

Style veteran

Show house designer Lisa Erdmann focuses on causes as well as clients

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The master behind the Master Sitting Room in the 2017 Kips Bay Palm Beach Show House, a fundraiser for a pair of children's organizations, also boasts a more than two-decade long passion for philanthropy.

A Fashion Institute of Technology and Parsons School of Design alumna, Lisa Erdmann has served on the boards of the Center for Family Services of Palm Beach County and the Nicklaus Children's Health Care Foundation, volunteered at St. George's Episcopal Church & Community Center's soup kitchen and supported Dress for Success Palm Beaches. She has an affinity for animals and donates to Big Dog Ranch Rescue. She is a show house veteran interior designer, giving her time and talent to more than half a dozen of them over the years.



Lisa Erdmann combined classic and contemporary pieces for her master sitting room at the Kips Bay Palm Beach Show House in December. PHOTOS BY NICKOLAS SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY

"It's very important to me to support nonprofits not just for business but for how I spend my personal time," said Ms. Erdmann, president of Lisa Erdmann & Associates in Palm Beach.

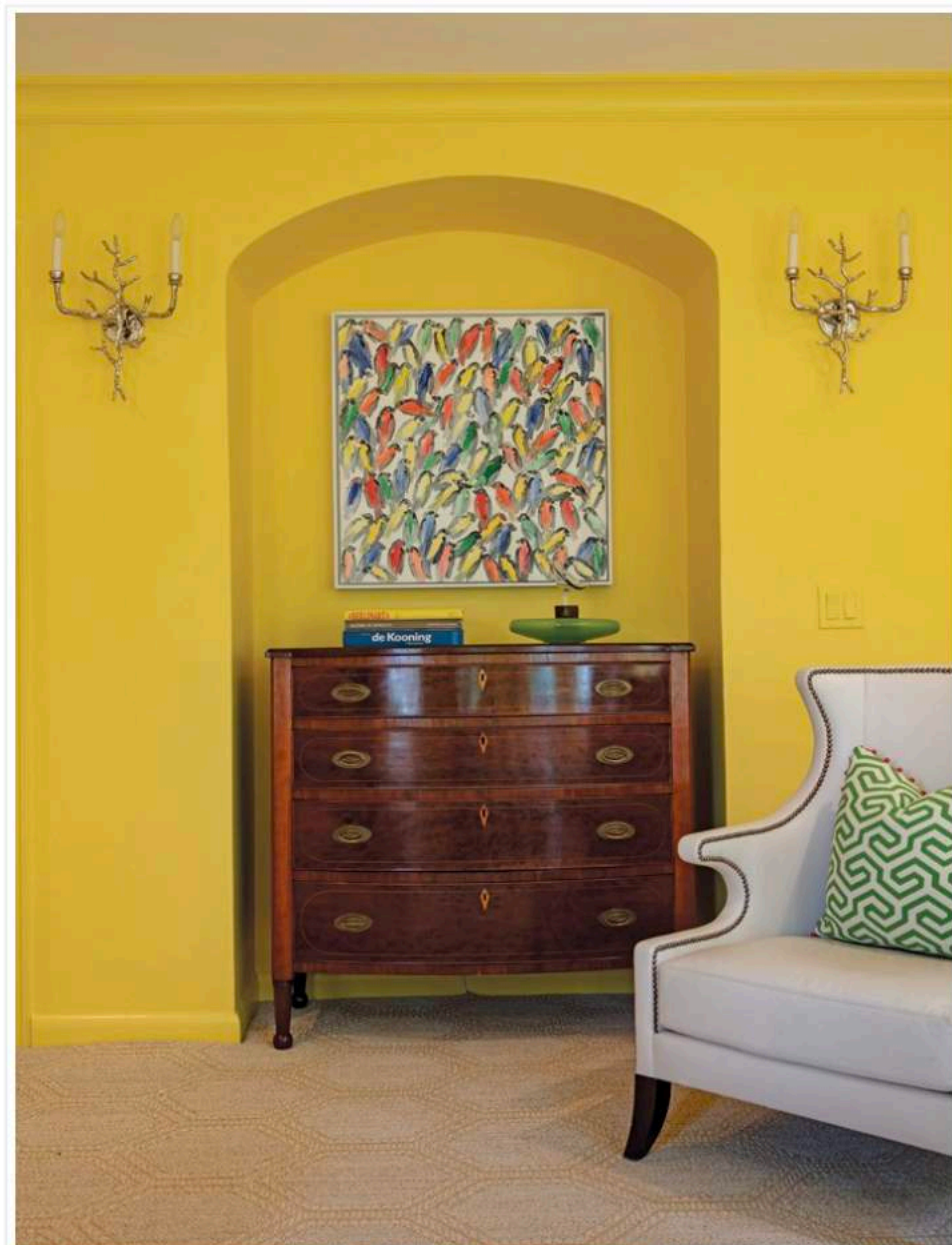
The most-recent show house benefited the Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club in New York City and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County in Boca Raton, Delray Beach, West Palm Beach, Riviera Beach, Wellington and the Glades. The Kips Bay club reaches more than 10,000 disadvantaged youths in the Bronx, and the Palm Beach County clubs reach more than 8,000.



