



The living room is the epitome of successfully mixing old and new. "What my client liked about my work was the fact that it's not a staid traditionalism, nor is it a flash in the pan," says Scalo. Here, a Chippendale mirror, klismos chair, and sofa designed by Scalo all fit together in a modern mix.

Perfect, Period

Lynne Scalo takes the best from every era to create a gorgeous house for today

by ANN KAISER photographs TIM STREET-PORTER



“What I love about this sofa is that it’s actually really comfortable,” says Scalo. “I used a fabric that’s very kid-friendly, entertaining-friendly.” The cowhide is surprisingly durable, and adds a pop of white to the room. **opposite:** The breakfast room chairs are “designed in a proportion you cannot improve upon,” says Scalo, who looks to the past for inspiration for her projects. Although the kitchen is a classic white, the silver pendants are signature Scalo.



For designer Lynne Scalo, it’s never just about objects. The pieces that make up this Westport home are inarguably beautiful, and represent an adept mixing of centuries of design that form a totally unique look. But for the family that dwells in these artfully crafted spaces, a couple, their eight-year-old son, and their dog, this house is just that—home—a place that’s much, much more than the sum of its parts. Of course, where Scalo is involved, home is a place of serious style, too. With her timeless touch, she transformed this new construction into a classic with a dash of glamour that will be eternally chic.

“Everything’s getting way too homogenized,” says Scalo of design today. “People are getting confused between editorial—what’s smart, what’s sophisticated, what’s fresh—and what companies are putting out in catalogs. There’s a really huge difference between object and style.”

Scalo’s work, which always represents a well-edited mix, was familiar to the client, and she sought out the designer for her stylish expertise. “She had a definite point of view, but she let me fly with interpreting





her personality,” says Scalo. She listened to her client’s preferences, and then expressed them through her own point of view—same words, different language.

And as much as beauty plays a role in the designer’s choices, so does the lifestyle of the homeowner. “I would never create something frivolous. It always has to be based in practicality, in function.” Since many of her Connecticut clients, including this one, have young children, Scalo has mastered the art of creating spaces that look great, but that work on many levels.

In the entryway, the mix begins, with a walnut Biedermeier chest, a piece of porcelain designed in the 1940s, mid-century black and white artwork, and brand new Phillip Jeffries grasscloth, plus a new chair that’s a take on a classic Danish design, one of twelve Scalo designed herself as part of a limited edition collection. The pieces span a century of design, but with her educated eye, Scalo makes the look completely cohesive.

She takes a worldlier point of view in the family room, with African





Though they're from different decades of design, "each of these pieces is always going to be beautiful, they're always going to look good," says Scalo of the mix in the entryway. The mudroom features the same wall covering, and pottery inspired by 1940s design. **opposite:** The formal dining room features a sleek sideboard, rock crystal chandelier and gold accessories.



artwork above a Moroccan chest of inlaid mother-of-pearl and walnut, with an art deco-inspired lamp. The breakfast area in the open kitchen features chairs based on a familiar later-Louis design. "The cutouts on the top just give that one little touch of something new," she says. She used a shimmery shagreen fabric from Osborne & Little that's elegant but easily cleaned, and the table is a luxe version of the Saarinen tulip design, with a hammered silver base. The lighting fixture is based on a design from the 1920s.

Wallpaper also is a big part of the design for this house ("My client is the queen of wallpaper," says Scalo), including a metallic charcoal-and-silver Phillip Jeffries wall covering that runs from the entryway through the hallways of the house.

The master bedroom features a wallpaper in a classic floral pattern,





"I always approach a design project like fashion. You keep your basics in a classic colorway that's going to last, and then I layer by incorporating pops of color through art or accessories," says Scalo. The artwork on the walls is African.



and the sofa is based on a 19th-century design, but it's re-covered in a Rose Cumming faux fur. The mid-century tables and shimmering gold drapes cap off a space that's all classic, but that is 'today' too. "It looks new but it's never going to go out of style," says Scalo. In another area of the room, an antique English secretary and chair sit between two tufted poufs on rollers that Scalo covered in a pewtery sequin fabric.

