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5 TOP DESIGNERS ON THEIR 10 MUST-HAVES

by Nadia Ibanez

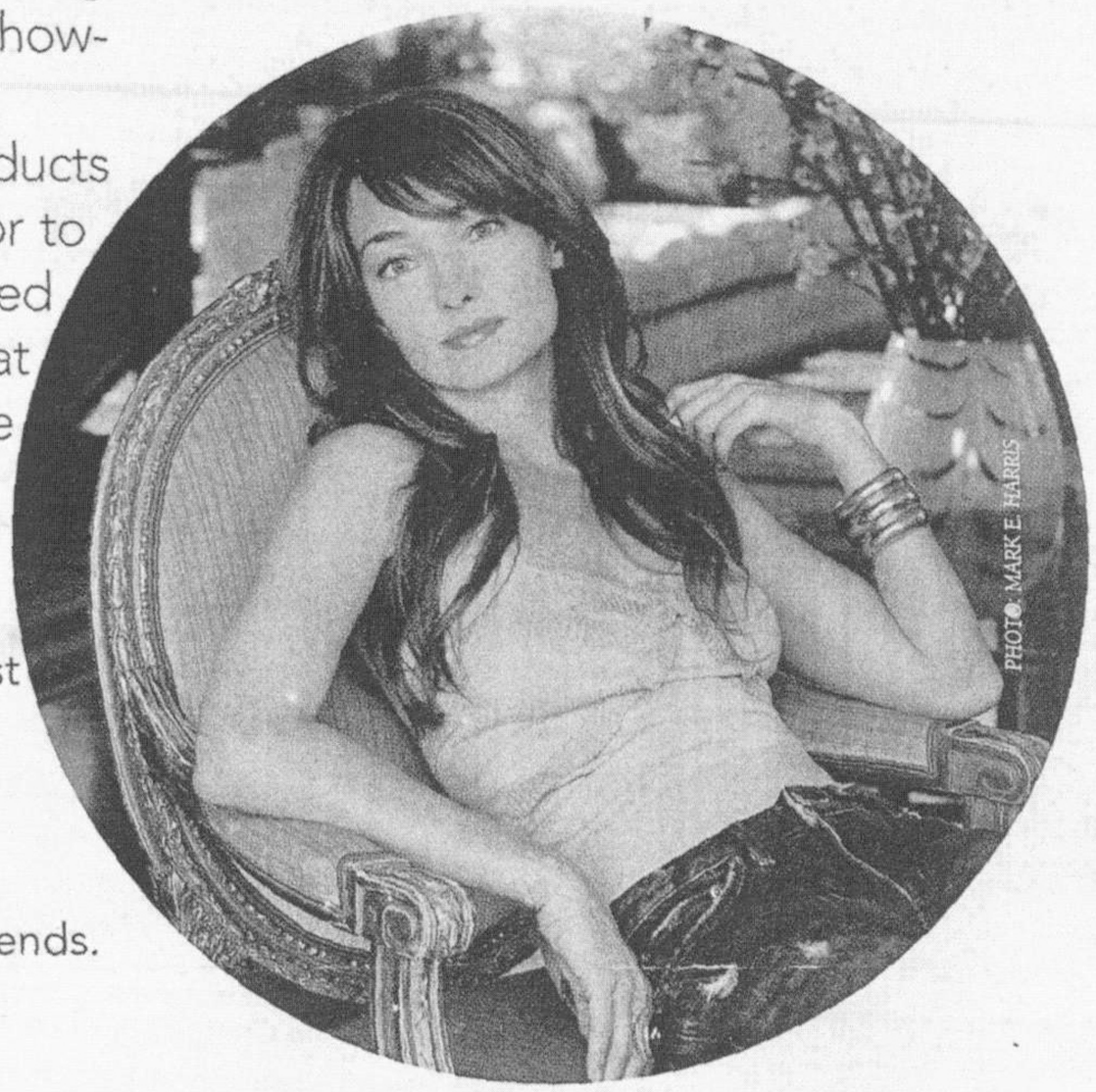
Interior designers have taken on a new importance in our consciousness. We turn to them when we want to revamp our living arrangements, and seek their home furnishing lines and showroom openings for inspirations to jazz up our own abodes.

