

In Living Color

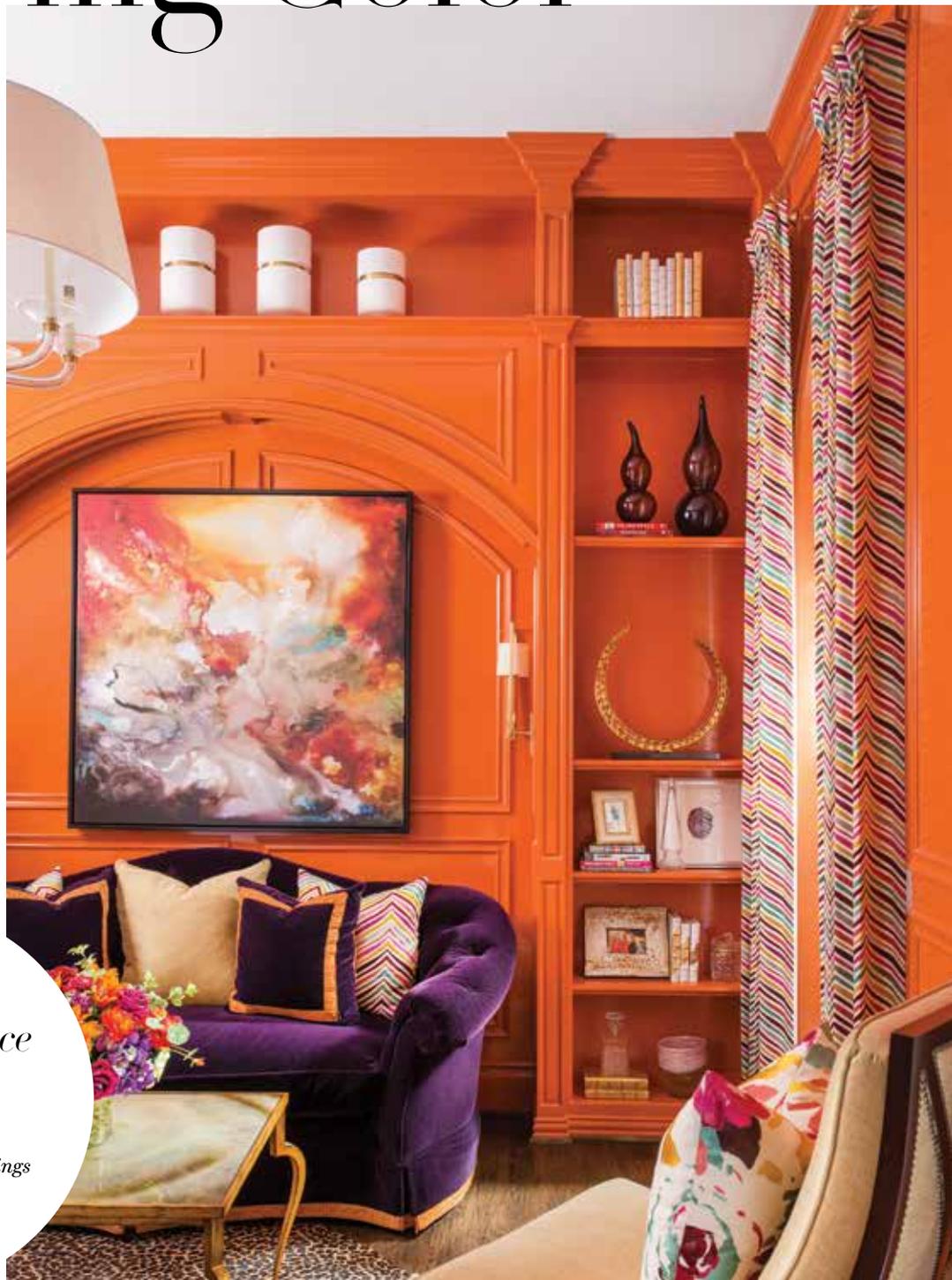
One contest. Two winners with contrasting rooms. Both prove that decorating with color is a bright idea.

