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Photo by Margie Verghese



KINGSTON DESIGN SHOWHOUSE PT 3

a tour with maryline damour

An Interview With Maryline Damour of The Kingston Design Connection & Damour Drake

by: Amy Wallace, Marketing Director

The Kingston Design Showhouse will open on October 5th! On a day when designers were loading in furniture and taking deliveries Maryline Damour, the founder of The Kingston Design Connection was good enough to give me a tour, and talk with me about why she and the other members of The Kingston Design Connection launched this project.

A Tour of 139 Downs Street - The Kingston Design Showhouse

Amy: Maryline, thanks so much for taking the time out to talk to me. I can tell it's a really busy day here, so let's just launch in. Where should we start? Should we start with why you embarked on this project in the first place before you give me the tour?

Maryline: Of course! The goal of Kingston Design Connection is to connect Hudson Valley designers to

each other and to the growing Kingston design scene. One way is through the Kingston Design Showhouse, where we have 10 designers from 10 different towns across the Hudson Valley + 25 + Kingston makers collaborating with designers in their spaces.

Amy: Let's start at the very beginning. We're in the entry which makes a huge statement as soon as you walk in.

139 Downs Street Front Door

Maryline: In the hallway we have a custom wallpaper made by Jason O'Malley, who is a Kingston-based artist. The hallway's designed by Kate Cummings from Accord. We chose to tie these two rooms (the lounge and the hallway) together. The colors of the wallpaper were custom, and they flow into and are reflected in this space, which is the lounge. We're actually calling it the parlor. Kate is designing this space too. Let's walk this way, this is the way people will flow through the house on the tour.

Amy: So, now we're in one of the front rooms. The windows and moldings are really nice in here, they're romantic, and there's so much light!

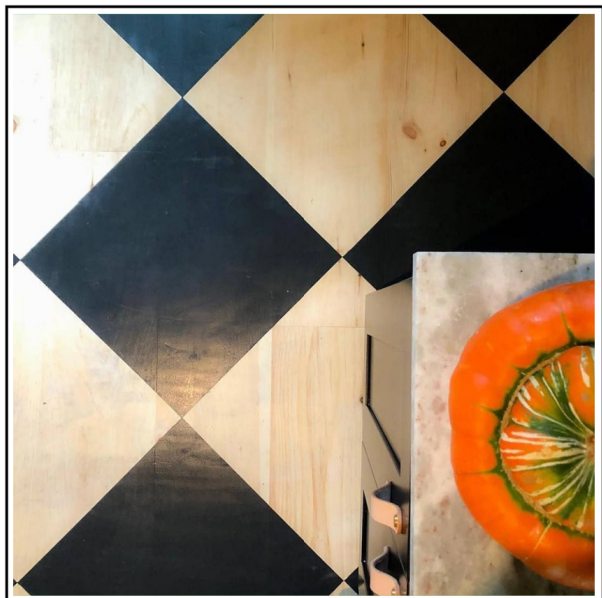


Maryline: Yes, this is the guest room - slash - dressing room. So, if somebody has a room that they're not using on a regular basis as a bedroom, they might consider doing something like this. The designer in this space is Sean Scherer. He's a designer from Andes, and he also has an antique shop called Kabinett and Kammer up in the Andes.

Amy: That's so funny. He actually has one of my favorite instagram accounts. I love the way he incorporates plants into his shop and his shots. Oh! What's this. Look's like it's maybe going to be a fancy mudroom?

Kingston Design Showhouse Kingston Real Estate

Maryline: Well, we're updating the traditional Victorian Butler's Pantry, the floor treatment (a painted checkerboard turned on end) has just dried so we can actually walk on it this morning. This will serve as a Butler's pantry - slash - home bar and it's perfectly located next to the parlor. This is a designer named Christine Edwards. She's from Poughkeepsie. She recently moved to the Hudson Valley. That was the other big piece for me I wanted to bring in when I set this up; there's a ton of established Hudson Valley designers, and there's a ton of new folks moving here. So, in the makeup of all the designers participating, it's about half and half. That way new Hudson Valley designers have a way, and a path, and are connecting to established folks. So Chris-



tina, because she's a new Hudson Valley resident this past year, she designed the Butler's Pantry but she is styling it in conjunction with JT Mckay from Blue Cashew. (Taking me on into the next room) And this is the bathroom that we're showcasing, and the designer is Michael Carr who is finishing up his room. (Michael is on the floor wielding a drill) Michael who's your Kingston-based artist?

Michael: Deborah Degraffenreid.

Maryline: That's right. You probably know who she is. She's a Kingston based photographer, she does Chronogram etc., she's providing a piece for the room. A number of the pieces that are being donated will be auctioned off in a silent auction and all of those proceeds are going to People's Place, as are all the ticket sales. (We continue out through the back door of the butler's pantry and on to a back porch.)

Amy: I love this porch! It's so great that there are two, a front and a back. You can be social....or not!

Maryline: Exactly! And then we have the back garden which is being done by Kat Hamill, she's a designer who is from this area originally and has recently moved back. She's doing a Moroccan lounge area with lots of pillows - very colorful. It's a real contrast to the front, which we'll get back around to in a few minutes. It's very formal, very tailored, and this is more kind of...let your hair loose! She'll also be styling the back porch.

Amy: We're going to go back inside through this second door on the other side of the back porch? I like how the whole place, inside, out, and back in again, has a circular flow. This is the kitchen?

Maryline: This is the kitchen, of the Design Showhouse, and this is my space.

