

# DESIGNER of the YEAR

KATHERINE NEWMAN SCALES NEW HEIGHTS OF STYLE WITH HER LATEST PROJECT, AN ARTFUL MASH-UP OF PAST AND PRESENT.



Mahogany panelling, newly restored in the library, feels fresh when combined with significant modern artworks and an offbeat seating arrangement. **Pendant, sconce, Lona Design; sofa, ottoman, chair, Katherine Newman Design; table by Sebastian Herkner, Avenue Road; sofa and ottoman fabric, Theo Decor; blue throw pillow fabric, Holland & Sherry.**

## The Backstory

Toronto designer Katherine Newman consistently creates superb design statements for her clientele, but what sets her apart is a holistic approach. Along with her business partner, architect Peter Cebulak, she manages all aspects of a project, including architecture, construction, landscape design, interior design and decorating. Their furniture line, Lona Design (available at Toronto's Primavera Interior Furnishings as well as in New York and Chicago), is a natural evolution.

## Why She Stands Out

It's no surprise Katherine's interiors are as *soigné* as the impeccably coiffed woman herself — one glance at her shoes tells you she is in no way risk averse. Katherine's forte lies in lavishing custom design details on top of historic architecture, with a signature whisper-soft palette of lilac and cream to convey distinction and quiet luxury.



Learn more  
about Katherine's  
signature style on  
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**IF A HOUSE IS OLD ENOUGH**, chances are the architectural details we'd consider historical today were thought of as modern to previous generations, which is partly what makes them so interesting. Within an exceptional Toronto residence in one of the city's oldest neighbourhoods, this tension between the classic and the contemporary enlivens every room, and is all the more dynamic because it's been approached with bold creativity and style.

Given the presence of handsome mouldings and original woodwork, it would be impossible to visit the home without feeling enchanted by its historical aura. But to the credit of designer Katherine Newman, these architectural features don't end up the main focus; instead, they enhance a diverse contemporary art collection and form a refined backdrop for Katherine's elegant and eclectic design. Most importantly, a welcoming ambience emerges from this formal setting. "There's an overall low-key approach, which is how they live," says Katherine of the homeowners, a family of four.

The landmark house dates back to the late 1920s, when it was designed in the Georgian Revival style by George, Moorehouse & King, the architectural firm responsible for the Toronto Stock Exchange and Graydon Hall Manor. While this pedigree was compelling to the homeowners, they were more attracted to the house's relatively low-profile curb appeal, which gives way to an interior of surprising size and scale. Set into a ravine, the property is also surrounded by nature, which allows the family to liken their setup to "a treehouse in downtown Toronto." Treehouses, of course, are rarely as sumptuous or as large as this house, at 18,000 square feet.

To hear Katherine explain her approach to the renovations, which she

**LEFT:** The sunny family room features several gathering zones. Modern and contemporary furniture speaks to the collected yet livable sensibility of the home. The homeowners say they gravitate toward "pure, simple but exceptional design." **Sofa, coffee table,** Lona Design; **light wood end tables, daybed,** Katherine Newman Design; **blue vase** (on coffee table) by Ingeborg Lundin, Orrefors; **glass sculptures** (on end tables) by Thaddeus Wolfe; **drapery fabric,** Christopher Farr Cloth; **artwork** (above fireplace) by Gershon Iskowitz; **photography** (beside fireplace) by Hiroshi Sugimoto.

A pair of custom-made metal-framed armchairs, inspired by 20th-century French designer Jean Royère's collectible Croisillon designs, bookend the fireplace in the main stair hall. Overhead, Pentagone chandeliers by Jonathan Browning produce warm halos of light. *Inset wall lantern, cabinet, Lona Design; daybed fabric, Jerry Pair Leather; bronze occasional tables, daybed, armchairs, Katherine Newman Design; chair fabric, Holland & Sherry; ceramic sculpture (on top of cabinet) by Turi Heisselberg Pedersen.*



executed with her business partner, architect Peter Cebulak, is to understand how rigorous she was about carrying the home's distinguished exterior character through to the interiors while updating them for modern family life.

For starters, designer and clients agreed that a lighter palette in key rooms would make the architecture — which boasts impressive corbels, entablatures, and egg-and-dart cornice ornamentation — seem even more grand. Sometimes this was remedied by applying a brighter colour on certain walls and refinishing the hardwood floors, and sometimes through the counterpoint of contemporary furniture, fixtures and accents with a light look. It helped that Peter's brother, Andrew, is an art historian and furniture restorer. Over a period of four months, he used an artisanal French polish technique to re-establish the patina of the wood-panelled walls. "The existing stain was weighty and didn't do the wood or the spaces justice," says Katherine. "The panelling is now patinated, rendering the rooms more alive."

The renovations took roughly a year, with the family moving in even as work continued on the lower level, where the homeowners had a wine cellar built. A collector's spirit is present throughout the home. During the reno, Katherine was particularly sensitive to how the couple's artwork by contemporary

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## ★ ★ ★ ★ A-LIST STYLE

### French Polished Panelling

An artisanal 18th-century process that uses many layers of shellac and oil makes the wood look extra beautiful.



**ABOVE:** David Hockney's *A Bigger Book* comes with its own stand designed by Marc Newson and brings a bright dash of colour to a corner of the walnut-panelled gallery. **Chair,** Soane; **footstools,** Katherine Newman Design; **footstool fabric,** Holland & Sherry; **round table,** Stéphane Parmentier; **urn** by Per Weiss.

