary dining room area to encourage collectibles.

Few interior designers are as bold and creative with color as Jay Jeffers, who founded Jeffers Design Group eight years ago and now has offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

His own bedroom in a turn-of-the-century house in San Francisco has rich chocolate brown walls with vivid pink and orange ribbon stripes. For a client's living room on Telegraph Hill he gutted a collection of turquoise and orange Blenko glass designs.

"My intention is always to create interiors that are sophisticated and have a sense of fun," says Jeffers. "I don't have a formula and I don't always follow the old rules. My work is a mix of elegant and stylish furniture that is easy to live with, sparked with unexpected color. I can pull together great

rooms that are monochromatic, but I think some of my best work has splashes of color." For inspiration, Jeffers often delves into his treasured collection of out-of-print books by the seventies London design trendsetter David Hicks.

Jeffers noted that Hicks once said, "Style is not merely what you do, but how you do it."

Eleven years ago, Jeffers moved to San Francisco from Texas, where he grew up to work on marketing projects at Gap Inc. "My approach to design is not exactly traditional," says Jeffers. "My college degree is in international business and marketing. I planned to work in advertising." By chance, he took an introductory design course at U.C. Berkeley Extension, says the designer. "I studied interior architecture,

the history of design, materials, color and space planning. By the time I completed the course, I was hooked, and I knew this was where I wanted to go. I never learned traditional ways of decorating so I look at design in a more contemporary manner, without preconceptions."

In 2004, he was named one of the Top 125 interior designers by *House Beautiful* magazine.

Jeffers says that he appreciates tradi-

very classic red, but it has a hint of pink so it feels totally modern," says Jeffers. "Red sounds rather overpowering, but red can feel quite neutral and restful and it is very compatible with a range of colors."

The centerpiece of the dining room is a handsome silk shade in rich crimson. At forty-two inches long, it creates the effect of a canopy floating above the dining table.

"You can't be timid with colors, especially with red," says Jeffers. "This red is deliber-

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ional style and design but his clients often prefer a new approach. "I never repeat design, and I don't have one look or color I impose on my clients," he says.

Two years ago, Jeffers was called upon to pull the rather ordinary spaces of a Telegraph Hill apartment building together, and to make the interiors cohesive in style. "I found that the interiors were very eighties, and needed a complete overhaul," Jeffers says. "The floors were covered with dull industrial gray carpet and it even had track lighting."

Jeffers first covered floors with matte-finish bamboo flooring with a pale cinnamon tint. "Bamboo is a very traditional material, but with this pale brown stain it looks fresh," says Jeffers. He has little affinity with formal rooms or heavy-handed antiques.

For his own house, Jeffers was able to express his love of color with a free rein and to use mid-century modern furniture and flea market finds. The living room walls are painted a rich, deep red. "I chose Benjamin Moore's rich Penicillin paint, because it's a





Left: For a spa in San Francisco's Cow Hollow, Jeffers used a warm and inviting color palette and clean, contemporary shapes to delineate the space.

Opposite Top: Posh Chic: For a long-time client, a redox, Jay Jeffers designed a living room with French flair. Among his selections were a vintage lacquered Lucite coffee table with a glass top, a sleek burnt-orange lacquered console table, chairs covered in handstitched velvet, and an ottoman tailored in orange and taupe cowhide. Curtains are Carleton V sheer silk with gold threads.

Opposite Bottom: An all-white nursery with a white sofa and a splash of pink has an Osborne & Little wallpaper with abstract taupe and white tiles.

ately dramatic. At night it gives the whole apartment a warm glow. Guests love it."

Jeffers likes to throw away design rules and make his own fresh furniture choices. "Ever since I was growing up in Dallas, I've spent weekends at flea markets and vintage shops looking for art, sculpture, off-beat finds, unexpected treasures," he says. "It's these unexpected and quirky pieces that give rooms character."

"Interiors should feel of their time and not look as if they are recreating the past," says Jeffers. "I always want my clients to feel comfortable and happy in their rooms. I want them to be inspired. And I want to surprise them and give them something original and fresh. I offer design ideas they could not dream of. If they walk into their rooms and simply say, 'That's nice,' I'd be insulted. It has to be 'Wow.'"

His current projects include Hollywood Regency-style interiors in an art deco house in San Francisco for a beauty spa owner. The dining room is very glamorous, with a glossy white lacquered dining table, and side chairs with pink satin cushions, and curvy Klimos-style chairs with shiny taupe vinyl seats.

A few miles away in Pacific Heights, Jeffers is designing super-modern interiors for a high tech executive. Black-framed Jean Hov sofas covered in pleated suede cloth and a pair of French thirties leather armchairs found at Blackman Cruz in Los Angeles make a lively juxtaposition in crisply delineated rooms. An antique Chinese carved bench serves as a coffee table.

"Every project is a new challenge, a new learning experience for me and my clients," says Jeffers. "I love exceeding my clients' expectations. I inspire them to start collecting art seriously, to put together an interesting collection of books or porcelain or vintage glass that gives them a lot of pleasure. I teach them how to display collections, how to make beautiful objects from their travels work in their interiors."

"I work to make aesthetically pleasing rooms that capture the character and wishes of each client," says Jeffers. "When a room is completed, it's a portrait of my client and their aspirations. If I achieve this, and give them pleasure and delight, then I am happy."TM