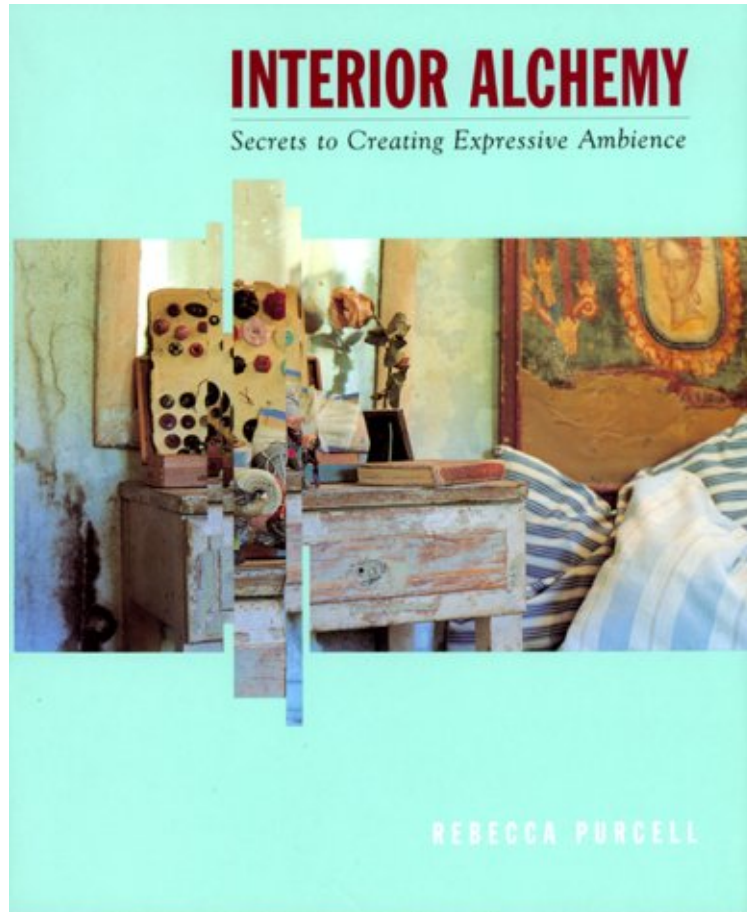


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Interior Alchemy: Secrets to Creating Expressive Ambience

Rebecca Purcell, Kathy Walton

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#251310 in Books William Morrow 1998-03-18 1998-03-18 Original language: English PDF # 1 10.75 x 8.50 x .751, #File Name: 0688148948192 pages | File size: 41.Mb

Rebecca Purcell, Kathy Walton : Interior Alchemy: Secrets to Creating Expressive Ambience before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Interior Alchemy: Secrets to Creating Expressive Ambience:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A magical design book! By KEM What a delight is this (fairly) slim volume! I had noted it before..... but never paid much attention to it, as the cover is so insipid as to make one pass over the book itself..... but recently happened upon it by chance at a new friend's home, and, enchanted with what I read and saw, came home and ordered it at once from an vendor. What makes this particular eclectic interior design tome so unusual is the unique division of style types presented.....perfect matches for the non-traditional dcor that I prefer. [My style is very much that which would be found if Queen Victoria fell down the rabbit hole and partied with Alice and the gang in Wonderland (full disclosure: I have pinched the basic idea of this style description from the delightful Robin Brown of Magnolia Pearl....enough said!)],Purchell begins the book in a wonderfully endearing way, "In a sense, this is an antidecorating book. Creating a home is a discovery process, not a matter of ornamentation or setting

