

Designers showcase their creativity

Plan to visit the American Lung Association's 2006 Designer Showhouse where fabulous ideas for the home are yours to take home with you.

Story by ELAINE MEIER; Photographs by KATIE DEITS

Ever wish you could enlist the help of interior designers without actually having to hire them? Maybe steal a few of their ideas and incorporate them into your own home? Well, with the recent opening of the American Lung Association's 2006 Designer Showhouse — whose rooms have been decorated by a collection of talented local designers (and with an emphasis on superior indoor air quality) — your wish can come true. That is, provided you take advantage of the opportunity to tour this beautifully restored historic home.

The house, located at 1217 North Flagler Drive in the Providencia Park section of West Palm Beach, was built in 1926. Back then, it was considered a mansion; today, it is an architectural gem painstakingly restored to its former glory by the home's new owners, Dr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Kotzen.

"I just fell in love with it," said Dr. Kotzen, who discovered the home a little more than a year ago, when he would leave work from Good Samaritan Hospital on his way home to Old Northwood. "I have experience in renovating old homes; my home in Northwood is a 1924 Mizner, which was moved over from Palm Beach on a barge. It has been very gratifying to bring this [Providencia Park] home back to its original grandeur. Tim Givens, an expert in building and remodeling old homes, knew just what to do."

A team of ASID designers was assembled by co-chairs Bernadette Upton, ASID, president of EcoDecor in North Palm Beach and Steven M. Hefner, ASID, owner of Designworks Creative Partnership in Delray Beach. "We decided to establish a design theme that worked within the framework of when the home was built in 1926," said Hefner. "Each designer was asked to stay within a Bauhaus, Art Deco or Mediterranean/European feeling to emphasize the architectural elements and beauty of the home."

"Many homeowners will be able to relate to the rooms in the home, because of their scale," added Hefner. "The house does not have huge rooms; it is a very livable, charming home. At the same time, every room is designed to promote the importance of healthy air quality using fabrics, materials and paint that have little, or no, toxicity and VOC [volatile organic compound] levels."

The living room, always a main feature in a designer showhouse, was designed by JoAnn Munro of Southeast Interior Design in Jupiter. "I was very excited about the house, because they kept the integrity of the original architecture," Munro said. "The living room is small by today's living room standards — about 16 feet by 25 feet; nonetheless, it has fabulous architectural elements, including a pecky cypress ceiling, twin arch French doors, oak floors and a fireplace, which is the focal point of the room."

To enhance the formal living area, Munro covered the walls with a new European limestone finish that is a completely natural product with no VOCs. She worked with faux artist Fran Gambino of Go Faux It to achieve a look that complemented the home's stucco texture. The décor in the room reflects a collection of travel from around the world, from



Hearth and home: JoAnn Munro, left, of Southeast Interior Design in Jupiter, designed the living room, above. The walls are faux painted by Fran Gambino, who also enhanced the stone fireplace with Pompeii-style paintings and tiles.



Worldly: Joseph Pubillones, right, of Joseph Pubillones, Inc., created the sophisticated guest bedroom, above.



Heart of the home: The kitchen, above, is centered on a utilitarian island, where guests can converse with the chef as dinner is being prepared. It was designed by Carol Knapp, right, and Brandon Moore of Knapp Kitchens & More, West Palm Beach.





Indoors at the beach: Dana Donaty of Dana Donaty Designs, turned the garage into mini adventures. The mural, above, is part of a three-dimensional scene. A zebra and flamingo watch for the sunbather to approach.

SHOWHOUSE/From 26

Moorish ceiling embellishments to a pagoda-topped *étagère*. An eclectic use of Chinese to classical motifs, using black furniture and gold accents are enhanced by an ebony-polished Steinway Boston Baby Grand piano at one end of the room. The lightly scaled seating area is completed with a Moorish-patterned wool area rug.

The sun room next to the living room was designed by Vivian Rios of VMR Designs in Delray Beach. Rios saw the space as a quiet room for conversation or entertaining. She decided to make it a setting of great elegance in the old Hollywood glamour style, infused with Art Deco and Moroccan accents. It has a contemporary feeling with aqua lacquered walls, iridescent faux and mother-of-pearl wall coverings, Art Deco chairs and mirrored cocktail and nesting tables.

"I wanted a feeling of a bygone era of elegance," said Rios. "There is a 'glimmer' in the room that is glamorous."

Also on the main level is a small bedroom and bath that was probably once used for staff. Joseph Pubillones, who owns a self-named firm in West Palm Beach, took on the challenge to redesign the intimate and often forgotten rooms in the house. His goal was to re-create the splendor of the 1920s in the small space by creating a guest room that evokes the spirit of a well-traveled, knowledgeable collector. He wanted it to be a "transcontinental bedroom."

