

Antique mirrored glass lines the chimney breast and slips of the fireplace, giving the otherwise traditional architecture a modern playful twist, and uniting it with the eclectic mix of furnishings.
Lynne Scalo Design



Creation and Connection

Lynne Scalo

Collaboration, very simply, is in our DNA.

The first prehistoric cave paintings, dating to the Paleolithic Era/Old Stone Age were discovered in Altamira, Spain in the late 1800s. These 18,000-year-old drawings tell the story of that time and are of supreme artistic quality. As an interior designer, I am in the position to tell a story through art and interiors. My desire to always be in contact with art and then bring it to the environment that surrounds us is what makes my profession such an integral part of modern times. Instead of caves, I use interiors of homes to tell the story of the individuals living within them, through a collaboration vision – both my client's and my own.

One of my earliest childhood memories involves my mother – herself a gifted artist – reading me a bedtime story, or rather showing me photos, and telling me the basic principles of design. Mom showed me photos of Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater house in Pennsylvania. "Form follows function" was one of the earliest imprints in my life.

For me, creating an environment is an artistic process. Being surrounded by art itself is, I believe, the culmination of a project. With this, not only do I mean great paintings but unique architecture, furniture, and textile designs that can talk amongst themselves is what a designer-created environment provides to a space. Architectural design goes hand in hand with

an aesthetic collaboration of the interiors. Architecture and interior design are a combination making the design whole. Without one the other could not exist.

I believe that there is no expiration date in great design – each epoch has its elements that can be carried forward until the end of time. Fully understanding the history of architecture, art, furniture, and its impact on culture is critical to my craft of interior design. I often explain this to my clients. For example, the klismos chair, created by the ancient Greeks and perfected in the 5th century BC, is still visible in our designs, only reimagined in brass and woven earth-tone leather making it shockingly modern. It would be perfectly at home displayed in the MOMA (Museum of Modern Art). Beauty transcends time and designing a home requires integrating each period to modern life. I create homes within which people can love their lives.

I have had the privilege of working with quite a few well-versed masters who are each proficient in their field. These architects, artisans, artists, and landscape designers are my partners in design and each brings a unique school of thought to the design process.

The art of interior design is innately a collaborative effort. It is foremost informed by the client creating a background in which they live their lives.

Empowerment is a by-product of self-expression. Therefore, the experience of collaborating with my clients ends up being an experience that empowers each client with the knowledge they have helped make their space just that – “their space.” I have found that I have grown my own very distinct and well-informed point of view, which I credit to leading to my recognition and accolades in my own field of interior design.

In my initial meetings with clients I find that as long as I come with an open mind I can often glean inspiration that will set me off on the best path to exceed their expectations. Whether my client is new to the process of working with an interior designer or a seasoned expert on interior design also plays a part in how the process will play itself out. I love when a client can give me a few hints as to their aesthetic but they are also looking to me and my artistic ability to create their dream home.

My design process evolves with each client relationship. The depth and breadth of each project determines how the collaborative nature will enhance the goals of each home being created. There are times that a project comes to me with nothing more than a set of blueprints. This gets me so excited because I know I can literally be in on the ground floor and work with my client, their architect, their builders, craftsmen, and landscape designers to bring my client’s dream home to fruition. The collaborative nature of such a project gives me the opportunity to glean inspiration from each artist involved. Yes I consider the creation of a home to be the ultimate art. We are fortunate enough to live in a time and place

where the home can be a place not just providing shelter and the basics but serves as a retreat from the daily business of life.

Architecture plays a huge role in my design process. Once the architecture has been identified I work with my clients to help them visualize themselves within their new home to be. It helps when they have an idea of their personal style but quite often I have families moving from an urban environment to the suburbs for the first time. This can be overwhelming, especially when coming from a small space to a large home with a vast outdoor space. My first goal is to reassure and encourage all involved – meeting the entire family actually is very important to me – even the pets! I want to know who will be in the space and how it will be used. Family life is a constant collaboration and the space within the home needs to be one that fosters time together, as well as providing retreats for each family member.

My style is also a collaboration in another sense – not just among individuals but among historical periods. I love, love, love, to blend the new with the classical. Did I say love? There are reasons that certain looks and pieces stand the test of time – because they are perfect. One of my secrets is to design and create a desk and instead of using leather as an inlay (which would be expected) I will use mirrors. This sort of combination adds just the right amount of glamour to make a classic shape just modern enough to also stand the test of time.

The most exciting part of every project for me is the installation phase. The excitement and energy is palpable and serves as the culmination of months



A Chandelier of striped glass spheres hangs at various heights, providing a changing focal point as one ascends and descends the staircase.
Igor Suter Design



This living room is the epitome of successfully mixing old and new. Here a Chippendale mirror, Klismos chair, a custom designed sofa all fit together in a classically detailed room.
Lynne Scalo Design



Reinvention of a classic English design, yet with a modern twist that has become Lynne Scalo's forte, the custom sofa in this living room is tufted inside and out and brocade to envelop its owner.

of work – and waiting – between myself, my clients, the architects, and other craftsman. It's a process of layering, beginning with the walls and floors, then furnishings, and last but not least what is commonly referred to as the final *zhush*. This word dates back as far as 1968 in Britain. It was the American Dialect Society 2003 "Word of the Year" and is defined as a verb meaning to "primp or fluff up." This stage is somewhat undervalued in many clients' minds until they see it happening before their eyes. The movement of an object by as little as 2 inches can change the feeling in a space and combining my artistic eye with the need for the functionality of the room make for a really fun process of "zhushing."

When I first opened my firm almost 15 years ago I knew I had a lot to learn. I also knew I had the heart and soul to put myself into growing my passion beyond my wildest dreams. These past years have instilled in me the knowledge that I have so many resources to call upon that no project is off limits to me. As I open the doors to my new atelier in Greenwich, Connecticut, this year, I welcome the opportunity to expand my reach and continue to build upon existing relationships and grow new ones. Greenwich is home to many artisanal masters in the home-design field – including the author of this book – and I am so enjoying this next phase of creating a collaborative symphony of professional artists. ✨