

# INTERIORS<sup>®</sup>

ART IN DESIGN



## Sheila Bridges

### Which artists' work do you collect and why?

My own taste in art is very diverse. In general though, I do own and collect a lot of art by African American artists, including pieces by Elizabeth Catlett, James Van Der Zee, Lorna Simpson, Howardena Pindell and others because I think it's important to preserve and celebrate our culture. Some of the pieces I own were passed down from my family.

### What kinds of art and which artists are your clients seeking now?

My clients generally seem to prefer more contemporary art pieces that are more abstract (non-representational) and less figurative. It all depends on the client of course—my clients all seem to have very different tastes. I always encourage friends and clients to buy art that "speaks to them." Art does not have to be expensive for it to be meaningful.

### When and how should art be introduced into interiors?

I think it's essential to have art in your home—it makes the space feel more finished and also tells us a lot about you. Art can be introduced later but should be integrated in ways that feel organic, meaning that you should move pieces around until you find the right space. I'm not really a fan of buying art to "match" rooms in terms of colors but it is important to think about size, scale and framing style.

**Tell us about the evolution of your Harlem Toile de Jouy wall-covering, from concept to its being placed in the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum's permanent wall-paper collection.**

I designed Harlem Toile de Jouy initially for myself and my own home. I have always loved French toiles but I never found one that spoke to me personally so I created my own! The original paper was bright yellow and then I introduced nine additional colorways over the years—nine are hand screened and one is digital. Not sure I remember exactly how it was introduced to the museum but feel honored to have it in their permanent wallpaper collection.

### Does art need design, or vice versa?

I would say that design needs art way more than art needs design! Art is an experience which often informs design.

