

# DESIGNERS' OWN HOMES

# athome

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SCENE

GOODS  
TEAL  
APPEAL



A-LIST  
FINALISTS  
REVEALED

# Courtney Yanni



The **MOSS DESIGN** designer's home is fun, sophisticated and **FULL OF COLOR**

*INTERVIEW WITH COURTNEY YANNI, MOSS DESIGN | PHOTOGRAPHER AMY VISCHIO*



**above:** A custom tuxedo sofa by Moss Design and Aerin's Sommerard triple-arm floor lamp from Circa can be glimpsed in the living room. **right:** The property's landscape is by Greenscape Design in Fairfield.



**DESIGNERS' OWN HOMES** ISSUE

**How long have you lived in this home?** We moved here in 2006, and this was my family's big move out of the city. The house is a very classic center-hall Colonial built as a one-off spec home, and we got into it right as it was finishing up, so we were able to impact some of the selections. We chose the floor stain, added paneling throughout in different areas, added millwork and different built-ins, and through the years, we've continued to add. We painted the exterior and changed the color of the door, and we added landscaping. It's a beautifully made spec home, and while many of the selections weren't ours, they were done really well and very classic, so they've maintained through the fourteen years. I was able to work easily around them because they were such classic finishes. It's a great example of what you can do with a spec house.

**What did you want your home to look and feel like?** I wanted a fun, warm, playful yet sophisticated house. I live here with my husband, three kids and a dog and a cat, and I wanted it to be representative of a young family—easy to live in and comfortable—while also having a level of sophistication for when we wanted to entertain and for the way we wanted to live.

**Were you drawn to any particular colors?** Color for Moss Design, through our work and for my home, is so important to us. A space with different colors creates such an emotional





**left:** In the foyer, a Made Goods desk is topped with a Jonathan Adler lamp and pottery, and above is a drawing allegedly signed by Picasso. **above:** A Quadrille wallcovering envelops the powder room, and faux orchids by Diane James Home are displayed above linen hand towels from Fig Linens and Home. **opposite:** In the first-floor office, the desk and built-ins were added to create a workspace for Yanni's husband, who works from home. A silk rug from Palace Oriental Rugs grounds the space, and the desk chair is from Schwartz Design Showroom. A floral arrangement by Deborah Herbertson from Terrain adds a touch of greenery.





**this spread:** The kitchen was launched by Victoria Hagan's Four Seasons Summer fabric—seen on the valance—and Gianni then pulled in Farrow & Ball's Vermicelli wallcovering in Teresa's Green. Stools from Anthropologie are pulled up to the spacious island, which is lit from above by pendants from Circa. The kitchen table, by Wolf Wood Co. in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is surrounded by chairs from Bungalow 5, and a bar built by Christopher Rosow is just steps away. Donuts are from Donut Crazy in Westport.



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—COURTNEY YANNI



**above left:** The family room built-ins display a knob bowl, Lucite art and turquoise Coco vessels from Schwartz Design Showroom, and a Rosemary Hallgarten ombré alpaca throw in Canary is draped over the arm of a sofa from Baker. **above right:** Yanni and her husband commissioned the artwork by Mitch McGee—layered birchwood cut, stained and painted—and purchased the piece through Elisa Contemporary Art. The floral arrangement is by Deborah Herbertson from Terrain. **opposite:** A faux fiddle leaf fig tree from Diane James Home provides another hit of greenery to the space, and a Napoleon candelabra from Dunes and Duchess and a jellyfish glass bowl from Schwartz Design Showroom top the ottoman.

