

“Hey, is that seat taken?”



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Yes! In the blink of an eye, with the single word “SOLD”, custom-made chairs and other designer wares were disappearing.

It was all part of the fun at last night’s Chair Affair where each sold item offers new hope to people in need.

This is the 20th anniversary of The Furniture Bank, a Toronto charity that collects used furniture to then transfer it to families transitioning out of homelessness or displacement.

Last year over 10,000 people in the GTA were able to turn their space into a home with help from people like you.

As their premiere fund-raising gala and silent (and not so silent) auction, the event brings designers and design enthusiasts together.

The Chair Affair invites attendees to dress up glamor-

ous and a little flirty and help raise money while enjoying an evening of fun, food, music and great finds.

Chef Michael Smith comes in from PEI to show off the year’s best seafood from the Maritimes and there are many food stations throughout the beautiful Casa Life location to enjoy treats from all over.

Last night, the event was hosted by Todd Talbot from HGTV’s *Love It Or List It Vancouver*, and Matt Dusk provided the music.

An event like this takes a lot of planning. The designers involved were approached in the summer by Chair Affair committee design liaison, Cori Halpern. Her request?

Contribute a custom made, upcycled piece, not necessarily a chair. Many rose to the challenge by contributing a variety of unexpected, creative pieces like re-imagined cabinetry, benches and more.

You can see some of the results in the photo. DIY Guy, Nicholas Rosaci, (hanging on to the chandelier) suggested



A who’s who of celebrity designers gathered Friday night in support of the Furniture Bank’s annual Chair Affair fundraising gala. Photo by Larry Arnal.

a Vanity Fair style photo shoot. He brought out his inner Annie Leibovitz and styled the group and their contributions for photographer, Larry Arnal.

I’m so humbled to be included with the designers in this photo! Seeing everyone’s pieces together was so

much fun, I have to tell you about some of the them.

Desta Ostapyk took a plain white bathroom vanity and jazzed it up with brilliant white, hand drawn hearts set on a black background. Jo Alcorn hand-painted her chair into a one-of-a-kind

work of art and Hollie Cooper’s bench was a study in restrained glam, literally.

Belts were tied to section off the seat cushion on this coffee table transformed into a bench. Dainty, but sturdy gold wheels gave it mobility. There was a lot of black and white contrast

in chairs, framed art and furniture and one colourful stand-out from Jim Connelly.

His bentwood coffee table was given an iridescent finish a little like abalone in a seashell. All together the collection looked so glamorous and sophisticated you’d never know it was all upcycled.

Soon we’ll be hearing about the results of the gala fundraiser and the success of the evening but before it’s over I want to thank the very talented people from the Furniture Bank who quietly make it all happen every year.

People like Tammy Peddle, Catriona Delaney, and Andrew Clendeninneng are a joy to work with. And please remember to think twice about that piece of furniture you no longer need. It can change a life. www.furniturebank.org or call (416) 934-1229.

— Jane Lockhart is a celebrity designer, TV personality and leading expert in the world of design. Visit www.janelockhart.com.

Window coverings are like icing on a cake



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Most people don’t like a cake without icing. A cake without icing looks naked!

Window coverings in your home are the same as icing on a cake. Without window coverings, a home looks oddly unfinished and cold.

Here are my designer tips on how to dress those panes of glass in style.

My personal favourite for most windows is drapery. As a designer, I believe drapes bring a warm aesthetic to your home, tying together the architecture of your home with the furnishings within.

Drapery panels can magically make a window look wider, taller and bigger. They

soften the cold look of a window and add warmth and texture to any space.

Beyond aesthetics, drapes also provide a practical purpose. They can deliver darkness on demand and even keep your home cool in the summer and warm in winter.

There are two ways to decorate with drapery. Fully closing drapery is where the drapes can be pulled closed across the entire window span to block light and provide privacy.

Decorative side panels, on the other hand won’t pull to cover the window but offer the illusion that they do. Side panels are a cost effective way to get the dramatic drapery look and require less fabric and less sewing.

I like to use decorative panels when using some other form of blind or shade for privacy and layer the two together.

Roman shades are another popular style of window treat-

ment today that will help to dress up your windows. They are especially good at visually adding height in your space. By installing a roman shade above a window frame this will give the illusion that the window is much taller.

I personally like to layer my window treatments whenever I can. Opting for side panels and then some type of blind, whether Roman, Roller or Traditional Wood blinds.

Though my favourite part of designing window treatments is selecting the fabric, any window treatment can be made into a traditional or contemporary style depending on the type of fabric you choose.

Today there are many places to find great fabric options that will offer great fresh patterns and texture. The fabric you choose will help pull the design of a room together.

I always use drapery fabric

as my inspiration and jumping off point for any decorating scheme. A great go to resource to look at is Maxwell Fabrics.

Here you will find a vast array of styles and options perfect for any interior style as well as add in your much needed hardware from companies like Deco & Deco to finish the overall look.

With the right window fabric, you too can create more visual interest and a luxurious feel in your home. Whatever type or style you choose, adding window treatments to your space is what elevates a nice house into a well designed home.

— Rebecca Hay is a Toronto-based designer who has worked on several HGTV programs and likes to create exceptional designs that infuse the old with the new. Visit www.rebeccahaydesigns.com.



Drapes bring a warm aesthetic to your place, tying together the architecture of your home and all the furnishings within.