





Others may have just gotten to know themselves and their true needs, likes, and dislikes a little better. We have changed the dynamics of how we live, where we live, and perhaps the style in which we live. Indeed, we may have never had time—or made time—to consider our homes so intentionally had it not been for the pandemic. Something great always comes from change if you're the kind of person who might be open to it. We have created work-at-home spaces, made learning areas for our children, elevated our gardens, adopted pets, and refined the way we spend time at home. I have been fortunate to stay busy, yet I've had more time to spend with the people who are most important in my life. I've learned to be a better and more generous host. I've had the time and space for deep contemplation. Some of the most positive changes since the start of the pandemic seem to have manifested themselves in our homes. Our homes are more comfortable and we're using them more fully. Relationships with family and friends are more meaningful. I think our pets also couldn't be happier. Our homes are the settings for all these positive changes.

So why not put as much energy, intention, and love as possible into defining the way we live? Maybe you're handy and can tackle multiple do-it-yourself projects. There's certainly plenty of information online to learn just about anything if you're not naturally predisposed towards ingenuity. Maybe you aren't sure where to begin. There are wonderful resources for vintage furniture and furnishings, contemporary manufacturers, auction sites, commercial sites, etc. Basically anything is possible to find online if you have a little time and energy. I would encourage you not to just look online, though. While I appreciate the convenience, I don't get a lot of satisfaction from pushing buttons on a keyboard to buy furniture.

When possible, I really like to get out there and explore. Flea markets, vintage shops, estate sales, and private sellers all help me enjoy a sense of discovery while hunting for whatever I can find for clients and for my own home. I find that although online options offer immediate gratification, it's much more rewarding to take it slow and live through the process. You may find that you make better decisions this way, and the pieces you choose may have greater staying power. If you're hunting for something specific, be patient. You'll find what you need when you're meant to find it and hopefully at a great price.

Also, don't be afraid to blow a wad of cash on something you really love or feel strongly about. If you truly love it you'll have it for a long time, allowing you to amortize the cost. Who knows, you may have even made a good investment that could benefit you down the line. Think of it as a process in collecting or curation. Find items that have meaning to you. Maybe start with one thing or a grouping that you really love and build an aesthetic around it.

This beautiful book is full of ideas and wisdom and design inspiration in a wonderful array of styles. As you design for yourself, I hope you're able to put as much love and intention into your surroundings as the designers whose projects are shown in the coming pages. If you indulge your interest, curiosity, and creativity, who knows where it might lead you! Happy nesting to you!



Cliff Fong

# modish

A photograph of a modern dining room. In the center is a long, dark-stained wooden dining table with a thick top. It is surrounded by dark, curved chairs. On the table, there is a brass candle holder with two lit candles and a small brass bowl. Above the table hangs a brass chandelier with multiple arms and light bulbs. The room features large, multi-paned windows that look out onto a lush green garden with a tree and a blue building in the distance. The walls are a light blue-grey color with white paneling. The floor is covered with a patterned rug.

the book of great design

Beth Benton Buckley

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When I'm tasked with working in an interesting space with a recognizable identity, I want to ensure that I design appropriately within the soul of that architecture. It doesn't mean that I'll interpret it directly—that can often look like set dressing. It's much more interesting to mix styles.

~Cliff Fong

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Cliff Fong

Los Angeles, CA







"Travel has had a strong influence on my aesthetic, and I've learned that there are a lot of cultural parallels between the decorative arts, architecture and design, fine arts and fashion. To me, they all kind of flow in the same way. They are all equally telling and reactive to cultural conditions—right down to their unique details. It's a natural, shared progression from one industry to another."













# about cliff

Interior design is not a singular expression for Cliff Fong, but rather a hybrid of many influences, experiences and ideas that he is able to seamlessly combine. Cliff's creative, multi-faceted approach has garnered widespread recognition and afforded him the opportunity to work with many notable clients. And while such high-profile projects certainly look impressive on a resume, Cliff says that what truly feeds his passion is the chance to create spaces that he finds interesting, with people he enjoys.

LA-based, Cliff has been a creative force for most of his life. Born in New York, Cliff spent his teenage years traveling around Europe before studying art history at California State University, Los Angeles.

After he began focusing on interior design full time, Cliff launched Matt Blacke Inc., through which he does primarily residential work along with the occasional commercial project. In bringing his own interior design vision to light, Cliff says that there are basic industry rules and formats that he usually doesn't deviate from, but when it comes to crucial details like choosing and installing furniture, art or other design features, every job is different, and he always strives to have a satisfying and cooperative creative experience.

"There are some people who want their home to look like a luxury hotel or a swanky nightclub, which is great, but that's not where my passion lies. I want to work with clients who see their home as an extension of their personality and interests. That is what enables me to create something truly unique and special."

