

Charlotte

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2023

HOME

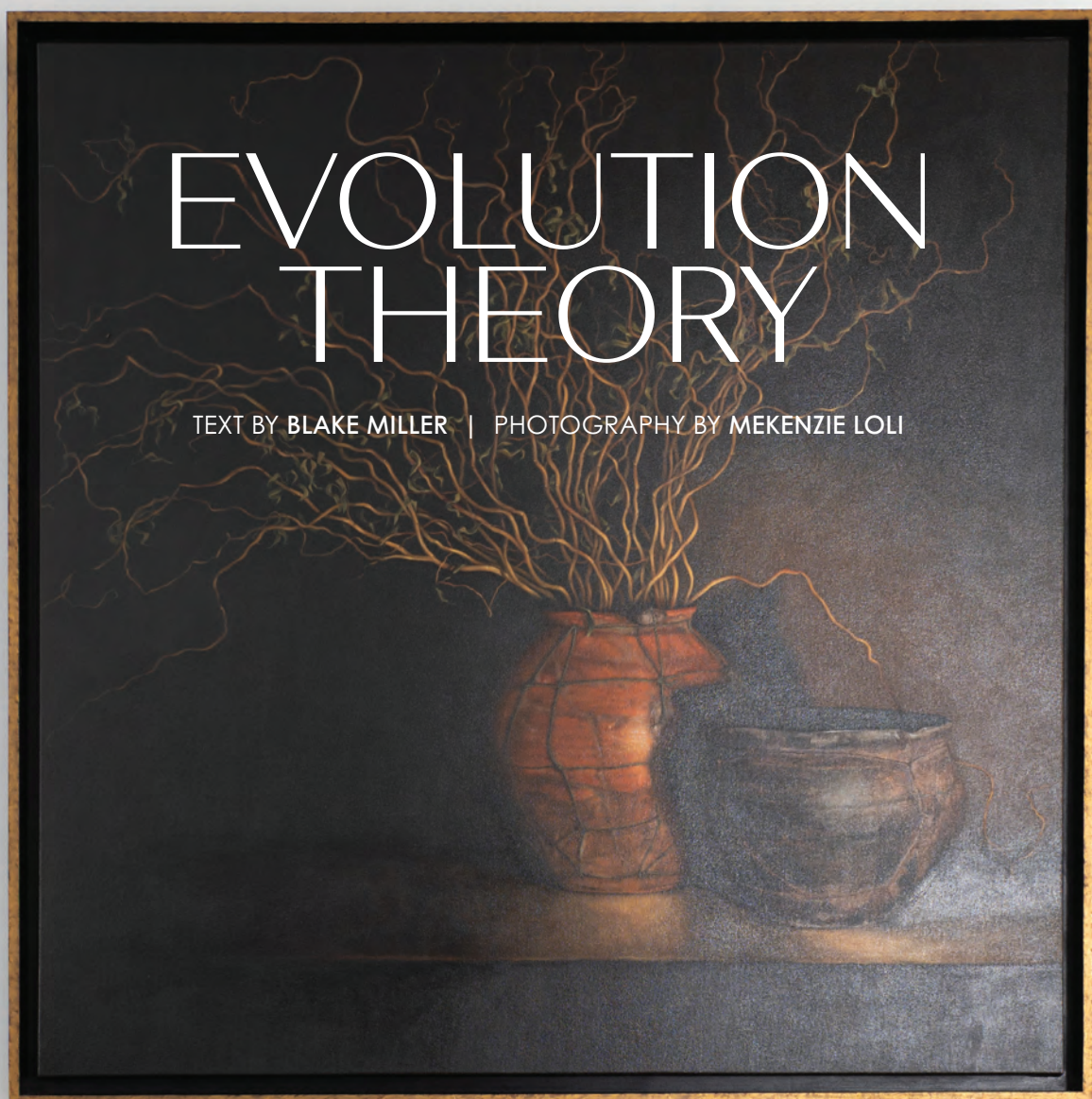
DESIGN & DECOR

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DESIGNERS
at HOME





EVOLUTION THEORY

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DESIGNER BETH CONANT KEIM IS NO STRANGER TO EVOLVING STYLES. WHEN IT CAME TIME TO UPDATE HER PERSONAL HOME, SHE KNEW EXACTLY WHERE TO TAKE THE AESTHETIC.





