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THE COLLECTOR

AN A-LIST DESIGNER BUT ALSO A HOMEBODY, KISHANI PERERA IS THE DESIGN FORCE OF NATURE BEHIND THE L.A. DECOR SHOP RUMMAGE.

BY **MOLLY REID SINNETT** PHOTOS **JOE SCHMELZER** STYLING **JONI NOE** PRODUCER **JESSICA THOMAS**

This photo: Kishani Perera's family room is a feast for the eyes. The grand mirror was one of her first big purchases, but it's the carved legs of the console table that draw attention. The elephants are a reminder of her Sri Lankan roots.

Above: A neutral color scheme on the walls and large furnishings allow colorful art and accessories to stand out. Nothing in Kishani's home is too precious—her four-legged roommates are free to roam wherever they want.

Kishani Perera is not your average highfalutin interior designer. Sure, she jets around the world looking for exotic antiques for her Los Angeles decor shop, Rummage. And her skills come in handy when decorating the homes of A-list celebrities and pop stars. But Kishani actually delights in the simple things—an amazing vegan breakfast wrap, a walk with her dogs, or an afternoon by the ocean—things that are sometimes hard to come by in her high-speed world.

Kishani has her hands full designing products, running her brick-and-mortar and online shops, and meeting with clients, all while trying to keep up with the pressures of social media. When her day is done, she retreats to the home she shares with three rescue pugs—Gus, Birdie, and Petey. The cozy bungalow is a microcosm of her design. New and vintage, global and local, expensive and modest all come together in her digs. "It's a labor of love," Kishani gushes about her house. "It looked like a crack den when I bought it. It was really scary. But I just love it. It's not big at all, but it's perfect for me and the puppies. Without them, I'd probably be a basket case. They love unconditionally. Sometimes you just need that."

meet kishani

I LIVE IN...
my head. The other answer would be "in dog fur." I'm always covered in dog fur.

I SHARE MY HOME...
with three crazy puppies.

MY BEST DAY INCLUDES...
the ocean, my dogs, music, and some vegan food.

MY FAVORITE COLOR COMBINATION...
depends on the day.

IF I HAD TO EAT ONE THING FOREVER...
it would be either a vegan breakfast burrito or a Karma Bakery brownie.

I OBSESS OVER...
everything. Definitely.

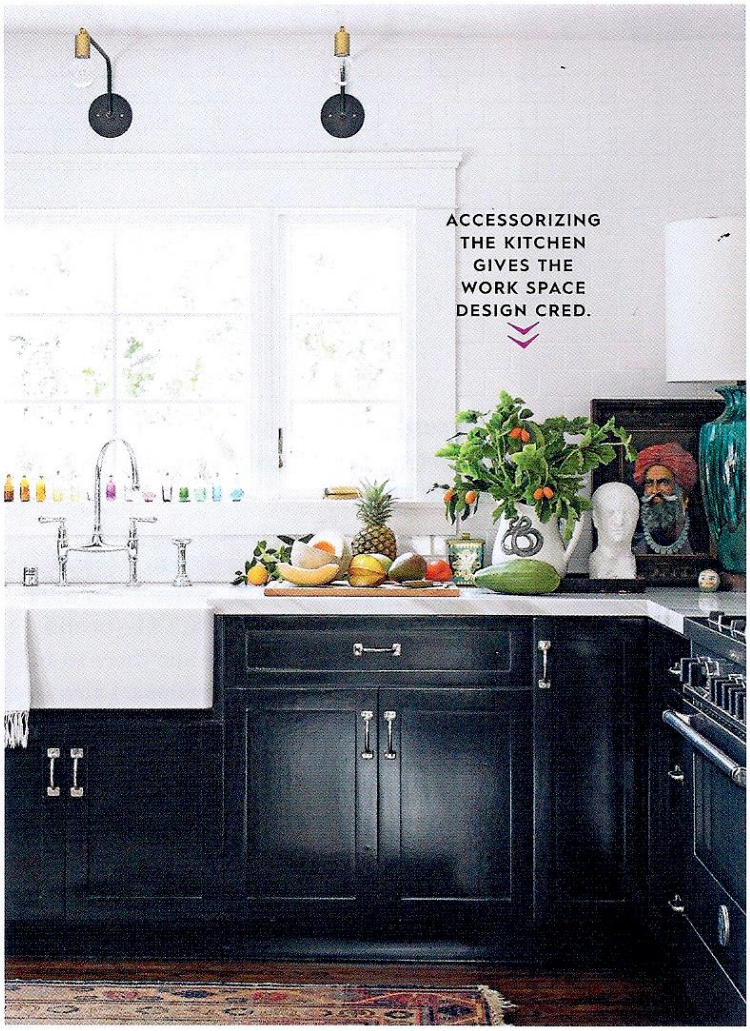
MY FAVORITE THING IN MY HOME...
is the disco ball *(opposite)* that I made based on a vintage one I found.