Lisa Erdmann, who grew up in North Palm Beach, founded her design firm in 1994. COURTESY PHOTO

"It's just such a well-run organization, and it goes to such a great cause," Ms. Erdmann said of the national nonprofit that oversees the two clubs and others across the country.

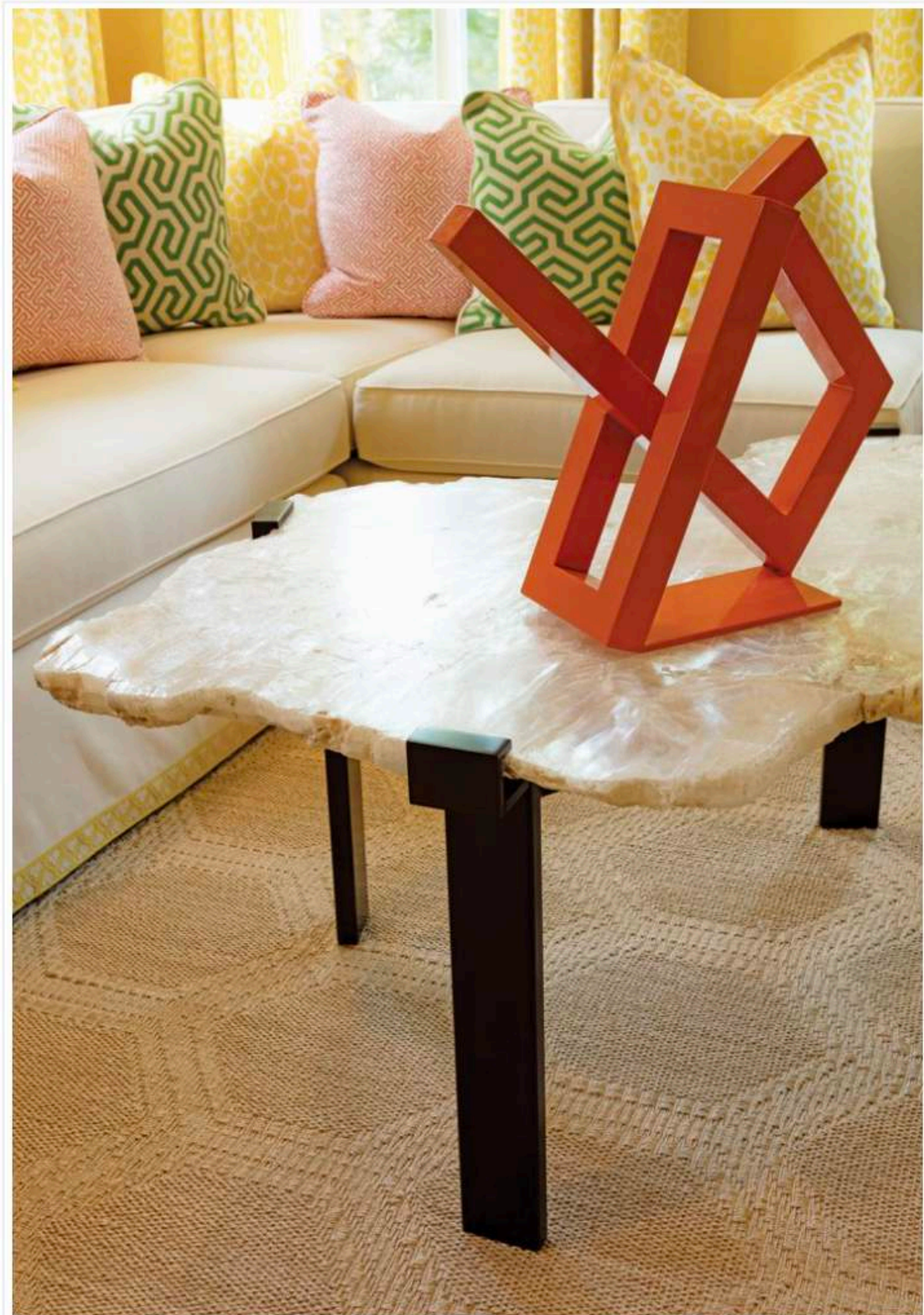
For the show house, in which a local, regional and national designers team up to transform a home and sell tickets for public tours, she was assigned an upstairs space with five windows. Not only did she paint the room in a yummy yellow shade called Sunbeam, she juxtaposed classic brown furniture with a Lucite game table.



