

f SAN. francisco

JUNE 2005

Weddings, Bay Area-style

GET HITCHED!

BEACH? CHURCH? CITY HALL?!?

**A TAKE-CHARGE GUIDE
TO FINDING THE RIGHT**
planner, caterer, florist,
dress, band & more

PLUS: WEDDING ALBUM OUTTAKES
EVEN A TWICE-DIVORCED CYNIC WILL LOVE

Kim Nalley sings for her supper club

THE GLAM DIVA BEHIND THE
CITY'S JUMPINGEST JOINT

Domestic partnership isn't good enough

A THORNY LAW RAISES THE STAKES
IN THE FIGHT FOR GAY MARRIAGE

Move over, French Laundry

MEET THE NEW FOUR-STAR SPOT
RIGHT IN THE NEXT VALLEY

also:

ART GALLERIES IN STRANGE PLACES
MONEY ENVY STRIKES AGAIN

www.sanfrancmag.com \$3.95



WE DO:
Tara and Andrew Titus,
after tying the knot
in Half Moon Bay



by Kristine Carber

Photography by
David Duncan Livingston

Grant Gibson envisioned a fashion designer's office when creating the atelier, calling on 1920s to 1940s couture to evoke a retro-effect. The chandelier is a flea market find, as is the antique mahogany sleigh bed, which he lacquered black and dressed in crisp linens. The antique tall-case clock is English, and window treatments are minimal to maximize the view. The furniture appears to float on the white-painted wood floor.



Top designers come together once again for the San Francisco Decorator Showcase, restoring an English Tudor mansion to its former glory. Here's a sampling of their work.

A Paragon of

Style



"Elegant and inviting" is how Angela Free describes the master bedroom retreat. The wing-style bed is upholstered in faux ostrich and dressed in Sferra sheets with a pea-green floral trim. Reflected in the mirrored screen is the antique silvered-iron and crystal Italian chandelier from Candace Barnes; the sconces are brushed metal from Hedge. Above the fireplace is a 1969 painting by Robert De Niro, Sr. (the actor's father), whose work is carried at Hackett-Freedman, and on the hearth is a priceless baroque *faience brasero* from Brussels. The wall treatment is a hand-painted mélange of white; the molding's crosshatch pattern mimics textured linen.

Few events capture the hearts of homeowners and designers alike as much as the San Francisco Decorator Showcase. Started 28 years ago to raise funds for San Francisco University High School's financial aid program, the event features the work of top Bay Area design professionals, whose collective efforts transform a special house into a paragon of style.

This year's showcase takes place in a beautiful Presidio Heights English Tudor mansion. Built in 1914 for a wealthy financier, the residence was once owned by flamboyant attorney Melvin Belli and later a Belgian consul general. The 10,000-square-foot mansion was designed by San Francisco architect Houghton Sawyer, who was one of the first to use reinforced concrete in single-family home construction. The building has a brick facade, a walled garden, magnificent quartersawn oak panels, and a marble-and-silver-gilt dining room fireplace. Many rooms overlook the beautiful Presidio forest.

2005 San Francisco Decorator Showcase

April 30–May 30 • 1 Cherry Street (at Jackson) • \$30; \$25 for seniors
(415) 447-5830 • www.decoratorshowcase.org



Christel Heinelt and Thad Warren of Lushart Decorative Painting designed the bathroom suite to be playful yet sophisticated. They restored the wall with Venetian plaster, then burnished it for a stonelike effect. Warren, a fine artist, employed trompe l'oeil when painting the bubble-and-suds mural. The lighting features Italian handblown-glass globes, and the tuliplike sconces have textured bulbs that cast a pattern on the wall. The vanity top is Thassos marble, as is the floor, which has a mosaic border to mimic an area rug.



Tish Key ingeniously transformed the attic into an exercise room that is functional, yet stylish enough to feel like it belongs in the house. The flooring is sea grass for a refreshing feel, and the wool area rug is topped by a pair of leather wing chairs, which are comfortable, and durable enough to take wear and tear. Custom silk pillows add color and another textural dimension, as does the wicker ottoman with its houndstooth linen cushion. Walls are soft gray with a pristine white trim, and the ceiling is pale blue. Window shutters are also white to finish the fresh, clean effect.

Searching for the right site for the Decorator Showcase is an ongoing project. University High director of development Tricia Foster and design coordinator Delanie Borden start reviewing houses more than a year before the showcase takes place, as the house must meet stringent criteria for the event to be successful. Location and flow are key, because thousands of people will tour each showcase house. Interesting history and architecture are critical as well.

In January hundreds of designers tour the chosen estate, hoping to divine the perfect concept that will capture the advisory board's attention. Only about 30 design firms and landscapers are chosen, and these designers then must work under a grueling time frame to execute their vision—ripping out floors, removing wallpaper, and gutting plumbing, and then implementing their concept.

This year's showcase runs April 30 through May 30, and for the first time visitors can enjoy a room-by-room audio tour. For more information on the annual showcase, call (415) 447-5830 or visit www.decoratorshowcase.org.



Designer Melanie Coddington called on sage green and cream to set a soothing tone in the guest bedroom, adding gold touches for elegance and sparkle. The Murano glass lamp is from Candace Barnes, as are the hand-carved Louis XIV-style fauteuils. The bone "Aegean" table from Ironies features a twisted brass base. Drapes are hand-blocked silk by Vincent J. Chang.



Katherine North designed "his bath" for a wealthy gentleman who enjoys travel, fine scotch, and imported cigars. The concrete floor was replaced with honed Lagos gold limestone, which North also used for the backsplash. Walls are hand-plastered in a regency blue grid. The oak in the hall inspired the custom oak trim on the walls, and the nautical-style light fixtures embrace the open feel of the high ceilings. The vitrine holds vintage shaving accoutrements and chemist bottles from London's Saville Row.