reaction. When I moved in, the first project was the kitchen and family room. My mom was very helpful, as I come from a long line of professional and semi-professional designers and tastemakers. She and I worked on the initial design together fifteen years ago, and I continue to run ideas by her. When I was still living in the city, I found Victoria Hagan's Four Seasons Summer fabric, and it was the inspiration for the family room. All of the colors came out of it, and I used the fabric on the window panels in the kitchen. It's actually quite traditional, but we paired it with elements that are more modern, so it feels more transitional. From that fabric, I pulled in Farrow & Ball's Vermicelli wallcovering in Teresa's Green for the kitchen and on the coffered ceiling in the family room. It's a vibrant, saturated color, yet it's actually very calming. It's funny, because even though it's been fourteen years, I still love this color! We talk about that a lot with clients, that if you choose a color you love, you won't tire of it, and that has proven true for me and my home. I also pulled out chartreuse in a few areas as well as pinks, oranges and other fun colors that came out of that fabric, and they're still colors that when I'm designing

for myself, I head in that direction. In the dining room, there are these two statues that my husband and I got in Thailand, and they actually pull from those colors as well. They're washed-out pinks and blues, and they're very much the Victoria Hagan colors.

**Coming from the city, did you incorporate any existing furniture?**

We bought a lot of things, but we did incorporate existing art and sculptures; our art from New York is throughout the house. But with our furnishings, the scale was so different. We purchased a mix of vintage, antique and new pieces. For example, my family room sofas are from Baker, and they're 14 years old. I don't know if I would do a rolled arm now, but they're beautifully made sofas that will last. The mix of old and new is essential, and we always bring in old; it gives any room its soul.

**How has the design of your home evolved over the years?** I think it's become more sophisticated. It's the layers that you create as you move

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**above left and opposite:** In the dining room, an original French Art Deco walnut cabinet circa 1930, from Judy Frankel Antiques in Troy, Michigan, is topped with lamps from Interlude, florals from Diane James Home, and Thai dancers—used as ornamentation for a church—purchased on a trip to Thailand. A chandelier from Circa floats above the table and chairs from Interlude.  
**above right:** The new bar, built by Christopher Rosow, is painted in Farrow & Ball’s Black Blue, features a studded brass top and is backed with a Kelly Wearstler wallcovering. The florals are by Deborah Herbertson from Terrain.

through your life, collecting items. It’s mixing classic pieces with modern ones and vintage ones. I love that layered look, and that’s how my home has changed over time.

**I love the blue desk in the foyer!** We wanted that bright, unexpected color moment when you step inside—you automatically think, “Something fun is going on here!” It has a midcentury shape and clean lines, and it’s contrasted by a Picasso drawing (it’s signed, but I can’t confirm its authenticity!) in a gilded frame above; that’s exactly my style. The books show our love for art; I love human faces on pottery, which hold the yellow flowers; and the Jonathan Adler lamp is graphic, tall and oversized.

**Do you cook a lot in your kitchen?** I went to culinary school and worked at the Food Network for ten years, so television and food were my first career. I love cooking and needed a real cook’s kitchen, and this one functions beautifully. It’s also a hardworking kitchen—it gets used and abused, but it’s been well loved! We made some decorative updates, and we added a built-in bar, with two library lights above, for added storage. The caning of the chairs around the kitchen table has this fun Palm Beach vibe, and they gave the Victoria Hagan fabric a whole new life. It’s so interesting when you bring in something different, how it changes the vibe of a space. I also grew up with caned dining chairs, so they’re reminiscent of my family dining experiences growing up; having similar furniture is a nice connection for

me. I end up working at the island a lot, and I’m literally in the center of my home; that’s a comfortable perch for me.

**How about the family room?** The Farrow & Ball color on the family room ceiling is a literal connection to the kitchen and a way of carrying that color through, and we added two built-in cabinets. We actually got the artwork over the sofa for the living room, but we loved her so much that we wanted to live with her every day, so we brought her into the family room. It worked perfectly, and she’s brought a lot of whimsy into this space and updated the entire room. We commissioned the piece from Mitch McGee, and we were able to choose what she looked like based on another piece he had done. We gave her green eyes because I have green eyes, but that’s really where the resemblance ends! *[laughs]* My husband and I have very different tastes in furniture—he tends to like serious antique pieces and inlaid wood, while I like much more modern, midcentury, fun pieces—but we have the same eye when it comes to art, and it’s been easy finding pieces that speak to both of us.

