

Special issue

NOVEMBER 2005

HOUSE & GARDEN

DESIGN FOR THE WELL-LIVED LIFE



**A MANHATTAN
HOUSEBOAT,
A FARM IN ITALY,
AN ARTIST'S
RETREAT,
A PARIS
APARTMENT**

**VALESCA
GUERRAND-HERMÈS
IN MOROCCO**

U.S. \$3.99
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A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a colorful patterned top and blue jeans, is sitting on a light blue sofa. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The room has a classic interior with a wooden bookshelf filled with books, a white bust on a shelf, and a large ornate chandelier hanging from the ceiling. The floor is covered with a geometric patterned tile. The text "November" is written in a large, elegant serif font across the top of the image.

November

HOUSE & GARDEN CELEBRATES THE
BEAUTY AND DIVERSITY OF GREAT DESIGN

Decorator Emma Jane Pilkington relaxes on a sofa by Anthony Lawrence-Belfair upholstered in Ulf Moritz's mohair in Nimbus for Sahco Hesslein.



A mix of styles—such as a 19th-century Anglo-Indian table from Burden & Izett Antiques, NYC, paired with Jansen campaign chairs from the Coconut Company, NYC—tempers the formality of the living room. ART *The Embryo* (2001), by Mauro Corda. PAINT Estate Emulsion in Pointing 2003, Farrow & Ball. LIGHTING Bronze 19th-century sconces with original gilding, Quai Voltaire Antiques, Greenwich, CT.

A photograph of a room interior. In the foreground, two black leather deck chairs with silver metal frames and brass-colored adjustment knobs are positioned on a light-colored wooden floor. In the background, a large rectangular mirror is mounted on a white wall, reflecting a gold-colored candelabra with three lit candles. The room has white walls and a white baseboard.

CHAMPAGNE WITH A TWIST

EMMA JANE PILKINGTON
KEEPS THINGS FRESH IN HER
MANHATTAN APARTMENT
WITH A SURPRISE
AROUND EVERY CORNER



We can all sheepishly recall childhood temper tantrums, though at the time our outbursts seemed justified. Typical provocations included lima beans, refused requests for ice cream, and unconscionably early bedtimes. Many other circumstances prompted bratty behavior, of course, but it seems a safe bet that Emma Jane Pilkington is the only little girl in history ever to have thrown a screaming fit over interior design. "My mother, Carolyn, has always been so beautiful and stylish," Pilkington says, remembering an incident from her youth in Australia, "but there was one time at age seven when I became insanely upset over her choice of wallpaper

for the master bedroom of our town house in Melbourne. It just didn't sit well with me. I doubt she took my opinion seriously, though."

Today, people are taking Pilkington's design opinions quite seriously. As Wordsworth wrote, "The child is father to the man," and it's no surprise that Pilkington, now living in New York, has embarked on a career in interior design. She outfitted the Park Avenue apartment of Ivanka Trump and a downtown apartment for classically trained new-age singer Sasha Lazard and her husband, film producer Michael Mailer, and has a clutch of clients in Greenwich, Connecticut, who, like Pilkington's husband, Todd Goergen, managing partner of a private equity firm, work in finance. But, in some ways, Pilkington's most challenging assignment was her own apartment. "With a client you are always guided by their needs and tastes," she says. "But there are so many directions you can go in when it's your own place."

The direction Pilkington chose was straight, though there are many diverting curves in the road. The furniture consists mainly of classic pieces that come from several periods but are grouped to bring out their harmonies. One end of the living room is anchored by an

A ca. 1940 rug composed of vintage kilim sections, from F. J. Hakimian, NYC, adds an Art Deco touch to the living room, which includes Regency spoon-back chairs from Burden & Izett in white Renoud Texture horsehair by Brunswick & Fils and a Louis XVI backgammon table, opposite page, and a 19th-century Venetian mirror from Lee Calicchio, NYC, above. The sofa and banquette were custom-made by Anthony Lawrence-Belfair, NYC.