Amy: Lucky you! You kept the hardest space for yourself.

Maryline: Yes, lucky me! The Showhouse will have a mix of highs and lows, and because we're in a neighborhood with a lot of Victorian buildings with the same footprint, I thought it'd be interesting to show someone what to do with the regular standard kitchen that most of them have. So the tile is inexpensive and from home depot, the cabinetry is stock cabinetry, this (the countertop) is just wood painted and shallacked, and I'm going to use standard white appliances. All of the collections in the kitchen are functional kitchen items, but they're also the thing that is going to elevate your basic standard kitchen.

(We move back into the front of the house to the dining room)

Amy: The guys from FRED! Michael and Charles are here working on their room. (See my interview with Michael and Charles about their shop FRED in High Falls and their experience working on The Showhouse here)

Maryline: This is the dining room of The Design Showhouse. And these are the two partners from FRED who are taking over the space, which I know you've already discussed. And, the final room is a study - slash - home office and this is designed by Margie Verghese, and she owns a store down in the Roundout called South Manor.

Amy: So, what's left?

Maryline: Just the front porch and yard, which was completely redone by my Design Build firm Damour Drake which is based here in Kingston. Before we started to work, there was no porch. The only thing that was left that was architecturally significant were the corner posts on the house. Everything else had rotted away. So we copied them. We copied the shape to create the porch columns and spindles. I decided to go with a very dramatic, dark, bold color for the house. A lot of victorian houses tend to pick out a lot of bright colors, which is one way of going about it. I really wanted to show an updated look - what you could do with just paint to really change the look of the victorian - the soffit, fascia, everything. I went dark green. I basically made you focus on the mass of the house as opposed to all the details. Then the details that are picked out are really pronounced. I chose to have a similar color value on the porch. Most people tend to paint the trim and porches the same. But to me, using a dark color that is subtly different from the bulk of the house gives it a unified look.

Amy: I really love the simple landscaping out here.

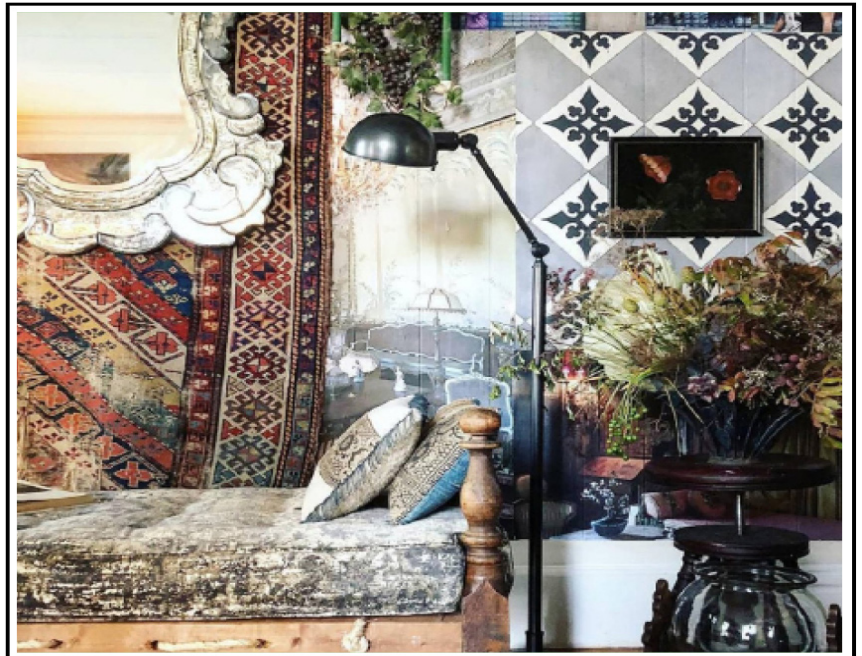
Maryline: Yes, this is another high low. This (the walkway) was just concrete. What a lot of people would have done, if they wanted it to be correct, would have been to replace it with flagstone, which is very expensive. But you can just grind down concrete and expose the aggregate and then seal it, and it's nice. And that's what we did. So there's lots of different things like that throughout The Showhouse where people can see some aspirational design, as well as some ways, on a regular budget, to address something, and still have it reflect the history of the home that you're in.

Amy: And who did this landscaping?

Maryline: The landscaping was designed by Scott Zimmer, and he's a local Kingston-based architect. He does a lot of work on city gardens, and the goal of this was have it be beautiful, but also very low maintenance, and have interest throughout the year. And, because there are so many neighbors who hang out on their porches in this area, we thought that we would actually extend the social area beyond the porch. Porches are very social - people can see you. But he's created an area here, at the foot of the porch, where as these grasses and hydrangeas grow they'll provide a nice screen that will create a more private space below the porch.

Amy: This would be a great place for a block cocktail party. I really think I'm going to do this to my front yard! Tell me, what has been your biggest surprise about this project?

Maryline: It's been a wonderful surprise that people have been willing to join me on that journey, when





BEFORE



AFTER

they didn't know exactly what it was going to be. The level of support for something that was new and interesting and different has been surprising. We have, probably about 30 businesses at this point, who are either donating or lending resources to make this happen. In addition to the 10 designers, we have about 25 artisans who are lending pieces and donating pieces. It's just been overwhelming, that level of support for something that people were like, "Oh, what is this? Okay, sure, let's try it!" That's been great.

For More Information On The Kingston Design Showhouse Including How To Buy Tickets Click Here

All photos are sneak peaks from The Kingston Design Connection's Instagram:



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