Like the rest of us, even top interior designers have products they swear by to help get their imaginative juices flowing or to wind down after a day of creating. We asked five renowned designers to name the top 10 items in their own homes that they couldn't possibly live without. The answers are as diverse and diverting as the designers themselves.

Kelly Wearstler: Design Diva Extraordinaire

Here's what Kelly Wearstler, famed interior designer and guest judge on Bravo's *Top Design*, told us were her 10 favorite things:

1. My husband, two boys and our dog
2. My bathtub
3. Our backyard. My family spends downtime gardening on weekends.
4. Our swimming pool; we swim almost every day.
5. Rolling racks for closet overflow—love my fashion!
6. Our purified water system.
7. My Apple computer. Even when I'm at home, I like to feel connected.
8. My camera is always there to capture special moments, and with my two little sons running amok, this is often.
9. Perusing my library of books, magazines and catalogs is an imperative part of my creative process.
10. I love my collection of fine china.



Kelly Wearstler enjoys spending free time with family in her Los Angeles home.

Wearstler is a busy woman these days. She is the founder and principal of the award-winning Kelly Wearstler Interior Design (kwid) in Los Angeles. She's also been hard at work on her own line of home furnishings, specializing in carpets and fabrics, and wall coverings offered to the trade by F. Schumacher & Co. Later this year, she'll be introducing the Kelly Wearstler Bed Linen Collection in finer department stores and boutiques, bringing motifs of nature, exotic imagery and elegant details of couture to the bedroom.

Wearstler recently added her insights and keen eye for style on Bravo's *Top Design* series, joining host and designer Todd Oldham and judges Jonathan Adler and Margaret Russell, as they decided who would win the coveted title of "Top Design."

Wearstler has instilled her witty and enchanting style in various resorts and hotels in the United States, Caribbean and Mexico, as well as in offices, restaurants and retail stores. Her major projects have included decorating Avalon, Maison 140 Beverly Hills and Viceroy Hotels and the high-roller suite at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. She also designed the interior for the BG restaurant at Bergdorf Goodman in Manhattan. Upcoming projects include shaping the aesthetic palettes for famed hotel The Tides in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, and various Viceroy Hotels around the globe.

