

LIFE IN THE PARKWAY



Interior designer Edie Twining at her West Roxbury home, where she turned the bedroom shutters into frames for sketches she has done on her vacations during the years.

STAFF PHOTOS KATE FLOCK

Redesigning home spaces the Twining way

By Victoria Groves
CORRESPONDENT

If you already know West Roxbury resident and interior designer Edie Twining, chances are that your home or office is the envy of family, friends or co-workers.

Her artistic vision can be seen inside the offices of Clarks, a shoe company in Newton, complete with log beams, reclaimed mill doors and industrial fixtures. Her portfolio from the past 11 years includes local businesses such as El Oriental de Cuba in Jamaica Plain and Tony's Place in West Roxbury, but the children's rooms she designs is something else entirely. They include unique and cozy built-in beds, custom furniture and rugs, and are often built around a child's interests, from boats, to forests to fairy tales.

Twining, who lives on Houston Street, works full time for Clarks, but is working to expand her freelance residential design business in 2009. In the past, she has worked as a children's book author and illustrator before returning to school for an interior design degree. Twining has a love for textiles and wood, and uses her artistic talents to create drawings that show clients exactly how their new space will look.

"I have a real specialty in children's environments," Twining said. "In the past, I've focused a lot on stores and restaurant design, but I'd like to get more involved in residential work."

In 2001, Barefoot Books in Porter Square commissioned Twining. She created a fairy-tale perfect space complete with a storyteller's throne that caught the eye of mega toy store FAO Schwartz in New York City.



Interior designer Edie Twining at her West Roxbury home.

This past September, she finished an installation of a similar design there.

"When I was raising my own kids, I had a great time designing their spaces," she said. "I've loved kids' environments ever since I can remember."

Her first step in designing a

child's room is to meet with the parents and the child to find out who they are and what they like. She uses this information to create a foundation for the design, but tries hard not to overdecorate. "It's important to create a room a child can grow into," Twining said. "Every kid needs a safe haven that allows them to develop their own personality and allow their identity to flourish."

One signature piece in many of the rooms Twining designs is a bed that is built into the wall like a cubby. It's portable and requires no construction, but it does allow a child to have his or her own space, especially if sharing a room. "When I was a kid, I had a bed built into the wall and it was the most comforting space," she said.

Some of the rooms she has designed have revolved around nautical and forest themes, and another that reflected a tiny client's love and collection of yellow school buses.

"There are ways to set up a room so a child can display things they've made or collected, and store toys," Twining said. "I love finding little parts and pieces to complete a room."

Twining works within the bud-

gets of her clients by varying the amount of custom work she does.

"My own house is fitted out with recycled furniture," she said. "I'd rather help people figure out how to reconfigure what they have and add a few things."

A child's room project would usually take Twining four to eight weeks to complete, depending on how much custom work she needs to tackle. If there are structural additions, she is able to bring in an engineer or an architect to sign off on a bigger project. But often, this doesn't need to happen.

"People's first idea is to add an additional box onto their home," Twining said. "But often this doesn't need to happen ... it just takes planning and thinking outside of the box."

To contact Edie Twining or see more of her work, visit www.Twiningdesign.com.



A piece of artwork done by West Roxbury interior designer Edie Twining.



A purse West Roxbury interior designer Edie Twining is in the process of designing.