

# LIVING

EDITED BY MIRANDA PURVES

## Match Made in Hollywood

Ruthie Sommers takes L.A.'s flea-market habit to new highs with a dose of East Coast polish. When boutique owner and ex-Manhattanite Zoe Schaeffer needed to make her Mediterranean bungalow feel like home, such ministrations were just what the doctor ordered. By Megan Deem



**Meeting of the finds:** In her living room, Schaeffer (at left) stays true to her mix-and-match ethos in Vera Wang over her own jeans. Sommers (at right), her decorator, wears Sari Gueron. Rug, Moses Ice, visit [therugcompany.com](http://therugcompany.com).



**T**he L.A. look (jeans, cute top) has been ascendent for long enough; now the style-dictating planets are tilting back toward the East Coast, at least if recent Manhattan-to-Hollywood transplant Zoe Schaeffer has anything to do with it. The 30-year-old ex-magazine editor has just opened the boutique Presse with her friend and former colleague Renee Roman Klein on South La Brea next door to vintage mecca *The Way We Were*, offering locals access to the indie designers—such as Thakoon, Proenza Schouler, Sari Gueron, and Devi Kroell—favored by the NYC fashion vanguard. Schaeffer tends to shun stylists (or, as the stylist phenom trickles down to mere mortals, imitating the looks stylists put on stars) in favor of embracing designers with strong points of view, then personalizing the look by mixing genres and eras. (She cites Helena Christensen as an icon.) Schaeffer feels exactly the same way about home decorating—though she's quite willing to admit it's a lot harder to dress a whole house than a single body.

So when she and her husband closed on a charming 1929 two-bedroom Mediterranean bungalow in West Hollywood, she called decorator Ruthie Sommers, another East Coast transplant. Sommers, the owner of Chapman Radcliff Home in West Hollywood, came to Los Angeles via Charlotte, North Carolina; New York City; and Paris. Her work, which mixes flea market and high-end—almost as if your prim Upper East Side aunt shared space with a surfboarding cousin—has developed such buzz in Hollywood that Scientology may soon be replaced by Ruthie worship.

(Sommers' book, *The L.A. House: Reinventing the Well-Lived Life*, is due out this fall. Drew Barrymore is writing the forward, natch.)

"I absolutely am trying to bring an East Coast design sensibility to West Coast cool," Sommers says. "I wouldn't call it an East Coast rigor, but where curtains are hung is very important to me." (For those following along at home, drapery ideally hangs closer to the ceiling, not right above the window. "It draws the eye upward, tricking it into thinking the ceilings are higher," Sommers says.)

Schaeffer's house resonates with that hidden-bower vibe of the Hotel Bel-Air bungalows where stars such as Grace Kelly found refuge. Both owner and decorator wanted to emphasize this more formal, pre-'60s Hollywood of glamorous lunches and cocktail hours without sacrificing the relaxed, sunny lifestyle of today's L.A.

Sommers had the light-filled living room stripped of its claustrophobic grass wall covering and painted with Farrow & Ball's powder blue, which reflects light while maintaining the room's decorum. Schaeffer went along with project manager Kristen Hutchins' recommendation to cover her Lucite benches (purchased from the NYC store Paris Apartment) with zebra-print cowhide. "I'm not particularly drawn to zebra," Schaeffer says. "But it made a nice pop in our somewhat conventional living room."

Schaeffer chose silver-and-eggplant Florence Broadhurst Japanese Floral wallpaper for the bedroom, and Sommers found a dark-plum paint for its foyer. French doors open onto the unshaded pool (pause here to shake off the envy), so a darker retreat soothes rather than oppresses. The guest room also

has Broadhurst paper in large pink swirls on cream. The rooms flow despite the daring contrasts, because the undertones match. Already renovated, the bathroom and kitchen needed only some vintage accent pieces to counter the heavy marble and stainless steel.

Schaeffer applied Sommers' design pointers when she was planning Presse's decor. "The boutique has the same deep-plum walls as my bedroom," Schaeffer says. "And on the back wall, a de

Gournay chinoiserie wallpaper that I couldn't find the perfect place for at home." Two clear versions of the purple-and-black Murano chandelier purchased from Best of Venice and

hanging in Schaeffer's bedroom found their way into Presse.

It's symbolically fitting that just after Schaeffer finished her two big decorating projects, she slipped on an ice patch covering her front walk during this winter's freak Northeast-style cold snap and broke her arm. She promptly slapped a Lanvin label on the cast. □

**Outside in:** (From top) The facade, the cabana, and the master bedroom





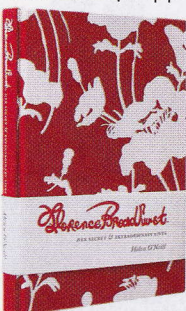
#### Bungalow babes:

(1) Even the half bath is accessorized; (2) a Sari Gueron-clad Schaeffer tickles Sommers' baby girl, Eloise, whose mother wears Jenni Kayne, in the guest room, which is papered with Broadhurst's Arabian Garden; (3) breakfast nook chairs covered in Manuel Canovas Misia fabric from Cowtan & Tout ([cowtan.com](http://cowtan.com)); (4) the TV room's chinoiserie cabinet, left by the previous owner, is a replica of one Kelly Wearstler created for the Maison 140 hotel.



## MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

When Schaeffer and her husband stayed at Manhattan's Soho House before their wedding, they fell in love with the Florence Broadhurst Japanese Floral wallpaper. They found it at John Rosselli in New York City (212-593-2060). Appreciation for Broadhurst's hand-drawn, silk-screen designs



is starting to reach critical mass. *Florence Broadhurst: Her Secret and Extraordinary Lives* (Chronicle Books) is out this month; Helen O'Neill's gripping biography tracks her secret affairs and her unsolved murder, and uncovers an amazing trove of images to inspire your decorating. Meanwhile, Signature Prints ([signatureprints.com.au](http://signatureprints.com.au)) has reissued Broadhurst wall coverings and created a home collection that includes luggage, throw pillows, and doorstops in the colorful patterns.



#### Rooms bloom:

(5) Hutchins found the master bath's glass cabinet at Silver Lake's Now/Again (323-662-4338). "We lacquered it a dark fig and added the gold detail. Now it's a fabulous piece worth top dollar," Sommers says; (6) Schaeffer, a former beauty editor, wanted the color of her dining chairs to replicate the shade of the Prada perfume atomizer's bulb. United Leather, a wholesale leather warehouse in downtown L.A. (213-747-1723), made it happen.