

Telling a Family's Story, Room by Room

Why I Love Windows

It's been more than a year since Libby McColgin hired Rebecca Deming Rumpf to undertake a whole house project. Rumpf, who describes the project as "one of the most challenging, exciting, interesting jobs I've ever done" has finally had a moment to look back and reflect on what she and her client have achieved in that time, even though there are still several rooms to finish.

When they met, McColgin was not only in the process of moving to the Charlotte, N.C. area, but was combining two residences, and a lifetime of items, collections and memories gathered from the family's time spent overseas in various Pacific Rim countries. The home she purchased already had custom window treatments in many of the rooms, but McColgin's taste was more defined, more eclectic and more wide-ranging than what she found in her new home. As she told Rumpf at their first meeting: "We want WOW from our guests when they visit, not why."



Rebecca Deming Rumpf, IDS Associate, Custom Interiors by Rebecca, Charlotte, N.C.

BELOW: In the expansive master bedroom, nighttime privacy and light control are provided by Hunter Douglas PowerGlide Luminettes, which stack invisibly behind the stationary panels when fully opened. The panels and flat backing valance are in Robert Allen Soho velvet, interlined with heavy flannel. Empire swags mounted over the flat velvet valance are in Kravet Silk Singh damask with jabots contrast lined in Vervain Lucerne silk check; key tassels and ball fringe are from Fabricut. **OPPOSITE:** For the Kingston pole swags over the pre-existing shutters in the master bath, Rumpf had custom wrought iron ceiling hooks made by Gaby's Shoppe to coordinate with the new Fine Arts Lamps chandelier. The fabric is Pindler & Pindler Tuileries embroidered silk with Schumacher Sargent silk taffeta for contrast lining and a Kravet velvet bead trim. The Seabrook Natural Sisal wallcovering was installed by Custom Wall Designers of Charlotte, N.C. Drapery workroom and installation: The Designer's Window, Charlotte, N.C. (Photos by Bobby Cochran Photography, Charlotte, N.C.)





Bridging the gap:

“What makes this entire project unique is the way we’ve used custom window treatments to bridge the gap between the traditional furnishings Libby and her family have cherished for decades with their more recent appreciation for contemporary Asian design,” explains Rumpf. “Here in North Carolina I do a lot of swags and cascades and I’ve worked with beautiful fabrics and trims, but Libby really pushed me to come up with new ideas and approaches. There are still plenty of swags and cascades in this home, but there’s also a lot of different ideas, and unique customized solutions.”

Style-setter meets story-teller:

“Libby has been one of the most wonderful people I’ve ever had the opportunity to work with,” continues Rumpf. “She has a great sense of style and knows what she wants, but she still gave me lots of creative freedom and was always very open to new ideas.” Rumpf mentions that McColgin often didn’t want to talk budget, stating that she didn’t want Rumpf *not* to show her anything simply due to cost. “Because she was confident enough to make suggestions, to offer feedback, it really pushed me to a whole new level to come up with details and elements that would surprise her,” says Rumpf.

“Due to their travels and this incredibly full life they’ve had, everything in their home has a story or a memory attached to it. My goal is for the finished home to read like their family’s autobiography, telling the fascinating story of their lives and their travels. I see myself as the ghost writer, helping put that story together smoothly, seamlessly and professionally, but the story and the home is all about them.”





In the laundry room, Rumpf and her client worked with one of the few explicitly “Asian” prints selected for the window treatments, Schumacher’s Pearl River scenic. “We had this fabric and several others laid out when Libby’s husband came home. He knew immediately that Libby had settled on this one,” remembered Rumpf. “And with that in hand, I knew as soon as I saw the jade trim that it was perfect for this design.” The shaped valance, over pre-existing wood shutters, features a longer bottom layer in Plumridge linen/silk Scaff. Eternity Jade Fringe from Samuel & Sons was sewn in-seam on the top layer along with a false cord in the solid brown fabric to give the illusion that the jade circles were suspended in the air. Workroom and installation: The Designer’s Window in Charlotte, N.C. (Photos by Bobby Cochran Photography, Charlotte, N.C.)

Working with the what is:

“Any designer worth their salt can walk into an empty space with an unlimited budget and create something beautiful, but I really love the challenge of working within the parameters of what the client has. Customizing each design project to the unique tastes, sensibilities and cherished belongings of each client ensures that the client will be comfortable living with the finished project, but it also prevents my work from getting too repetitive, because I’m not doing the same signature look over and over again for hundreds of different clients.”

What I love about window treatments:

“Every project I accept involves custom window treatments, but I also assist clients with wall treatments, furnishings, accessories, lighting or whatever else they need to pull their space together. I specialize in window treatments because I love exquisite textiles, I am very inspired by beautiful fabrics, passementerie and couture sewing details, but also because I truly believe that custom window treatments can transform an interior more than any other design element. With the right combination of fabrics and trims, a window treatment can make such a big impact in a room and bring the disparate elements the client may have in the rug, the wallpaper and sofa all together. Plus, because each design is unique to each client, there is that thrill of knowing that you will

never, ever see the exact same window treatment anywhere else. You can’t put a price on that.”

Rumpf’s how-to advice:

“Stop trying to compete on other people’s turf. Instead of worrying about how to stand out in a crowd of other businesses who are all trying to do the same thing the same way, figure out what you personally are really, really good at, what you love doing so much that you would do it for free if you had to, and then build your business around your own personal strengths and find the demographic out there who will value what you do.” V

CLOSER LOOK



Rebecca Deming Rumpf
custominteriorsbyrebecca.com



FOR TWO MORE COMPLETED ROOMS FROM THIS PROJECT, GO TO WF-VISION.COM.