

BY STEPHANIE BLOCK

# *Haute* SEAT



## TO-DIE-FOR DESIGN WITH JEFF SCHLARB

*The interior of a man of interiors*

FULL DISCLOSURE: JEFF SCHLARB IS THIS AUTHOR'S LIFE-CHANGING INTERIOR DESIGNER. He is a fabulous creative with an obsessive attention to detail whose work you've no doubt seen in friends' homes around the world and in decorator showcase rooms. You've probably noticed his atelier on Sacramento Street, too. Jeff's energy is high octane, his vision expansive, and his team of associates the best in the business. If 2020 is the year to upgrade the château, he just might be your guy.





Jeff Schlarb



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## What are your New Year's resolutions?

Do the very best I can, the very best way I know how, and to keep on doing it through to the end. This is my mantra, my words to live by: to be the best designer, father, business owner, and community member I can be.

## How do you collaborate with clients?

Every project is different, and the collaboration percentages differ on every project — there's a freshness to that. The pendulum swings from very client-driven to people wanting to be led more. The richest creations are those that truly reflect the clients, the ones for which they have done the work to have their own critical eye and make the decisions to reflect that. But in every case, the end-of-project reveal can bring tears — it's so exciting.

## The reveal: what is it and why do you do it?

We know styling, how to edit just so, how to place a picture frame at just the right angle to perfectly balance something to be countered, how to choose flowers of the right scale. We are very gifted in the art of final presentation. Plus, high design is a dramatic endeavor which can be a long process. So, we think it's important to mark the occasion. One of my favorite client reveals [winks at author] had caviar and champagne, and we walked in and dreamed and soaked up the wild air.

## What are your personal inspirations?

I am really positive. I always see the sunny side, and I'm inspired by the people

around me. I'm driven. I'm working on a new neon sign for the window on Sacramento Street with words that inspire me every day to be there. I always ask myself one thing: am I doing my best? Life is a long game. If something doesn't go perfectly, I ask myself, "Did you do your best?" If the answer is yes, then I won't beat myself up. If the answer is no, then I ask myself, "Will you do your best next time?" And that answer is always yes. That is how I stay inspired to keep growing.

## Do you have a favorite style?

What I want is to create some sort of comfortable interior inspired by today's world and products with a level of artistry that matches the client. Approachable, comfortable interiors inspired by today that borrow form the past — contemporary classics. It could be gold unicorn faucets (guilty), or it could be herringbone veneer wallpaper from Phillip Jeffries.

## What is your advice for people who want to work with an interior designer?

Look for someone with experience and some sort of team: there are a lot of tasks to manage. And look for someone whose first name begins with a J and last name begins with an S.

## What do you want people to know about you?

I live each day with massive amounts of gratitude. I pinch myself every day that I come to work with my awesome team and wonderful clients. This kind of craft is exciting every day, and that is never ever lost on me — and that's how I live life.





