

[HOME TOURS]

Vibrant, Nature-Inspired Design Blossoms at This Year's Kips Bay Decorator Show House



A roster of top-tier talents reimagined a Beaux Arts mansion on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

BY FRED A. BERNSTEIN



[MAY 28, 2023] “Everybody here has fantastic taste. Just not the same taste,” says designer GHISLAINE VIÑAS, sitting in the parlor she designed in the Kips Bay Decorator Show House.

Considered the most prestigious showhouse in the country, Kips Bay is back after a three-year COVID interregnum. That’s good news for design lovers and, especially, for the fundraiser’s beneficiary, the KIPS BAY BOYS & GIRLS CLUB, with its myriad youth programs throughout the Bronx.

Twenty-two designers were given rooms in the River Mansion, at the corner of 106th Street and Riverside Drive, on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. Built in 1902, the house, currently owned by philanthropist Sherry Bronfman, is on the market for \$24 million.

Riverside Park, just across the street, seems to wrap the 10,000-square-foot house in greenery. But Greenwich, Connecticut, landscape architect JANICE PARKER brought more flora to the house’s front door, where pleached linden trees are flanked by emerald green arborvitae, skip cherry laurel and English ivy, creating a welcoming, verdant approach.



TIMOTHY CORRIGAN was entrusted with the so-called family room, located next to Franklin's space, but his version is hardly a place for watching RuPaul from a La-Z-Boy. Real trees (from Blondie's Treehouse) stand as sentinels, while elsewhere nature appears in the form of hand-painted florals on Corrigan's silvery Spring Fever wallpaper. Among the designer's gutsy moves was hanging an abstract painting on that figurative background. Another unusual touch is the serpentine medallion over the DAVID DUNCAN STUDIO chandelier. The neutral tones of the custom Kyle Bunting rug keep the focus on the real showstoppers, including a magnificent TIERED CHINOISERIE TULIPIERE — available on 1stDibs from PERIM LANG ANTIQUES and sporting brass flowers from the estate of TONY DUQUETTE — that is displayed on a center table from QUATRIN (Fournir Collections).



“We know it’s not how most people would do a parlor in this kind of house,” says Viñas, in something of an understatement. For one thing, the custom coffee table, made for the designer by Brooklyn Millwork, is painted French’s-mustard yellow. But it’s not even the most attention-getting aspect of the room. That would be the SHOCK, 2005, BY JILL GREENBERG — a political protest photo of a crying child over the fireplace or the wallpaper, a houndstooth that Viñas had Wolf-Gordon blow up “to make it more contemporary.” Mounted on the paper are familiar items rendered in felt by artist Mark Mulrone. “He’s very wacky. It’s fresh, it’s fun,” says Viñas. Accessories bought on 1stDibs include a floor lamp designed by BEN & AJA BLANC and a couple of ceramic side tables by and from Bari Ziperstein, aka BZIPPY.