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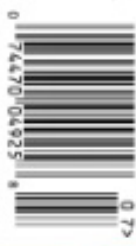
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HOME LIFE

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LORI GRAHAM used a mix of local and global vintage and contemporary objects to style bookshelves that climb to the ceiling of her tall third-floor loft. Adjacent to the owners' suite in her Dupont Circle rowhouse, this room includes a library ladder to access the wall of bookshelves punctuated by an off-center fireplace.

LORI GRAHAM, 38
LORI GRAHAM DESIGN

DC DESIGN STARS

PHOTOS BY
TONY POWELL

Interior designers Lori Graham, Jeff Akseizer and Kristin Peake are creating spaces that speak to their clients, including themselves. *Washington Life* tours their homes to share what their clients proclaim: they're rising stars in the design industry.



JEFF AKSEIZER, 34 AKSEIZER DESIGN GROUP

JEFF AKSEIZER and his French Bulldogs LuLu and Louie love to entertain in the living room of his renovated McLean, Va., home. Akseizer paired a hickory chair-wingback with a Bolier & Co. sofa in rich warm colors and added a David Hicks-patterned Stark rug, antique coffee table with 14-kt. gold trim and Carrara marble top, and rare coral for color and contrast. The built-ins around the fireplace, his favorite "accessory" in the house, are from his own ADG Millwork Shop in Boswell, Pa. Additional decor by Jamie Brown of Akseizer Design Group.

MIDWEST CHARM

Tulsa, Okla., native Lori Graham, principal of Lori Graham Design, travels far and wide for design inspiration. Her latest journey took her to Beirut, where the former lawyer was taken with the "sexy" Le Gray hotel. Graham adds that the J.K. Place Santa Maria Novella in Florence, Italy, is a perennial favorite. "My Dupont Circle living room is inspired by J.K. Place where I used images of sitting rooms to show the juxtaposition of classic elements with modern furnishings and unexpected accessories and fabrics as a timeless approach to design," she says.

The mix of "old" and "new" is what keeps her designs fresh and her client list growing. Graham's aesthetic continues in her own product

line, LG Place, which features classic furnishings reimagined with modern finishes and details. When she's not incorporating her own products in her designs, she looks to consignment and vintage shops like Sixteen Fifty Nine for Mid-Century items; Timothy Paul for carpets, textiles and bedding; and Miss Pixies. "Other great bargains are found in the D.C. residences themselves," she adds. "I love finding pieces my clients already own or fixtures in the historic homes they are renovating."

COASTAL CALM

Kristin Peake, principal of Kristin Peake Interiors, draws inspiration from the Eastern Shore, where she spent part of her childhood,

as well as from other coastal countries for her clean, comforting designs. "My favorite destination is Italy," Peake says. "Inspiration comes from so many things: from a piece of sea glass on the beach to a linen napkin at a French bistro." Part of her trademark calm approach to design is the use of beige as a foundation followed by pops of color. "If you're a good designer, you work with your client's preferences and guide them to good design and good choices that will last a lifetime," she says.

The University of Maryland graduate follows this philosophy in her own home, using timeless furnishings and neutral finishes including warm, textured wallpaper by Phillip Jeffries in her foyer. Wallpaper has been back for years, notes Peake, who looks to Osborne & Little for strong colors and geometrics and Ralph Lauren for true Americana styles. Some of her go-to furniture and accessory sources include bi-yearly markets, plus West Coast stores such as Noir Furniture, Custom Furniture & Cabinets (CFC) and BoBo Intriguing Objects. —Sherry Moeller

BIG CITY PACE

Having grown up on Long Island's Gold Coast, Jeff Akseizer, principal of Akseizer Design Group, has "always been fascinated with the rush of 'high' design styles that came here from Europe between 1850 and 1940." He likes to visit and even take clients to places with design voices from the past such as Newport, R.I. "That town is filled with famous residential architectural works from McKim, Mead and White's Isaac Bell House to Richard Morris Hunt's The Breakers." Also influenced by Hollywood designers Dorothy Draper and William Haines, he says his personal design philosophy "is to look at each room as a Hollywood set and create function and form that my clients never thought was possible."

Approaching design with a sophisticated palette, Akseizer loves all things old. He collects 18th- and 19th-century silver and finds treasures at the Red Schoolhouse Antiques in Millwood, Va., where goods are shipped in from Scotland. Akseizer also believes in ample lighting, especially for "flex" spaces — residential rooms that double as offices. Besides his own custom line of lighting, he likes Ochre, an online source. —Sherry Moeller **WI**