

PEOPLE TO WATCH

Sheila Bridges

ANNA WILLIAMS

OCCUPATION Interior designer who founded her own company in 1994

GOAL To create modern living spaces for busy professionals

QUOTE "Whether we're dealing with antiques or modern furniture, everything can be classic."

SHEILA BRIDGES, 36, LIKES TO SAY she designs low-maintenance homes for high-maintenance people. That her clientele includes hip-hop music producer Sean ("Puffy") Combs, antivirus-software designer Peter Norton and novelist Tom Clancy is a testament to her diverse appeal. When music executive Andre Harrell called upon her to update his Manhattan apartment in the style of the 1920s Harlem Renaissance, Bridges achieved the look so artfully that her efforts were featured in *House & Garden*. Fusing minimalism with romanticism, she creates modern settings by using vintage pieces.

A graduate of Parsons School of Design in New York City, Bridges founded her own business six years ago, using her home in Harlem as her calling card. The apartment is a study in opposites where an ornate daybed is offset by the clean lines of geometrically shaped ceramics. Bridges' first book, *Furnishing Forward*, is due out next year, and she hopes to branch out into television. Her multimedia ambitions have earned her comparisons to Martha Stewart, but Bridges points out one important distinction. "I respect her as a businesswoman," she says, "but I doubt anybody will ever see me shingling my own roof." —By *Desa Philadelphia*