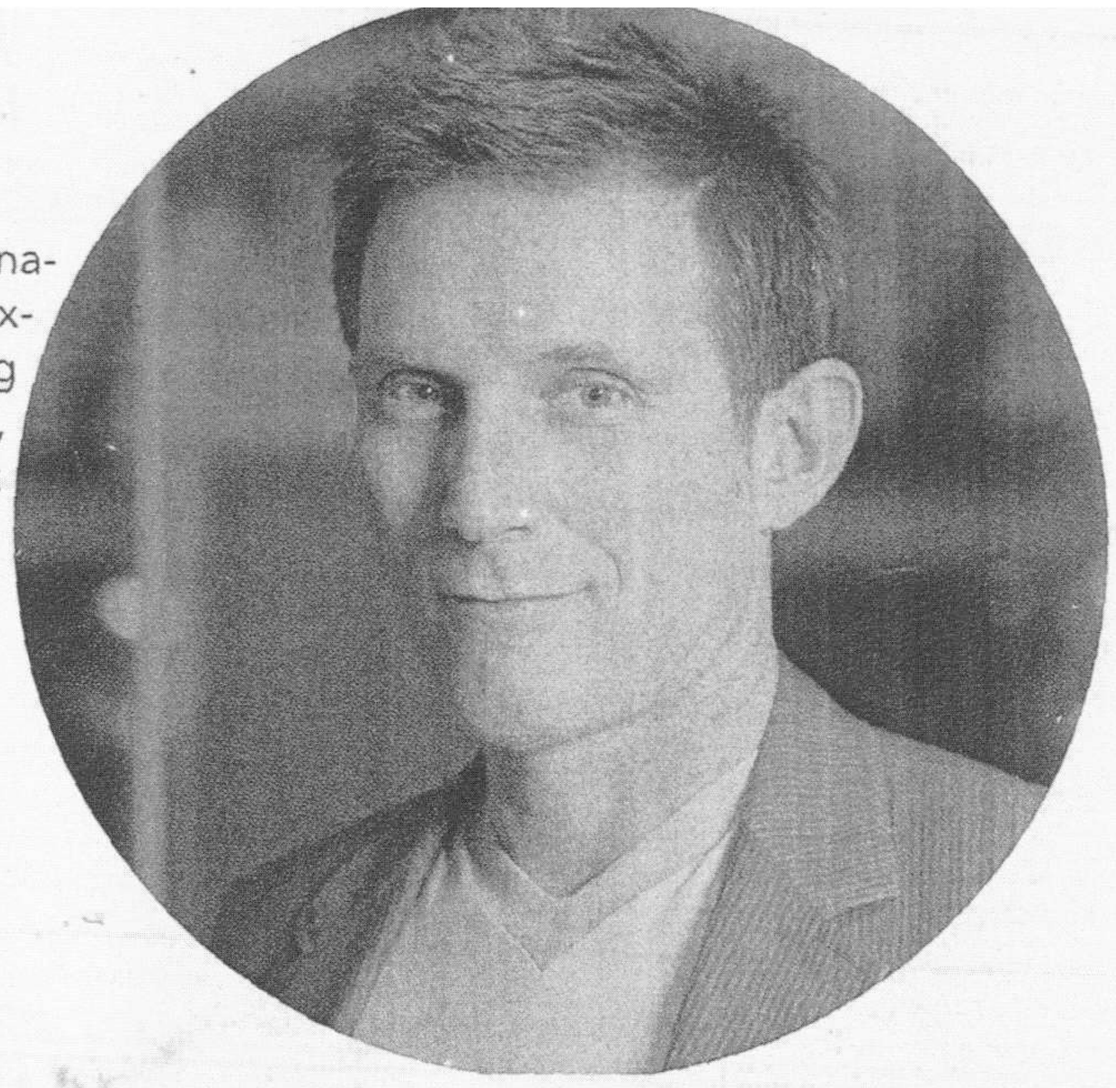
She's also authored two design books, *Modern Glamour: The Art of Unexpected Style* and *Domicilium Decoratus* (ReganBooks), which her avid fans keep on their coffee tables and refer to in times of desperate design dilemmas. For more information on Kelly Wearstler, visit www.kwid.com.

Wearstler designed the BG restaurant at Bergdorf Goodman in Manhattan.