The focal point of the room is a 1930s Belgian Art Deco bed with antique Chinese tea tables as nightstands. A 1920s Italianate Art Deco chandelier draws the eye to the ceiling, where Pubillones brought the Benjamin Moore, Eco-Spec White Moonlight ceiling down 9 inches around the pale Blue Hydrangea walls, creating an architectural feature with faux trim outlined in silver.

The adjoining bath exudes elegance with its white Carrara marble floors and Egyptian mother-of-pearl inlaid mirror. Rebecca Kelley, faux painter and owner of Art Effects, used Venetian plaster and stenciling on the walls, and for the ceiling, she used a special finish, a green building product, which is a cotton material customized with mica and dyes.

DelMar and April Leach of LDG-Leach Design Group in Delray Beach created a line of tile called Lost Art®, using 18th and 19th century European molds. While the Leaches are adept in all forms of design, they chose the powder room, master bath and pool to demonstrate how they would incorporate their new tile



line into real decor.

The master bath was raw space. A floor-to-ceiling oval enclosure was designed for a pale-yellow, claw-foot tub, flanked on each side by fluted columns, custom capitals and tie-back drapery. The walls were glazed in pale terra cotta with a limestone block wainscot, topped with a molded plaster border. LDG selected 13-inch crown molding, with Lost Art plaster rosettes placed every 12 inches. The floor incorporates 12-inch square onyx tiles, inset with 4-inch ubatuba granite cabochons. Ubatuba was also used as a border for the tub enclosure and toilet room, as well as the top for the double-sink vanity and dark wood cabinetry. An elegant space was created for the shower area using creamy yellow and gold slab onyx panels. There is an arched window in the shower that looks through the master bedroom to the Intracoastal Waterway.

The downstairs powder room is a 5-by-5½-foot jewel, which looks out to the pool. Peacock blues and greens were chosen for the wainscot, using double teardrop-shaped tile.

"The room has a 1920s Mizner/Moorish feel," said April Leach. A commissioned painting by DelMar Leach of a 1920s couple overlooking a French chateau completes the room.

The pool is bordered with a classic wave motif in blue and white, and then a solid blue tile to complement it. A Turkish medallion in the pool is a multi-color mosaic, according to April Leach.

The showhouse wouldn't be complete without a nursery, so co-chair Bernadette Upton of EcoDecor took on that task. An expert in designing homes to



Promoting well-being: The serenity room above, was designed by Karen Gonzales of REG Architects, Inc., West Palm Beach. Natural colors and materials build a tranquil space, while a sliding Shoji-screen-style door separates it from the bathroom.

Floor to ceiling: The sun room, left, was designed by Vivian Rios of VMR Designs in Delray Beach. It radiates old Hollywood glamour with Art Deco and Moroccan accents.

address allergies, asthma and chemical sensitivities, Upton noted that, because of indoor pollution, often a newborn is brought home to the "sickest room in the house." This can lead to lifelong ailments.

In creating the Showhouse nursery, Upton kept in mind the tenets of the American Lung Association's "Baby's Breath" program, which includes an educational booklet and video for expectant parents. The indoor air quality (IAQ) is considered when looking at paints, wall coverings, carpeting, mattresses and furniture, so that as few VOCs as possible are emitted into the air.

Being VOC-responsible need not diminish one's decor — and it certainly didn't hamper Upton. She chose a Venetian Carnival theme that is playful, bright and charming. Creams and greens are spiced with pinks and blues, adding vibrancy to the space. The "Big Top" valance over the windows feature cordless window shades for safety.

The adjoining bath by Susan Bridgeforth of Off the Wall in West Palm Beach carries the theme right down to the "Jack in the Box" toilet. Bridgeforth also created a detailed mural that perfectly captures the circus in its heyday of the 1920s and 1930s.

Jim Sugarman, executive director of the American Lung Association, looks forward to raising \$150,000 during the Showhouse's three-week run. "We are thrilled with the teamwork the designers have shown. This is our second designer showhouse, and we are very grateful to Dr. and Mrs. Kotzen for the opportunity to host the event in this wonderful home. It has been a wonderful experience for everyone involved."

The Designer Showhouse for the American Lung Association is open Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. through April 30. Tickets are \$25. "Meet the Designers" events are 7 to 9:30 p.m. on April 19 and April 26.

For more information, call (561) 659-7644.



Details: DelMar Leach created a jewel-like space with tile and faux painting in the powder room.