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Because of the amount of light that pours into the breakfast room, designer Julie Klainert was careful to choose materials that wouldn't fade. The custom table has an iron base with a silver-leaf finish. "The glass top is back-painted blue for fun," she says. A bright yellow Schumacher performance fabric adds a cheerful note to the space.



A SEATTLE DESIGNER REVIVED A MODERN HOUSE ON SAN JUAN ISLAND BY WHITENING ITS DARK INTERIORS AND USING A BOLD AND CHEERFUL COLOR PALETTE TO GIVE THE ABODE A SUNNY DISPOSITION



ISLAND LIGHT

BY PAIGE PORTER FISCHER PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARYN MILLET STYLING BY MELANIE MCKINLEY



Kleiner stands at the home's front door, which she had painted a custom yellow to coordinate with the interior's yellow accents. The team chose a dark gray for the home's exterior. The patio ceilings were painted crisp white, and the beams were stained gray to match the siding.

When interior designer Julie Kleiner hopped aboard a floatplane from Seattle to San Juan Island, she didn't know what to expect. Her clients had invited her to see a waterfront house where the environment, they promised, was magical. The house, they insisted, was not.

Once Kleiner, cofounder and principal of Massucco Warner, and architect Mike Troyer, principal of Studio AM Architects, landed on the island, they made their way down a long and winding dirt road to an unassuming, pine tree-lined driveway. "And then, the view suddenly opened, and it took my breath away," says Kleiner. "Most of the waterfront properties up here are very steep, and the trees make the landscapes rather dark. But not this place. It was more of a gentle slope down toward the water, and the house is exposed to this incredible view of the Sound."

The property itself had so much promise that Kleiner's clients were willing to consider reimagining the house entirely. "The original walls were a mixture of exotic woods, and the interiors were a 1990s version of Pacific Northwest-style design," Kleiner says. "It was dark and a bit dismal, like being on the inside of a boat."



In the spacious great room, a custom Holland & Sherry dark blue rug anchors the space. Kleiner chose gray performance fabric for the two 10-foot-long sofas and deep blue leather for the oversize ottoman, all custom designed by Massucco Warner Interior Design. "Our clients aren't into lots of patterns, only very simple geometric ones," says Kleiner, who chose tone-on-tone piping for the two chairs by O. Henry House but opted for bright yellow piping as a playful accent.

"MY CLIENTS WANTED THE SAME COLOR THREAD THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE SO WE COULD MOVE THINGS AROUND AND EVERYTHING WOULD WORK TOGETHER"—JULIE KLEINER



The designer modernized an existing stone wall with a Gray Malin triptych of New York, where the owners once lived. It is safe behind nonshattering Plexiglas because the dining table is a Ping-Pong table by 11 Ravens. "We originally planned for a canvas piece there, but the owners told us their Ping-Pong games get rather intense," says Kleiner with a laugh. She also chose a shatterproof light fixture for the space and surrounded the table with bold yellow chairs by Artistic Frame, which are easily removed when a game—or tournament—is in progress.

The designer envisioned a light, bright, airy space that would allow the wide-open view to command center stage. She and Troyer worked to remove some of the more heavy, rustic elements of the interior architecture and replace them with horizontal shiplap painted Benjamin Moore Simply White. Creating that clean backdrop also allowed room for Kleiner to incorporate her clients' favorite color: blue. "I knew we would use blue almost like a neutral in this house," she says. "We needed a fun accent color to really bring the sunshine in, and we landed on school bus yellow, a fun element that we then were able to carry through all the spaces."

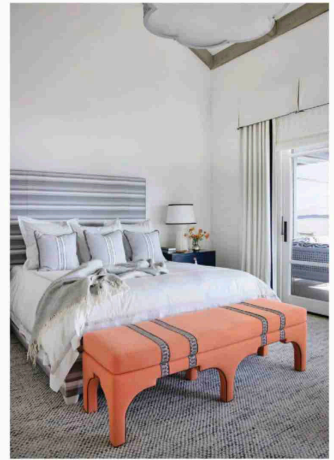
Kleiner knew that every material—from the floors and window treatments to the furnishings—needed to be chosen with environmental factors top of mind. "It may not be blue-sky sunny here all the time, but it's quite bright with all those windows," she says. "The floors and furniture fade with ease, and textiles could easily disintegrate. Every single element in this house was chosen for durability against the elements, whether salt air or UV light or wet feet."

What Kleiner is perhaps most proud of is the very spirit of the house, which


Kleiner played to the coastal theme in the powder room, where she wrapped the walls in a custom silk-screen crab wallpaper. The lute light fixture and oyster shell-framed mirror deliver plenty of texture, while the modern art lends playful color. Kleiner added yellow tape to the sconce, too. "If you can customize something with color, why not?" she says. "If you can paint a vanity in a fun color, just go for it."



Kleiner wanted comfortable furniture for the deck just off the daughter's bedroom, so she splurged on a pair of outdoor rockers from McKinnon and Harris.



The clients wanted their primary bedroom to be serene, so Kleiner played with paler blues and chose a more subdued accent color for this space: cantaloupe. "The bench really adds a fun moment, without overpowering," she says. "This client loves fun little details, so we added tassels on the nightstand pulls." She also used navy blue tape on the custom lamp shades. A handwoven wool rug by Mark Inc. keeps the room cozy.



"THE PROPERTY ITSELF IS INCREDIBLE—
YOU SEE WHALES AND SEA OTTERS
ALL THE TIME"—JULIE KLEINER

"The glass doors disappear to make this space indoor-outdoor," says Kleiner. "Because they live so much of life outdoors when they're here, we wanted the outdoor furniture to feel almost like indoor furniture, but hold up to the elements forever." For that reason, they chose McKinnon and Harris pieces. "They will last as long as this house," says Kleiner, who outfitted the cushions with a fun Perennials fabric.

The daughter's room is wrapped with windows, so Kleiner kept things ethereal with simple pale blue bedding and gray-blue drapes. "We added a few pink touches, like the piping on the chair and the tape on the lamp shade," she says.



represents her active, sports-loving clients. "At one meeting, we decided we didn't want to put all the fun stuff out in the party barn," recalls Kleiner. "We said, 'If your family really loves Ping-Pong this much, let's just find a Ping-Pong table that will double as your dining table.'" And the designer did just that. "It was important to me that this house feel like it embodied them," she says. "It's not often that properties here become available. Families hold on to them forever. And that was so appealing to my clients because they wanted a legacy home—something their kids and grandkids would always want to return to. I think, in the end, we created something that truly speaks to who they are as a family."



For the son's room, Kleiner designed built-in bunk beds that boast queen-size mattresses. Shiplap wraps the walls, and gray-and-white buffalo check bedding dresses the beds. Kleiner added touches of red and blue for a classic look.

Just off the great room is a more intimate den. "It's super cozy in here, and when my clients go for the weekend and it's just the two of them, they often end up hanging out in here on this small sectional," says Kleiner, who chose an indoor-outdoor chenille fabric for the sofa and added navy piping. "It opens to a little covered terrace that's sheltered and very private." A yellow light fixture provides the small room's "wow moment."



Most of the houses on San Juan Island don't have pools, says Kleiner. "But my clients added the pool because they live so much of their lives up here outside, kayaking and playing tennis or pickleball. [Puget] Sound is way too cold to go for a swim," says Kleiner. Landscape architecture firm Land Morphology designed the pool and terrace; architect Mike Troyer designed the pool house.