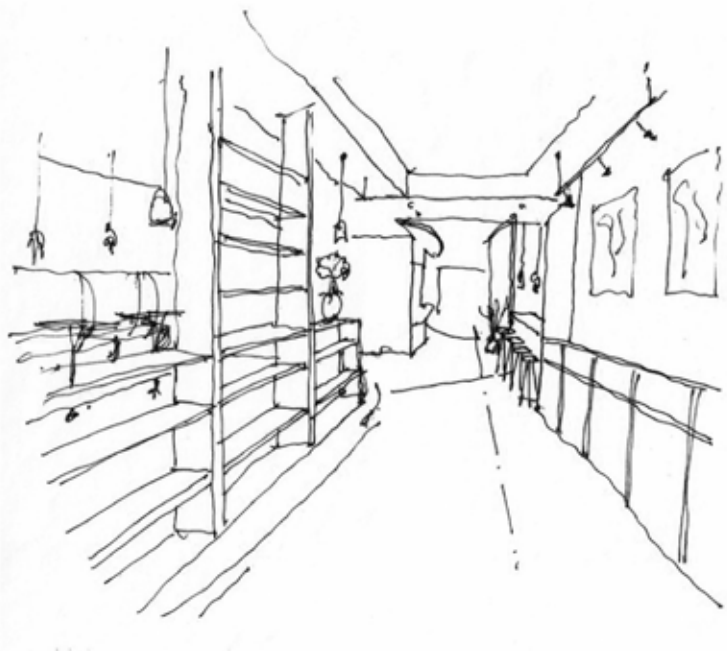


DESIGN FROM WITHIN



Harnessing the design possibilities found on the interior



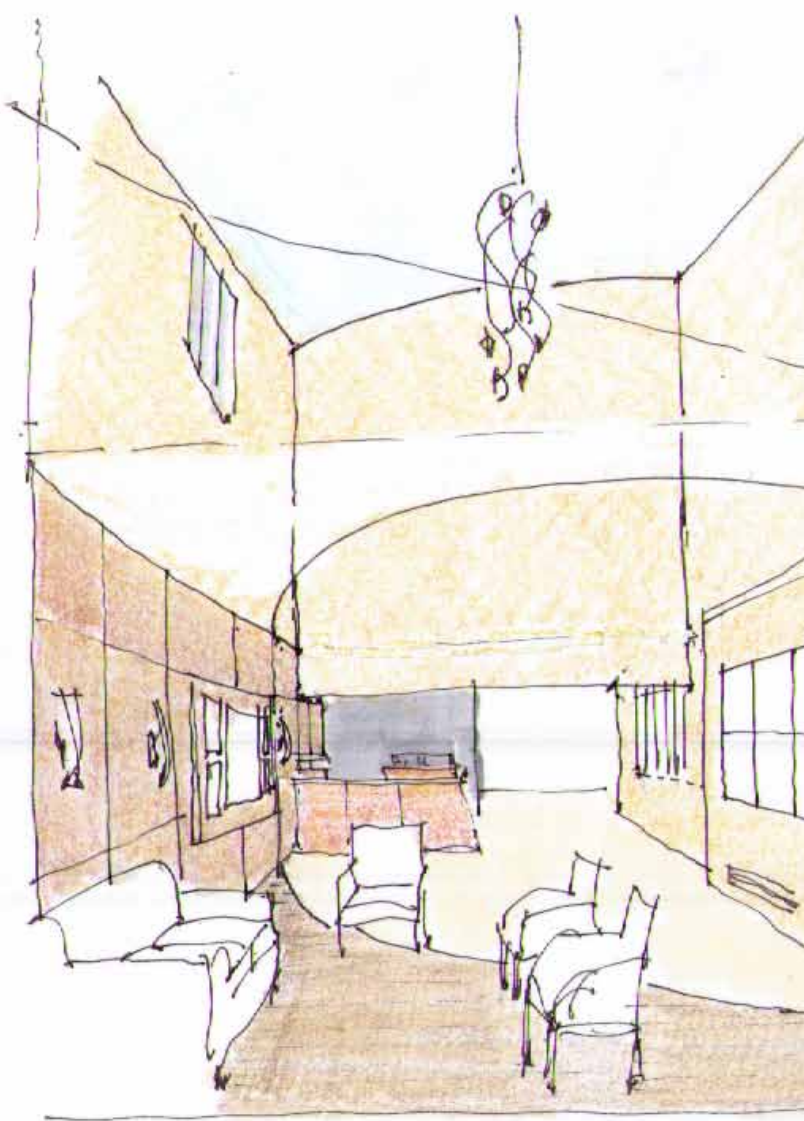
Good design has the power to awaken the senses. Instinctually, we feel good when we're in a well designed space. Carla Haskell of Design Group Collaborative believes that interior design connects people intimately with their surroundings. Haskell's interest in interiors began when she took classes in Interior Design at both UMass Amherst and then at Rhode Island School of Design. Because, as she says, she "kept wanting to move windows and walls," Haskell decided to begin formal studies in Architecture at Boston Architectural Center (now Boston Architectural College) where she earned a Bachelor of Architecture. "I think an interior envelopes you on three dimensions and creates physical reactions to the body that most exteriors won't," says Haskell. "Our senses of touch, smell, sight, and feeling are all affected by a building's interior as we move through a space." *MH+D* asked Haskell to tell us more about interior design and the tools she uses to create beautiful spaces, from the inside out.

