

HOME & DESIGN

The Miami Herald



SUNDAY, JULY 29, 2007 | EDITOR: TERESA MEARS tmears@MiamiHerald.com | 305-376-3674 or 954-764-7026 ext. 3674

3D

HGTV

Young designer shines in prime time

BY JO WERNE

Special to The Miami Herald

When HGTV asked Brooke Friedman to design the interior of a house at The Oaks in Boca Raton for its *Designers Challenge*, she was given one month to prepare her plans and three months to finish the project. Now two years later, the project is airing — at 11:30 p.m. Saturday on HGTV.

As in most interior design projects, “there was a surprise,” says Friedman, 24. “While HGTV was filming me

working, I had a wall removed only to discover a major plumbing line. I used an elbow-shaped pipe to move the line into a soffit.”

She also had to work with a 25-foot ceiling in the living room. Friedman used faux finishes to visually lower the ceiling.

Friedman says her residential interiors lean toward classical contemporary though she strives “to achieve what the clients want. After all, they have to live there. “I don’t do just con-

temporary or traditional,” she says. “I pull colors for the interior from a piece of art. I’m not one to add a lot of fluff. An interior should last 10 to 15 years without looking dated.”

One of Friedman’s current projects is redesigning the home of Bill and Gail Kelley in Fort Lauderdale, including the kitchen. Since the Kelleys’ home is on the water, she chose an island theme, using grass cloth on the

•TURN TO FRIEDMAN, 10H

BROADCAST READY: Boca Raton Brooke Friedman will be featured Saturday night on HGTV.



MARSHA HALPER/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

10H | SUNDAY, JULY 29, 2007

A

PROFILE | IN DESIGN

MiamiHerald.com/Homes | THE MIAMI HERALD



CANDACE WEST/MIAMI HERALD STAFF



BROOKE J DESIGN GROUP

CURRENT PROJECT: Above, homeowner Gail Kelley and her dog, Buddy, check out the new kitchen designed by Brooke Friedman. Right, a two-story living room at The Oaks in Boca Raton, one of Friedman’s projects to be featured on HGTV. The area rug is banded with a zebra print cloth.

HGTV

Young designer takes on cable network’s ‘Challenge’

•FRIEDMAN, FROM 1H

walls, a sisal rug for the floors, and pulling blues and greens out of a painting for the color theme.

It seemed written in the stars that Friedman would become an interior designer. The North Miami Beach native remembers drawing floor plans when she was as young as 8. Owner of Brooke J Design Group in Boca Raton for the past four years, she has worked on commercial and residential projects around the country, although 80 percent of her projects are in Broward County.

She creates interiors for multimillion-dollar residences, country clubs and model homes and once did

the interior of a 25,000-square-foot office building.

One contented customer is Noah Breakstone, president of Breakstone Homes in Miami. “Brooke J Design Group did an incredible job at designing our model homes and clubhouse,” he says. “Her color schemes and creative ideas played an integral part of the rapid sell out of our community.”

The Design Center of the Americas (DCOTA) in Dania Beach also noted her achievements in 2006 by naming her one of the top 10 upcoming designers in Florida.

Though her firm’s title includes “group,” Friedman works alone. She doesn’t even have a secretary.

“I’ve had assistants, but

I’m very anal about my work,” she says. “I check everything three and four times. If anything goes wrong I’m responsible and I fix it. I work seven days a week, sometimes 14 hours a day. If you love what you are doing, it’s not work.”

One reason she can do it all is because of her education. At the University of Florida, Friedman had to take two years of architectural studies before she could enter the interior design program. When a Miami design firm offered her an internship in her senior year, she transferred to Florida International University where she graduated a semester early with a bachelor of science degree in interior design.

She is a Licensed Professional Interior Designer. “I can sign and seal plans,” she says of her National Council for Interior Design qualification. The two-day exam for certification included codes, contracts and space planning among other design-related issues. Friedman also serves on the board of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID).

Recently married to Ari Meltzer, who works with his father, Oded Meltzer, at Reamco Development in Miami Lakes, Friedman has a strong, practical way of doing interiors.

For example, she designed an upholstered wall of vertical striped fabric for one client’s master bedroom.

But the twist: she made upholstered panels that are attached to the wall with Velcro. “If they move, they can take the wall with them,” she says.

MORE INFORMATION

Brooke J Design Group is at 557 NW 39th Circle, Boca Raton; 954-895-9378 or www.brookejdesigngroup.com

DESIGN ADVICE



Here are some design tips from Brooke Friedman:

- Always do a space plan of your room before you purchase furniture. Take measurements of the space and lay out the room on graph paper. This will save you from making costly mistakes. If you need to visualize, you can use masking tape on the floor to create the actual scale and placement of the furniture.
- When starting a room design, find your inspiration piece. It can be a work of art, a fabric, or a vase. Use that piece to create the room’s style, feel and color palette.
- To add dimension to a room or to make a small room appear larger, use an oversize mirror to create an illusion of a bigger space.
- Paint a room a neutral with a hint of color on one wall to create a dramatic effect without being over the top.
- To change a space at minimal cost, stick to mostly neutral furniture and dress up the room with accent colors in pillows, accessories, artwork and window treatments.

We’re breaking ground and moving earth to bring you a piece of paradise.



ST. REGIS
RESORT & RESIDENCES
BAL HARBOUR