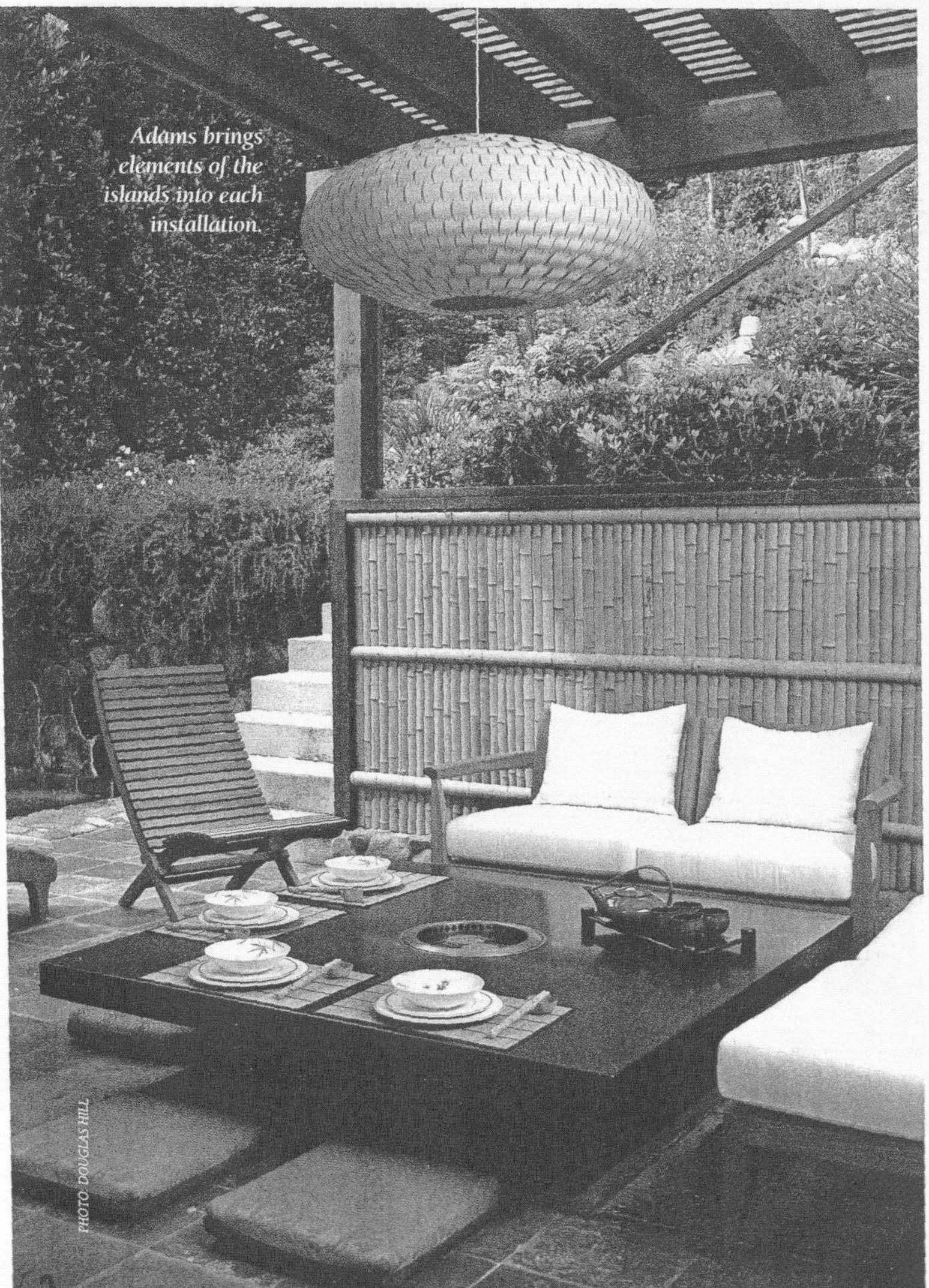
Troy Adams: East Meets West

Troy Adams, CKD (Certified Kitchen Designer), is internationally recognized as the creator of FusionDesign™ in luxury kitchen, bathroom and wardrobe system design. During a 17-year stay in Hawaii while honing his design style, Adams has been inspired by island elements and East meets West elements. His top 10 items are:

1. BenchToilet
2. Linear pebble fireplace
3. Dform saucer pendant light
4. Understair storage cabinetry
5. Tansu for AV equipment
6. Miele steam oven
7. Rotating pantry carousel
8. Bruck Sierra pendant lights
9. Walker Zanger Roku moss tiles (looks like bamboo when installed vertically)
10. Teppan yaki grill



Troy Adams is celebrating his newly designed showroom at the Pacific Design Center.



Adams brings elements of the islands into each installation.

PHOTO DOUGLAS HILL

Adams believes that in order to create a living space as individualistic as its owners, each space needs to peacefully co-exist with its neighboring spaces. FusionDesign™ draws on Asian, European and American design styles. Applying an Asian-based sensitivity to nature, European-inspired sophistication and an American focus on functionality, Adams brings harmony to his fusion of designs.

Adams' early experience was working with residential environments in Alaska where he spent 10 years as a carpenter, building custom cabinetry and installing kitchens. After braving bitter winters for a decade, he moved to Hawaii and settled into a Studio Becker® showroom.

Adams became one of the most sought-after designers in Honolulu and won high praise and numerous awards. Leaving his successes behind on the Big Island, Adams moved to Los Angeles in 1999 and opened his second design studio at the Pacific Design Center. He's designed and built high-end residential and multi-unit projects across the nation, Bali, Saipan, Guam, Norway and Saudi Arabia. Today, Adams uses his passion for travel, and architecture and design from around the world, to blend a mix of cultures into unique home environments.

Adams spent the last two years redesigning his showroom at the PDC to create an ideal space for his design philosophy. The doors opened during WestWeek in March, where he introduced the Troy Adams hidden furniture line. For more information on Troy Adams, visit www.troyadamsdesign.com.