"You don't have to get rid of all that stuff you inherited," Lisa Erdmann says of the antiques she mixed with contemporary pieces in her show house room.

"I mixed antique – which you could say, aka, brown – furniture with more modern pieces," Ms. Erdmann said. "We found that you can really mix in these pieces. You don't have to get rid of all that stuff you inherited."

She also incorporated earthy elements – a pair of lamps made from rock crystal as well as a selenite cocktail table – and put a piece of pop art by Nelson de la Nuez on the wall to anchor everything.



A sculpture by Jane Manus sits atop a selinite cocktail table. NICKOLAS SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY

"Art absolutely can be a focal point," Ms. Erdmann said. "There's a formula for each room. You just have to find it."

Here are her thoughts on design:

Tell us a little bit about your philosophy of design.

As professional licensed designers, my firm can create any design style. Our philosophy is to listen, absorb the client's comments, experiences and dreams for the house and create a custom design or look for their spaces. Our clients are our inspiration on every project.

How has that evolved over the past 24 years?

In 24 years, a designer gains experience and knowledge of the industry and the design process. We learn something new on each project and take all that information forward to future projects.

Is there any one constant, or signature "look," in a Lisa Erdmann design?

Every time we design a job, we want to understand what the client wants and develop a custom program. We don't stamp a client with a style.

Is there a "look" that says South Florida or Palm Beach?

I think there is a "look," but it has many faces, ranging from cute to sophisticated. Bright colors are plentiful – aquas, blues, teals, yellows, pinks, greens – but also crisp whites and neutrals are a signature.

What is your favorite design trend right now?

I don't prefer to follow trends. I consider my work to be more classical and timeless.

How do you balance your career with your philanthropic endeavors?

I think it is very important to help those less fortunate and try to make time to support organizations whose mission and vision aligns with mine.

What is your favorite place for relaxation? My home. I love to cook, entertain friends, be with family and our puppy Zoe. Who are you following / watching, design-wise?

I follow elegant classical designers like Ellie Cullman, Victoria Hagan, Timothy Corrigan, Jean-Louis Deniot and photographer Miguel Flores-Vianna. |

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