

HOME DESIGN

Bohemian spirit goes modern

Book looks at new interpretations of the lush and lived-in lifestyle

By Chantal Lamers

Los Angeles dweller and Berkeley native Justina Blakeney cut her teeth early on the modern bohemian lifestyle illustrated in her new book "The New Bohemians: Cool and Collected Homes" (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, \$35).

The influential blogger, artist and designer, who famously dubbed her cozy, busy bungalow "The Jungalow," shuns minimalism in favor of a palette of patterns and a collection of plants and draped foliage.

In her book, Blakeney explores new interpretations of well-lived boho interiors via 20 homes across the country, including the Berkeley Hills digs of designer Erica Tanov.

Noting that these unconventional decor pursuits vary widely, Blakeney categorizes styles into six categories: modern, earthy, folksy, nomadic, romantic and maximal. (She falls into the latter.) The book includes do-it-yourself projects to help remake accessories from some of the homes as well as a guide to plants, which are essential in mass when it comes to creating the boho spirit at home.

With her blog (www.thejungalow.com), Instagram and Pinterest, Blakeney has more than 1 million followers.

More than two years ago she started a popular Instagram series called Face the Foliage, where she created and photographed portraits from vines, leaves, pods and flowers.

In the spring, she'll launch the Justina Blakeney Home collection with Anthropologie. The details on the collaboration are still under wraps. We caught up with Blakeney to chat about how her East Bay upbringing helped cultivate an early appreciation for bohemian style.

Q: What kind of effect did growing up in Berkeley have on your bohemian aesthetic?

A: Being a "mixed" kid growing up in Berkeley meant that I was raised around lots of different cultures, colors, languages and customs. (Her father is African American and her mother is of Eastern European Jewish descent.) I learned to have a real appreciation for contrasts and a notion that standing out and being different was a good thing. I believe that my affinity for bohemian-style decor has everything to do with growing up in an environment that supported out-of-the-box thinking and creative exploration.

Q: Tell us about your childhood home.

A: When I was 4 years old, we moved from the Dimond Park area of Oakland up to Euclid Avenue in the Berkeley Hills near Tilden Park. It was a pretty modern home, clean lines and a stun-



Photos by Dabito

The Berkeley Hills home, above, of designer Erica Tanov and her musician husband is featured in "The New Bohemians."



Meet the author

Justina Blakeney will sign copies of her book 6 to 8 p.m. Oct. 8 at the Erica Tanov store, 1827 Fourth St., Berkeley; (510) 849-3331.

ning view of the bay. My parents, who loved to frequent auctions, filled it with an eclectic mix of mahogany antiques, Ethiopian art and Jewish objets d'art. My parents were cool about letting my brother and sister decorate our own spaces. We were free to paint our rooms, move furniture around, and they supported any urges to decorate, garden and make the space our own.

Q: We read on your blog that you recently purchased your first home. Do you think you will fall into a new bohemian category?

A: Yes, we're excited to have purchased our first home. It's a sweet Spanish-style jungalow in the Frog-Town neighborhood of Los Angeles. I think I might be transi-

tioning from Maximal Bohemian to Folksy Bohemian ... due in part to my husband, who has more minimalist tendencies than I do.

Q: Plants play a big role in bohemian decor throughout the book as noted in the section Plant-O-Pedia. Can you predict the next "it" plant?

A: I am in love with the split-leaf philodendron. Its mammoth leaves rival that of the fiddle-leaf, but there is something kind of '70s feeling about the philodendron — makes me think of Matisse, who is also having a moment right now. Also, the leaves are like gorgeous sculptures even sitting alone in a vase.

Q: What are other specific elements or guidelines when it comes to achieving boho interiors?

A: Textiles are so versatile and allow for flexibility and constant change — all things that I think are important in boho homes. Also, textiles add great textures, colors and patterns to a space and can instantaneously change the look of a chair, a sofa, a table or a window.

Q: Berkeley designer Erica Tanov's home is among 20 featured in the book. What was it that drew you to her space?

A: I love her use of textiles in the space, and her home has the feel of faded glamour — so romantic and nostalgic. Her style is so sophisticated but also remains whimsical and thoughtful.

Chantal Lamers is a San Leandro freelance writer. E-mail: home@sfchronicle.com



Tanov's 1926 Mediterranean-style home features hand-painted de Gournay wallpaper in the bedroom.



A midcentury Chinoiserie cabinet is used as a bar in Tanov's home. Behind the bar, Tanov didn't patch a wall but kept the rough texture.

The Justina Blakeney cheat sheet

Put the cool and collected into your abode by checking out some of Justina Blakeney's favorite Bay Area resources for artisan-made, bohemian-style goods.