**LEFT:** After reviving the walnut panelling in the gallery, Katherine replaced the fireplace surround with a brighter marble. Contemporary furniture in fluid shapes, inviting fabrics and impressionist hues complement traditional architecture. A framed artwork by American photographer David LaChapelle leans casually on the mantel. **Pendant,** Lindsey Adelman; **sofa, ottoman,** Katherine Newman Design; **sofa fabric,** Rogers & Goffigon; **ottoman fabric,** Rubelli; **daybed** by Poul Kjærholm, Fritz Hansen; **glass sculpture** by Jeff Zimmerman; **ceramic sculpture** by Haas Brothers.





**YOU WOULD BE OVERWHELMED IF  
EVERY ELEMENT WAS A STATEMENT.  
OUR APPROACH TO LAYERING IS NUANCED**



Smoky mauve walls brighten the dining room, while the Deco-inspired rug grounds the European walnut dining table and Danish-inspired chairs. Pendants by Italian glass artist Simone Crestani and curled bronze sconces by French designer Hervé Van der Straeten are part lighting, part sculpture. **Dining table, chairs, rug**, Katherine Newman Design; **chair upholstery** suede, Jerry Pair Leather; **candleholders** by Jeff Zimmerman.



## A-LIST STYLE

Gilded Floating Cabinets

A pair of sideboards with a vintage feel and glam golden finish bridge the gap between old and new.

Earthy terracotta vessels by Françoise Blondeau and Aït Lhaj Hassan flank a pair of doors that conceal full height storage for the homeowners' china. **Sideboards**, Katherine Newman Design; **mirror** by Michel Salerno for Maison Gerard; **peony sculpture** by Matthew Soloman.



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To see more of designer Katherine Newman's work, visit [houseandhome.com](http://houseandhome.com) and click on the current issue



**TOP LEFT:** A black, restaurant-inspired lighting system punctuates the kitchen. For subtle contrast, the ceiling was painted in Benjamin Moore's Sea Froth (2107-60), reduced in colour by 25 per cent. The breakfast room occupies a sunny corner just beyond the kitchen. **Kitchen island,** Lona Design.

**TOP RIGHT:** With its gallery-sized walls, the main stair hall displays an arresting mix of artwork from the homeowners' collection. Katherine added pieces like the Lona Design cabinet, which holds its own next to paintings by Gordon Applebee Smith (over stairs) and Jean-Paul Riopelle (left of cabinet). **Table, settee,** Katherine Newman Design; **settee upholstery leather,** Jerry Pair Leather.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** Reflective elements in a principal suite bathroom playfully feature pieces from adjacent areas, such as the colourful artwork by Alfred Pellan that's seen in the vanity mirror. **Bathroom vanity and wall cabinet,** Katherine Newman Design; **stools** by Charlotte Perriand; **pendants,** Kalmar; **mirror** (left of doorway) by Lorenzo Buchiellaro; **artwork** (above fireplace) by Jean McEwan.



**RIGHT:** The generous proportions of the principal bedroom allow for an expressive mise en scène of covetable furniture, art and objets. The grouping includes PK20 lounge chairs by Poul Kjærholm, a ceramic Bishop table by India Mahdavi, a Pied de Bouc stool by Marc Bankowsky, a glass floor lamp by Sebastian Herkner and a blue ceramic sculpture by Merete Rasmussen. **Coffee table**, Katherine Newman Design; **artwork** (above fireplace) by Jean McEwan.

**BELOW:** A simple wood bench is a more casual counterpoint to the pristine surroundings in the principal suite. Bedside pendant lights with custom red cords by Lindsey Adelman provide a splash of colour. **Bed, headboard, nightstands**, Lona Design; **headboard fabric**, Fortuny; **ceiling fixture**, Christopher Boots; **drapery fabric**, Weitzner; **artwork** by Marcelle Ferron.



# GET TO KNOW

*Katherine Newman*

THE DESIGNER'S COVETED STYLE EXTENDS TO HER DARING SARTORIAL SENSE AND PREFERRED PARISIAN CHOCOLATES.



**YOUR MOTTO:** “Continuous effort – not strength or intelligence – is the key to unlocking our potential.”  
— Winston Churchill

**YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT:** Sky-high platform shoes.

**GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE:** Sartorial pursuit. My collection includes vintage Yves Saint Laurent. More recently, when Maria Grazia Chiuri and Pierpaolo Piccioli were at Valentino, I loved how they captured a sense of elegance that was both current and timeless.

**HOLD-ALL HANDBAG:** Bottega Veneta's Cabat bag is the most practical for a frequent traveller like me.

**FAVOURITE FLOWER:** Pink peonies and purple vanda orchids. I order them from Emblem in Toronto and Banchet Flowers in New York.

**FAVOURITE SKIN CARE:** Sisley Paris's Ecological Compound.

**SECRET INDULGENCE:** Chocolates from La Maison du Chocolat in Paris. Although it's not so secret!

Pink peony flower.



Neroli Grand  
Carrés chocolate,  
Through La Maison  
du Chocolat.

Sisley Paris  
Ecological  
compound.  
At Holt Renfrew.



Cabat handbag.  
At Bottega Veneta.

**IF YOU COULD KEEP ONLY ONE THING IN YOUR HOUSE:** A bronze sculpture by my late great-aunt, the sculptor Sophia Buckingham Hungerford, and a painting by A.Y. Jackson that my grandmother commissioned for me when I was a child.

**YOU COLLECT:** Art. The first artwork I purchased was a portrait by David Hockney of his muse, Celia Birtwell. It hangs in my living room.

**THE LAST THING YOU BOUGHT FOR YOUR HOUSE:** A ceramic sculpture by Danish artist Merete Rasmussen.

**CITY YOU WANT TO TRAVEL TO NEXT:** Prague.

**CARRY-ON LUGGAGE:** Louis Vuitton's Pégase Légère 55.

**CAN'T-MISS RESTAURANT:** Cottogna, in San Francisco. Italian food is my favourite.

**FAVOURITE CAR:** Mercedes SL550.

