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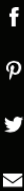
DAY IN THE LIFE

AD PRO Shadows Philip Mitchell as He Prepares for the Kips Bay Show House

Here's how the Nova Scotia-based designer gets ready for the design world's biggest showcase

Posted April 27, 2018
Text by Hadley Keller

For any designer, preparing for a [show house](#) is a daunting task: Given nothing more than a bare-bones room and only a few weeks, the designer must create a dazzling display of style and creativity that inspires visitors, captivates the press, and—hopefully—earns a few clients. The task is made that much harder when the designer in question is working (at least partially) remotely. For Philip Mitchell, who splits his time between New York, Toronto, and the small seaside town of Chester, Nova Scotia, designing his sitting room for this year's [Kips Bay Decorators Show House](#) was an exercise in equal parts creative vision and careful planning. Not to mention the very early mornings and quite a few plane rides. Luckily, Mitchell loves his job, so conceiving the room—which he outfitted with many personal touches—for the occasion was a happy work. Here, the designer takes AD PRO behind the scenes for a day leading up to the show house. Doors open May 1, so [get your tickets](#) now.



3:30 A.M.

I wake at our house in Chester, a charming seaside village on Nova Scotia's south shore. I enjoy an espresso while on a video call with our European project manager, Brandie (who's five hours ahead in Milan), regarding an apartment we're completing in Nice. I was never a big sleeper and this trait has served me well with productivity in general, but especially liaising across time zones!

4:00 A.M.

I quickly shower, dress, and enjoy a second espresso before heading to the airport. Check emails and [Instagram](#) from the car en route to the airport. Destination: New York, to source for my 2018 [Kips Bay Show House](#) room.



Chester, Nova Scotia.

Photo: Jeff Vienneau, via Wikimedia Commons

6:10 A.M.

The flight is a few minutes late, but once in the air I head straight into my favorite time to work, uninterrupted air time, when I get a tremendous amount accomplished. After reviewing the notes from yesterday's site meeting for a large oceanfront compound I am working on, I prepare hand-drawn perspective sketches and elevations that I then snap photos of and email to my office as soon as I land, so the project CAD drawings can be updated immediately.

7:20 A.M.

Land at JFK (the beauty of starting your day in an earlier time zone is that there are technically more hours in my day) and hail a cab to a site walk-through. I meet with Josh from SilverLining contracting, Alistair from Chesneys Fireplace, and Anthony from SA Baxter Hardware regarding drawings, construction work, moldings, and hardware for the Kips Bay drawing room.

10:30 A.M.

I meet Caroline from my office (who has flown in from Toronto for the day to help with sourcing) at David Duncan Antiques to find some of the one-of-a-kind antique and vintage pieces that he is known for. We score an amazing rock crystal Carole Stupell lamp and cool modern bronze Brutalist sculpture for our room.



Designer Philip Mitchell.

Photo: Courtesy of Philip Mitchell



Mitchell's staircase for the 2016 show house was a hit with its patterned wallpaper and tons of art.

Photo: Marco Ricca

11:00 A.M.

Around the corner at Liz O'Brien's we find a unique Marie Suri fire screen and fall in love with wonderful 1960s Mark Shaw photograph of Lee Radziwill to be used in the Kips Bay room—and, in the end, complement my own personal art collection.

12:00 P.M.

Indulging in some delicious food and a change of scenery with a client at Fred's, where we split a Inverno pizza, a Club salad, and a half order of fries (not to mention an ice-cold martini) while reviewing some sketches, furniture, and fabric options for her apartment terraces uptown.

1:50 P.M.

Head to the Brunschwig & Fils and Lee Jofa Design Studio to review their new, yet-to-be-released fabric and trim lines to incorporate into our design for our Kips Bay room. The new Groundworks Kelly Wearstler Rarity geometric fabric is perfect for one of the sofas in the space.



Mitchell made use of the large-size room by creating several seating areas.

Photo: Nickolas Sargent

3:30 P.M.

We arrive at the New York Design Center and head to a few of our favorite showrooms: Profiles, Dennis Miller Associates, and The Bright Group, each of which specialize in contemporary furniture. Between the three of them, we find the perfect pieces to round out the collected and curated style of my drawing room.

4:50 P.M.

Head further downtown to The Rug Company's showroom in SoHo to select some antique and contemporary area carpets.

5:15 P.M.

Follow up call with Jackie and Megan in my Toronto office to review all of the additional items sourced today for the show house, incorporating them into the floor plan and general updates for my other projects.



A corner table is set as though a game is in progress.

Photo: Nickolas Sargent

6:30 P.M.

Caroline heads back to the airport and I meet up with my husband, Mark, at the Club Room in the Lowell Hotel for a quick predinner drink and catch-up.

7:30 P.M.

Dinner at Altesi Italian restaurant, one of our neighborhood haunts, with our good friend [Lisa Simkin](#) from Blanche P. Field to discuss some incredible bespoke lampshades over an assortment of delicious homemade pasta.

10:30 P.M.

Head back to our New York apartment to take our dogs, Jacob and Wylo, for a quiet evening walk in Central Park.

11:30 P.M.

In bed scouring auction websites, tagging artwork and antiques for Nanci in the Toronto office to bid on for various client projects the next day. A couple of minutes returning emails and falling down the Instagram “rabbit hole” while Mark and our dogs are cuddled up beside me—I couldn’t imagine my end of the day any other way.

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