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## FASHION: **Mad** for Matadors

### Parties!

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Denise Hale's Luncheon  
for Vanessa Getty  
Goyard's Grand Opening  
360° of Fabulousness

### Feature House

## Jay Jeffers' Ode to Glamour

ALSO

### Dispatches from the Design World



**Light Box.** In the master room, a color-tinged light sculpture glows behind decorative panels designed by Jeffers to create multiple "color light" zones. One area is illuminated in warm-toned Cinnabar fabric by Cowtan & Todd with hand-painted glass by Galloway & Paul; the other is illuminated in green Christopher (created by Henry Cole & Adams). Both sofas, an industrial table, can be moved aside to create a dense "tree" of light. Images & from Southland. Photos: Matt Bar, Matt Bar from David Hicks Studio and the light fixture is by Savino.



# A Fix of Hicks

BY DIANE DORRANS SAEKS

PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON

Lifelong devotion is a rare thing. In the world of interior design, it's extremely rare. Many decorators have more artistic periods, moods and infatuations than Picasso. Yet San Francisco interior designer Jay Jeffers is a David Hicks devotee for life. Jeffers' admiration for the legendary English designer is evident in his vivid, confident decor and eclectic interiors. Brightly patterned fabrics on pillows, artful tablescapes and fresh and bold colors were Hicks signatures, and Jeffers uses these design devices deftly. He admires the late, great decorator so fervently he can quickly quote Hicks' pithy pronouncements on design. ("Style produces atmosphere"

"Do not follow fashion too fanatically" ... "Accessories should not have an over-worked-out look.") "David Hicks' work, especially his major interior design from the '70s, has become something of a rulebook for luxury, style and instant elegance," says Jeffers, whose library is stocked with several of Hicks' out-of-print books on design, fabrics, gardens and style.

"He was a pioneer in revolutionizing the way we see and live in traditional interiors. At a time when interiors were either traditional or modern, and the two were never mixed, Mr. Hicks always avoided one-note design. Hicks' rooms combined daring colors like chocolate

brown and pink or coral, and modern Scandinavian chairs with Chinese antiques. I see his work, I'm inspired, and I don't fold back."

Jeffers recently embarked on the renovation and decoration of a large house in Pacific Heights for a young couple, with echoes of Hicks on his mind. The project was a 4,500-square-foot house for Karl Peterson, founder of online travel company Hotwire.com and now a partner with Texas Pacific Group Ventures, and his wife, Holly Jacobson, a real estate agent with Sotheby's International Realty. Built a decade or two ago, the house had expensive bay views, but its Laura Ashley-style wallpaper and standard-issue fixtures were rather dull and dated when

Peterson acquired it. Jeffers started a one-year renovation and remodel. "The house had good bones, and Holly, with her real-estate expertise, had a great sense of its potential," Jeffers says.

His clients requested light-hearted rooms with truly individual interior design. "They're a young couple, and they wanted the rooms to be fresh and to reflect their generation," he says. "I planned to use color to give the house a new attitude. Custom-crafted furniture would give personality and character. The rooms would be modern but not at all trendy."

Peterson likes to cook, and the couple entertains, so the kitchen and living, dining and

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**Throwing a curve.** Above: In the living room, a two-person chair by Nancy Corbin, designed after a mid-century lounge chair, is upholstered in a hand-dyed, coral-colored cotton fabric by Manuel Canovas. The painting is by Alexander Kanovsky. The etched Lucite table was found at Paul Nerkes, a favorite Jeffers source for vintage finds on Union Street, San Francisco.



**All in the details.** Top: In the living room, a collection of mid-century American glass art contrasts with branches of coral on a Chinese antique table with elaborate carving. The striped ottoman on the pillow is from Knave's Fabrics; Jeffers custom-ordered the Koshi Smith Furniture barrel-back chair from Susan Magrath.

**Holly picks.** Above: The living room, with a large bay window overlooking the street, is classical in proportion and decor. The floor-to-ceiling window-lined ottoman is by Karl Moser. The curtains are crafted in a glass and coral geometric patterned Bergamo silk, then backed with coral-colored sheer silk by Livingco. Above the sofa is a Miller and Cheung Stern photo collage from the Stephen Wong Gallery in San Francisco. Tape-covered walls are outfitted with gray-fabric nestings and window frames.