the right things in the right places. It's about creating a living space that feels right and therefore looks smashing."She writes of learning early on in her career a no-holds barred sense of style from local display artists which has become her secret formula. her alchemy. She learned how to "hoosh"!To hoosh means to "tak[e] disparate objects and furnishings that you have and mak[e] something whole out of it, something with weight and presence.....transforming things, finding great collectibles and turning out some cunning fakes [of your own]."She divides the book into seven types, which I paraphrase briefly here:Attic - a sense of genteel anarchy prevails as collections of everything,are organized into artful arrangements.Spare - each object is surrounded by space, for spare is about texture, shape and designExpedition - be transported to the home of a nineteenth-century naturalist, a virtual museum loaded with human and natural history referencesExotic - much like a Victorian gentleman's retreat, a salon of rich, offbeat colorHumble - for tiny spaces, filled with simple decorative and loved objectsAlienated - spans time....giving you a view that encompasses a century (or more) of artifacts in one sweepAlchemy - for the medievalist in you.....think lofty and baronial EuropeThe photographs are splendid, and one does wish that there were even more presented here, The writing is charming, with suggestions, DIY projects and handy guidelines for those of us who are crafty. Published in 1998, this book still rings true with wonderfully imagined and re-imagined style options and explorations.I heartily recommend this little gem.....I secured it for a mere pittance from a vendor, and peruse it daily. A real delight!5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Decorating EdenBy H. F.Firstoff the four stars is hard to explain. I want to give this item five. But there is a few things I cannot overlook. However, this book is amazing. It is a decorating eden, filled with wonderous things you should look into and explore. If you look at this book and you think "ack, \$\$\$!! I do not have the money to pull off these styles" you will miss the entire point of the book. The entire book is about doing it yourself, and she does it on a penny. she explains throughout - its possible to get the look and spend a reasonable amount of money. The book is not about buying the most expensive antique. Its about creating. Its about making something yours from junk. Its about hooshing - making it yourself; spending no money. It is a tome of creativity.The only reason I cannot give it 5 is the one chapter 'Humble' - while the style is visually appealing she seems to forget a few things, like sanitation. The cute little guest cottage is made out of an old large chicken coop, where the walls have sustained beautiful natural water damage. While aesthetically pleasing, its mold. Also, chickens carry alot of airborne diseases that if you mess around in their dried feces (like oh say, in a chicken coop) you can inhale and get terrible things like meningitis. (It happened to a friend's brother of mine while he was cleaning out a similar coop to the one she uses. Not something to mess around with. And he was wearing an air filter and construction gear.)While this chapter can be completely overlooked and ideas still gained from it, it completely ignores hygiene and health. But honestly, this shouldn't make you ignore this book. Its a diamond in the rough. No book is perfect, but this - is pretty darn close.21 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Not for the faint of heartBy Tracy RowanUpfront here: If you're the sort who likes to have your space organized, if you dislike the shabby, the thrift store look, the impression of disrepair, do not bother with this book. Purcell leans heavily on the idea that interior fantasy is built up of layers of eccentric, aged, lived-in objects and artifacts, and the result, while remarkable, is not going to be to everyone's taste.Purcell's aesthetic is dark, and even a bit threatening. It's eccentric rather than whimsical, and that's not a bad thing. It's just that it can be a bit overwhelming. (If you're looking for a modified version of this, one with a lighter feel, check out Tracy Porter.) It makes heavy use of thrift store finds, but in these days of shabby chic, this look isn't as thrifty as it used to be. One room features a grouping of very large composition dolls. Granted, they're damaged and rather ratty-looking, but all the same, scoring a single large compo doll can be pricey. Half a dozen is likely to set you back quite a bit of money. And that's more or less true of many of the design ideas here. Very nice things (or at least things so odd that you're going to have to go to some lengths to find a good analog) artfully arranged so that they look kind of neglected. Cha-ching! That's gonna cost you.Over all, I'd have to say that Interior Alchemy, is a great book for those who are not timid about their decorating, who have either some serious spare change or spare time, and who are already more or less on this path of crowded, eccentric spaces. The fantasy level here is enormous, and if it's worth it to you to do the work, then this is a grand resource. To most people, I'd say, start with something a little less ambitious.

Here are tricks for creating cutting-edge interior design from tile original style setter at New York's trendsetting ABC Carpet Home. The recent issue of Metropolitan Home magazine featured a New York apartment furnished with beautiful finds scavenged from flea markets. America has developed a yen for the vintage. Whether covering an entire wall with a salon-style arrangement of pictures creating the "attic" look; throwing together a grand canopied bed faked with gilded molding and draperies to evoke the "exotic"; or choosing to go "spare" by displaying carefully selected objects, including old tools, glass boxes, or botanical prints, style setter Rebecca Purcell shows how anyone can create expressive rooms that make a statement. Full-color photographs in each chapter show how these fabulous styles were produced in different homes. Chapters include do-it-yourself projects for finishing touches, including tassels, aging fabrics and metals, valances and draperies, wall washing and stenciling, picture matting, and more.

About the AuthorRebecca Purcell is at the forefront of a revolution in interior design. She was display director for

ABC Carpet Home. She lives in New York City.