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# Houston

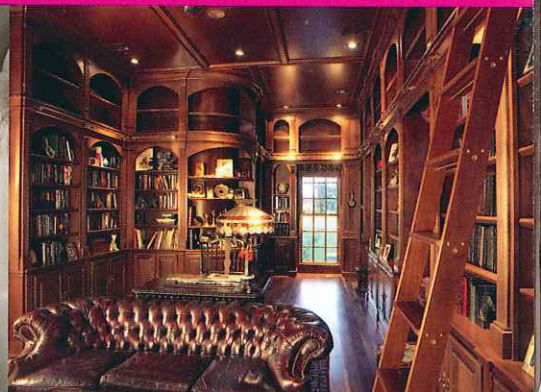
# Design Resources



*The finest home furnishings, products, services and design professionals*

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Allison Bagley is the writer behind HoustonTidbits.com, a website for hip young urbanites looking for the latest on restaurants, shops and events. She has worked as a freelance writer for several local and state-wide magazines, reporting on lifestyle trends. Allison holds a degree in Journalism from Baylor University. She and her husband Brian recently renovated their 1930s bungalow in the Upper Kirby district.

ALLISON BAGLEY



Elizabeth Baker has spent the past 10 years in the interior design industry developing & marketing product for high-end residential use. Previous to that she was the East-Coast VP for KnollTextiles. Developing product for the high-end stone industry seems to be a very natural progression, touching all aspects of interior selection & decisions.

ELIZABETH BAKER



Born in Denmark, Jan Christiansen was introduced to his love for contemporary designs when right out of business school he was offered a 1 year training opportunity abroad. He left Copenhagen to apprentice @The House of Denmark, a fine contemporary furniture store in Atlanta Georgia. After completing his apprenticeship in Atlanta he spent two years in London England working in the Contemporary furniture business. In 1981 he moved to Houston and opened Danish Inspirations where the past 26 years he has expanded the awareness of modern contemporary furniture. With his natural ability to connect with people and a well known radio voice, he's made Danish Inspirations one of the leading contemporary furniture stores in Houston.

JAN CHRISTIANSEN



Zoe Compton, principle of Zoe Murphy Compton, Ltd., a native Houstonian transplanted to Aspen, Colorado for 25 years, has returned to her roots, switching her main residence to the Circle Bar Blue Ranch in Gonzales, Texas. "With my family in San Antonio and Houston, my ranch on the fringes of the Hill Country, and the shopping markets in Houston, Austin and Dallas, I have a wide area to work in." After 10 years in Houston, she was given the opportunity to restore Aspen's internationally famous Hotel Jerome, which won 2 National Trust awards. Additionally she has a hand-forged lighting line sold primarily to the trade, she also has a collection of colored antique furniture that she will be reproducing and showing in the decorative centers by the end of the year. Her awards include: 1st place Colorado ASID Interior Design Award and Architectural Digest's Outstanding Interiors Award. She is in the New York based Brunschwig & Fils' latest book as a top designer.

ZOE MURPHY COMPTON



JanePageDesign Group is an award-winning, full-service interior design firm, well known for its elegant and distinctive interiors for 25 years. To effectively serve their impressive client list, which includes many Fortune 500 executives, celebrities, and political notables, the firm follows a team approach – they work closely with the finest contractors and architects to ensure that their clients' requirements for budget and custom design are met. Published in numerous magazine & design books, JPDG has received an abundant of interior design awards for home interiors, kitchens, bathrooms, theaters and lighting designs. With a staff of designers JPDG is able to design for large variety of style request. "We believe that a more sophisticated design is achieved when there is a team of designers involved in the process" Jane-Page Crump, ASID, principal and lead designer. Jane Page Design Group can custom tailor your dream home whether it be in Texas or elsewhere.

JANE PAGE CRUMP

Erika Durham Hargrove has nearly 10 years of experience writing about entertainment, health care, education, and politics — you name it, Hargrove has covered it all.

The highlight of her career thus far has been her 2006 trip to Uganda, Africa with The University of Texas to report on children impacted by the HIV-AIDS crisis. Other high profile stories include the execution of death row inmates and interviews with Texas political leaders, such as Governor Rick Perry, and national political leaders such as the former U.S. Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders.