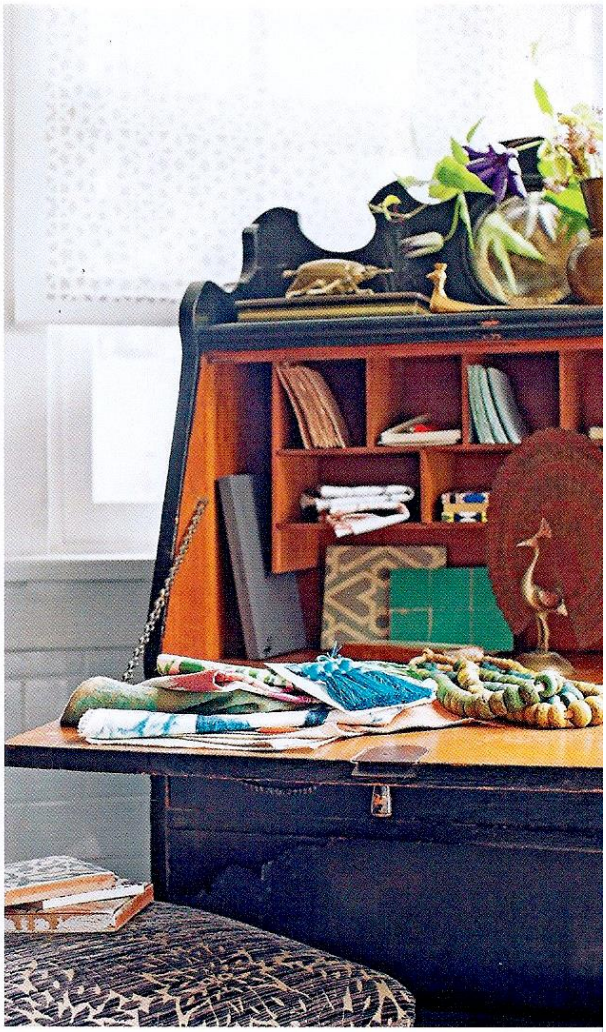
INSPIRED BY A FLEA MARKET FIND, KISHANI MADE THE MIRRORED CHANDELIER.

This photo: A new retail sofa takes on exotic appeal when layered with a sari and a collection of pillows in a variety of patterns and textures.

"I DON'T TAKE MYSELF THAT SERIOUSLY. AND ANYBODY WHO DOES, I PROBABLY DON'T GET ALONG WITH. LIFE IS TOO SHORT TO BE THAT UPTIGHT." –KISHANI PERERA

This photo: Kishani decorates clients' homes with items she loves. So it's no surprise that she bought this Paris flea market dining set back from a client. The hanging lamp was a garage sale find.





Q HOW OFTEN DOES YOUR DECOR MOOD CHANGE?

A My own house is the last thing I think about. I've had the same stuff forever, which I love. But just the other day I was like, "I have to get rid of some of this stuff and refresh a little bit." I love antiques, so it's not like it's trendy. And you don't get sick of them. At least I don't. So I keep things forever, which is nice. But maybe it's time for a new chapter. Time to let someone else enjoy these beautiful things.

Q IN YOUR SECOND LIFE, WHAT WOULD YOUR JOB BE?

A It would be a couple things. Maybe I'd be a writer because that's actually what I went to school for. I also love music, so something like music management—although I did date a few musicians when I was younger and I'm not sure I could handle that. It would be fun to be on the business side of things, but still in the music world.

Q MUSIC SEEMS IMPORTANT TO YOU. WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT PLAYLIST?

A This is easy because I'm a music fanatic. This is my current playlist: *Genghis Khan* by Miike Snow; *Does It Look as If I Care* by Choir of Young Believers; *Talk* by Bob Moses; *What's In It For?* by Avi Buffalo; *Never* by jennylee; *After Dark* by Eliot Sumner; *Where No Eagles Fly* by Julian Casablancas + The Voidz; *To Know You* by Wild Nothing.

Q IF THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO HAVEN'T HEARD OF YOU OR YOUR SHOP, WHAT WOULD YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR BRAND?

A My design is very personalized. Very eclectic. It spans a million decades and countries and styles. I spend a lot of time getting to know my clients and materialize what they can't. Clients will tell me, "I don't really know my style or what I like," and I tell them, "You do, you just don't know how

Above left: Black high-gloss cabinets are a classic contrast to white walls, but it's the turquoise lamp on the counter that sets the style apart. "It's so unexpected," Kishani says. *Above right:* Tucked in the kitchen, the petite secretary has a finish that just happens to match the black cabinets.

Above: A pair of antique brass hanging lights flanking the master bed has been a staple in Kishani's home for 10 years. "They give off this beautiful soft light," she says. The dark khaki walls are a calming backdrop for the worn finishes of the dresser and nightstand.

to articulate it." I spend a lot of time doing that. My work is very different from client to client, but I love every house as much as the last. I want each client to be involved because it also forces me to do something different. That's what makes it interesting.