Tail of the Yak: Shopping here makes it look like you've travelled all over the world collecting really cool and esoteric pieces without ever leaving the Bay Area. I love the poster-size calendars they come out with each year. 2632 Ashby Ave., Berkeley; (510) 841-9891

Paxton Gate: For the earthy bohemian in you, pick up weird little plant friends, crystals and oddities. Their fern collection, botanical illustration books and locally made perfumes are faves. 824 Valencia St., San Francisco; (415) 824-1872. www.paxtongate.com

Athen B. Gallery: This new gallery houses an incredible selection of art from local artists and also blurs the lines between public and private art. It's a great place to pick up one-of-a-kind art for your boho abode. 1525 Webster St., Oakland; (937) 594-2329. www.athenbgallery.com

DIY driftwood sconce

Justina Blakeney was inspired by the driftwood lamps in the California desert home of one of the couples in her book. In her version, she adds color to the driftwood with yarn, but suggests using paint as well.

Materials

1 long, lean piece of driftwood. (If you don't have time to scour the beach, she suggests searching eBay and pet stores.)

1 light socket and cord set. (She used the Hemma cord set in white from Ikea.)

Ring hanger with screws

Filament light bulb

Yarn in a few colors

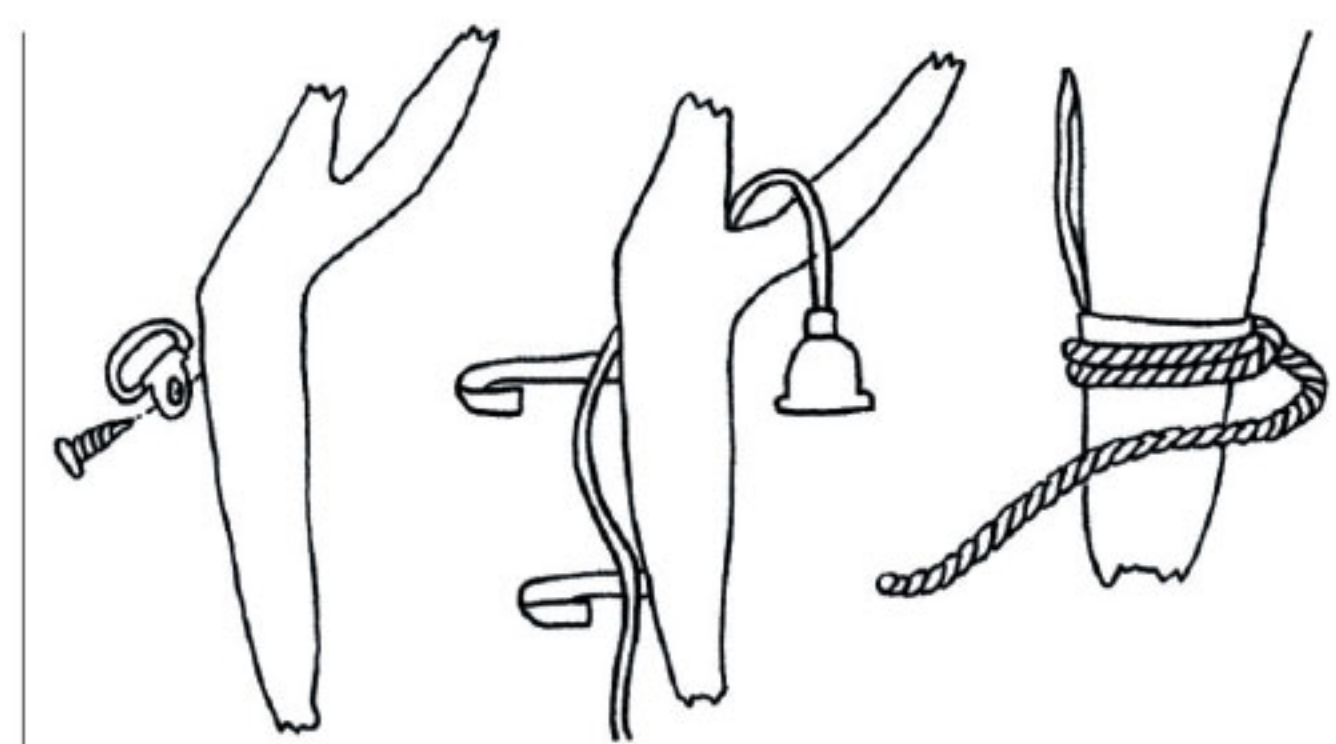
Pencil

Screwdriver

Hammer

Nail

Electrical tape



Instructions

1. Experiment with the wood and light socket. Figure out how you want the piece of wood positioned on the wall. With the wood set as you like, mark the tallest point that makes contact with the wall on the back, and at the same time mark the wall. Screw the ring

hanger into the back of the wood at this spot. Hammer a nail into the spot on the wall.

2. Place the light bulb in the socket. Place the cord on the desired point of the driftwood so that the light is suspended at a height you like.

3. Remove the light bulb and attach the cord to the back of the driftwood by wrapping the electrical tape around both the cord and the body of the driftwood in a few locations. (The tape will eventually be covered by yarn, so place the tape where the yarn will go.)

4. Tie a long strand of yarn around your driftwood just below the first piece of tape (make sure the knot remains to the back) and wrap the driftwood in yarn, making sure to cover the tape. Take creative freedom with the amount of yarn you wrap and the colors you use. Tie the yarn in a double knot at the back when done. Repeat on other areas of the wood as desired.

5. Replace the light bulb and hang the sconce on the wall.

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