

Designer Friday: An ASPIRE Exclusive Interview With Phillip Thomas

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Since starting [his interior design business](#) over 11 years ago, Phillip Thomas has made incredible strides in his magnificent world of design. Thomas routinely traveled back and forth from New York to South America and attributes his biggest design influences to the confluence of robust colors, intricate textiles and eclectic details. From designing home spaces for The Dakota and 15 Central Park West, to being featured in major publications such as Architectural Digest and Elle Decor, Thomas earned his spot in becoming an influential and playful design leader. Introducing this week's Designer Friday, Phillip Thomas.



Pictured above is Phillip Thomas' Kips Bay Decorator Show House debut. He wanted to create the "Lady Lair" that served both a modern and professional woman. The whimsical wall design of custom graffiti was created by Andrew Tedesco Studios. Photo by Phillip Ennis.

Andrew Joseph: What's your morning ritual?

Phillip Thomas: I am an early bird! I typically wake up between 5:00 and 5:30 AM. After I check my and respond to European vendors, I like to exercise. Running in Central Park is one of my favorite things to do! I have studied Central Park since I was in design school, and every single square inch has a lesson to tell – and watching the sun rise over the city while running around the Park is inspiring!

Andrew: How do you maintain a work/life balance?

Phillip: A balance?! When you love what you do as much as I do, it is hard to distinguish between work and pleasure. Let's just say that I am a work in progress and still have a lot to learn about achieving balance.

Andrew: Dream country to work in? Or dream project to take on.

Phillip: As a child, I spent a summer living in Venice and would love to do a project there. Could you imagine bringing life into the decayed decadence of a Venetian palazzo on the Grand Canal ~ Heaven!!



The inspiration for this space was the client's exuberant personality. With equestrian elements and bold patterns, this room perfectly demonstrates Phillip's innate understanding of what his clients want.

Andrew: Vintage or new?

Phillip: Both! We are so lucky to have so many talented contemporary artisans these days. Nevertheless, vintage pieces have had an enormous impact on the work of those contemporary talents. Mixing the two together creates a dynamic tension which brings energy to a space.

Andrew: What's one ingredient you put in everything?

Phillip: My family is from Chile. In Chile there is a spice called "Merken". It is a woody, spicy powder that adds a kick to anything!

Andrew: What's your biggest fear in life?

Phillip: Anything less than perfection! (I am working on this one with my therapist...)

Andrew: What's your current TV obsession?

Phillip: I have been watching a show on Netflix called “Derry Girls”. I cannot tell you just how hilarious it is. It's about a group of teenagers growing up in Ireland during the “troubles” of the 1990s. Having recently worked in Ireland, it really captures the ethos of the place and period. It also has all those great nostalgic memories like the fads and music that was popular then – even during my high school years in New York!



Deep purple covers the walls of this audacious dining room. Phillip makes sure to take the time to carefully choose elements and colors that represent the homeowners to the fullest extent.

Andrew: Favorite piece of clothing you own?

Phillip: Women have the little black dress ~ I have the crisp, white dress shirt. It is a staple of mine!

Andrew: What might the design world look like in 10 years?

Phillip: I hope we go back to a place where all eras of furniture design are embraced. The disparaging use of term “brown furniture” always makes me cringe. I grew up in a home filled with pieces that would fall under that category. I think that there is a place for them in today's interiors.

Andrew: Favorite place to view art?

Phillip: I am an avid collector of contemporary Latin American art. I love going down to visit my family in Chile and being able to spend time visiting art galleries and artists' studios.

Andrew: You are stuck on an island, you can pick one food to eat forever without getting tired of it, what would you eat?

Phillip: Any kind of ceviche!!



Phillip wanted to combine functionality with elegance for his client's home. Being a young family, Philip wanted to continue an energetic space in each room to embody jubilation.

Andrew: Favorite scent?

Phillip: Any scent by Le Labo. But if I had to choose one particular scent from their collection, it would be The Noir.

Andrew: Song you can listen to on repeat?

Phillip: Madonna's "Sorry"... That always just makes me want to get up and conquer the world!

Andrew: What's one thing that is always in your refrigerator?

Phillip: Greek Taramosalata. I could snack on that all day!

Andrew: Before leaving the house, you always...

Phillip: Fluff the pillows in my living room. There is nothing worse than getting home at the end of the day to find a home in disarray.



About The Designer | Phillip Thomas, Founder and Principal of Phillip Thomas Inc., follows his guiding belief that the process of creating a home should be enjoyable for all involved. A point of distinction for his firm is that the design is always about the client and that their personality is reflected in the elegant, timeless, and livable interiors. Beautiful materials and an unparalleled attention to

detail are essential to a successful design project and are apparent to clients as they participate in the design process, and later, as they live in their new home.

Since establishing his own firm in 2011, Thomas has worked with a wide-range of clients on projects both in the United States and internationally, and work can be found in many of the top buildings in New York City including the Dakota, 15 Central Park West, River House, and One Madison.