



# work of art

An underused storage area is transformed  
into a sophisticated sitting room

BY SARAH ST. AMAND • PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY HORKOFF





Quiet neutrals can add sophistication and longevity to interior design

Collingwood  
OC-28

Swiss Coffee  
OC-45

## FAQS

Before starting a project like this, it is important to understand the client's lifestyle and their family dynamic in order to tailor the design specifically to everyone's needs. Based on the answers to the questions below, a style and concept will present itself.

- What hours do you work?
- Do you have kids?
- Are there any pets?
- How many people are in the family?
- Do you entertain?
- How would you describe your style?
- Do you like your home to look lived-in?

For Lisa, it was clear that an elegant retreat with luxe furnishings and fabrics was the direction to take. There are unlimited fabrics and furniture options available, so my role is to filter through the variables and make selections that speak to the client's style, use of the space, and take into consideration the budget.

## FABRICS AND FIXTURES

Since this room was intended to be a kid-free zone where Lisa could relax with a good novel after a stressful day at work, a collection of fabrics —silks, satin and gauzy sheers —were chosen for the drapery panels. The fabrics help to underscore the casually elegant yet comfortable atmosphere.

To prevent decor from looking dated too quickly, a monochromatic neutral, quiet colour scheme will create a timeless ambience. Whereas monochromatic rooms instantly captivate, they can also look dull and lifeless if there is little interest in the space. That's why lighting is very important to soften the look and create a cosy atmosphere.

After 10 years in this house, the homeowner hadn't touched a single room. The decor was dated and the inexpensive builder-grade finishes were not holding up, esthetically or otherwise.

Lisa, the homeowner, is a single mother of two and a professional with a very hectic work schedule. She craved an orderly feminine corner of the house that was all her own.

The living room had been used as a storage hub for an old piano, desk and storage boxes that never got unpacked. It was certainly time to adopt a fresh decor to make this room an integral part of Lisa's home.





Several forms of light are the key to any good design. Pot lights highlight artwork and provide overall light in the room. Incandescent lighting from lamps offers a softer light. Accent lighting, like the glass-front cabinets in the built-in cabinetry, and candlelight, provide a lovely glow.

For optimum flexibility, it's a good idea to put lights on their own switch and on dimmers. It allows you to control the lights, with some on and some off as needed.

A small hit of colour in a monochromatic room creates interest, like the unexpected silk chartreuse toss cushions. I love rooms that can be easily altered just by changing toss cushions or adding a throw over a chair in a trending or seasonal colour.



A small hit of colour in a monochromatic room creates interest, like the unexpected silk chartreuse toss cushions

The use of gold accents in the framing, hardware and decor effortlessly warm up a neutral, cool room

## ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

When designing a room, I like to treat it very much like a theatre production: there is the star of the show, the accompanying role, and the rest of the cast. It can take some time to assemble just the right materials and design elements to capture the look.

The star of this show is the custom wool-silk area carpet, along with the large-scale artwork. The built-ins are the supporting role and the furniture and fabrics are the cast. All of the elements in this space offer a pleasingly graceful atmosphere.

Lisa really enjoys the room and is thrilled with the way it looks. It proves how much our environment truly affects us and how a stress-free space can become a retreat from the overload of everyday life.

With each client, I ensure my designs look different from one to the next. No two clients are alike, they're different people, so their rooms should look different too, as a reflection of their personal style.◆

### SOURCES

**PAINT:** Collingwood OC-28 on walls and ceiling, Swiss Coffee OC-45 for trim and millwork; benjaminmoore.com

**FURNITURE, ARTWORK AND ACCESSORIES:** Sarah St. Amand Design

**FLOWERS:** La Petite Fleur lapetitefleur.ca

Award-winning designer Sarah St Amand, principal/owner of GTA-based Sarah St. Amand Interior Design, specializes in residential and commercial design. CDECA member, Sarah's work is nationally recognized and has most recently won the Best of HOUZZ 2016 award. For more information, visit [stamanddesign.com](http://stamanddesign.com). [sarah@stamanddesign.com](mailto:sarah@stamanddesign.com) 519.802.6328

