

# Trendspotting at the Lake Forest Showhouse

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Bedroom by Soledad Zitzewitz Interiors.

Lavish wallcoverings. Venetian plasterwork. Bespoke details. The color green in many of its shades.

These were just a few of the trends we spotted at the 2023 Lake Forest Showhouse & Gardens, back after a few years' hiatus.

For this year's showhouse, more than 35 interior and landscape designers wielded their magic to transform a red brick, Georgian-style Lake Forest home designed in the 1960s by architect Walter Frazier.

The main home in the tony suburb has 16 rooms, including four bedrooms and four bathrooms, and — along with a coach house, an outbuilding and a three-car garage — all on nine acres of landscaped property surrounded by nature preserves.

Visitors (the house is open to the public through June 4) can amble through more than 8,000 square feet of interiors and eight outdoor garden spaces, each representing various design trends. Maximalists will enjoy an explosion of color and pattern that wound its way into most rooms.

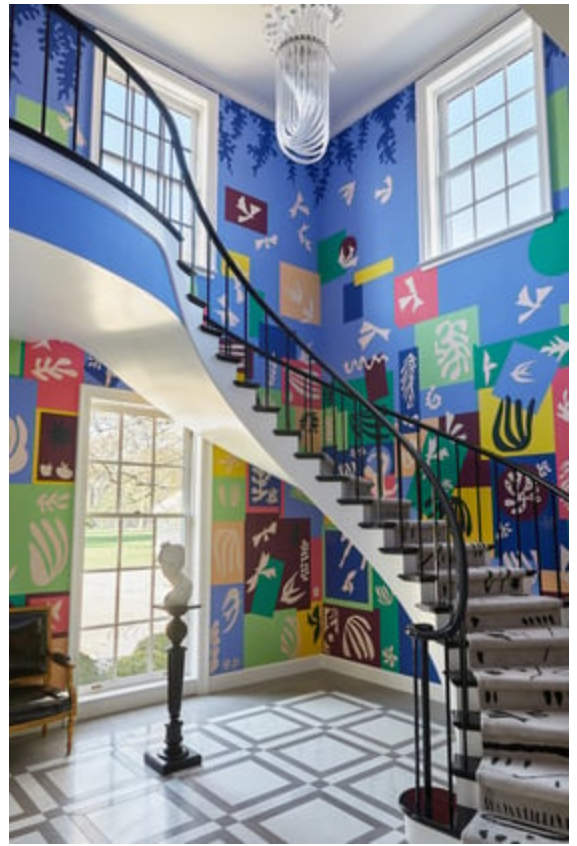
The kitchen, however, is decidedly neutral. Outfitted with cerused-oak cabinets in a custom stain and a natural quartz countertop, it is the most modern room in the architecturally traditional home. George Markoutsas of Highwood-based Ablaze Design Group designed a large niche to house the range and custom hood and kept materials simple and classic.

Here are some of the design trends we spotted:

Heather Talbert

Foyer by Sarah Vaile Design

**Wallcoverings.** No trend was more prevalent than wallcoverings, starting in the entry, where designer Sarah Vaile adorned walls floor to ceiling in \$180,000 worth of a DeGournay silk fabric with linen cutouts. Made in a custom colorway of vibrant blues and greens, the collaged work is inspired by French artist Henri Matisse. “A wallcovering adds texture, depth and warmth,” Vaile said. “It is the single most transformative design element in a room.”



Aimee Mazzenga

## Ladies' dressing room by Sally Brown Thilman Interiors

Wallpaper also appeared on closet doors, melding them into walls covered in the same design and, unconventionally, on ceilings, too, as seen in the home office designed by Nora C. Marra Interiors and in the ladies dressing area, where a classic tromp l'oeil design was added by designer Sally Brown Thilman to bring an architectural element to the room.



Aimee Mazzenga

## Dining room by Alexander Kahler Design

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**Green.** A color that is still trending strong, green popped up in a mellow version on a Murano glass chandelier in the living room by Vincere and in bright bedding accents in a young girl's bedroom designed by Jenny Brown. Erin Minckley of Relativity Textiles wrapped walls in the guest powder room in a playful print featuring the verdant hue. The dining room, with expansive windows looking out onto the home's gardens, brought the color inside with floral window treatments and a hand-blocked vine wallpaper. "The idea for our design was to bring the outside in," said dining room designer Alexandra Kaehler. "The dining room now feels like an extension of the gardens."

**Plaster.** From decorative elements to wall treatments, designers turned to plaster in a throwback to the traditional building material, which lends an Old World feel to the home. Designer Soledad Zitzewitz specified inlaid Venetian plaster, hand-applied by Simes Studios in a geometric pattern, to the walls of the primary suite.



Aimee Mazzenga

Bedroom by Randy Heller.

For a more watery effect, Randy Heller lime-washed walls in a guest bedroom and also hung a plaster portrait bust of Apollo on the closet door. “Plaster and limewash are huge right now,” Heller said. “People are looking for something different and they add a lot of character in a very subtle way.” There’s also a ceiling medallion handmade by Chicago Ornamental Plastering in the dining room as well as a plaster bust on a pedestal in the foyer.

**Bespoke details.** Embellishments such as decorative trim on drapery panels; applied moldings on walls; tassels and embroidery on upholstered furniture, and metals straps on cabinet drawers elevated spaces.

Dustin Halleck

Jack 'n' Jill bathroom designed by Elizabeth Mollen for Stone Textile Studio.

Other fun elements included hand-painted floors (including in the Jack-n-Jill bath by Stone Textile Studio's Elizabeth Mollen, who also embraced patterned bold wallpaper), mushroom-motif accessories, skirted fabrics in lieu of doors, scalloped designs, display pedestals and wall brackets, original artwork and shades of pink.

Many of the decorative items, art and furnishings in the rooms are for sale. There's also a garage boutique selling home furnishings. Additionally, The Lunchroom restaurant from Chicago's Space 519 boutique will be a pop-up at the Showhouse on select weekends.

Proceeds benefit the the Infant Welfare Society, a nonprofit providing health care to medically underserved families in Chicago.

