



WOODWORK, GOTHIC-STYLE WINDOWS, and stained wainscoting (left) command attention in the 1862 home. SOURCES: lamp, Currey & Company in Atlanta; table, Domain in Bridgewater.

■ Stacey Guggenheim Carney (below), the home's owner and designer, relaxes with Molly.

■ The receiving room (opposite) is so named because of the home's provenance. The glittering chandelier "was a total bargain," the homeowner says. At her request, the lighting shop ordered the garnet crystals that now hang from the fixture. SOURCES: chandelier, Lighting for Less in Matawan; gilded frame on the wall, Creative Space in Middleton; love seat and chairs, Domain in Bridgewater.

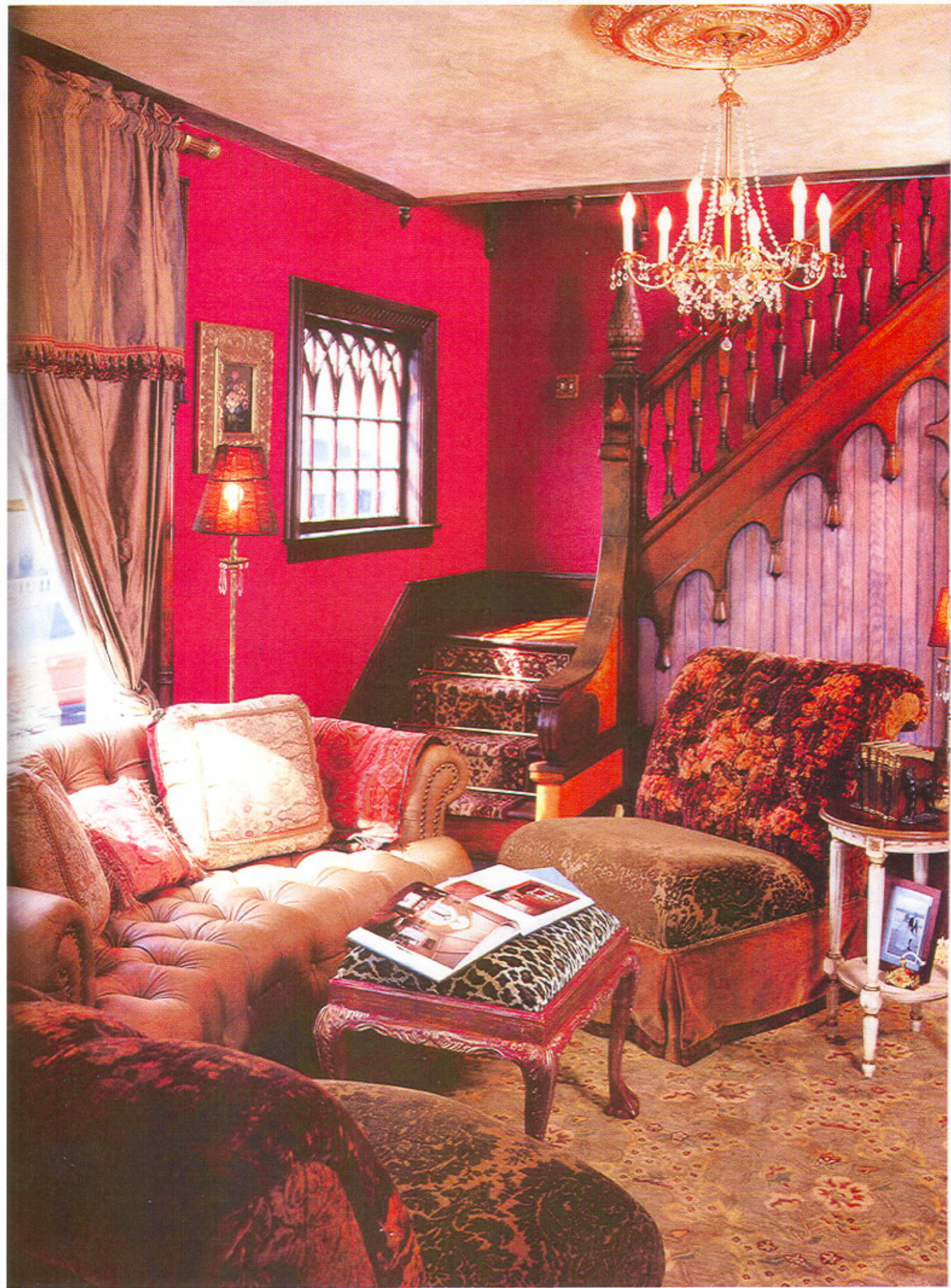


DIFFERENT STROKES

A Monmouth Beach interior designer
takes a hands-on approach

DESIGNER STACEY GUGGENHEIM CARNEY IS A PAINTER, A CRAFTSWOMAN, and a super shopper. She doesn't mind getting paint on her hands: In fact, she loves to paint canvases, walls and furniture. So it's no surprise that she frequents the unpainted furniture stores. She also makes her finds

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in unlikely as well as likely stores. From discount chains to antique boutiques to the newest hot spot in the streets of London or Paris, she might find an accessory, a piece of furniture, or just a piece of silk ribbon to lend the right touch to a lamp.

Carney, a decorative painter and interior designer, is an industry partner of the American Society of Interior Designers. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design, where she majored in apparel design and studied painting, textiles, and industrial design.