The guest bedroom features a wallpaper custom designed by Conant Keim and fabricated by The Detroit Wallpaper Company. The design is a darker version of Burberry's signature plaid and reminds the designer of her travels to the UK. The chandelier is by Made Goods and the console table is from Four Hands. **OPPOSITE:** The home's original fireplace was "super traditional," so Conant Keim had it boxed in, and stucco was added by her contractor John Waller. The piece above the fireplace is by artist Mary Calengor from Shain Gallery.



BETH CONANT KEIM is no different from her clients. Trends come and go, styles and tastes change, and people long for something more. When Conant Keim and her husband Keith purchased their 102-year-old Plaza Midwood home in 2001, the designer was just tapping into the Charlotte market and the niche of upscale kids' bedrooms was hers to claim. "For years, when my own kids were younger, I did the fun, crazy color and pattern, and that became my calling card as a designer," she says. "My own house went through its late nineties red-and-yellow color scheme to a multicolor scheme where it was very bright and saturated. And my interior design work was no different."

But when the economy took a hit in 2008, Conant Keim, owner and lead designer of Lucy and Company, felt the stress, and the bold, strong colors in her home left her feeling exhausted. "I needed calm in my life," she explains. "All of those bright colors were stressing me out so I painted everything white and changed everything to neutral tones because it made it feel calmer to come home to. I



Beth Conant Keim, pictured left, loves the hunt for unique, one-of-a-kind pieces for her clients' homes and for her own. In the living room, an antique inlay desk is a vintage find she's kept for years. The console and coffee table are by Noir.



After removing all the upper cabinetry in the kitchen, Conant Keim needed storage for her china and glassware collections, so she designed a pair of custom cabinets fabricated by carpenter Jason Angeldorf for the dining room. The dining table is by Josh Utsey while the dining chairs are vintage. **OPPOSITE:** Black subway tiles from Walker Zanger set the tone in the renovated kitchen, which was updated by re-facing the white oak cabinets by Jacob Wolfe and adding new hardware. The countertop is from Harkey Tile & Stone.







To add interest to the kitchen and keep it clean and modern, Conant Keim included a wall of wood fluting. The wall features two hidden doors, one to the adjacent living room and one to the basement.

have been on the neutral bandwagon ever since. And as I got older, my style evolved and it became more classic and timeless with more lasting power.”

The most recent iteration of her home’s design began with the renovation of “a makeshift porch we enclosed when we moved in,” says Conant Keim. The couple ripped it off the house and “built a proper sunroom, which is now my most favorite room in the home.” At the same time, the designer was working on a project in London for a client and “became obsessed with this British vibe, and

that’s what bled into what I was doing at the time. It’s all about nostalgia, sentimental pieces, moody colors, timeless unlacquered brass. It inspired the entire redesign of my downstairs living spaces.”

Conant Keim’s biggest focus, not only for her clients but also for her own home, is a collected, timeless aesthetic. To achieve this in her home she relied on auction sites such as 1stDibs and Chairish as well as flea markets and estate sales to find one-of-a-kind items. “I never want a home full of things that are mass produced,” she says. “It’s all about the hunt to



Conant Keim transformed the one-time enclosed deck/porch into a bright and airy sunroom via tall, oversized windows. "My backyard is pretty mature, so this space feels like you're surrounded by trees and sunlight everywhere," she says. "It's definitely my favorite room in the home." A Phillip Jeffries grasscloth pairs well with a Ralph Lauren sofa swathed in a black-and-white boucle.

The owner's suite was once a colorful kids' playroom, but when Conant Keim desired a more serene place to lay her head at night, the space was transformed into a relaxing oasis for the designer and her husband. A fresh coat of white paint on the walls and a tongue-and-groove ceiling immediately brighten the space, and a midcentury-modern Eames chair and rug by Schwung give it a modern edge.







