

Show House

Tour the Kaleidoscope Project, a Show House Celebrating BIPOC Designers

The inaugural showcase invited 23 designers to reimagine the century-old Cornell Inn

By Mel Studach

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The Cornell Inn, a picturesque New England bed and breakfast in Lenox, Massachusetts, has been “spoiling guests in the Berkshires since 1888,” as its website avers. As of this week, guests will be treated to even more splendor as the historical site unveils a full renovation in collaboration with the [Kaleidoscope Project](#), a designer showcase representing a diverse roster of talent.

Twenty-three BIPOC designers from across the country were invited to makeover the century-old property, including 18 guest rooms and communal lobby, dining room, and bar, with proceeds from the event funding scholarships for youths of color interested in pursuing a career in the arts and design industry. “With the advent of the Black Lives Matter Movement, we in the design industry community sought to support our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community in an actionable way,” says [Patti Carpenter](#), cofounder of the Kaleidoscope Project and principal of [Carpenter + Company](#), in a statement. “We are seeking to show the true colors present within our community and to create welcoming and inclusive spaces that reflect a broader design narrative.”

Unlike common design show house practice, where the arduous work that goes into the quick-turnaround designs is eventually wiped away, the final interiors of the

Kaleidoscope Project are wallpapered, window-draped, and stylishly decorated for the long haul. Though the showcase is open for public viewing May 16–June 6, the designs will be enjoyed by guests at the inn going forward. With that in mind, participating designers decided to abide by the theme of “Restful, Reflection, and Rejuvenation” when renovating the space.

The theme materializes throughout the residence in a splendid use of pattern, texture, and color selection with contributions from [The Shade Store](#), [Kravet](#), [Caesarstone](#), [Saatva](#), and others. “Color is everything,” says designer [Everick Brown](#), who coated the lobby, which he nicknamed Katana (Swahili for “to meet, encounter, or come upon”), in Benjamin Moore’s calming [Puritan Gray](#) and [Revere Pewter](#). “It’s the first place you walk into in the building, and it’s meant to help you transition into the space,” he explains. “The goal was to create a space where people would be inspired to commune and have conversation, or just to reflect and rejuvenate.”



[Swivel chairs](#) from Design Within Reach layered with pillows by Judy Ross Textiles decorate [Everick Brown](#)’s living room. Photo: Frank Frances

If Brown’s interior does the welcoming, then Virginia Toledo’s vibrantly patterned dining room nearby says “Come on in.” The interior designer, of firm [Toledo Geller](#),

pays homage to the New England heritage with an Americana color palette, anchored by Schumacher's [Elizia Ikat wallcovering](#) that gets framed by the home's original wood beams. "[The wallpaper] spoke to me as a metaphor for this project," Toledo tells AD PRO. "Kaleidoscope is bringing together so many different backgrounds and heritages, but we are all American together."

Other designers also found inspiration in the region's architectural history and rolling landscape, while some, such as [Christy Davis](#) and [Rydhima Brar](#), drew upon their respective Chinese and Indian heritages to infuse their spaces. "The beauty of this is how we brought together 23 designers and people of color, but when you walk through the spaces, what you see and feel is not a monolithic room," says Everick.



The [Elizia Ikat wallpaper](#) from Schumacher served as a starting point in [Toledo Geller's](#) dining room. Tailored Pleat drapery in Sunbrella fabric from [The Shade Store](#) layers on the look. Photo courtesy The Shade Store

It's a diversity in design that, Toledo says, is long overdue. "I'm happy to have led the charge with my other 22 designers, but more than anything, I'm excited to see what this brings to the other show houses in our industry and the platform that it gives to other designers of color."

Below, tour more of the interiors included in the Kaleidoscope Project, which will remain on view through June 6.





A beautifully tactile wall covering adds depth in [Purvi Padia Design](#)'s calming space. Photo: Frank Frances



Rasheeda Gray, of [Gray Space Interiors](#), creates a sultry mood using peachy hues and burgundy velvet drapery from The Shade Store that lines across the entire wall. Photo: Frank Frances



R/Terior Studio's Rydhima Brar pulls from her Indian heritage to create space imbued in rich, deep hues. Photo: Frank Frances





A neutral Schumacher wallpaper grounds in the guest room designed by [Gail Davis Designs](#). Photo: Frank Frances





Designer Nile Johnson creates a sophisticated nook with Moss velvet drapery from The Shade Store. Photo: Frank Frances



A metallic wallpaper from [Thibaut](#) delights on the ceiling of the guest room by Christy Davis Interiors. Photo courtesy The Shade Store



Cole & Son's [Acacia wallpaper](#) provides a beautiful foliage backdrop in [Designs by Jennifer Owen's](#) guest room. Photo: Frank Frances



An array of textures and finishes enlivens the monochrome palette in [Dennese Guadeloupe Rojas's](#) interior. Photo courtesy The Shade Store





Serenity comes in cerulean in [Johanna Howard Home's](#) guest room. Photo courtesy The Shade Store





Brunschwig & Fils's [Bird and Thistle wallpaper](#) shimmers in [Doreen Chambers Interiors'](#) guest room. Photo courtesy The Shade Store



Wool flannel drapery grounds the busy floral wallpaper from Schumacher in [Shawna Underwood's](#) guest room. Photo courtesy The Shade Store



Inspired by the Metropolitan Opera, designer [David Santiago](#) layered the bar in a red silk wallpaper from Scalamandre. Lighting by Currey & Co. Photo: Frank Frances