



Kenne Shepherd Interior Design & Architecture PLLC

FOR MORE THAN 17 YEARS, THIS FIRM HAS INFUSED ITS PROJECTS WITH A TIMELESS YET MODERN STYLE

by Julie Edwards

Elegance. Sophistication. Style. When speaking with Kenne Shepherd, owner and principal architect for Kenne Shepherd Interior Design & Architecture, these qualities are embodied in her words as readily as they are in her work.

“We embrace our clients’ vision of how they would like to live and embody that in an environment that is distinct in its character and of the highest quality.” Shepherd says. “With every project, we immerse ourselves in all aspects of the

design—from architecture and interiors to furnishings and accessories—to create an integrated system of form and expression.”

Shepherd founded her firm in 1993, in New York City. Originally, the firm focused on high-end luxury retail projects such as Calvin Klein’s Madison Avenue store in New York City and Salvatore Ferragamo’s national retail expansion; however, Shepherd soon diversified, adding residential work to the firm’s portfolio. Comprised of a small but

NYC Fine Living

This New York residence masterfully blends new finishes and furnishings with the existing architectural elements. Furniture pieces, like the sofa by George Smith (georgesmith.com), which is upholstered in an embossed rose-colored fabric from Pierre Frey (pierrefrey.com), were added to complement the client’s existing heirloom furniture such as these guest chairs, which were reupholstered in a gold-, beige-, rose-, and green-stripped damask fabric from the Lelievre and Old World Weavers collections by Stark (old-world-weavers.com). The table lamp is a unique electrified “Kashmiri Urn” from Vaughan Lighting (vaughandesigns.com). The custom area rug (tufenkian.com) was handmade in Tibet, with the colors carefully chosen to unite the overall color scheme of the living room.

PHOTO: PAUL JOHNSON

More projects by Kenne Shepherd

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select group of architects and designers, the firm currently provides a full range of commercial and residential architectural and interior-design services, from initial concept to project completion.

“Luxury architecture and interior design are very similar—whether retail or residential—because you are creating an image of a lifestyle while dealing with a high level of design and fine materials,” Shepherd says. “The difference is that with residential, you have more freedom in color choice, material choice, and construction techniques.”

As the firm’s services have expanded, so has its design style. Shepherd says initial projects were very minimal with tone-on-tone finishes, but today the firm’s style is “richer,” with more use of texture, color, and lighting to create a modern yet classic ambiance. “Interior design obviously is a great complement to architecture,” she says. “Our clients can choose either interior-design or architectural services; however, when we are able to provide both for a project, the end result is a more comprehensive and unified vision.”

Distinguished by *Display & Design Ideas* as one of today’s top 100 design firms, Kenne Shepherd Interior Design & Architecture has received extensive coverage in design publications. One of the firm’s recent projects of note is a three-bedroom residence in a prime location of Manhattan’s Upper East Side. “The project required judicious renovation that refined the architecture and masterfully blended new finishes and furnishings with the existing [elements],” Shepherd says. “The residence is owned by an attorney and his wife, who are empty-nesters relocating from Boston to New York City. They were downsizing [and], at the same time, had many family heirlooms and artwork they wished to keep.”

Using a more traditional approach to mirror the clients’ style, Shepherd says she used “bold infusions of dramatic color balanced by soft, traditionally inspired materials to create an inviting atmosphere

to highlight the traditional furnishings and artwork the clients had gathered during their years of travel.” She also designed custom, handmade wool rugs and carpets to unify and anchor each space.

The transformation of the kitchen and bathrooms required more extensive remodeling. In the master bath, Shepherd used Jerusalem Gold stone to create a very modern look, while new granite countertops, marble mosaic-tile backsplashes, and stainless-steel appliances changed the kitchen into a much warmer, inviting space. “The result, while a departure from the firm’s usual design style, was very successful,” Shepherd says. “Our influence is still easily seen in the clean lines and sophisticated color palette.”

A lifelong arts enthusiast, Shepherd began her artistic journey in college when a mentor encouraged her to change her major to architecture from political science. “It was love at first sight,” she says. “Everything just flowed from that moment forward.”

During Shepherd’s early years, she worked as an architect for general contractors on large-scale commercial projects in North Carolina and Alaska, and later assisted in developing a land-use plan for the city of Seattle. “My planning and construction background has been an invaluable part of my work experience, because it allows me to understand the unique challenges of contractors,” Shepherd notes. “I believe my respect for the contractor’s craftsmen and their work is one of the things that sets me apart in my field.”

For the future, Shepherd, who is a LEED-accredited professional, looks to become more involved in sustainable design. “Sustainable design encompasses both areas of our firm—from the architectural components such as the use of natural light and energy-efficient fixtures, to the design-materials aspect,” she notes. “It’s exciting to see a growing range of good quality textiles in the market, which makes it even easier to include sustainable materials throughout a project.” ■



Calvin Klein Madison Avenue Store, New York, NY

A refined composition of soaring columns defines the main floor’s double-height environment and sets the tone for all three retail floors. Strong horizontal forms draw customers through the space and create a human scale for the display of its collections.



Manhattan Pied a Terre, New York, NY

To create this serene urban refuge, Kenne Shepherd used refined materials such as off-white Thai silk to wrap the living area’s walls. A custom-designed, hand-woven white wool carpet covers the floor. Framing the panoramic mid-town views are lacquer convactor covers and matching valances.



Manhattan Pied a Terre, New York, NY

The galley-style kitchen, open to the rest of the apartment, features custom-designed lacquered cabinets that match the color of the silk-covered walls. Cool grey granite countertops and top-of-the-line stainless steel appliances provide subtle accents.



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