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## The Home Designer Inspired Design

By Brandon Neff



Inspiration. I feel it's the genesis of any creative pursuit. Function, you say? Sure, that counts too, but it's inspiration that launches a desire to capture in form what the mind can only imagine. Look around. Inspiration comes in many forms and through many paths. Sometimes it knocks you straight on your tail, or can be as stealth as a cat hunting its prey. I think the question I'm asked most is, "What inspires you when designing a space?" And, to that I always answer, "Everything."

The color and texture of a dog's coat, or the shape of clouds in a late summer's sky - I am always looking, observing and drawing inspiration. I encourage my clients to seize inspiration from their everyday lives - obscure adventures, the rehearsed or merely the familiar. Many people I work with think they don't have a creative gene in their body, but I beg to differ. I believe everyone has the ability to see the world through a curated lens.

For example, one of my clients asked me to design a wall installation based on one of his passions - airplanes. My assignment for him was to create an image in the sky with himself (and his plane) as the subject - conveniently he has

a pilot's license! The image above came from his first shoot - very inspiring!

I love the photo's composition and color! That canary yellow of the planes mixed with the contrasting blacks and whites have inspired my next project - stay tuned. This image has an almost Rauschenberg feel to it - something very Pop Art and fun. For me, it's the bold typeset lettering and insignias that get my art director's mind working overtime to begin work on a new room using graphic, pure, saturated color.

By directing my client to create an inspired image, I myself, have been inspired.

Ok. Here's another example. Since getting my new phone I have become obsessed with its camera. I now use the phone more as a photo lens than as a means of communication. Everywhere I go, I take pictures - the good, the bad and the ugly. At the end of each day I sift through my digital camera roll like a kid sorting treats after a Halloween haul. Some days I get black licorice (not a fan), but some days I score a Milky Way! We're talkin' king size!

One such image was of a home I discovered South of Market in San Francisco - a classic Victorian Painted Lady dressed up for a ball. Instantly, I was inspired.

Obviously the color grabbed me immediately, but also the scale, the moldings and the simplicity of its beauty. Fan deck of colors at my side I began to re-imagine the image as a room - walls, crown, woods, scale and playfulness - all being reinterpreted into an interior.

I borrowed the light oak hue of the front door as inspiration for the table and floor, the gold finials of the home's balcony to inspire the gold trim on the chandelier, the salt white frieze for the room's crown molding and the silvery purples and deep plums of the facade for my custom wallpaper.

I believe that art and design are the genesis for evoking emotion and discussion amongst those involved in, and those witnessing the process. Design isn't something esoteric, or obtuse. But, rather, it's finding inspiration in what turns you on and gets your juices flowing.

What inspires you?



Custom dining room designed by Brandon Neff



Brandon Neff is a Bay Area based Interior Designer. He can be reached at [BrandonNeffDesign.com](http://BrandonNeffDesign.com) or at [brandonneffdesign@yahoo.com](mailto:brandonneffdesign@yahoo.com).

Reach the reporter at: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)

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