**Tell me about the dining and living rooms.** These are the spaces we more recently did, and they’re the most reflective of the work we do at Moss Design. Meghan De Maria, the founder and principal designer of Moss Design, was a valued sounding board for me with these rooms. They were put together as one space—it’s very monochromatic and rich, and it’s the



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**opposite:** A tall French Directoire period circa 1850s ebonized cabinet, also from Judy Frankel Antiques, makes a statement in the living room. The chairs, favorites from the family room, were recovered in a Schumacher flame stitch fabric, and candlesticks from Schwartz Design Showroom rest on a cocktail table from Interlude. The artwork is by Kelly Reemtsen, and the florals are by Deborah Herbertson from Terrain. **this page, clockwise from top left:** A duck lamp from West Elm, a vintage Art Deco tea set from Fairfield County Antique & Design and artwork purchased in the Venetian Jewish Ghetto by Meghan De Maria from Moss Design create a vignette; the custom tuxedo sofa by Moss Design cuts a clean silhouette, and a vintage "Birds in Flight" sculpture by Curtis Jere for Artisan House hangs above the mantel; a closer look at the French Directoire period circa 1850s ebonized cabinet; pillows from Schwartz Design Showroom dot the sofa.





**opposite, top row:** Yanni's dog, Millie, takes a nap near artwork by Fred Weiner; in the master bedroom, a desk from Interlude and a lamp from Schwartz Design Showroom are paired with artwork by Emma Kohlmann—purchased through Betsy Biscone Art Advisory—and the ombré alpaca throw is from Rosemary Hallgarten; a chair from Interlude, a side table from Schwartz Design Showroom and an Aerin lamp from Circa create the perfect reading spot in the master. **opposite bottom:** The duvet cover fabric, ivory alpaca back pillows and the throw on the bed are all from Rosemary Hallgarten; a soft Phillip Jeffries wallcovering evokes a sense of serenity in the space. **this page:** A vintage bench sits below artwork by Fred Weiner in the upstairs landing, and the rug is from Flor; a firepit from CB2, with chairs from Target, is a popular destination for Yanni's children.

darker space in the house. For the dining room, I wanted a dark color that would play off of the Teresa's Green, so I chose a very, very dark blue with green undertones. We built the bar, which set the tone for the space, and added a brass top, and I love the Channels wallpaper by Kelly Wearstler that backs it. A 1930s French Art Deco walnut cabinet from Judy Frankel Antiques contrasts with the brand-new bar and adds soul to the space, and the table and chairs are from Interlude and really modern. The mirror was on our wall in New York City, and it works perfectly here. For the living room, we wanted a place we could go to in the evening for drinks with friends or to lie on the sofa with a book. Farrow & Ball's Black Blue is such an interesting color in here, because it changes throughout the day, and it will even pull on some greens. It's a moodier room. An 1850s French cabinet, also from Judy Frankel Antiques, was ebonized, which really updated the piece a lot; it doesn't feel like a traditional antique.

**Your master bedroom looks so relaxing.** This is the Moss Design version of a calm space—there is still a bright color at the end of the bed, but the colors are more toned down in here. The butterfly artwork over the desk is a vibrant color for a bedroom, but the overall feeling is a calm one. The bed is a slate gray velvet, and the grasscloth on the walls couldn't be more neutral. The desk is metal and gray burl wood from Interlude—I have visions of writing thank-you notes there! *[laughs]*

**How hard was it designing your own home?** So much harder! I know there are a million possibilities, and it's so difficult to narrow them down. And that's why I bring in Meghan—we always help each other with our homes, because she feels the same way. We'll ask things like, "Can you source some lights for my bedside tables?" She is always a valued sounding board for design and for every other aspect of my life! We met in New York City when our now-16-year-olds were 3 months old, and we became very close friends. I joined her at Moss Design a year after she started the firm, and our lives are very intertwined. We work really well together.

**How long do you see yourself living here?** This is the home my husband and I are raising our family in, and it has a similar feel to the home I grew up in. The next place we move will be for the next phase of our lives. Our family story is happening right here.

**Resources:**

Interior designer: Courtney Yanni, Moss Design, Southport; 917-721-4351; mdmossdesign.com

Stylists: Courtney Yanni and Meghan De Maria, Moss Design, Southport; 917-292-6153; mdmossdesign.com

