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East Meets West

A creative collaboration adds a dash of Asian inspiration to a traditional Ridgewood Cape

BY BROOKE PERRY
Photos courtesy of Brian Klutch

Striking a sleek, Asian-inspired sensibility within the very traditional framework of a classic Cape was the mission of kitchen and bath designer Anthony Albert Passanante, CKD, CBD, allied member of ASID, of Anthony Albert Studios in Waldwick, and interior designer Jane Pierson, of Jane W. Pierson Interior Design of Ho-Ho-Kus. "As styles change, so do our tastes," says Pierson, who helped the Ridgewood homeowners decorate 10 years ago. The pair, who collaborate regularly, tackled the project with an eye for improving functionality, knocking down walls to create better traffic flow, carving out a tray ceiling from unused attic space, and introducing finishes such as concrete and stainless steel that are more commonly found in an industrial setting.

In addition to infusing the home with references to the couple's frequent travels and their appreciation for clean, contemporary lines, Passanante seized the opportunity to reduce the home's carbon footprint by employing a range of local craftsmen and resources. His signature all-natural concrete surfaces, for example, are manufactured by Trueform Concrete in nearby Denville. "Concrete is the ultimate renewable resource," he notes.

"The homeowners are fond of Asian antiques and art and desired a more sleek and streamlined aesthetic," notes Pierson. Sticklers for detail, she and Passanante did an abundance of research on Asian design and motifs to ensure a thoroughly authentic end result. Pierson even acquired a simple antique carving of Chinese characters to mount over the couple's bed. Its translation? One Thousand Years of Happiness.

MASTER BEDROOM

The home's thoughtful mix of contemporary furnishings and Asian antiques is beautifully captured in the master bedroom. Pierson paired furnishings by Armani Casa with exquisite custom hand-woven Indonesian seagrass and bamboo blinds by Conrad, through Kim Kelly Interiors of Ridgewood. The bed features a suede headboard and silk canopy and, at its base, an antique red lacquered bench by Ark Antiques complements the room's Chinese nesting tables and artwork. The bedroom's cool blue undertone is reflected in the area rug from ABC Carpet, an upholstered chaise by Kravet, and an antiqued Venetian glass chandelier and coordinating sconces. >







KITCHEN

A showroom kitchen in Passanante's Waldwick design studio provided the inspiration for the home's spectacular new kitchen, which features the designer's signature smooth-as-silk concrete surfaces throughout the space. Passanante paired concrete counters and farm sink with custom cabinetry painted white with a light green undertone to complement the room's shimmering countertop-to-ceiling backsplash of multi-colored glass mosaic tiles by Mediterranean Tile in Fairfield.

The kitchen's Sub-Zero refrigerator and pantry are ingeniously concealed behind a custom piece of cabinetry designed as a Chinese armoire. Fashioned of Sapele Pommele, an exotic species of African wood, it is a glamorous contrast to the room's overall white aesthetic. Passanante used the same wood to fashion a dramatic ceiling feature that mimics the architectural lines of an Asian pergola. Leather-wrapped hardware and a high-gloss finish complement the wood's rich grain.

The room's lighting is another distinguishing feature. Passanante turned to Robert Parsly of Lighting by Gregory in Upper Saddle River to design a state-of-the-art Lutron system controlled by a single, concealed keypad. LED ambient lighting is embedded in Passanante's free-floating concrete shelves, frames the ceiling feature and flanks the six-burner Wolf stove. "The room has a glow that is just extraordinary," says Passanante.

LIVING ROOM

The living room's focal point is Passanante's asymmetrical concrete fireplace, accented by a streamlined stainless-steel screen. A pale Oriental rug from Rug Importers in Paramus and textured grasscloth wallcovering by Phillip Jefferies create a neutral backdrop for the room's original artwork from Keryma Gallery in Ridgewood, including Judy Lapides' contemporary oil painting over the mantel. To complement the fireplace's simplicity, Pierson chose sleek, angular furnishings by Armani Casa, including the chair and cocktail table pictured. An antique lacquered demi-lune Chinoiserie table from Ark Antiques is an appealing counterpoint to the room's more modern ambience. ➤







DINING ROOM

"If walls could talk, these would scream 'drama,'" says Pierson of the dining room's striking red jute wallcovering by Stroheim with hand-stenciled gold Imperial medallions. The motif complements the tray ceiling, which Passanante carved out of unused attic space. The inset features Thibaut's gold-leaf Venetian cork wallpaper. Passanante collaborated with Jay Demauro, of Artique Glass Studio in Glen Rock, to design and install custom shoji sliding doors, further enhancing the room's overall Asian feel.

Pierson furnished the room, choosing an Armani Casa dining table and chairs upholstered in cream linen. The furnishings' espresso finish matches the sliding doors. Behind the table, an antique Chinese altar table from Ark Antiques of Moonachie and a framed antique child's kimono add visual interest. Pierson anchored the room with a quiet, subtle area rug from Rug Importers in Paramus to enhance, but not overpower the room. Personal touches include the Venetian chandelier and wall sconces the homeowners purchased while traveling in Italy.

MASTER BATH

"This small bathroom makes a large statement," says Pierson, whose design included an intricate use of a trio of tile textures and colors — glass, porcelain and marble from Porcelanosa in Paramus in shades of taupe, green and black — to create a sleek, uniform look throughout. The room's focal point is its free-standing sink and teak storage cabinet beneath, which appear to float on the tiled wall. Above, the frameless mirror is accented by a utility shelf. The rain-head frameless shower features more elaborate tile inlay. Pierson finished the space with two coordinating crystal pendants by Schonbek and an antique Asian plant stand from Ark Antiques. ■