In the guest bedrooms, Scalo clearly had some fun with color and texture. In one, a classic European iron bed is a nod to the homeowner's Portuguese heritage, but the drapes, which Scalo had custom-made for this client, are definitely from today. Though the chaise looks mid-century, it's actually something Scalo had made, inspired by the period. "Sometimes with actual mid-century pieces, the design tends to be smaller and lower, and the scale isn't right for some homes in Connecticut," she says, so this piece is custom made for the space. The wall covering is another update, inspired by the turn-of-the-century grandes dames of New York's affection for a little animal skin: "Even though it seems wild at first, it's actually very Park Avenue," says Scalo.



The office is dark and dashing with a coffered ceiling and vintage-inspired desk. *above:* In the powder room off of the mudroom, Scalo used a Schumacher wallpaper.

The other guest room has a bit of a Moroccan feel, with patterned wallpaper and ikat drapes. Framed antique editions of French and Italian prints hang over a chair covered in dark blue velvet. The rest of the room is a mix of styles, too: Classic Connecticut in the blue-and-white lamps on brown walnut bedside tables, and a white lacquered vanity.

For the more masculine office, Scalo bucked the light wood trend for something “a little more Mad Men.” The new desk is based on a 1920s design, juxtaposed with a chair designed in the style of 19th-century England. The two turquoise chairs are angular updates of an early Danish design, and a studded wall covering from Phillip Jeffries rounds it all out. Behind the desk, a vintage painting hangs alongside rare architectural prints.

But nowhere is the mix more striking than in the living room, which features a re-edition of a klismos chair, a Chippendale mirror, a cowhide rug, and a totally tufted sofa that Lynne designed for the client. It strikes the perfect balance of old and new, and has a subtle glamour that also



The custom drapes are the perfect finishing touch to a guest-room of purples with a punch of green. A pair of mid-century paintings hangs above the chaise.



The Moroccan-inspired guestroom features a Phillip Jeffries wall covering

looks approachable, comfortable. It looks like somebody lives there, just somebody who is innately chic, sexy and cool. “Simplicity is the highest form of sophistication,” says Scalo, “and simplicity with interest is probably one of the most difficult things to achieve, because a lot of times it can just be boring.”

In the kitchen, a multicolored cascade of plates is another simplistic but striking design feature, and as to the color choice for the rest of the

room, Scalo is unapologetic about going where many have gone before. “Sometimes people think white is a cop-out and it’s so not,” she says. “It makes me feel upbeat to be in a space that’s really classic, that’s really simple.” With some contemporary lighting and Lucite barstools, she makes it a unique space, without giving up the fresh, clean feeling of a white kitchen.


The dining room is a more formal, classic space, with a very European



"It reminded me of Pride and Prejudice," says Scalo of the antique chair in the master bedroom. Gold drapes flank a new faux fur-covered sofa.



look and richer, darker color choices. The table is a banded mahogany style, and the sidepiece is based on a mid-century design. A fine wool rug, a French-style rock crystal chandelier, and brass drawers with a 1940s design create a rich, elegant look.

This home represents the greatest that design has to offer. With her sharp eye, Scalo can cherry-pick the best from every period, and make it all look like it was meant to be together. The most rewarding part for her, though, is being the one who sets the stage for the lives to be lived in a home. "Design is not about the objects," she says. "That's a soulless activity. It's about creating an environment, a home, a life." 

RESOURCES

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*"My client is the
QUEEN of WALLPAPER"*

—LYNNE SCALO



"People are always asking me, 'Can I mix brass and gold and silver?' Of course you can. It's smart and sophisticated," says Scalo. Here, she mixes golden drapes with silvery bedside tables.