



Pieter Estersohn

At this weekend's show, interior designers will create vignettes demonstrating how to use antiques in the home, such as in this New York apartment.

# Spotlight on antiques in show's grand finale

Waning interest in traditional style finds Thetas retooling annual charity event

By Diane Cowen  
STAFF WRITER

**A**isles of booths with fine antiques, shining silver and glittering crystal will line the ballrooms of the George R. Brown Convention Center this weekend for those heading out to the Theta Charity Antiques Show's grand finale.

This is the 68th and final year of the longtime Houston event that has

brought fine antiques to a central marketplace and raised \$8 million for local charities.

In the past few years, the Theta show – a function of the Houston Alumnae Chapter of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority – has worked to revive attendance and sales at the show as the popularity of traditional antiques has waned and shoppers have so many other ways to find them.



They added Designer Walks and Art Walks events with local interior designers and art experts taking small groups through the show to educate them about how antiques and art can be used in a variety of home-décor styles. Those events were popular but couldn't make up for the huge effort it takes year-round by volunteers to put on a show for an audience that has gotten significantly smaller in the past decade.

Jennifer Donovan O'Donnell, a co-chair for the Theta show, said the group has had a committee studying the decline for the past three years. In January, it concluded that it was time to host one last show and move on to a new community-service initiative. Others co-chairing this year's event are Courtney Hill Fertitta and Giggly Martin Thanheiser.

"The show has grown more and more complex and expensive to pro-

*Antiques continues on D6*

## Heed experts to get remodeling right

Houston interior designer Lauren Haskett offers tips

By Diane Cowen  
STAFF WRITER

Lauren Haskett takes a classic approach to interior design, lending her talents to home makeovers and room remodeling in traditional and transitional style.

Haskett, principal at Lauren Haskett Fine Design in Houston, recently spoke at Access Design, a meet-the-designers event co-hosted by the Houston

Chronicle and the Houston Design Center. Her topic was "Get it Right: Plan Like an Expert," and she laid out some of the rules she uses on projects.

Here are tips from Haskett to make your home remodeling or decorating projects a little bit easier:

### KITCHEN

Perhaps the most important element of a kitchen is its functionality. Aisles between counters and an island should be at least 36 inches wide, 48 inches if you want to accommodate

*Tips continues on D6*



Max Burkhalter

Vivid wallpaper and new hardware can have a dramatic impact in a bathroom, such as in the Houston home of Julia and Andrew Novarini.

## Chairwoman of the board

Houstonian launches cheese and charcuterie board business

By Allison Bagley  
CORRESPONDENT

Even if guests at a party don't know one another, they'll bond over the cheese. That's the experience of Alyssa Case, who recently launched Graze, which provides Instagram-worthy boards artfully loaded with cheese, charcuterie and accoutrements for



events. "It adds a creative element that will have your guests talking," Case says, adding,

### Case

"everyone loves something pretty that they can take a picture of in the day and age that we're in."

Case, 28, uses cheeses from Texas farms, including Dapper Goat Dairy outside Luling, alongside farmers-market-fresh produce, seasonal jams, meats, olives

*Boards continues on D6*

**CONCERT REVIEW:** Pianist Ax, symphony cut to the heart of Beethoven and Brahms. **PAGE D2**

**NEW ON NETFLIX:** Host David Chang says his show honors Anthony Bourdain. **PAGE D2**

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STAR

ANTIQUES

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duce. It's always been run exclusively by volunteers, and the resources and infrastructure needed to keep the show going just doesn't exist like it used to," O'Donnell said.

This year's show brings nationally known interior designers Alexa Hampton, Thomas Jayne, Charlotte Moss and Thomas O'Brien for a Friday panel discussion moderated by Flower magazine editor Margot Shaw. On Saturday, Brooke and Steve Giannetti of Giannetti Architecture + Interiors will talk and sign copies of their new book, "Patina Living."

Ten interior designers, all but one of them local, will create 10-foot-by-12-foot room vignettes at the back of the event space to showcase local talent, demonstrate how to use antiques in your home and create an environment that feels like a show home. They'll also revive a tradition of past shows with some antiques dealers — experts in their own areas — giving talks at their booths.

Money raised goes to four permanent beneficiaries: Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens/The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Child Advocates; the Kappa Alpha Theta Foundation and Texas Children's Cancer & Hematology Centers. A handful of other local charities were chosen to receive money this year: Amazing Place; Bo's Place; Camp for All; Holly Hall; Nick Finnegan Counseling Center; The Rise School; and The Rose.

Though consumer interest in antiques has waned, most interior designers will tell you they don't want to create a room that doesn't have something old in it, whether it's a vintage item or true antique.

Thomas Jayne, of Jayne Design Studio New York, was with a client in Charleston, S.C., last week when he talked about his Houston visit. This won't be the first time he's been to Houston or to the Theta show. He has longtime clients here and is good friends with Bayou Bend Collection curator Bradley Brooks.

"There's an editorial trend that says no one wants antiques and it's counterintuitive, but a lot of people still like and use old things," Jayne said. "The difference is for a while, everything (in a room) had to be old to be cor-



Interior designers Alexa Hampton, Thomas Jayne, Charlotte Moss and Suzanne Kasler will speak.



Pieter Estersohn

A house of a collector of Post War art in Wynnewood, Penn., reflects an affection for old items. "Vintage art is a way to add antiquity," Thomas Jayne of Jayne Design Studio New York says.

rect, and that made it stultifying for people. Some of us grew up in homes where there were rooms we couldn't go into because they were too fragile. That's difficult for people who want wash-and-wear."

