Hamptons Cottages and Gardens

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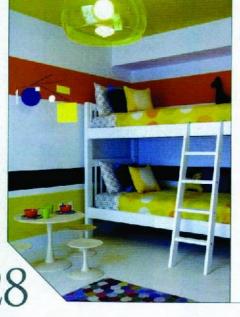
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Amy Lau by Jami Supsic

A VERSATILE DESIGNER EMBRACES COLOR, MODERNISM, ORGANIC MATERIALS AND ART



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The Designer | With a degree in art history and a graduate degree in interior design, Arizona native Amy Lau (ABOVE LEFT) founded her firm, Amy Lau Design, in 2001. Gallery Space | Lau's minimalist design of this dining space (ABOVE) allows art to take center stage. Math Muse | Marked by bold colors and graphics, a child's room (BOTTOM LEFT) gets geometric play. Reflective Spirit | In her own bedroom (ABOVE RIGHT), Lau placed an organic infused mirror. Sea Legs | The Mediterranean sea inspired this bedroom design (TOP RIGHT). See Resources.

You worked with Thomas O'Brien, co-founded Design Miami and started your own company in 2001. How did you get started in interior design? My undergraduate degree is in art history and marketing. After school I worked for a Guatemalan furniture and accessory company and was in Mexico about twice a month on buying trips. Eventually, I started designing pieces in all these beautiful, native materials. It was incredible, but I always knew I wanted to work in interior design so I enrolled in Sotheby's graduate program. I wanted to study the method and the research behind design. I really wanted to learn the entire history of it. Do you spend time in the Hamptons? Quite a bit recently because I designed the Elie Tahari concept store and I'm now working on a seven bedroom home in Bridgehampton. I love it here. I love riding bicycles and wearing big, floppy sun hats. I love the beaches in Amagansett and I even love that cheesy place Cyril's on the drive to Montauk. You really embrace color in design. Is this your personal preference? The funniest thing is that initially the majority of my work was monochromatic, but always with a heavy play on texture. It's almost like, as I built confidence as a designer, I became more emboldened in introducing color to my clients. How does a degree in art influence your design style? In every way, I collaborate with artists and designers a lot in my work. I love the fusion that happens when you come up with an idea or concept and then work with someone to bring it about. The whole process becomes an inspiration in and of itself. What else inspires you? Anything and everything. Whenever I'm perplexed or need creative refreshment I always go to nature or design and art fairs, vintage books, antiquing and traveling. Traveling probably comes second to nature. What are some of your favorite materials? I love wood, lacquer, enamels. Mineralogy is like sculpture. As we start to use more and more of our natural resources, stones and minerals are only going to become more valuable. What's your own home like? It's very tailored. Everything has a place and a purpose. I'm the type of person that, until I find the right flatware, I'll use plastic. The furniture is mainly modernist, some contemporary. The artwork spans from the work of friends to artists whose work I admire. I feel kin to them. It just makes me feel so special to have their work around. It makes my environment rich. What excites you about the future? I've been designing a tile line with Heath ceramics for Kohler and a rug collection for Doris Leslie Blau-that's just the start. It's all very exciting!