THE FLOURISHES IN THE APARTMENT COME
FROM PILKINGTON'S USE OF FABRIC, PATTERN, AND ART



LIVELY JUXTAPOSITIONS BETWEEN TRADITIONAL FURNISHINGS AND MODERN ART KEEP THE ENERGY LEVEL HIGH IN THE APARTMENT

early-nineteenth-century marble and ebony Anglo-Indian table, paired with two saber-legged Jansen campaign chairs. The other end of the room features an eighteenth-century Louis XVI backgammon table and two black spoon-back Regency chairs. The dining room centers on a long oval mahogany Directoire table surrounded by Directoire-style chairs from the 1930s and an important eighteenth-century mahogany bench signed by the French master furniture maker Georges Jacob. The master bedroom contains an odd but effective grouping of eighteenth-century English chests and a matching Empire bed and armoire, painted gray. "I don't usually like suites of furniture—too boring," Pilkington says. "But these two pieces have lived together for more than a hundred and fifty years, so I couldn't break them up."

Flourishes in the apartment come from pattern, fabric, and art. Goergen and Pilkington are budding collectors, a fact announced by the Rauschenberg in their elevator lobby and a large Nevelson composition in the foyer. Their eye for placement is as strong as it is for artistic talent. A bronze nude by French sculptor Mauro Corda, set atop the Anglo-Indian table, seems to float in the living room; the formality of the dining room is diffused by a huge screen by Verner Panton made of silver plastic spirals and hung opposite a large eighteenth-century Italian gilt-wood mirror. They bought a standing desk solely to house their copy of the mammoth Taschen biography of Muhammad Ali, *GOAT* (an acronym for "Greatest of All Time").

A visual punch as potent as an Ali left jab hits you in the foyer: a faux-marquetry painted floor, executed by New York decorative painter Gilles Giacomotti. The pattern of interlocked diamonds and octagons extends up the hallway and into the library, and has the stately grandeur of the coffered ceiling of a Baroque church. Still, its being *trompe l'oeil*, there's something

A faux-marquetry floor painted by Gilles Giacomotti, NYC, and a Louise Nevelson sculpture make a stunning impression in the foyer, above. See Shopping, last pages.
■ The dining room, opposite page, dazzles with a Directoire table and chairs in Edelman Leather's Royal Hide in Dead White and an 18th-century bench by the French master Georges Jacob in Dale Horsehair by Old World Weavers. The chandeliers and French silvered-bronze candelabras are from Quai Voltaire Antiques.







fun about it, too. Pilkington uses pattern to offset the seriousness of the furniture in her choice of two vintage "composition" rugs, each made from stitched-together segments of kilims, from New York carpet dealer F. J. Hakimian. One, with overlapping fan shapes in white and cream, brings an Art Deco note to the living room. The other, made of bands of black and white, lends graphic vigor to the master bedroom.

Fabrics are Pilkington's passion—she has a library of hundreds of document swatches—and she is particularly adept at using textiles that feel as good as they look. She covered the Jacob bench, for example, in a checked horsehair that is sleek to the eye and the touch. There is a sofa upholstered in simple, rich mohair and a pair of Billy Baldwin club chairs covered in plush Scalamandré velvet. She showed brilliance by covering an Arne Jacobsen Egg chair in Clarence House leopard-print silk velvet.

Her treatment of the Egg chair is the sort of bold, imaginative stroke you'd hope to see from a young and clever designer. Pilkington currently has four projects in the works and with her sister, Amy Pilkington, a jewelry designer, is working on a line of what she likes to call "jewelry for the home," which will include such things as napkin rings and passementerie. For now, Pilkington is being careful not to overextend herself, which is wise for a person who admits that she is still developing her knowledge of the trade. Unlike many decorators, she enjoys working for clients who have things to teach her. "It's wonderful when you work for a knowledgeable collector or connoisseur. You can find out so many new things about periods and styles," she says. "Of course, I always want to fuss with their things, change the fabric and such." Spoken like a true brat, and a talented one at that. ▷

Hardly an era goes unrepresented in the office, which contains a Directoire daybed in Scalamandré's Kinsale, a George II-style mirror, an Empire chandelier from Carlos de la Puente Antiques, NYC, an Art Deco table by Dominique with a Jansen stool, both from the Coconut Company, and an Arne Jacobsen Egg chair, from Metropolis Modern, NYC, covered in Clarence House velvet.



