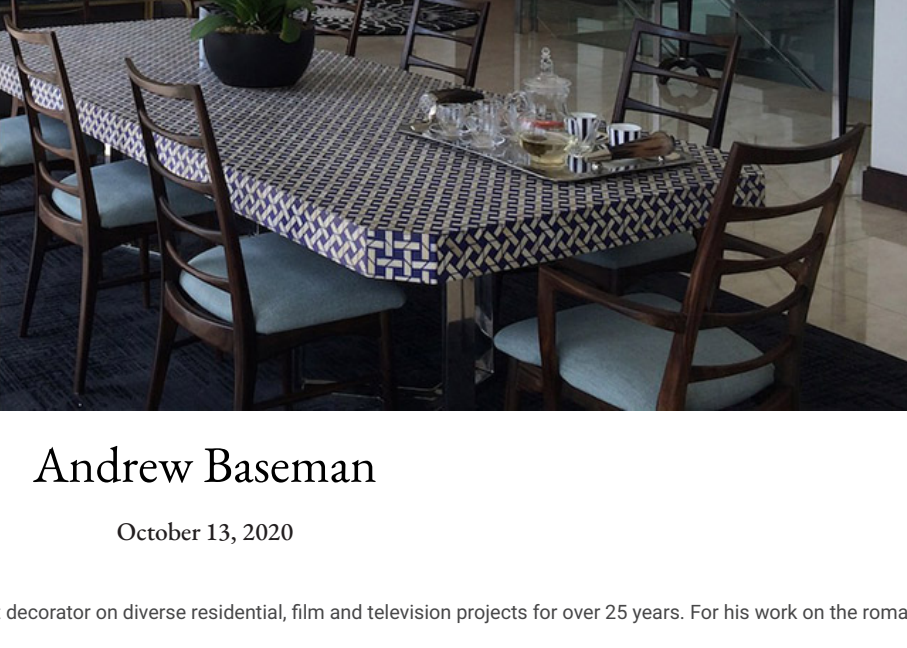


SET DECORATOR SPOTLIGHT



Andrew Baseman

October 13, 2020

Andrew Baseman has worked as an interior designer and set decorator on diverse residential, film and television projects for over 25 years. For his work on the romantic comedy *Crazy Rich Asians*, he won the Art Directors Guild Award and was honored with six other design nominations, including the Critics Choice Award for Best Production Design. Favorite projects include the upcoming movie musical *In the Heights*, and *The Trial of the Chicago 7*, as well as *Mindhunter*, *Gotham*, *The Americans*, *The Normal Heart*, *The Nanny Diaries*, and *Kinsey*. He has worked with notable directors including David Fincher, Jon M. Chu, Aaron Sorkin, Ryan Murphy, Bill Condon, Stephen Frears, and Jane Campion.

Andrew writes the blog *Past Imperfect: The Art of Inventive Repair*, which chronicles his unique collection of mended antique ceramics and glassware, and has exhibited his collection and lectured in the US and abroad. His book *The Scarf*, a classic illustrated art book chronicling the history of the printed scarf, reflects both his expertise and love of vintage textiles. He studied set and costume design at Carnegie Mellon University and is a proud member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Television Academy, Set Decorators Society of America, and Motion Picture Studio Mechanics Local 52.

(Photography Credit: Joanna Chattman)

Andrew Baseman Project Showcase



Q&A with Andrew Baseman

Q.

*Describe your childhood bedroom?*

A.

When I was around 8 years old, we moved into a 1920s English Tudor style house in Short Hills, NJ. The previous owners left the window treatments in each of the rooms, and I inherited Johnny Appleseed patterned curtains. My mother was an antiques dealer and furnished my room with antiques on loan from her shop. My favorite piece was a large Civil War memorial painting detailing a soldier's history. A few years later I was able to redecorate, taking a 180 degree turn, with modern furnishings. I chose a color palette of black, white, brown & tan and picked out shag carpeting, geometric Vera bedding with matching curtains, a Danish modern teak desk, chrome chair, and a cork lamp.

Q.

*Best gift you've ever received?*

A.

When I first moved to New York City to start my career in theatre set design, I lived on the Upper West Side in a small studio apartment with a miniature kitchen. I was barely able to pay my rent and buy food, so I made humble meals for myself at home. My favorite cheap dinner was a halved avocado filled with mustard vinaigrette dressing, a few pieces of buttered melba toast, and a glass of ginger ale. Hard to imagine but back then, avocados were hard to find and often I was unable to prepare my favorite budget meal. For my 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday, during the height of an avocado drought, my dear friend Kate presented me with a few beautiful ripe avocados. To this day, that was one of the most thoughtful gifts I ever received.

Q.

*What was the first project you worked on?*

A.

