

In a home that was purchased for its setting, designing spaces that captured the view while being warm and inviting were essential. Color, lighting, and textures create a flow through the kitchen, dining room, and living room.

BY **Katherine P. Cox**
PHOTOS BY **Charles Parker/Images Plus**



GILBERTE INTERIORS

A CLOSE FAMILY, A STRONG WORK ETHIC,
AND 50 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

A half-century ago, Gilberte and Andy Boghosian opened a small interior design store on Allen Street in Hanover. Today, Gilberte Interiors occupies three floors and a much larger footprint on Allen Street and is now in the hands of Andy and Gilberte's two children, Cheryl and Aharon. Gilberte, a petite woman with a big smile, is still active in the business, as is her husband Andy. Both in their mid 80s now, they've ceded much of the decision-making to the younger Boghosians. "They're smart," says Gilberte with a smile. "They know what they're doing," agrees Andy, who says that even if he doesn't always agree with their decisions, in the end, they're usually right. >>>





The Boghosians are a very close family, and that, coupled with a strong work ethic and 50 years of experience, has contributed to the success of Gilberte Interiors, a full-service interior design firm with clients all over the United States. An inviting showroom of furniture and accessories comprises just a portion of the building. A large room filled with carpet and other fabric samples is one of several libraries with fabric, paint, wood, and lighting samples.

THE HIGHEST QUALITY AND A PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCE

“Nobody has the library that Cheryl has amassed,” says Aharon proudly. Taking over the entire second floor is a vast showroom of kitchen and bath products—hardware, vanities, sinks, tubs, stone and tile samples, and lighting fixtures. This is Aharon’s domain, as he heads the kitchen and bath design part of the business.

The lower level in their Hanover Design Center is the location for the on-site workroom for fabricating custom window treatments, bedding, slipcovers—really any details made of fabric. Separate buildings house an upholstery workroom and wood-working shop along with a warehouse to gather furnishings and materials for each project.

“That level of detail is important to us” Cheryl says. “It ensures top-quality work, providing a truly personalized experience while enabling all of our designs to be fabricated to our specifications and standards.”

Cheryl and Aharon have earned a reputation for knowing what the client wants and delivering a stellar job that takes the stress out of moving, remodeling, or building a new home. They work with the builders, installers, and tradesmen—“making the connections,” says Aharon—so the client doesn’t have to. >>

Right: Custom upholstery and natural materials make this space more than just a mudroom.

Opposite top: Fresh and light tones create a relaxing breakfast area overlooking the Connecticut River.

Bottom: Custom details include handwoven wool and silk carpet and upholstered bed as well as the customer-designed TV console.





A SOLID FOUNDATION AND ROOTS IN THE COMMUNITY

"We grew up being very involved," Cheryl says of the business. "We helped out after school; we did whatever was needed; we were here all the time." Cheryl went off to college at the Rhode Island School of Design, graduated from Syracuse University, and is certified by the American Society of Interior Designers. With a background in interior architecture, interior design "is second nature to me," she says.

She worked for an interior design firm in Boston after graduating, and then joined the family business in 1983, taking over for her brother, who had been working there for five years after graduating with a business administration degree from the Whittemore School of Business and Economics at UNH. He left to take a marketing management position with the Window Quilt Company.

"It was my turn," Cheryl says, and she's been here ever since. Her husband, Neil Roth, is a key part of the team. He handles the business end, she says, and oversees their many subcontractors. Aharon returned to Gilberte Interiors in 1989. Since then, "We've been progressing, growing, expanding. Our parents built a great foundation for our business and developed who we are as a design business, a family business, and a community member. Those roots haven't changed at all," he says.

Cheryl says three elements distinguish Gilberte Interiors: a strong design foundation, attention to detail, and a strong commitment to each client, each project. "I've never questioned the time needed to put into each project," she says. "That's who we are—making sure everything is taken care of and done right. We've been here for 50 years for a reason."

Their dedicated team of employees—they refer to them as

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From left: Gilberte and Andy Boghosian established Gilberte Interiors Design Center and Retail Showroom 50 years ago.

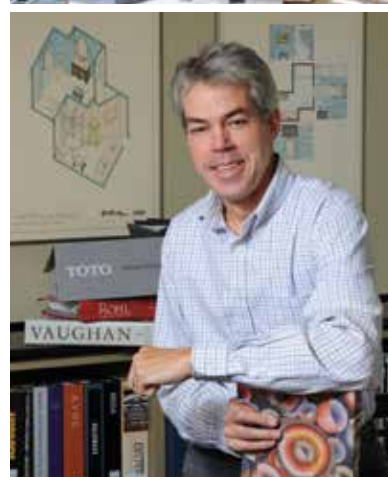
Center: Cheryl Boghosian, ASID, selects from the extensive library of resources.

Top right: Aharon Boghosian details designs and specifications for project baths and kitchens.

Bottom right: Neil Roth reviews material specs and orders.

Opposite top: Soft tones and textures highlight this kitchen space.

Bottom: Custom upholstery and iron work create interesting shapes and contrast.






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Right: The “Captured Space” project took an unfinished open concrete basement and transformed it into a family room.

Below left: Bar space details involve combining textures.

Below right: Another view of the comfortable family room space.

Opposite top: At another home, custom cabinetry and lighting complete a renovated country kitchen.

Bottom: Custom cabinetry and stone create a unique and inviting kitchen.



family—are a large part of that success, Cheryl and Aharon note. The staff includes 10 full-time employees as well as several part-time workers. “I love what I do and I think everyone here enjoys what they do. I can’t do what I do without them. It’s a team effort, and I’m very thankful for that,” Cheryl says.

The Boghosians get to know their clients and learn how they live before the design work begins. Often, they serve as the liaison between their clients and the contractors and oversee the projects. “We really pay attention to everything. We see how they live. We connect with them,”

Cheryl explains. “We’re very sensitive to efficiency with a client. Their time is very valuable,” adds Aharon.

ENHANCING HOUSES, CREATING HOMES

While Cheryl says she enjoys the large projects where she gets in on the ground floor, even smaller projects are important—projects that make a huge difference where their ability to use their design skills to impact clients’ lives are so rewarding. She recently worked with a longtime client to transition her to an assisted living facility, getting her organized, redesigning how things would be used, and



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setting her up before she moved in. “I knew her well enough to know what she liked. Good design will make her feel like it’s her home.”

Aharon and Cheryl say their approach and design aesthetic is clean and timeless. “There’s a flow to the projects—good balance, good flow,” Aharon says. A home’s location and environment also dictate the design, says Cheryl, as well as how the clients use the space when they live there.

A recent job entailed turning a basement into a second living space to accommodate the clients’ grown sons when they visit and to be a gathering spot. The “captured space” project, as they called it, transformed a utilitarian basement into a warm and welcoming living space that includes a bar and kitchen with custom cabinetry, a bathroom with steam shower, and a custom media center that’s the focus of attention for the new space. The Boghosians developed the plans for the space that included heating, plumbing, and lighting systems, plus flooring and a new stairway.

Location was the focal point of a project they worked on for empty-nest clients who wanted everything new—furniture, light fixtures, cabinets, even the artwork—in a home they bought for the setting and the view. Window treatments, bedding, and upholstery were all fabricated in the Gilberte workrooms. The Boghosians call this project “far from an empty nest.”

Her goal as a designer, Cheryl says, is “to use good design to improve and enhance the client’s house, which becomes their home. How do I make this a great space for them and their lifestyle? How successful a space becomes requires a balance of elements. Creating change in scale and light, coupled with use of color, texture, and light—those elements are really important. That’s our forte.” ←

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