A 1960s couture Dior dress hangs outside the closets in the bedroom, which is furnished with an Empire-style bed and armoire painted in Farrow & Ball's Pigeon, a 19th-century English wooden chandelier, and an F. J. Hakimian kilim composition. Hampton Court coverlet, through Schweitzer Linens, NYC. See Shopping, last pages.

DESIGN FOR THE WELL-LIVED LIFE

For decorator Emma Jane Pilkington and her husband, financier Todd Goergen, a perfect day includes their exotic Scottish cat, Campari, and lots of cucumber and goat cheese.

WHAT'S THE ESSENCE OF A GREAT DECOR?

Emma: "Formality plus nonchalance equals chic."

HOW DO YOU MOST ENJOY ENTERTAINING?

Todd: "I love to cook at home, while dancing around in a vintage Marimekko apron."

Emma: "I enjoy setting the table as much as Todd likes the preparation. He has such fun putting together a menu and pairing wines. If it was left to me, we'd probably sit looking at beautifully arranged—but empty—plates."

WHAT IS THE MOST INDISPENSABLE TOOL OR APPLIANCE IN YOUR KITCHEN?

Todd: "Copper pots."

Emma: "My husband. And I couldn't do without my two Fisher & Paykel dishwashers."

WHICH CHAMPAGNE DO YOU SERVE?

Todd: "For a very fancy party, a magnum of 1985 Dom Perignon rosé; for casual events, Veuve Clicquot."

DO YOU HAVE A HOUSE COCKTAIL?

Todd: "Passion fruit juice, Belvedere vodka, and champagne."

Emma: "I'm a Campari girl: Campari and soda; Campari, fresh orange juice, lime, and Cointreau. In the summer, we also love to fill huge crystal jugs with Pimm's and fruit or cucumber. I put a sterling Tiffany stirrer and an edible flower in each tall glass—the drinks look (and taste) so refreshing."

WHAT MUSIC ARE YOU LISTENING TO LATELY, AND ON WHICH SOUND SYSTEM?

Todd: "The suave dance orchestra Pink Martini, on my new Terra/Creston system."

Emma: "Ever since I saw *The Boy from Oz* on Broadway, I've been addicted to singing along (full blast and alone) with Hugh Jackman as Peter Allen whenever I'm driving."

WHAT ARE YOU DRIVING?

Todd: "When we got married, I traded in my Aston Martin DB7 Volante, and we now share a more sensible Mercedes CL500."

WHAT DO YOU DREAM OF DRIVING?

Emma: "I'd love to have a 1969 Mercedes SL like the one my mother had back in Australia. A less realistic option—though it's so delicious and, as a four-seater, quite practical—is the new Ferrari 612 Scaglietti."

HAVE YOU COME ACROSS ANY NEW GADGETS THAT YOU NOW CAN'T DO WITHOUT?

Emma: "My Canon Mini DV camcorder."



WHAT ONE THING FEELS MOST WONDERFUL TO THE TOUCH?

Todd: "My cat, Anoushka, a little Scottish Fold."

Emma: "I agree. She feels like a chinchilla."

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHARITY?

Emma: "Todd and I contribute to many groups through his family's philanthropic trust, the Goergen Foundation. They focus mainly on education and the arts. Personally, I support as many animal welfare organizations as I can."

WHOSE FRAGRANCE DO YOU WEAR?

Todd: "Penhaligon's Blenheim Bouquet."

Emma: "My mother taught me never to divulge one's perfume—it's part of a woman's mystery."

WHAT'S ALWAYS IN YOUR FRIDGE?

Emma: "Chopped cucumber and goat cheese. I eat it night and day."

Todd: "Colman's mustard with a sterling silver top from Theo Fennell in London. I can put it straight on the table."

WHICH CAMERA DO YOU USE?

Emma: "I carry my Sony Cyber-shot everywhere to document design details and inspirations, which I catalog for my design library."

Todd: "A traditional Canon 35 mm. I refuse to give in to the digital revolution."

WHAT IS THE ULTIMATE LUXURY?

Todd: "Service."

Emma: "Time. Quiet." □