For her stellar human-interest reporting Hargrove won the 2004 Star Reporter of the Year Award from the Associated Press. That same year she won second place for Investigative Reporting.

Hargrove graduated from the Dan Rather School of Communication at Sam Houston State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism.

ERIKA DURHAM HARGROVE



# TEXAS DESIGNER COMES HOME

AS INTERVIEWED BY MINDY PANTIEL, EDITOR OF METROPOLITAN HOME  
SUBMITTED BY ZOE COMPTON



Twenty-six years ago a native Houstonian and single mother, Zoë Compton, was hired to renovate the Hotel Jerome in Aspen, Colorado. With a failing economy in Houston, she took the challenge that changed her career and life as a designer forever. With two National Trust awards for the hotel, she began her career working on the finest houses in the world. Working on four to six houses at a time was the best teaching tool a young designer could have. “I learned the proper sequences of how a job should be processed,” she stated in an interview by Mindy Pantiel, editor of Metropolitan Home, Denver, CO. The hotel “has lived well”, she said. “In all these years we only did one furniture and fabric upgrade.” Now, just this year the famous hotel has been sold for a reported \$26,000,000.

## TEXAS RANCH AND FULL CIRCLE TO HOME AGAIN

When you drive into the massive stone and iron gates of Circle Bar Blue Ranch, you don’t expect to find an office that looks like it should be in Houston or New York City, but this designer has come full circle to home again. “My friends thought I was a little nuts, but I really have always lived in the country. Aspen, when I moved there, was a small little town with lots of horses and cattle. Everyone thought that no one would ever know I was back in Texas being out here, but there are so many beautiful houses that are all around me, and with Houston only 2 hours away, and Austin and San Antonio only one hour, when people find out I’m here, hopefully I will be as busy as I want to be. My work definitely reflects the big city

or the country, and so much of the time I combine the two.”

Compton’s summers were spent in Mason, Texas, where her mother’s family ranch was located. She also lived in Houston before moving to Aspen, so Gonzales, Texas seemed to be the place in-between to call home. Her children are split between Houston and San Antonio, and she wanted a place convenient to work and to be close enough to the big cities; yet she wanted to be able to look out of the window and see her horses and their babies.

## MANY DIFFERENT STYLES OF DESIGN-MIXING IT UP

Compton credits her diverse design style to the many sophisticated clients from all over the world who have so many



Photos courtesy of Zoe Murphy Compton, Ltd. 830.437.5220



*“The coffee tables are a new addition to the line and were also born from never finding that perfect table to show off a rug that is under it.”*

different tastes. “I was sent to Paris to buy antique art-deco furniture, was working on the Victorian style hotel, and at the same time was restoring my own farm house; in addition, a very contemporary apartment in New York was added to the mix. When I completed the clients’ houses in Aspen, I would go to New York, California, and Michigan to work on their permanent homes there. For ten years I was all over this country, and even though it sounds fun, I did get tired of living out of a suitcase.”

Compton also puts great stock in what she calls her gift to intuition, what people are thinking and want; her total determination to deliver it is the challenge. Some may think her style is complicated and detail-oriented, “but the finished product is very rich and difficult to copy,” she says in her straightforward, folksy manner. Compton is equally direct about the type of person who is most likely to be in sync with her unique mix and brand of decoration. “I like to work with people with sophisticated tastes who are well traveled, who really trust me, who like something a bit different, and, quite frankly, have the money to complete a project.”

When the time comes to select those finishing touches, Compton insists that her clients go shopping with her. “My job is to monitor their choices, not to make them,” she says. Her rule is never to purchase anything without the client’s permission. “I want their place to look like them, not like Zoe Compton.”

### CUSTOM LIGHTING AND IRONWORKS

A custom lighting and ironworks business began when so many of the houses Compton worked on needed special lighting and glass-top/iron-base coffee tables. “I think these are two of the most important ingredients to finish out a room,” she states. The coffee tables are a new addition to the line and were also born from never finding that perfect table to show off a rug that is under it. “I love good rugs and the only way you can see them is to use glass, especially if the rug is an old one. The best part of the design is in the center, and when you cover it up, you miss it. I don’t get that,” she says. “So, I’ve tried to design some interesting iron bases that will fit in any style house. My catalogue has grown over the years, and I have been fortunate that designers love my lights.”

