

# This New House



Stephen Schmitt/The Journal News

An army of garden and landscape designers used sod and mature plantings to turn the grounds of Riverstrip — virtually barren a week ago — into a horticultural paradise. The showhouse opens tomorrow.

*In Upper Nyack, 28 designers transform a tear-down into a showhouse*

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The Journal News

While some of the biggest trends in home design today are a super-minimalist modern look and the return of 1970s-style bold colors, one wonders how that will play in Peoria and the rest of the real world. You'll find some of those answers at Riverstrip in Upper Nyack, this year's Hudson River Designer Showhouse.

The showhouse, which will benefit Women's Services of the Union State Bank Cancer Center at Nyack Hospital, opens tomorrow and runs through June 18. Unlike the other showhouses run by the Women's Auxiliary of Nyack Hospital over the past 10 years, Riverstrip is newly built.

Located on 2 waterfront acres in Upper Nyack, Riverstrip once contained the servants' quarters of Shadowcliff, the adjacent Georgian mansion built for Eleanor Manville Ford in 1921. Though the servants' quarters were torn down in 1997 to make way for the house, the original carriage house remains. The property takes its name from being the southern tip of the estate that ran from North Broadway to the Hudson River.

Hidden from the road by an imposing brick wall, the new house, with its use of stone, columns and turrets, evokes a modern cathedral. It's probably just as large — 8,000 square feet divided into more than 25 rooms.

For designers, the open floor plan

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# DESIGN



For a young girl's room, above, Pound Ridge designer Mali Petite mixed patterns of yellow, blue and white with cranberry accents.



Two Nyack designers, Karen Houghton and Maggie McManus, used folk art, woven baskets, hooked rugs and furniture from their e-commerce site, hudsonhams.com, to create a cozy project room for kids.

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 typical of new houses, presented a unique challenge: their rooms would visually overlap. "The flow-through sightlines of the house meant that each designer had to consult with those in adjoining spaces," explains Anthony Antino, the New York designer who's design chairman of the show. Even with such constraints, an amalgam of styles could be seen in a preview of the show earlier this week, from super-sleek modern to French bazaar. One trend — decorative painting —

er. Tokamee loves iridescence and uses it liberally, in a floating dropped ceiling covered with Chinese protea-leaf paper, a silver-leafed bar and luxe fabrics, most of which are by Salamandre. Elsewhere, the gaining momentum of modern design can be seen. "The whole thrust of design is reflecting the great modern movements of the last century and forward thinking, inspired by the new millennium," explains Charles Pavatini III, a New York-based designer. The centerpiece in his sleek room is a stainless steel and glass table by Ron Wolf and co-creator,

John Buscarello spared nothing when he designed the kitchen: stainless steel appliances by KitchenAid, cherry cabinets by Wood-Mode and, on the island, a pricey new countertop made of solidified volcanic ash. Tea anyone? Designers Laura Day, left, and Jennifer Palumbo created a white-on-white interpretation of the Japanese tearoom. A painted ceiling bouquet, inset, by Claudia Manley of Toppan. Mamaroneck designer Kaja Gam, below, puts the finishing touch here on blue custom room.



— *Illustration: Alex*

New York designer who's design chairman of the show.

Even with such constraints, an amalgam of styles could be seen in a preview of the show earlier this week, from super-sleek modern to French baroque. One trend — decorative painting — dominates the 28 decorated spaces. It's used extensively throughout the house, from subtle washes of color to bold geometric patterns.

Overall, what one learns from the showhouse is that mixing — combining different periods within the same room — looks great and may be the perfect solution for most of us whose living rooms are a combination of bought, inherited and found furniture.

"Nobody wants to do an entire room in Lucite," says Gerald Tolomeo, a designer based in Little Falls, N.J., and New York. "Today we can take all of those trends from the '50s, '60s and '70s and make them work together fabulously." Perhaps Tolomeo's room, more than any other, exemplifies the eclectic trend so prevalent in design today.

His "Shaken — Not Stirred" den is a glamorous tribute to the gin-martini set of the 1940s and '50s. Here Tolomeo mixes a vintage 1950s modern chair with a Louis XVI reproduction sofa and a Le Corbusier chaise longue. A 17th-century Japanese screen dominates one wall, while Lucite cubes front two étagères created by the design-

er of design is reflecting the great modern movements of the last century and forward thinking inspired by the new millennium," explains Charles Pavarini III, a New York-based designer. The centerpiece in his sleek room is a stainless steel and glass table by Ron Seff and sculptural red beechwood chairs by Cassina.

In the living room, Ho Sang Shin, of Fort Lee, N.J., and New York, uses the roughness of Asian antiques to offset stark white furniture by Bruton. His crowning achievement, however,

is the conversion of the free-standing fireplace that once had a traditional fireproof mantel and stone chimney into a testament to modernism. A wooden frame was built to cover the stone, over which Shin applied Donghia bamboo wallpaper and added a stainless steel mantle. "The old fireplace just didn't go with a contemporary house," says Shin.

Also on the modern end of the spectrum, Kaja Gam, a Mamaroneck designer whose firm is based in New York, turned a nondescript narrow space into a fun playroom with a mahogany bocce court at its core. Although the court dominates the room physically, the designer's custom-made felt-covered seating in bright tropical colors provides the punch. Gam offset the room's shape by adding curves, which, in the form of furniture, encourage interaction. Light Site in New York designed the low-voltage track system using red

created a white-on-white interpretation of the Japanese tea room.

A pointed ceiling bouquet, inset, by Claudia Manley of Toppon.

Mamaroneck designer Kaja Gam, below, puts the finishing touches on the game room, which boasts a mahogany bocce court, custom felt furniture she made herself and Murano glass pendant lighting on tracks.



