

contents MAY/JUN 2022

features

25

ESCAPE ARTISTS

Innovative design transforms an outdoor space.

30

COLOR FULL

An architect and designer bring their bold vision to life.

42

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Custom touches and colorful choices complete a family home.

54

FUN DIRECTION

A client embraces her modern side.



30

A library in lipstick red designed by The Lewis Design Group.

ON THE COVER LIZ EUBANK DESIGN | PHOTOGRAPHY JANE BEILES

departments

8 EDITOR'S NOTE



10 **GET THE GOODS**
Color trends: Pastels; Color Block; Browns

16 **GETAWAY**
Set sail to Faraway on Nantucket

20 **SHOP TALK**
Local design news, the latest collections, haute happenings and more



72 **ATHOME WITH**
Frances Palmer shares her local favorites.



left Million Dollar Red by Benjamin Moore makes the library come alive. **middle** A faucet by Waterworks adds elegance to the bar. **right** Vintage green chairs complete the dining room tablescape. **opposite page** The gorgeous staircase, which features a railing by Forest Iron Works and an antique crystal newel post from Paris, begins in the downstairs hallway.

COLOR FULL

When a **CREATIVE TEAM** brings their friendship to a project, they save all their **DRAMA FOR THE DESIGN**

Who lives here?

Laura Casale: A couple came to me because they had a pipe burst. It took out a good portion of the old house they live in. We planned this project together and set up collaboration with Barbara on interior design. The clients are so fun and charming, and, like many times, we became friends with our clients.

Barbara Lewis: Both the husband and the wife were very much involved in the whole project.

What was the design plan for this project? Were the owners on board with bold color from the start?

LC: The current house was once an outbuilding of a much larger estate. The project's direction was to renovate a portion of the house that was built in the late 19th century. Our charge was to create and renovate the

family room, which is now the red room, add an office, and redesign the entrance staircase. Basically, we were tasked with changing the entire character of one side of the house. The bold colors were something we led them to. As we became friends, the catalyst for the direction of the red room—which also helped decide what other colors we used—was our trip to Paris with one of the clients, where we purchased the red chairs. We were already going there to attend Paris Déco Off, and we invited them to come. We had a fantastic time. The chairs were purchased at a flea market in Biron, and the red room took off from there. But the color really lends itself to the owners' spirit.

BL: They were absolutely on board. It began in Paris with the chairs and just went on from there. Strangely enough, from the decorating side of things, it all started with the library. Not the living room; not the dining room; not the family room.

INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA LEWIS, THE LEWIS DESIGN GROUP AND LAURA CASALE, LAURA CASALE ARCHITECT
PHOTOGRAPHER AMY VISCHIO



"In the Northeast, having four seasons gives you a LOT OF LATITUDE in terms of what you can do with COLOR. You can have different rooms that EVOKE THE FEELING of that time of year."

—BARBARA LEWIS, THE LEWIS DESIGN GROUP



above: A comfy Wesley Hall chair, upholstered in plaid Ralph Lauren fabric, amplifies the green colorway of the client's office.
right, from top to bottom: A light fixture from Currey & Company. The office bathroom, with Philip Jeffries wallpaper, a vanity console by Plandome Interiors and Waterworks faucet. Geometric shower tile by Ann Sacks adds another layer of texture.
opposite page: A console by Modern History furniture evokes the client's more traditional side.



right The library is the pièce de résistance of this colorful home makeover. below Cowtan & Tout window fabric, a Stark carpet, red antique chairs from Paris, a sofa by Hickory Chair, and a Coleen Rider light fixture harmonize the red room.



“The chairs were purchased at a **FLEA MARKET IN BIRON**, and the **RED ROOM** took off from there.”

—LAURA CASALE, LAURA CASALE ARCHITECT

This project has incredibly vivid color play going on; mostly greens, blues, and reds. How did you find yourself at the intersection of these cool and warm colors, and how did that juxtaposition inform your vision of the space?

LC: Architecture and interior decoration must always go together for any project to be successful. Finding how these things collaborate is important. Stylistically, we collaborated on all the detail. The green room, for instance, is the husband's office. He's originally from the West and is an avid trout fisherman. He's a bit more traditional, so that's what inspired the colorway of that room. When we decided on the direction of the red room, we then had to choose other colors that would not combat the strength of that deep red. That's why the hallway had to be neutral. We couldn't have that beautiful green dining room, the red room, and the blue room connected by another color. It would've looked like a box of Jujyfruits.



A Calder print sits on the mantel, which was repurposed from an antique home and painted to match the red room.



VanDeusen Blue paint by Benjamin Moore sets the tone for the family room, and Cowtan & Tout chair fabric follows suit.



top: A red table from Two Worlds Arts helps prove that red and blue can go well together. **bottom:** Taffard window fabric lets the light in (or keeps it out).





above Mary McDonald for Schumacher wallpaper adds dimension and fun to the dining room.

BL: We always felt that the blue complemented the red. We chose a chintz for the library from Cowtan & Tout called Melbourne Hall, which is a floral print that had the perfect red in it, and a beautiful blue, and we worked off that blue for the family room. The intersection of it all was Melbourne Hall. The clients really wanted a blue family room. The blue was somewhat of a warmer blue, if there is such a thing; it really wasn't all that cool.