We teamed up with Benjamin Moore for our fifth-annual Life in Color contest to select the most vibrant interiors from the city's top talent. This year, we decided to shake up the paint cans a bit. Once again, we called on Dallas designers to submit their favorite rooms from their glowing portfolios. But instead of calling on our editorial staff to make all the decisions, we narrowed down the submissions to 12 rooms—representing every hue in the fan deck—and turned the voting over to our readers. We also partnered with Dwell with Dignity to donate one dollar to the nonprofit for every online vote that was cast. In 11 days, our finalists received 1,712 votes, and we named the winner with the most tallies. But the editors couldn't hand it all over—we chose one "editors' choice" to share with you, too. Congrats to our two winners, who get bragging rights and swag from Benjamin Moore.

Readers' Choice Winner

SHAY GEYER

IBB Design Fine Furnishings
ibbdesign.com



Rumba Orange/
2014-20 Elderberry Wine/
CSP-470 Old Gold/
167



WHEN DESIGNER SHAY GEYER'S MOTHER (and fellow designer) Beth Rafferty started conceptualizing ideas for her new study, Geyer suggested lacquering the room in Rafferty's favorite shade of orange. "She looked at me like I lost my marbles," laughs Geyer. "But she kept saying, 'I want this house to be happy—I want it to feel good when people walk through the house.'" So Geyer gathered six Hermès-inspired hues, and the duo settled on Benjamin Moore's Fall Harvest. The mother-daughter team added jewel tones—such as the eggplant purple mohair sofa—to keep the palette saturated, while also including neutral moments, like the slipper chair covered in gold silk fabric. And as no surprise to Geyer, it's Rafferty's favorite room in the house. "With your own personal house, it's fun to take those risks," Geyer says. *-Ryan Conner*

GEYER'S TIPS FOR GOING BRIGHT AND BOLD

→ **SAMPLE, SAMPLE, SAMPLE.** Try at least two to three different colors. Paint each color on a poster board (or if you're building, ask your contractor for a piece of Sheetrock) and move them around to different angles at different times of day. Take into account flooring, natural light, and ceiling height—all of which can affect the color. "Just because it looks good in your house doesn't mean it looks good in mine," she says.

→ **TAKE FABRIC WITH YOU.** "Maybe you have a fabric you're trying to pull a color from—have that with you," she explains. Don't be afraid to take as many reference materials as you need with you to the paint store.

→ **USE A REPUTABLE PAINT BRAND.** Especially if you're attempting a bold color, quality is key.

→ **CHOOSE THE RIGHT PAINTER.** "You want to be really picky with who you hire to do a lacquer," she says. Geyer compares the process to painting a car. From start to finish, the painter completes 12 steps, including sanding down at each layer. "It's laborious, which is why it is super expensive," she says. Pro tip: If you want the look for less, look for Benjamin Moore's Advance line, which gives you a high-gloss sheen without the price tag.

Homespun Charm/
1249 Hollywood Gold/
279 Avocado/
2415-10

*Editors' Choice
Winner*

LAURA LEE CLARK FALCONER

*Laura Lee Clark
lauraleeclark.com*



DESIGNER LAURA LEE CLARK FALCONER had just finished the big sister's room for this client when it came time for the little sister to get a refresh. At 14 years old, the teenage client wanted something fun. But Falconer knew she'd also need a room she could grow up with. "This was her time to really call it her own and have some input," Falconer says. "This is such a fresh, different combination of colors. It's so sophisticated, yet girly." The results (in her favorite colors) were high-gloss enameled walls in Benjamin Moore's Hidden Sanctuary and an Élitis ombré wallcovering. "It was just something that caught my eye," Falconer says. "It's so different, how it fades in and out. It's modern, but still feminine, and not too youthful." Gilt mirrors, green lamps, and a bold monogram on the bedding added more detail. "It's not your regular monogram," Falconer adds. *-Sarah Bennett*

FALCONER'S ADVICE FOR CASTING A PRETTY GLOW

→ **STICK WITH ONE WALL.** "The idea is doing only one wall as the focal point with a wallcovering," she says. "It's not costly, it's easy to change out, and it won't overwhelm. It gives you just enough drama."

→ **MIX IN POPS OF DETAIL.** Add color with artwork, pillows, or lamps. Or, get inventive. "Another thing we've done in a girl's room was hang vintage Hermès scarves on the wall," she says. "We used the hooks they sell in the Hermès store. You could do that with any scarf."

→ **GO CLASSIC WITH BIG PIECES.** Keep it simple with larger items. "Be cautious about how you use color on a headboard or chairs," she says. "Don't go so trendy or bright on those things, but keep them a little bit softer so they will work later if you want to change them out."