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# In A New LIGHT

Mill Valley Interior Designer Eugenia Jesberg Enriched The Décor Of A Striking Queen Anne Victorian With Luscious Fabrics And Rich Patterns

TEXT BY **DIANE DORRANS SAEKS**


PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
**DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON**

**D**esigner Eugenia Jesberg of EJ Interior Design is admired for her inventive décor and for an assured and imaginative use of colors, fabrics and furnishings in updated traditional interiors. She is especially adept at crafting classic family-friendly interiors with a chic and modern edge.

Jesberg's navigation and knowledge of the world of modern design and technology were required recently when she remodeled and decorated an exceptional Queen Anne Victorian home in Belvedere for a high tech executive and his cosmopolitan family.

The sunny and comfortable living room opens to a teak deck with views of Angel Island and Raccoon Straits. A custom designed sofa was upholstered in plush blue velvet by Schumacher. The glamorous pair of thirties-style William Switzer chairs was upholstered in Lee Jofa velvet. Mirrored tables are by Julian Chichester. Eugenia Jesberg brought graphic punch to the décor with a Florentine patterned carpet by The Rug Company.





“We restored,  
remodeled and  
decorated the  
entire house.”

—*Eugenia Jesberg*





OPPOSITE A starburst pendant light from Vaughan welcomes guests and family in the entry. A geometric patterned wool carpet by The Rug Company, London, adds a lighthearted mood to the updated classical Victorian trim, moldings and room dimensions. The barstools are by McGuire. ABOVE The remodeled kitchen was designed as a multi-purpose room for the family, which includes two young children. Versatility is guaranteed by a large marble topped central work island/bar, a durable lava stone table from Sue Fisher King in San Francisco, and acres of counter space. The chairs are by McGuire. A trio of nickel plated Coleton Globe pendant glass lanterns is by Vaughan, London.

This historic house, which has stood for more than a century on the eastern side of the island, had great appeal, with sheltered decks, bay windows, and beautiful millwork. Structured with great 'bones,' the house required extensive renovation.

Bay windows and wraparound teak terraces offer up-close views of the wooded slopes of Angel Island, a national park, as well as the surging whitewater Raccoon Straits, and calm Belvedere Cove. To the northwest the homeowners view iconic Mount Tamalpais, and to the south, San Francisco, across the bay. The house is surrounded by extensive gardens.

"My clients traced the house online, through their realtor," notes Jesberg. "They are Internet-savvy, and conducted really smart searches. Their first viewing of the house was online, and they fell in love with it, which had essentially great charm and character. They followed up with their realtor, visiting the house, conducting due diligence. After escrow was completed, we embarked on the redesign and remodel, which took about one year."

Jesberg had designed the owners' previous residence in Marin County, in a very contemporary style, and although it was custom crafted to their taste, it was not the house in which they wanted to eventually raise a family.

"The renovation project got quickly underway and then my clients went to live and work in Florence, where they remained for the next twelve months until the house was completed," Jesberg explains.

The designer communicated with her clients daily via phone and email. Every day she would send them digital images of sofas, chairs, antique mirrors, carpets and tables she was proposing for the house. She reported progress, antique finds, and all the minutiae a proper renovation entails.

"It was a very efficient way of moving the interior architecture and decoration forward," recalls Jesberg. "We had an approved plan and a very evolved concept before they went off to Italy. As I found them kitchen chairs or a lamp for a specific use, I would send an image for their approval. They are very decisive and visually attuned, so the process progressed smoothly." Jesberg was her clients' eyes in California.

"The critical ingredient to the successful completion of this project was a good working relationship," notes Jesberg. "As we had worked together before on their previous house, my clients were realistic and focused and, most importantly, trusted in our design team."









The final restoration reflects the original intent of retaining a sense of the traditional Victorian architecture while incorporating twenty first century requirements, such as new bathrooms and guest quarters. Jesberg and the contractors used sustainable materials where possible.


"There was not one part of the house we didn't touch," reflects Jesberg. "We restored, remodeled and decorated the entire house. We also modified the floorplan to create larger rooms a more expansive kitchen, for example to accommodate the young family."

The sunny versatile kitchen is the heart of the house. The owners, who are relaxed and generous hosts, enjoy cooking and entertaining casually, as well as formally, in the new dining room.

"Although it is in some ways a formal house, I've included very comfortable furniture and gracious seating arrangements so that the family and their guests will always be at ease," Jesberg describes. With plush velvets, embroidered silks and Fortuny prints employed throughout, all of the rooms have a lavish air but are softened with off-white walls, simple window decorations and low-key antiques that are all child-friendly.

"Our inspiration and intent from the start was to highlight the bay views and bring in as much natural light as possible," says Jesberg. "For the interior we settled upon a New England approach to Victorian architecture, without the embellishments. There is nothing ostentatious about the décor. It all looks as if the family rescued ancestral heirlooms, pieces that have been in their lives for years."

Jesberg selected soft blues and pale greens, with jolts of color in floorcoverings from The Rug Company. She also brought more light into the rooms, with elements of reflection to bring the outside in. Coffee tables of antique mirrored glass, and judicious selections of mirrors in the living room and bedrooms, add lightness to the spaces.

"It is a very happy house," says Jesberg. "It has a great heritage and every day my clients appreciate it more." 

Downstairs in the multilevel house, the family room was designed for relaxation and as a cozy winter retreat. The classic Donghia sofa is covered with Brunschwig & Fils chenille. Eugenia Jesberg designed a series of pillows with antique India embroidered fabrics as a counterpoint to the muted colors of the décor. The round Cameroon tables are from McGuire. On the floor, the 'Smarties' rug is from The Rug Company, London.









OPPOSITE Eugenia Jesberg is noted for her attention to detail and her care with trims, piping and flanges. Her astute fabric selections are evident in the bedrooms. In the master bedroom she placed a classical urn-shaped lamp from Visual Comfort on a mahogany and vellum table from De Sousa Hughes. The elaborate Florentine pattern of the coral colored Fortuny fabric on the pillow is framed with simple cotton piping. The tape-trimmed shades were crafted by Susan Lind Chastain.

ABOVE In the guest bedroom, a pair of beds is ornamented with custom crafted headboards of Waverly cotton. The trim is from Samuel & Sons. The side table is from Ironies. To add glamour to the bed, Jesberg designed plaid pillows in silk by Osborne & Little, with a silk flange by Elitis. The antique Italian etchings are from Coup d'Etat in San Francisco.

LEFT Jesberg's subtle design for the master bathroom includes custom-designed walnut cabinets with nickel-plated fittings by Waterworks, countertops of Calacutta Oro marble, along with a Waterworks tub. The floor is a custom combination of Crema Marfil and Thassos marble tiles from Ann Sacks. On the walls, ceramic tiles from Walker Zanger.