

## Taking a page from Kelly Wearstler's book

Jennie Nunn, Special to The Chronicle

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Kelly Wearstler never misses a hockey game - those of her sons, Oliver, 8, and Elliott, 7, that is. She doesn't gab on the phone with friends, she works out every morning, and she doesn't leave her Los Angeles office for lunch breaks. Call that her big secret for staying grounded, or merely her dedication to the thing she loves most (besides her family, of course): design.

So it's no surprise the tastemaker and founder of Kelly Wearstler Interior Design has set the bar high, becoming synonymous with avant-garde fashion; glamorous hotels in Miami, Los Angeles and Palm Springs; and outfitting everything from the 1920s salon-inspired BG Restaurant at Bergdorf Goodman in New York to beach houses in Malibu meticulously layered with color.

We caught up with Bravo Television's former "Top Design" judge and one of Town & Country's Style Leaders at Gump's this month for the rerelease of her limited-edition book "Hue" (Ammo Books).

### **Q: What was your approach for "Hue" and what do you hope readers take away?**

**A:** There's so many different ways to lay out a book, and we put everything together by color, so there's a little bit of interesting things for everyone. Also, the use of color, pattern and texture and the endless possibilities.

### **Q: What are your golden rules for design?**

**A:** Have a point of view. You have to train your eye, know what you like, and stay true to yourself. But also, too, just moving and playing around with furniture. You can learn a lot that way.

### **Q: Your must-haves for a space?**

**A:** Sculpture and art is so crucial. I love Willem de Kooning, Victor Vasarely and Sheila Hicks.

### **Q: What are your top three go-to sources in the city?**

**A:** Torso Vintages (272 Sutter St.; [www.torsovintages.com](http://www.torsovintages.com)) for vintage finds, and William Stout Architectural Books (804 Montgomery St., [www.stoutbooks.com](http://www.stoutbooks.com)). They have a well-edited and unusual selection, and I always find something cool that inspires me. I also love the Asian Art Museum (200 Larkin St.; [www.asianart.org](http://www.asianart.org)). The collection of Asian art is like nothing I've seen before.

### **Q: If you weren't an interior designer, what would you be?**

**A:** Maybe an artist or painter. I love art, and I wish I had more time to draw and paint, because it's so

restful and incredible. And I like cooking, but I never have time.

**Q: What are you working on now?**

**A:** I'm designing residences in Kuwait, New York and Los Angeles, ranging from modern to classical architecture. We are designing new serving pieces for my collection for Pickard ( [www.pickardchina.com](http://www.pickardchina.com)) and I'm working on new fabric, wallpaper and trim for my collection with Groundworks at Lee Jofa (to the trade only; [www.leejofa.com](http://www.leejofa.com)) that will be available in the spring. I'm also putting the finishing touches on my spring collection for Kelly Wearstler for Bergdorf Goodman ( [www.bergdorfgoodman.com](http://www.bergdorfgoodman.com)).

**Q: Growing up, who inspired you?**

**A:** My mother. She was an antiques dealer who exposed me to beautiful objects from early on. I was always creating things, and my mother encouraged me to explore artistically.

**Q: What inspires you now?**

**A:** My library of vintage books. They range anywhere from ceramic to fashion to furniture. And going shopping for fashion is inspiration for my interiors.

**Q: Who are your style icons?**

**A:** For fashion, I've always admired Peggy Guggenheim for her fearless, innovative style. For architecture, Carlo Scarpa. I love his use of unconventional forms and interesting juxtaposition of textures.

**Q: Your no-fail easy tips for decorating?**

**A:** If you're on a budget, be more risky with things that aren't so expensive or permanent. I scour flea markets and antique stores to find interesting objects and art.

Organize. It's the one thing that's overlooked in design. If every item has a place, it makes a huge impact.

Add drama with a splash of color you love or wild-patterned fabric.

Buy an amazing light fixture.

**Q: Your design style?**

**A:** I draw inspiration from the original architecture and the setting. I mix eras and styles, and I take risks with color and texture. But, at the core, I design with my heart. One of my biggest inspirations is my clients. They bring so much to the project - it's fascinating. Through them, I fall in love with new things.

**Q: You haven't done a project yet in San Francisco. Anything you would like to design here?**

**A:** I'd love to do an amazing house in the Presidio.

**Q: What's in the works for 2011?**

**A:** I don't plan so far ahead. I'm looking forward to [Thanksgiving](#). My whole family comes to our house. Oliver and Elliott are the entertainment, just like my sister and me were when we were younger. They have a band, called the Negotiators. They rock. I'm going to do another design book, just not right away. I'm also looking forward to traveling with my family and showing my boys my favorite cities, like Istanbul and Tokyo.

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