PHOTO: JONATHAN ADLER

Jonathan Adler: A Happy Approach to Interior Design

Jonathan Adler found his career destiny as a preteen while at summer camp. Born with an innate desire for making pottery, Adler is now a famous and adored interior designer with a book and a home décor line under his belt—not to mention his gig as lead judge on Bravo's *Top Design*. Here's his top 10 list:

1. Ping-pong table in the living room
2. Liberace—my adorable Norwich terrier
3. White painted floors
4. Apple pie
5. Meurice chandelier
6. Collection of vintage Bjorn Wiinblad pottery
7. Bust of Michael Jackson
8. Sharp Aquos flat-screen TV
9. Kensington sheets
10. Chippendale chairs

Adler is known for mod shapes, vibrant colors and eye-popping patterns in his signature home décor line, which he launched in 2002, ranging from pottery and pillows to lighting and stationery—not to mention his quirky, hand-stitched yarmulkes. His designs have also appeared on popular television shows such as *Sex and the City*, *Will & Grace* and *The Apprentice*. He also released his first book, *My Prescription for Anti-Depressive Living* in 2005, which combines his wit and enthusiasm for creating happy homes. His products are available at Jonathan Adler retail stores in New York neighborhoods, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago and Miami.

With affirmations such as, "We believe tassels are the earrings of the home," and, "We believe you should throw out your BlackBerry and go pick some actual blackberries," Adler and his designs bring curious and funky additions to the decorating world. He recently finished the interior of fashion designer Trina Turk's store in the Meatpacking District of Manhattan and the Manhattan home of fashion designer Nanette Lepore. For more information on Jonathan Adler, visit www.jonathanadler.com.

Upper: Slip into comfort with Jonathan Adler's Kensington sheets.

Lower: Adler appeared as lead judge on Bravo's Top Design.