What was your biggest challenge with this project?

LC: Our greatest challenge was working with the age of the house and improving previous renovations.

BL: Luckily, we knew the clients well enough to be able to present them with choices that they would like.

Why do you think color is such a powerful tool when it comes to transforming the atmosphere of a space?

LC: As an architect, I think color enhances the physical structure. Color represents having guts and joy; it's like a surge of excitement when you have a room—like the red room—that's so intense with color. The blues of the family room make it feel nice and cozy. We left an antique window

in the green dining room and wrapped the mud room around it. It's a beautiful leaded glass window. Other architects might've chosen to just seal it off and create a new wall, but leaving it there allows better light into the dining room. I think this makes the dining room feel light and airy, even with that deep green color.

BL: Either you respond to color, or you don't. I respond to it very much, and my rooms are always colorful. I'm just fortunate enough that the clients I'm working with are feeling comfortable with color. I think it elevates your mood, and I think that you'll go into certain spaces because the color is something you're drawn to on that particular day. Some days, when you want to be a little bit cozier, you might end up in that blue room. Another day, you might be in a more jubilant mood and drawn to the red room. In the northeast, having four seasons gives you a lot of latitude in terms of what you can do with color. You can have different rooms that evoke the feeling of that time of year. That's another thing that I like about using color: it can change where you want to be in the house at a given time. We chose that Mary McDonald for Schumacher wallpaper for the dining room because that room has an interior window. The way we brought life and vibrancy into it was by using a white table and that vibrant green wallpaper. In my own personal home, I have two different

this photo: The bright and blue entry hall greets any visitor with a light fixture from Valley Attic (Locust Valley, NY), a table from Devonshire (West Palm Beach, FL) and fresh cut flowers.



above and lower left: An antique chandelier hangs above vintage chairs and a springtime tablescape. **this photo:** A console from The Lewis Design Group's collection catches light below an antique oval window.





above, left The sconces outside the powder room and the mirror within are antique finds from Plandome Interiors. above, right Playful wallpaper from Astek Wallcoverings helps the powder room pack a punch.

sides of the house. I have a winter side that has velvets and wool plaids, while the other side is much lighter, with lots of blue and white. In the spring and summer, I'm generally on that lighter side, and as the days get longer, grayer, and cooler, I end up on the other side. And that's why color is important: it brings you into the moment.

The red room is glossy and intense. Was the mantel always going to be painted to match the room?

LC: The mantel is part of the architectural history of the house. The red room is a renovation of what was an existing library, so there was an existing fireplace. One of my previous clients brought that mantel from France to be used in their home. Fifteen years later, they sold their home. I knew the person who bought their home, and I heard they were going to take the mantel out and that it would just be thrown in the garbage!

I called the contractor and said, "Get that mantel over to me! Do not throw that out!" The mantel ended up in my storage facility where I keep architectural artifacts. I must be a packrat architect, but I kept it for seven years. When we were doing the red room, I was like, "I have the perfect mantelpiece for this room!" I just had to give it to the clients. We painted it red, and on the inside of the fireplace I used a herringbone glazed waterwork brick. It excites me, because I really love recycling and being "green." I have quite a collection of pieces like this, and I try to find the perfect client for them, or the client finds me. I'm so happy that mantel is there.

BL: It really all started with the chairs and the two chinoiserie tables that we brought back from Paris. The chairs were newly done and in beautiful condition. We had the mantel, and we decided to go really dramatic with the Million Dollar Red from Benjamin Moore, and it just turned out well.

We got the great art piece over the mantel, which I think adds contrast to the rest of the décor in the room and gives it a nice bit of layering that I strive to have in any space I design.

Why do you think you both work so well together?

LC: I'm a hybrid architect. My mother and great aunt were interior decorators, so I'm the third generation of designers. I have a great sensibility of the importance of interior decoration in my projects. It's really important to me to have the best interior designers to collaborate with. Barbara, number one, is so talented. And so fun! The process with the clients and her was just so easy. Barbara and I communicate regularly; collaboration is all about accepting each other's ideas and accepting each other's criticisms. I've worked with interior decorators who are non-collaborative, and it's a drag, because we do such fun stuff. The whole idea of architecture and interior design is exciting. When you don't have the best collaborator, you don't have the best end result. Barbara is collaborative, delightful, and engaging. And the synergy with the clients for this project was wonderful.



left In the mud room, Brunswick & Fils wallpaper and Windmill Wings paint by Benjamin Moore tell a delicate yet impactful story. above Ann Sacks tile creates a stunning pathway, and a vintage Gampel-Stoll mirror greets guests.

BL: Laura and I work really well together because we have a very similar vision, similar work ethic, and similar dispositions. We're in communication a lot; we talk just about every day about ongoing projects. We are good friends, and we care about our clients, but it's largely the fact that we have a similar approach to how we take on a project and how we like to see the finished product. It's just the right connection. So often, you'll see the exterior of a home, and then you'll go inside, and you won't know what happened, because there's a disconnect. With us, it flows.

—INTERVIEW BY VERONICA SCHORR

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