Q: WHAT INSPIRES A WELL DESIGNED INTERIOR?
A: Inspiration for design comes not only from the client but from the place. Since my work takes place in northern and eastern Maine, nature is a huge influence on the interior design. I often try to introduce elements from nature such as stone, wood, and a natural palette to my interiors. Juxtaposing these elements provides exciting interactions that constantly surprise and delight me. Design should not be preconceived but should evolve and grow as the design process unfolds. This does not end on the drawing board but continues during construction and is shaped by the client for their final use. Close collaboration with the people who are using the space makes a huge difference in its success. Architects work closely with clients to find out what their goals and vision for the project are. To ensure that the interior design does not conflict with patterns of movement and activities inside the space, we try to understand as much as we can about how a space will be used. This helps us develop a more intimate relationship with those who will be living with the project long after the design is complete.

Q: WHAT TOOLS DO YOU USE IN INTERIOR DESIGN?
A: The basic tools are form, light, and texture. We use these tools to create a spatial design. Stair elements, ramps, chair rails, railings, alcoves, and soffits are examples of forms that we use to define an interior experience. These are usually part of the architecture of the space that emerges early in the design. They create a sense of movement and connection that pull spaces together. Light is used to expand or contract a space. The use of natural light can expand the feeling of a space. Providing light and/or dark colors can activate our senses in different ways. Large rooms become cozy with the use of dark colors, small rooms appear larger with lighter paints. Finally, textures are part of the artistic palette that we use to create contrasts or special highlights or features. I enjoy using natural as much as possible. Natural materials such as wood, glass, and stone provide interesting effects in a design, and are more enduring than synthetic materials.

Q: WHAT MAKES AN INTERIOR SPACE WORK AND CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE?
A: Successful interiors integrate all of these elements while creating a sense of balance. Many people are aware of Feng shui principles. Feng shui is based on the belief that providing balance in our interior environments creates balance in other aspects of our life. This may be asking a lot of an interior space but I believe a well designed space, be it a residence or an institutional setting, can provide a positive influence on our day-to-day existence. An example of how powerful an interior can be is with hospitals and clinics. A few decades ago hospitals thought a clinical, sterile environment sent a message of trust to their patients. Now we know that people want to be soothed and feel comforted in these spaces, and hospitals are realizing they must respond to that need. Not only that, but studies now prove that warmer, more comforting environments actually promote healing. For home design this translates into finding out from the client what they want their house to say. **MH+D**

For more information, see Resources on page xx.



IN *MH+D*'S CONTINUING COLLABORATION WITH AIA MAINE, WE PRESENT TO YOU EACH MONTH A DESIGN CONCEPT FROM AN ARCHITECT'S POINT OF VIEW.



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