**Deep reds.** Left: In the living room, a pair of French gilt shell leather chairs is from MacBrien Cruz, a vintage gallery in Los Angeles. The bronze sculpture table by Gary Hubert has a top that quarters with teardrop crystals. The Nevegood table is from Eero. The Jeffers designed the seat cushions. Left.



**DESIGNERS TAKE OVER**

breakfast rooms on the main floor were a special focus of the head-to-toe remodeling project. "The first floor was quite open, from the living room in front to the breakfast area on the north side," says Jeffers. "My challenge was to give each room its own style, creating visual harmony from one area to the next."

In Tom Ford's introduction to Ashley Hicks' (David's son) recent book on David Hicks, Ford — another avid Hicks devotee — noted that Hicks had an Englishman's fearless relationship to color, and he knew how to use it. In Hicks' hands, scarlet pink or orange became handsome and civilized, never flamboyant. Similarly, Jeffers wields his color palette with confidence, and the overall effect is cheerful. Jeffers designed the guest room with orange patterned pillows and painted doors and trim in vibrant crimson. The effect is vivid but not over-the-top. "Karl and Holly are great clients who trusted my decisions and choices," Jeffers says. "We put together their art collection and shaped the rooms to be functional but lighthearted." The classical lines of the house are there, but each room has its jolt of color and dash of irreverence.

David Hicks would be proud.



**Rise and shine.** Above left, in the breakfast room, a pair of Baccarat chairs by Philippe Fauriol was custom crafted, from Brad Ford. Stiles created the decorative oak paleontologist head box, painted panels, and console. The curtains belong to the hotel.

**By design.** Above: The desk in Peterson's study was crafted in Los Angeles by

De Aitch from the salvaged aluminum wing of a retired airplane aircraft. Legs and base of the desk are mulliganga. Jeffers covered the walls in suede-clash wallpaper by Wolf-Gordon.

**Playful patterns.** Below: An enfilade, small bedroom was turned into a charming guest room, with a Hickson, damask-patterned iron

quilt cover by Dedar and pillows by Michelle Weston and Thomas Paul. The bedside bureau, headboard and cabinet doorframes were painted in Crispin and Manchester. Tan paint by Benjamin Moore. The hand-painted wallpaper is from Elizabeth Cole at De Sève Hughes.





**Table manners.** Jeffers created a versatile dining room in a house that serves as a laboratory from the floor to the ceiling. Customers eat on a table and can comfortably include the house. The floor is

wood and oak dining table, with a maple edge, set of chairs together in both one or two tables. The design direction is by Jeffrey M. Jones from the Studio Program. © Photo by Holly Hill



Jeffers, beside a 1930s mirror of iron and antique glass and a graphic collage by Roy Fox

## Quick David Hicks

Jay Jeffers is energized by the opinionated and often irreverent style quotes of the late English design guru David Hicks, who wrote a dozen books that have become highly collectible designers' bibles. At times Veeland-esque in his opinions ("Colors do not clash. They vibrate."), Hicks is the one Jeffers turns to when he requires a design pick-me-up. Here, his picks from Hicks' design creed.

"Interior decoration is the art of achieving the maximum with the minimum."

"... it isn't what you possess, but how you make the most of it through the way in which you present and arrange it."

"Taste means selection, decision and sensibility — if it is to be good."

"I believe that interior decoration is the art of accentuating the best and covering up the worst."

"Any of my clients would agree that I am not a dictator, that I always try to evoke an atmosphere, which they themselves can feel they have helped to create."

### Hicks Books

*(They're out of print, so find them online through [alibris.com](http://alibris.com) and [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).)*

*David Hicks on Decoration 5 (1956, Birkwell Books)*

*David Hicks on Living — with Taste (1968, Birkwell Books)*

*David Hicks on Decoration — with Fabrics (1969, Birkwell Books)*

*Living With Design (1971, Wadsworth & Nicholson)*

"One of the most relaxing and pleasurable things in life, I think, is to rearrange one's books, one's pictures and one's smaller possessions. There is an almost never-ending series of arrangements and solutions."

— David Hicks on Home Decoration, 1970