

Sunset



This Cozy Sausalito Bungalow Was Designed to Look 'Undone'

Inside a delightfully funky and bohemian space for a fashionist

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“The corrugated metal base with the brass band says ‘Hello!’ right when you walk into the house,” Kress says.

It’s hard to style anything—whether it be an outfit or an interior—to look effortlessly “undone.” It definitely requires a deft eye, and designer Kress Jack was able to pull it off in this Sausalito bungalow.

The four-bedroom, three-bathroom home was built in 1951 by renowned local architect Charles Warren Callister, who was known for his handcrafted aesthetic and high-level design of single-family homes and community developments. When the homeowners, empty-nesters and creatives Paula Williams and her husband, had walked into the house for the first time, they were sold on the fact that it felt like a cross between a boat and a treehouse with its water and woody views.



“The top level is a gradation of pinks and purples, and the lower level has a hand-painted drippy rope stencil running crazily over the stair treads, which I had fun doing myself along with the long tonal grasses on the bedroom walls,” Kress explains. “Paula hand-tied both the hand rails out of rope—adding her personal touch and creativity.”



A pink chair stands out in the living room.

Originally, the house was dark, very masculine, and had three different kinds of wood that was mismatched and faded. The bathrooms were very dated and the carpet was worn.

“While the bones were there, it needed a major facelift adding color and light while still respecting the original lines, crazy angles and the integrity of the house,” Kress says. “We didn’t want to cover up any of the windows—no window coverings in any rooms except media room. There were so many angles that everything we brought in had to be custom-designed to fit in the rooms.”



“We changed paths halfway in the design process of the main bathroom when Paula decided she really wanted a steam shower,” Kress explains. “We were going with a more porous cement tile at first, but had to rework the design and source tiles that were more forgiving to the heat and moisture... all worked out beautifully in the end.”

The primary bedroom is a sanctuary.



Paula wanted the house to be one they would be able to share with their family for years to come. They didn't want it to be too precious, hence the “undone” style.

“In our first meeting they were both very adamant that we kept things casual—they would be barefoot most of the time, have big dogs, and wanted to be able to plop on anything without worrying about ruining it,” Kress says. “They wanted their home to be inviting for them and also for their big family (three daughters and their friends). These are not ‘coaster’ kind of people, so no precious fabrics or expensive rugs.”



"I love placing art in closets, makes it more fun—and the vintage photograph of the woman with the mustache just cracks me up—she had another similar one we placed in the media room," Kress says.



"We painted the existing cabinets a fun bright blue and added the lucite hardware to glam it up just one more notch," Kress says.

The two upper levels of the home were designed to represent the couple's design tastes and preferences. But by the time Kress and team (which included builders from **Buildrite Bay Area**) were ready to tackle the downstairs level, Paula and her husband had split up, so that changed some of the designs. Paula wanted to create a private sanctuary that she could claim for herself, while leaving the top floors for her three daughters when they visited.

"I really wanted her to keep this level pretty neutral and light, which was a hard sell at first for Paula, who's a proud color junkie," Kress says. "Now the all-white space is her favorite space in the house—she loves how calm it is!"



“Paula wanted it to feel like a high-end boutique,” Kress adds.

The fireplace is a focal point of the living room with a large-scale floral wallpaper.



Paula’s **closet** is a total dream—it was made to feel like a high-end boutique where she could see everything and didn’t have to dig around. “I wanted to keep the palette pretty clean, to let her wardrobe, accessories, and hat collection be the stars, so we chose black and white, with gorgeous textured brass hardware reminiscent of her Brutalist jewelry collection,” Kress explains. “We made sure to include open shelving for her hats and bits and bobs, so she could grab them easily and play, but everything else stayed behind glass doors. The black foam ceiling light is a homage to the sculptural hats she is known for sporting to pretty much any occasion.”

The common areas of the home also have the same relaxed, cool, and stylish feel. The kitchen has a custom island designed by craftsman **John Hull** that adds a bit of glam to the space with its corrugated metal based. The existing cabinets were painted a bright blue and lucite hardware was installed for more glamour.



The fireplace is a focal point of the living room with a large-scale floral wallpaper.

And what was a design restriction in the living room, actually turned out to be a stunning statement piece. “The entire middle of the living room houses all the workings of the house including the fireplace,” Kress says. “We originally thought we could rework that area and move a lot of those inner workings, but the cost was prohibitive, so we left it and made it a focal point instead—adding the very fun and vibrant wallpaper by **Voutsas**.”

The media room is painted a **dark and moody** rich green to add some edge and color. It was important to add plenty of seating in the media room, but the sectional had to be built-in because of the crazy angles in the space.

The finished design is unique and eclectic, with fun surprises and details at every turn, from the eye-catching staircase to the metal kitchen island to the lush fireplace. Paula is in love with the space, saying it feels exactly like her. A forever home, indeed.



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