



## Island Idyll

Editor at Large Clinton Smith chats with a Greenwich-based design firm that recently took the tropics by storm. *Photography by CARMEL BRANTLEY*



Rinfret, Ltd.'s bedroom at the 2024 Kips Bay Decorator Show House Palm Beach was an oasis of calm. The coral chairs are by Dennis & Leen through The Bright Group, while the rug is from J.D. Staron.



**LEFT, RIGHT, AND BOTTOM:** Rinfret, Ltd., collaborated with de Gournay on the hand-painted and appliqued wall panels and embroidery for the bed and settee. **BELOW:** Florida artist Robin Grubman created the underside of the shell-encrusted bed canopy.



**Cindy Rinfret of Rinfret, Ltd., is no stranger to the Connecticut design scene.** She's published two collectable tomes with Rizzoli that focus exclusively on the houses that she has created in Greenwich and the surrounding environs over the years. Yet her reach and influence extend far beyond New England's borders. In 2019, Rinfret designed a soaring blue-and-white living room for the Kips Bay Decorator Show House in Palm Beach, Florida. And this year, she and her collaborator, lead designer (and daughter) Taylor Stebbins, were once again invited to

participate in the prestigious fundraiser that draws designers and visitors from across the country.

During its nearly monthlong run, the bedroom that Rinfret and Stebbins created was an oasis of calm in a house where punchy tropical prints and colors were often de rigueur. That's not to say that the subdued space didn't represent a sense of place; on the contrary, Rinfret and Stebbins used subtle motifs and a soothing palette that all harkened to its coastal location in an understated elegance.

Calling the space the Seashell Sanctuary, the design duo was

*CALLING THE SPACE THE SEASHELL SANCTUARY, THE DESIGN DUO WAS INSPIRED BY THE HISTORIC VIZCAYA ESTATE IN MIAMI.*





inspired by the historic Vizcaya estate in nearby Miami—this writer’s favorite house in America—and grottos throughout Italy, including the sixteenth-century Villa d’Este in Tivoli.

Rinfret, Ltd.’s collaboration with de Gournay led to hand-painted and embroidered wall panels for the room, as well as an embroidered headboard, bed-cover, and settee at the foot of the bed.

As for the canopy bed itself, it is arguably the room’s pièce de résistance.

“We worked with local artist Robin Grubman to create the underside of the canopy,” says Stebbins of the shell-encrusted piece. “We gave her a blueprint, but Robin ran with it. We sourced many of the shells from the Philippines. They are nature’s antiques.”

With a room filled with so many eye-catching details, one of Rinfret’s favorite moments might be its most subtle.

“We love the ceiling,” Rinfret says. “It’s one-sixth of a room and often overlooked. We added a molding detail and inset a wood wallcovering from Phillip Jeffries. It makes a big difference in having the space feel complete.” *Rinfret, Ltd., Greenwich, rinfretltd.com*



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** The room’s designers, Cindy Rinfret and Taylor Stebbins. Kravet fabric covers the cushion of a wicker Justin Van Breda London dog bed. The elegant fabric on the desk chair is by Cowtan & Tout. Paul Ferrante designed the headboard’s shell sconce.