Jayne said that vintage and antique furnishings and decorative arts provide narratives for a world of people hungry for stories. An old chair or sofa had

previous owners and was used for purposes slightly different from today. Maybe a parlor chair was saved for company, or an early American chair represented wealth since few then had real furniture. Paintings told stories, and even dishes and kitchen utensils had a role in life, representing manufacturing technology or even artistic developments.

"I've always argued that you can't have a great interior without something old. I like the nuance," he continued.

It could be something as simple as old dishes, pottery or a vintage transferware pattern. Even if you need tableware that's dishwasher safe, you can have a set of everyday dishes that can take a beating and have another set for special

2019 Theta Charity Antiques Show

**When:** Preview party 7 p.m. Thursday; general admission 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday & Saturday and noon-6 p.m. Sunday

**Where:** George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas

**Highlights:** 11 a.m. Friday panel and book signing with Alexa Hampton, Thomas Jayne, Charlotte Moss and Thomas O'Brien, moderated by Margot Shaw; 11 a.m. Saturday talk and book signing with Steve and Brooke Giannetti

**Tickets:** General admission, \$25; preview party regular admission, \$250 and young collectors, \$50

**Information:** [thetacharityantiquesshow.org](http://thetacharityantiquesshow.org)

occasions.

Art is another good option if antique furniture doesn't seem like it can take the hard wear of family life.

"Vintage art is a way to add antiquity. There's nothing more interesting than an old map or botanical prints; they're colorful and organic. There's a lot of good art available for not much money," Jayne said.

In his own home, Jayne mixes modern and traditional chairs around a 19th-century dining table, saying the trick is to have a room with a mix of old and new. He also has family things, such as his grandmother's silverware, and he doesn't mind washing it by hand or polishing it occasionally because the reward is that every time he uses it, he's reminded that his grandmother once told him that food tasted better when you used good silver.

There's also the issue of craftsmanship, when furniture and other home goods were made by hand by artisans before things were mass-produced, or at least when they were made by people who cared more about each piece they turned out.

"You get amazing value, it's interesting, more durable — the plus categories are huge. It just takes education and effort. Like anything of value, there's some work involved, but the return is huge," he said. "I can't imagine having a place without some old things."

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TIPS

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two people who cook and clean together.

Standard counters are 36 inches high, and bars are 42 inches.

Shop for appliances early in the process so you can plan around their height, width and depth.

When possible, add more drawers and put countertop appliances behind doors.

BATHROOMS

In small spaces such as a powder bathroom, go bold with bright colors, vivid wallpaper or dramatic lighting. If space is tight, hang sconces on side walls.

Simple changes can have a big impact, so installing wallpaper or painting cabinets and adding new hardware can pack a big bang for the buck.

If you're installing a new shower, add a hand-held sprayer and be mindful about how the shower door opens for easy access to

water controls.

DINING ROOM

Many people agonize over the size of a chandelier and choose one that is too small. Add the width and length of the room; that's how many inches the diameter of your chandelier should be. If your room is 15 feet by 18 feet, your chandelier's diameter should be about 33 inches (15+18=33). Also, hang it so its lowest part is 33 to 36 inches above the table's top.

Allow 24 inches of space per chair around the table.

If you use a rug, chairs should fit comfortably on it when people are seated.

BEDROOM

A king-size bed should have three Euro shams or two king shams and takes a 9-foot-by-12-foot rug.

A queen-size bed should have two Euros or two standard shams and takes an 8-foot-by-10-foot rug. Seating helps, so add a com-

fortable reading chair or chaise; a bench at the foot of the bed can be useful, too.

Nightstands don't have to match but should be about the same height.

LIVING ROOM

Use a rug large enough so that all furniture can sit on it (front and back legs). Wool rugs are more durable and more easily cleaned.

Leave at least an 18-inch aisle between your sofa, chairs and coffee table. Upholster seating in performance fabrics or others with stain protection.

Hang curtains 10 inches outside of a window's trim, and hang the curtain rod two inches from the ceiling or from the bottom of crown molding.

Art should be hung with its center 60 to 65 inches off of the floor.

Accessorize with books first, then fill in with flowers or plants and objets d'art.

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Max Burkhalter

Books make a great accessory in the living room of Houstonians Julia and Andrew Novarini.

BOARDS

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and nuts.

"The flowers are everything," she says of the wow factor — edible blooms she sources from local Flora Cocina, including zinnias, daisies, pansies, roses, snapdragons, linaria and calendula. Munching on petals or trying an unusually flavored goat cheese sparks conversation, Case says, adding "these boards are wiped clean."

Case cuts, cleans, oils and conditions maplewood to make the boards, which can serve as few as four or up to 30 — the largest board is called "the Texas." She's fulfilled special orders larger than that, too — sometimes covering an entire kitchen island with a spread.

Case, who studied art at Texas Christian University, says it took trial and error in her Heights home to perfect her craft. Now she leads

Graze

Boards start at \$75 to serve four to six; [grazehx.com](http://grazehx.com).

classes to pass on board-arranging skills, including an "element of surprise," such as cutting a raspberry or blackberry in half to add color variance. She recently taught a group of interior designers.

For the holidays, Graze offers a seasonal collection

incorporating goodies such as pomegranate seeds and persimmon. And if Case seems like a familiar face, it's because her other full-time gig is modeling — her clients include Neiman Marcus, Kendra Scott and Dillard's. Of her two career paths, she laughs, "They have nothing to do with the other — it's apples and oranges."

Allison Bagley is a Houston-based writer.



Graze

Graze provides Instagram-worthy food boards for events in various sizes.

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