ABOVE, FROM LEFT: The guest bedroom features artwork by Karen Hollingsworth from Shain Gallery as well as a sconce by Circa and a bed by Four Hands. The powder room was the last room designed during the renovation. Conant Keim outfitted the space with a wallpaper by Schumacher.

find something different, something that means something to you, something that your next-door neighbor won't have."

Such was the case with the custom plaid paper by The Detroit Wallpaper Company that Conant Keim hung in her guest bedroom. "While in the UK, I fell even more in love with Burberry plaid, so I designed a wallpaper that reminded me of my time overseas." Similarly, hanging on a metal coat rack Conant Keim found at Bobo Intriguing Objects is a striped blazer with a crest on the pocket that reminds her of the Henley Royal Regatta on the River Thames in England. "My UK project is on the Thames, so this coat rack and blazer are a nod to that," she explains.

But it's not just the furnishings and accessories that trigger happy memories for the designer. Unsurprisingly, artwork plays a major role in her work and in her home's interior design. "There are all sorts of pieces that have sentimental

meaning to me," she says. "My feeling is that you have to fall in love with a piece of art before buying it for your home. Every piece in my home means something to me." She especially loves to work with local galleries like Hidell Brooks Gallery and Shain Gallery when helping clients find pieces for their homes as well as for her own.

Like most designers, Conant Keim's home is constantly evolving with subtle tweaks here and there, yet the calm, neutral, classic aesthetic remains the same throughout. "It took a lot of years of traveling and researching and working on different design jobs before I could really hone in on what was my personal style," she explains. "You just grow into your aesthetic." As for another major renovation and redesign down the road, Conant Keim says that's not on the horizon anytime soon. "I'm not going to change this house. I have it exactly where I want it."◆

The living room is a combination of old and new pieces, including an antique inlay desk, a vintage rug, and artwork by J. Louis. A pair of chairs by Lee Industries and an adjacent Noir coffee table provide a place for after-dinner drinks or day-to-day lounging.



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OFFICE VISIT

BY BETH CONANT KEIM

DURING THE HEIGHT OF THE PANDEMIC, I RECEIVED NUMEROUS CALLS FOR A “PRETTIER HOME OFFICE WITH A GREAT BACKDROP FOR VIRTUAL CALLS”—NOT SURPRISING CONSIDERING THE NEW WORK-FROM-HOME DYNAMIC.

This project happens to be one of those requests. The office is the first thing you see upon entering this Myers Park home, and I wanted to make it dramatic. To accomplish this, I painted the walls dark, then added unique furniture pieces and art in various styles and mediums, which I found at B.D. Jeffries one lucky day—everywhere I turned, I happened upon amazing art pieces.



THE OFFICE IS THE FIRST THING YOU SEE UPON ENTERING THIS MYERS PARK HOME, AND I WANTED TO MAKE IT DRAMATIC.

These days, many front-sitting rooms are being converted into home offices; the goal is to give the office space a homey feel. During the design of this space, I paid attention to the foyer as well as the dining area, keeping the colors simple but strong. I moved the new foyer fixture back and centered it over a round table, one that was as big as possible while still allowing for walking room.

The dining space was all about the black Sherrill chairs mixed with a custom dining table by Josh Utsey. An antique mirror, a new chandelier, and a large Stark rug in a solid color define the charming room, consisting of a simple, clean color palette and striking pieces.

It was important to me that the entire first floor be visually cohesive. Revamping the main living space to complement the dining room and office was my goal. We removed the standard flanking bookcases and added a book-matched patterned Walker Zanger tile on either side, which modernized the view. A simple change of color to the fireplace via a faux finish transformed it at a fraction of the cost of replacing it. New furnishings and textiles completed this space.

Not only do the homeowners have a modern, art-filled office with a backdrop to flaunt, but they also have adjacent rooms that are equally stunning. ♦