Projects for her firm — Stacey Guggenheim Carney Interior Design & Decorative Painting — often begin small, with a client hiring her to paint a mural. “I wind up choosing an entire new palette for the house, help her to choose new furniture and window treatments, and before we know it, I’ve been there more than a month and feel like I’ve redesigned her whole space.”

In two previous design jobs, Carney had a staff taking care of the hands-on work, but the role of supervisor isn’t as appealing to her as doing it herself. “seeing the whole design process from beginning to end.” So Carney keeps a box of trims that turn a ho-hum chandelier into something clever for a client’s room. And she finds just the right stool at Marshalls or table at Target and paints it to match the room.

Her own house has those same touches: the leopard fabric on the ottoman, the butterfly finial that tops a daughter’s lamp, and garnet crystals hanging from a chandelier.

The busy mother of twins, Carney unwinds with mail-order catalogs in the evening. On their pages she finds interesting furnishings — fruit glasses to furniture — that dress up her rooms. Sometimes she adds a spin of her own, such as reupholstering the kitchen stools purchased from Ballard Designs in

café checks. Dishes in a matching black-and-white toile pattern are another mail-order purchase, this one from Spiegel. Glass knobs on the desk in her office are from Crown City Hardware, a Pasadena-California-based vendor of vintage-look hardware.

Carney often uses her painting and fabric expertise to rescue a dresser or a stool. Serving in place of a coffee table is an ottoman purchased — damaged and marked down — at The Store from River Road in Shrewsbury. She mended the piece and then reupholstered it in a leopard print.

Carney also designed and stitched all of the window treatments in her house. For a client’s home, however, she designs the window treatments and then contracts with a professional seamstress.

Many of the rooms in Carney’s home also showcase her painting skills, with the office being an obvious example. There, painted grapes and ivy mix with faux ivy she bought at an A.C. Moore craft store. “I’ve had people come over to the house and say, ‘I just don’t want to leave!’” Carney said. “They love to stare at the grapes and the ivy.” In the same room, she applied special paint to create a blackboard on the wall.

NEAR THE SHORE

Carney’s house is only a couple of blocks from the sea, which is appropriate for a woman who grew up learning to sail before she could ride a bicycle. “My father has pictures of me asleep on the sailboat.”

Mindful of that childhood fun, Carney said she “always wanted a house near the shore.” In fact, the home’s exterior architecture creates a silhouette that makes the structure easily distinguishable when returning from a boat trip. “You’re in a boat and you’re trying to recognize your house to come back to the

right spot,” Carney said, and the chimneys and steeply pitched gables serve as a landmark. Originally, the house was on the oceanfront, but two blocks of houses were built between it and the water.

She and her husband, Jerry Carney, chose the house partly because of its proximity to the ocean and partly because they knew they could decorate and paint it to their taste. They also liked its architectural style. “I’ve always been a fan of Gothic architecture,” Carney said. “When I studied architecture with the cathedrals and the different Gothic mansions in Newport that I was familiar with, I really fell in love with the windows especially.”

The Carneys have kept the house in the spirit of its outer design, even to the point of designating the front entryway as the receiving room. Period-style furniture remains true to the mood of the Victorian era in that room.

FAMILY FUN

The homeowner loves her location, too. “My lifelong dream was to raise my kids on the beach, in a shore town.” Once her daughters reached school age, the time seemed right. So when the weekend weather beckons, the family goes to the beach. Carney’s daughters enjoy the outings. “They see all their friends there. It’s a nice, small community.”

The ocean also offers a special opportunity for father-daughter outings. “My husband goes fishing at night, and [the girls] tag along,” Carney said. They are developing the savvy of beach kids just as Carney did at their age. Perhaps they will inherit her fascination with decorating, too. ■

Writer Betsy Simmacher claims to be all thumbs at crafts, but she has painted several rooms in her Dallas-area home.

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THE CHANDELIER in the master bedroom (above) has a Parisian pedigree: It's from a trendy store in Paris' St. Germaine area; silk ribbon from Bon Marché wraps the fixture. **SOURCES:** Ralph Lauren bedcover and skirt, Horchow catalog; rug, The Woods Fine Furniture in Colts Neck.

■ Homeowner Stacey Guggenheim Carney bought the two-piece bureau (top) because she could carry it up her home's winding staircase. The metal grille above the dresser holds silk hydrangeas, and on the dresser is a jewelry box that was a gift and a Tiffany vase. **SOURCES:** silk hydrangeas, Byford & Mills in Little Silver; bureau and metal grille, Domain; dresser, Michelangelo in Hoboken.

■ In daughter Anya's room (left), Ralph Lauren bed coverings pair with pink mosquito netting attached to a ring of faux roses on the ceiling. **SOURCES:** mosquito netting, Bed, Bath and Beyond; chandelier, Ballard Designs catalog (customized with crystals and teddy bears); stool (customized with pink paint), Marshalls.



THE HOME'S Gothic Victorian style resembles many of the municipal buildings and churches in the area. A flower garden and wide front porch welcome guests. The porch table (left) offers a perfect spot for afternoon refreshments; hydrangeas and black-eyed Susans bloom near the picket fence. **SOURCES:** table and chairs, Lexington Furniture in Lexington, North Carolina; table runner, Kate & Company in Spring Lake; pitcher, Waterford; fruit glasses, Williams-Sonoma catalog; paint, Benjamin Moore's historic collection.