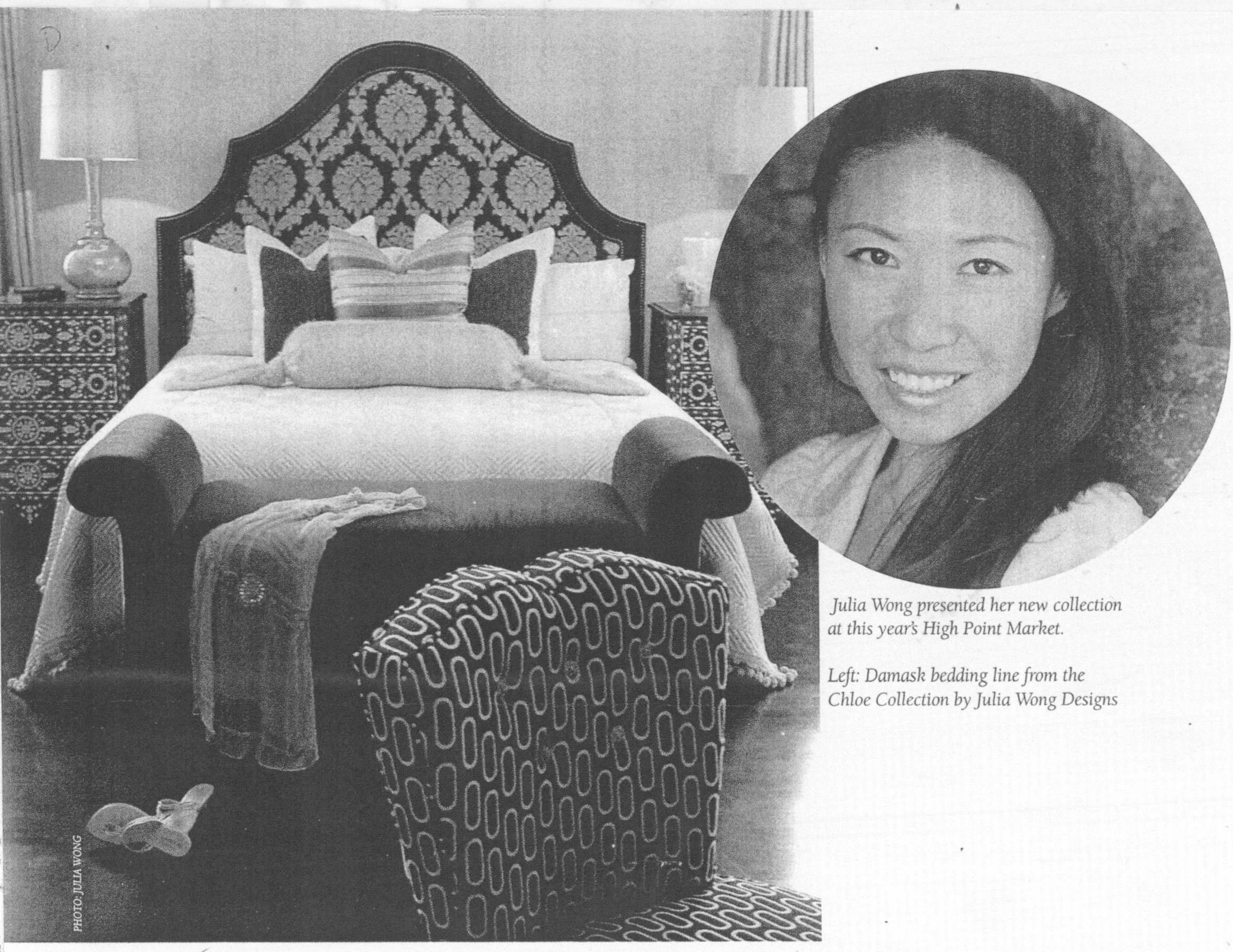


PHOTO: JULIA WONG

Julia Wong presented her new collection at this year's High Point Market.

Left: Damask bedding line from the Chloe Collection by Julia Wong Designs

JULIA WONG: FASHION GURU TURNED ELEGANT DESIGNER

Julia Wong has worked in interior design all over the world, picking up cultural remedies for design disasters. She also has a background in fashion design, and designed with the Fornari brand and renowned fashion designer John Galliano. Her top 10 must-haves are:

1. My Mr. Steam shower—invigorating!
2. My own bedding line in silk and ultra suede
3. A 19th-century Murano lamp I found on a trip to Venice
4. A Zac Posen black quilted handbag
5. Vintage pinot noir from California winery Gainey
6. A Ching Dynasty hand-carved dragon chest from my great-grandfather
7. An antique Baker sideboard
8. My Toshiba mini, super powerful, self-propelled vacuum cleaner
9. An antique church pew from a flea market in Barcelona
10. My 1920s art deco swivel vanity chair reupholstered in zebra-patterned velvet

Wong has practiced design in London, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Los Angeles and has created a global design aesthetic that fuses London culture, European tradition, Eastern sensibilities and American energy. Now a resident of Los Angeles, Wong continues to work on her signature product line of indoor and outdoor home goods and on designing high-end Hollywood homes.

Wong launched her new collection of Julia Wong Designs with Hollywood-based design and manufacturing company Haute House at this year's High Point Market in North Carolina. The elements in her urban and sophisticated master bedroom collection include silk bedding, luxurious headboards and illuminating details. For more information on Julia Wong, visit www.juliawongdesigns.com.

James Swan: Care on a Personal Level

James Swan doesn't believe in "signature work." He instead creates classic environments that frame the lives of his clients, and believes a home should always reflect the individuals who live in it. The top 10 items he can't live without are:

1. Billecart-Salmon Brut Rosé Champagne
2. Black cashmere sweaters—always appropriate and comfortable
3. Max and Mickey, my Yorkshire Terriers
4. Handmade leather photo albums
5. *The Decoration of Houses* by Edith Wharton, first edition. The bible.
6. *Architectural Alphabet* by Johann David Steingruber, published in 1773
7. Wendy Arkin's figural drawings—leave me breathless
8. Freshly pressed bed linens from Sferra Brothers, Frette or Pratesi. Heaven.
9. Smythson's Featherweight Panama Journal and a Sharpie Twin Tip Marker for writing and sketching
10. Candlelight and/or dimmers on every lamp with lampshades lined in pale pink silk

James Swan specializes in creating refined classical design for high-end residential projects. He founded his Beverly Hills-based interior design and decorating firm, James Swan & Company, Inc., in 1999 and has been connecting with his clients on a personal level ever since.