The first movie I worked on was *Rocket Gibraltar* (what, you never heard of it?), a not very good dramedy about the patriarch of a large eccentric family who requests a "Viking Funeral" for himself after his death. Of course, he drops dead and his wish is granted. The cast was wonderful and included Burt Lancaster, Macaulay Culkin, Patricia Clarkson, Frances Conroy, Bill Pullman, David Hyde Pierce, and Satan (aka Kevin Spacey). It was shot in the Hamptons during the summer of 1987 and I learned all about making movies while working as the assistant set decorator.

Q.

*First investment piece of furniture you purchased?*

A.

Soon after I opened my interior design business, I purchased a Late Biedermeier Art Deco drop front secretary desk for my home office. I loved the simple angular form, gorgeous wood patterns, and multiple small cubby holes and drawers hidden inside. Prior to that, in my early 20s, I had purchased a simple light maple 3 drawer dresser from a shop on the Lower East Side and was told it was from the 1960s. Years later I discovered it was actually Late Biedermeier Art Deco, so I guess inadvertently, that was my first investment piece of furniture.

Q.

*What are some of the podcasts you listen to and why?*

A.

I like to listen to podcasts that inspire me. Although I am still not much of a cook (but can arrange a plate of food nicely, thank you), I enjoy listening to *The Splendid Table* and pretend that I know what the hosts and guests are talking about. Another favorite is *How I Built This*, interviews with entrepreneurs about how they started their businesses from the ground up. But my most recent fav is *Burning Sofa*, featuring interviews with set decorators and production designers. I've learned so much listening to my peers discuss their film work and careers. And, (shameless self-promotion alert) I am honored to be one of the interviewees.

Q.

*Worst fad you participated in?*

A.

1970s fashion was unkind. I owned a pair of elephant pants and pimp shoes.

Q.

*Most embarrassing song on your Spotify?*

A.

Showtunes! I especially love music from obscure flop musicals and operettas.

Q.

*Are you a dog or cat person?*

A.

A cat person. Currently we share our home with 3 year old brothers, Grady & Oscar.

Q.

*Sweet or savory?*

A.

Both. I recently became obsessed with PopCorners Kettle Corn, which is both sweet AND savory.

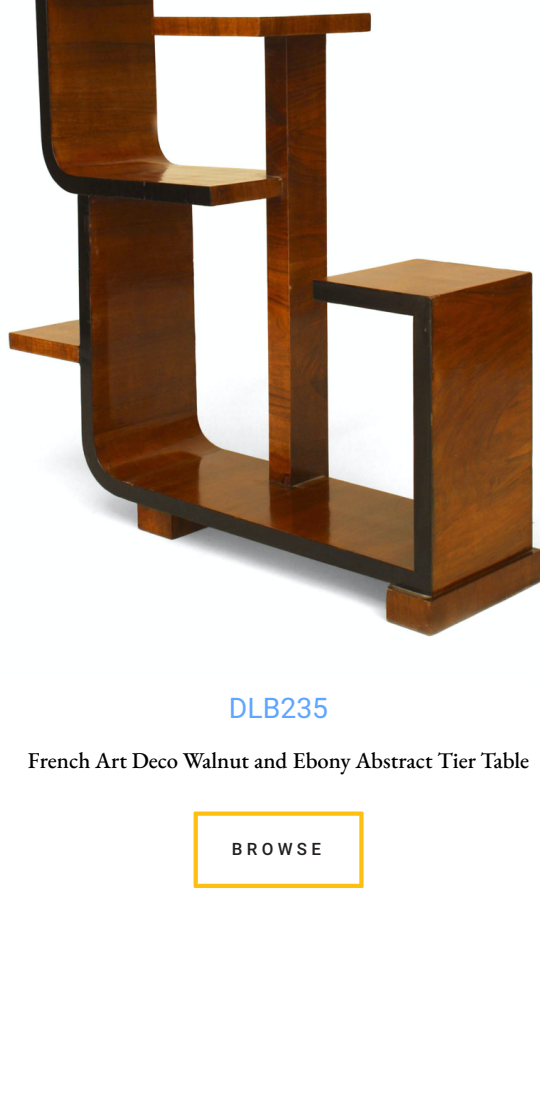
Q.

*Biggest pet peeve?*

A.

The overuse of the word "awesome" in describing things that truly are not.

Andrew Baseman's Favorite Newel Props Items



DLB235  
French Art Deco Walnut and Ebony Abstract Tier Table

BROWSE



GRS6205  
Chinese Pagoda Bamboo Birdcage

BROWSE



VTP0447  
Italian Venetian Murano Colored Glass Chandelier

BROWSE



NWL077  
2 Hans Wegner CH07 Shell Chairs

BROWSE