Regarding her relationship with designers, Compton says, “I sell so much more to the trade than to the general public because I know how a designer thinks, and I try to be helpful when she requests information. The designers that I have a long term standing with know that I will think of the details to make a piece



Zoe's Kitchen



Zoe's Pantry

special. I will custom size any of my pieces if the designer can convey what they are thinking; then I can convert or re-design a fixture that they will like. When a room is completed, the lighting acts as a common thread that runs throughout the house and glues everything together."

Compton stated that her pieces have a bit of a European flavor, and that adding animals in the Wildcat collection really gives it that flavor but mixes so well with all types of furnishings. Shades can change the look considerably; for example, the sheepskin is more casual, and a linen shade dresses up a room. Without shades, but using a dimmer, a room becomes very dressy; this really looks beautiful in a contemporary room. There is also a hand painted shade that can be matched to colors in fabric. "The most recent design, shown in the sketch in my ad, is a bit cleaner and has an art-deco flavor to it. It is one I am in the process of working up and is turning out to be very, very contemporary."

### THINKING GREEN AND RECYCLING

"I really don't have a favorite style, but I still go back to my roots when I didn't have much and had to make do with

what I had. Consequently, I do love to use old materials, beams, flooring, and sometimes use old buildings and add on to them or at least use the wood from them. I think that it automatically adds character to a house, and I am also doing my part recycling wood that is already dead."

### ZOE'S HOUSE

"I moved an old wooden house on the ranch and added onto it. The kitchen/sitting room is the old cabin, and then I moved an old galvanized grain silo and attached it to this area, and it is my dining room. A Venetian plaster over linen is on the walls, and my lighting finishes it off. There is that common thread thing again that runs throughout. It is very cohesive."

### ZOE MURPHY COMPTON Ltd. CHARACTER FURNITURE DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS

*are so important.*

"All of my pieces have been born out of necessity from shopping the streets and antique markets and looking for that special piece or lighting piece that will make a house special. I love color integrated into a room in a subtle way. It really makes a room alive and gives it that punch."

"Throughout my travels I decided to collect the best 'colored'--not flowered antique furniture--but solid painted colored furniture like the beautiful Gustavian pieces that were hand made in the mid to late 1800's. I promised myself that someday I would reproduce them to the proper size for a chest by a bed or a buffet for a dining room. Designers like me wouldn't have to work so hard to find that last character piece to finish off their room, and I have always wished there was a source to find just good colored furniture. These pieces are almost impossible to find and are so costly. I also found the need for a big decorative pantry to dress up a mud room or kitchen." Zoë's pantry was born from the lack of storage in her own house and is pictured.

These character pieces are currently being reproduced and will be offered in six colors. The entire line will be in Design centers by late summer in Dallas, Houston, Denver, Scottsdale, and Los Angeles.

Compton says that the finish on a painted piece is the same as the finish on an iron piece: if it's not layered and detailed, then "it's not for me. I pass up so many good designs because the finish



is 'so not exciting.' This is the essence of good design or bad design with furniture, in my opinion. The subtle layering of a room, a fixture with two patinas, a piece of furniture with texture or even two patinas or two of the same color to make one color is what it takes. Without those extra details, the room is not singing."

For 35 years now, Zoë has known what her peers need. With her lifetime of experience she says "I am now at a place that I want to share to all designers and the younger design community so many things that I have photographed and stored away in my head." She continues stating, "The challenge of the next project is probably something I will never be able to resist. I guess this means that I have to be on the lookout for a really beautiful cane? There are those creative, complex opportunities that I couldn't have handled 10 years ago, but now I can. The art and the challenge is definitely why I stay in this field."

"Before I left Houston, I was sitting in a parking lot with Phil Staley, who did all of my draperies. He said to me, 'Zoe, usually what you need to do is right under your nose.' I have always remembered that when things got complicated in my life. He was so right. That lighting and furniture line has always been right under my nose!" ■

*When a room is completed, the lighting acts as a common thread that runs throughout the house and glues everything together.*

