



## designer details

Ami McKay is the multi-faceted designer behind amazing home makeovers – here she shares the inspirations behind her environmental, healthy and always thoughtful designs with Barb Sligl

**BCH:** *Where does your design inspiration come from? Who or what inspires you?*

**AM:** My design inspiration comes from a combination of things. I am always inspired by the clients I am designing for. I search for their individual uniqueness and find a way to incorporate their essence into their homes. Also, the rooms usually reveal a plan to me. I look at the use of space, light, form and texture, and see what is lacking.

**BCH:** *How would you describe your personal style? Have you fulfilled that in your own home?*

**AM:** I love clean, open space with natural elements. I prefer light walls, wide-plank fir floors, high ceilings, wood beams, lots of oversized windows overlooking nature – these elements feed my soul. Now add a suspended 1968 Eero Aarnio clear acrylic Bubble Chair, a variety of contemporary art and incredible lighting, and my guilty pleasures are fulfilled! This is my game plan for our home that is in dire need of renovation. We have been living here for two months, and I am itching to tear it apart.

**BCH:** *You help create people's dream homes, especially on HGTV's Makeover Wish. What have you gained from these experiences?*

**AM:** Wow, what have I gained? I am still working on trying not to cry every time the recipient starts to well up when we surprise them. How can I not when all the people who love and adore them are there to honour and thank them for being who they are? The energy and love is tremendous. I am grateful to be in a position of celebrating heroes. This is soul fulfilling, and very fun work!

**BCH:** *What do you love most about being a designer?*

**AM:** The creativity, the energy, the excitement, the fulfilment and the relationships. Oh, and my mind cannot stop visualizing. I have no choice!

**BCH:** *You're launching a line of soft furnishings called Pure. How did this new project come about?*

**AM:** I have wanted to do this for about 10 years. I recently read a frightening stat (about how every woman in North America has fire retardants in her breast

milk from off-gassing chemicals found in/on the foam and fabric in our furniture) that made me want to jump and do this now. The time is here. The world has the option to purchase healthy food, healthy cars, healthy homes, and now healthy furniture. My hopes are that in time all soft furnishings will be chemical free. I owe this to my children.

**BCH:** *Do you have a favourite shopping spot?*

**AM:** M Smart Design Store in West Vancouver is a phenomenal store. All the products they sell are ethical or sustainable, and all are incredible. I have my eye on the brilliantly patterned vegetable-dyed wool area rugs, which will soon grace our entrance once the fir floors are installed. The only problem I have is deciding which one I love the most.

**BCH:** *What do you do during your downtime?*

**AM:** I play with my boys. We try to have regular adventures to add excitement into our daily routine. We travel quite a bit as a family. I find my mind only shuts down completely when we leave home. It is all about balance: family, friends, work and fun. Luckily my work is not "work." We only have one life to live. I plan on making every minute count.

**BCH:** *Please share a design secret with BC Home readers.*

**AM:** I believe the biggest secret in designing any space is planning. Spend time figuring out what you really want. The more prepared you are and the more inspiration you have the better the result. Piecemeal design works for those with a flair. If you struggle with vision, delve into design magazines and hone in on spaces that speak to you. Dare to dream! ■

The 1968 Eero Aarnio clear acrylic Bubble Chair.



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