Stephen Schmitt/The Journal News

and orange Murano glass pendants in key locations.

Downstairs, the work of two under-30 designers is a study in minimalism. Called the tea room, this basement space has the unglamorous function of housing the building's heating and electrical controls. But Laura Day of Nyack and Jennifer Palumbo of Manhattan, partners in the firm Palumbo Day, turned it into a refreshing white-on-white refuge. Based on the traditional Japanese tea-

room, the space encourages serenity and renewal.

Because of the room's odd proportions, the designers tried to make the walls disappear by using white paint and intermittent floor-to-ceiling white linen panels that ingeniously hide those unsightly utility boxes. Providing additional airiness is a specially created Lucite table with turned-up corners reminiscent of Asian architecture and hanging Lucite planters filled with wheat grass (convenient for jaijing). The white rubbery floor of poured epoxy adds texture to this virtually colorless yet vibrant space.

Leaning toward the more traditional, but certainly not ordinary, is a project room by HudsonHome.com — a Web-based business created by the Nyack-based design team of Karen Houghton and Maggie McManis. Houghton's work on Martin Scorsese's New York townhouse has appeared in *Architectural Digest*. McManis specializes in modernizing old homes without losing their architectural integrity.

Designed as a place for kids to do homework, school projects or crafts, the room has an expansive Hudson River view, which became a focal point in its design. The designers used a lush, regionally inspired palette of brick, slate blue and moss, along with folk art and crafts to create a comfortable,



#### MORE ABOUT THE SHOWHOUSE

The Hudson River Designer Showhouse 2000, or Riverstrip, is a new home that has been divided up and decorated by 28 designers. Decorative painters also were recruited, along with artists who provided outdoor sculpture and a virtual army of landscape designers.

**How it Works:** The homeowners — in this case, a young couple who want to remain anonymous — donated the use of their home. When the house is completed, the owners have the option to buy the furnishings. Some of the installations are temporary, but some, such as kitchens and bathrooms, are permanent and required the homeowner's approval.

**Who Benefits:** Women's Services of Nyack Hospital's Union State Bank Cancer Center.

**Dates:** Tomorrow through June 18.

**Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Address:** 525 N. Broadway, Upper Nyack.

**Admission:** \$20, including catalog.

**Featuring:** Ongoing silent auctions, a cafe and boutique created by The Original Christopher's of Nyack.

homey setting.

Dominating the room is husband's own painted country furniture that was chosen for its durability and folksy feel. A valance with circular cutaways acts as a shelf to display ceramics, folk art and other collectibles. Whimsical touches prevail, from the large white-dotted chaise longue to a Victorian-inspired greenhouse that houses a single perfect fern.

The designers also make the most of the many choices now available in storage containers, from baskets in every size and shape to stackable galvanized steel boxes. One of the more unusual one-of-a-kind pieces in the room is a notched wooden end table by Hermitage Artists, an upstate crafts company specializing in the so-called tramp art style.

In another room that overlooks the Hudson, Mali Petite, a Pound Ridge interior designer, created a girl's room also inspired by its location. With a maritime air, this sunny yellow, blue and white room is accented by splashes of cranberry. "I wanted to create a retreat for a young girl, where she could go and create her own little world," Petite explains.

Very much an old-fashioned girl's room, it features Victorian-inspired white furniture by Beacon Hill, an antique doll collection and an elaborate dollhouse. Petite combines patterns in a way that adds interest

instead of fuss. The bedspread and the wallpaper are florals, the upholstered ottoman is plaid and the blue and gray rug has a traditional English pattern.

A room for a somewhat older girl was created by Mango Tree, a New York City design and home furnishings company headed by Louise Panitz. Her fantasy for a pre-teen's girl's room is very feminine — lots of ribbons and bows, florals and a dressing table dressed in a sheer organza skirt. The decorative painting that borders the room culminates with a bouquet of flowers on the ceiling.

While most American family rooms try to be the epitome of casual chic, designer Susan Niblo of Bardonia created one in a formal French style more akin to a library on "Masterpiece Theater." Jo Ann ETC., in the Palisades Center, provided most of the furniture, drapery, pillows and other decorative accessories.

Niblo had to add details where there were none. Using a palette of khaki and cranberry, she designed elaborate silk interlined draperies with rope fringe and decorative hand-applied moldings that create the look of paneling where there was once a plain wall. Niblo hand-stenciled the floor to mimic inlay and the windows to imitate etched glass. A Jo Ann sofa with moss-fringed cushions

adds textural interest to the already elaborate room.

Because the family room is off the kitchen, this was another instance in which the rooms needed to work together. The well-known kitchen designer John A. Buscarello of New York used cherry cabinets by Wood-Mode with neoclassical details.

The centerpiece of the room is a massive 4-by-9-foot island. It includes a sink and stove along with an unusual material called bursting stone from England, a solidified volcanic ash, as counter-top. "It has a glorious feel," Buscarello says. Unfortunately, it comes in small slabs and is expensive.

Riverstrip is so expansive that even such ordinary spaces are worthy of decoration. Check out the hallway designed by Wendy List-Hammerman of the New York City-based WJH Interiors. She uses sheer gold curtains embroidered with ruby velvet flowers as a backdrop for a collection of goods from around the world.

Outside, be prepared to gasp at the sheer extravagance of the plantings, many of which are fully mature plants. Three waterfalls and a stylish deco pool surrounded by lavish gardens lead down to additional terraced gardens and, finally, the Hudson River below. ♦

Charles Pavarini III's sleek modern dining room has bold color, chairs by Cassina and stainless steel furniture by Ron Seff. The fixture is by Lalique, circa 1928.