Q WHAT DO YOU SEE ON THE DESIGN HORIZON?

A What I see coming back into my world, at least, is the return to white. White used to be a horrible, horrible thing. If somebody's house was white, you [thought] that they obviously didn't care about design. If they did, they would've painted their house a color. Or even with furniture, white was so modern. But now there's a new appreciation for white as a color instead of a noncolor. I'm working on a very modern house right now, and we're incorporating a lot of white. The floors are white-white. But we're mixing it with a black vintage sofa and a '70s-style burnt orange chair, so it's cool. White is a nice background for that.

Q WHAT VALUE DO YOU THINK HUMOR HAS IN DECORATING AND IN LIFE?

A Oh, so much. I would never design a house where you're terrified to sit on the couch. What's the point of that? You want to live; you want to enjoy it. I like to add whimsy and oddities here and there to add humor and make it less precious. I also like to make it personal, so it has to have some relevance to the client. What's life without humor? I mean, so boring. So boring.

Q WHAT ARE YOUR PET PEEVES?

A Lately what's been on my mind and really irritating to me is the use of the word *here's*. I feel like young people don't understand that *here's* is a contraction of *here* and *is*. *Is* is singular. You can't say "Here's fifty things." And it happens constantly. I find myself every once in a while accidentally saying it and I want to punch myself. I'm like NOOOOOOO!

Q WHAT'S THE ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'D SHOUT FROM THE ROOFTOPS?

A Manners matter. I feel like people think that manners are dated and you don't have to do things in a certain polite way. I wonder what is happening to our world. There is very little courtesy and things like that. I am very old-school. It seems to be disintegrating.

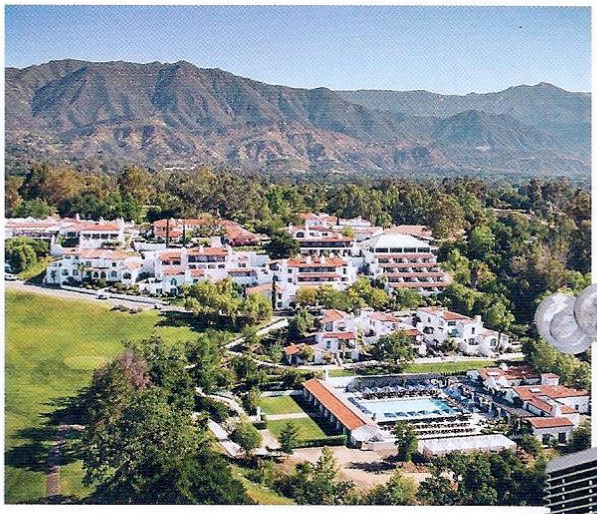
Q IF YOU WERE A SUPERHERO, WHAT WOULD YOUR POWER BE?

A I don't know what the name of the superhero would be, but the power would be to rescue animals because that's the biggest thing in my life. To be able to swoop into horrible places and save animals that are being tortured—and maybe kick someone's ass—and take them out of there.

Q WHAT WOULD SOMEONE BE SURPRISED TO LEARN ABOUT YOU?

A Probably that I am a complete introvert.

WHAT I'M *loving now*



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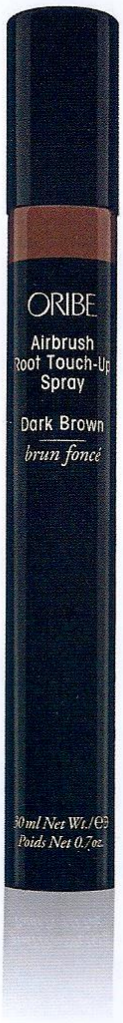

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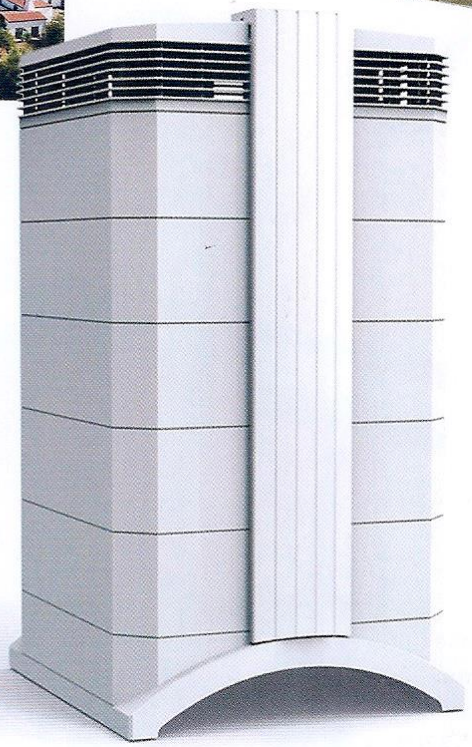

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