

Photos: Brett Beyer Photography



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Interview DREW MCGUKIN

Drew McGukin Interiors of Chelsea, New York deliver projects in and around Manhattan, the Hamptons, North Carolina and the west coast of the US. The company's confident application of textiles has gained the respect of brands such as Sunbrella and Robert Allen who have commissioned Drew McGukin spaces to showcase their fabric collections

Why is collaboration so important to you and how does the partnership between you and your clients tend to play out?

I believe client collaboration is imperative—vital to ensure the final space reflects the soul of its inhabitants. To achieve a space that lives and breathes as cradle, safe haven, communal, private, shared or somewhere that just feels like 'home', the process can be as unique and different as each individual client. The overarching outline or path for how we get there always starts with listening, drives from a place of function, fuels on a defining style and desire to elevate, then lands by nailing a genuine sense of 'self' within the space.

Why did you choose to make fabric such a vital element of the 2015 Holiday House and how has that project informed others since?

Holiday House was a unique opportunity to showcase a new fabric line by Robert Allen

with whom I partnered. The directive was to showcase as many new fabrics as possible and explore how they could work beautifully together. That room was all about layers and what I often hashtag as #patternonpattern—the concept of balancing competing patterns by combining them. Combining patterns well is a true art form! I'd say anyone who follows my work gets that I'm a pattern junkie.

Do your clients tend to be receptive to the idea of incorporating a handmade rug or creative textile element into their schemes?

Almost all of our clients are striving to achieve something other than what I call 'off-the-shelf' design. Our people are truly invested in the artistry of fabrics, rugs, furniture, hardware, etc. Our clients desire unique spaces defined by textural elegance, sculptural juxtaposition, timeless functionality and some kind of unexpected point-of-view.

What rug brands do you like to work with and why?

Gosh, there are so many good ones. Genuinely, we work with a lot of different rug vendors. Sacco and ALT for Living are heavy hitters with us. I'm consistently successful running into ABC Carpet & Home and finding exactly what I need as well.

At what stage of a project is a rug usually considered?

So, the old rule is start with the rug... Funny enough, I always do rugs last!

Can you name any particular recent projects in which you were especially pleased with the way the rugs worked?

Mansour Modern recently nailed an antique rug we placed in a San Francisco home that is perfectly sized, exquisitely time-worn and magically complimenting to the overall

scheme. The rug was sourced last and you'd swear it was the foundation from which the entire scheme was built. Truly, it was a mesmerising find!

Do you think that rugs and textiles can be considered as artworks? How important are they in your schemes?

I do believe rugs and textiles can be considered art. I believe they are often the most impactful elements in the room. The caveat for me is that I also know you can design an incredible space, expertly crafted, without breaking the

01 Drew McGukin

02 Soho loft by Drew McGukin, over-dyed rug from ABC Carpet & Home

03 San Francisco staircase with custom ombre carpet from ALT For Living

04 Drew McGukin's own living space, Moroccan rug by Soufiane Zarib

bank on these items. The escalating cost of rugs and fabrics has really reached a point where some clients will simply make a different choice to avoid the financial burden. I do feel the market has lost touch with what will truly be 'valuable' over time in exchange for the shock 'value' of the moment.

Could you sum up your design aesthetic in five words?

Bold. Fresh. Contemporary. Approachable. Comfortable.

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