In addition to interior architectural detailing and fine furniture design, James Swan & Company provides "After Care" programs, which provide project management of a complicated property, thus giving the home or building owner more time to enjoy their new environment.

When Swan's not working, he extends his time to charitable causes such as The Gay and Lesbian Fund, sitting on its national board; PAWS/LA, which works to provide packages of essential pet care services to people living with disabling illnesses; and KidSmart, an art education foundation for inner-city youth. He also established The Swan Scholarship Program at Los Angeles City College, which provides for students victimized by domestic abuse.

Upcoming projects include a boutique hotel in West Hollywood and residences across the nation. For more information on James Swan, visit www.jamesswanco.com. □

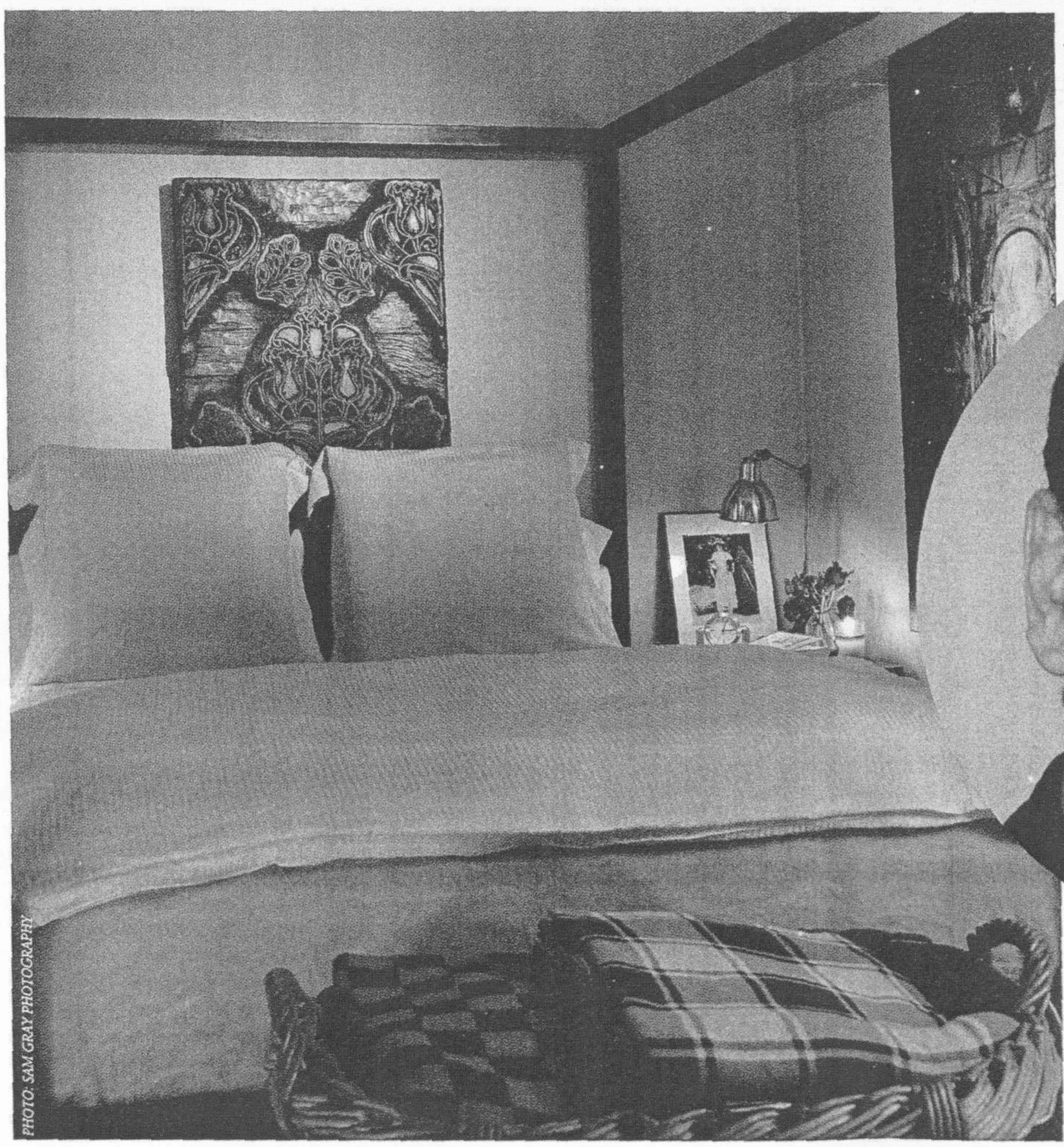


PHOTO: SAM GRAY PHOTOGRAPHY

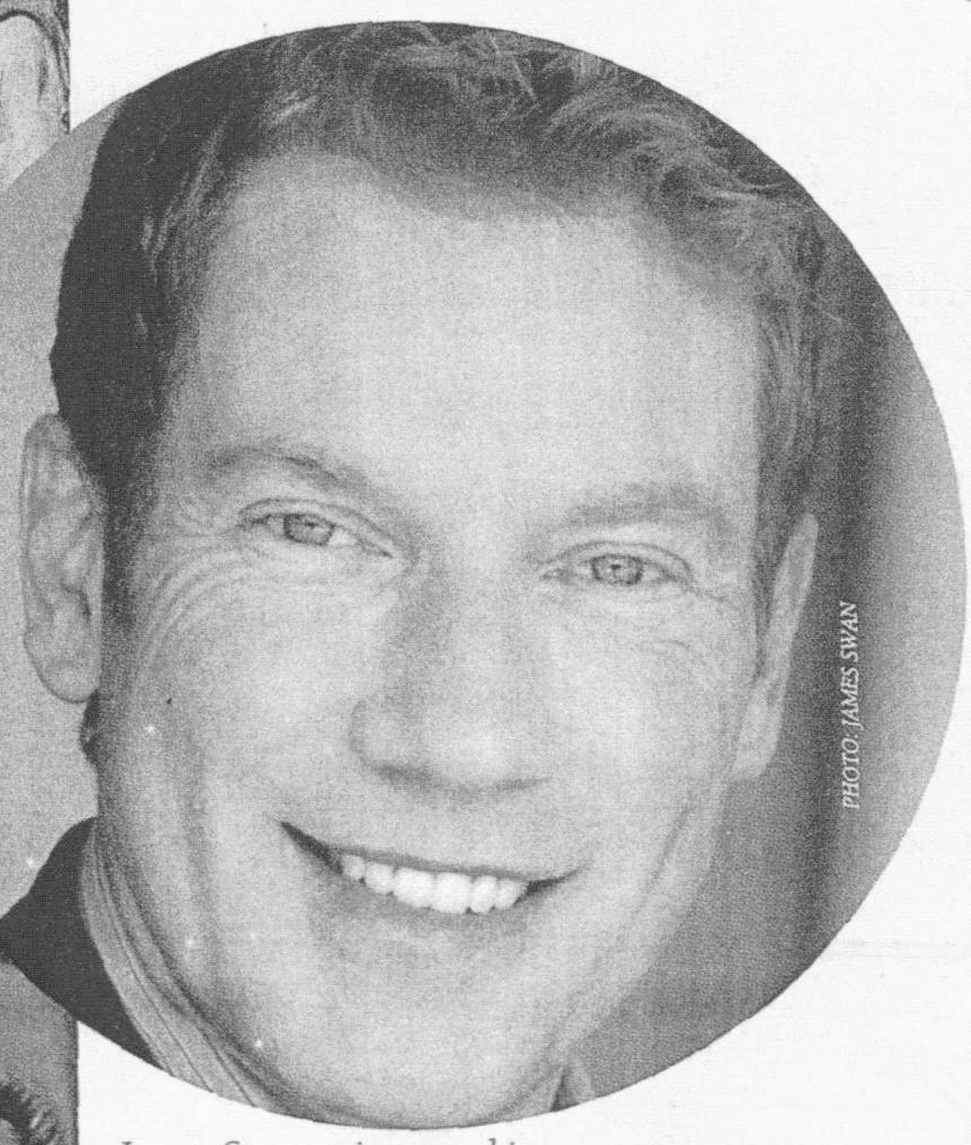


PHOTO: JAMES SWAN

James Swan enjoys working one-on-one with his clients.

Left: Swan slips between his cool, crisp sheets after a hard day's work.