

# NOZ NOZAWA

*Vivid Inspiration  
and Vibrant Colors*

BY DIANE DORRANS SAEKS



INSPIRED BY HER CHILDHOOD OBSESSION with architecture, sketching, design, and art, San Francisco designer Noz Nozawa launched her company in 2014.

With a bountiful portfolio and an international roster of clients, Noz Design is enjoying success and the joy of creation.

Today, propelled by her vivid peregrinations to Paris, Japan, Rome, and Venice, she creates rooms of dramatic dimension and creativity. California Homes interviewed the designer recently. **CH**

**CH** Congratulations on your success and international recognition, the result of your many years of work and a lifetime of art and design study. You are making your mark with clients on the East Coast, Florida, and California. It's an exciting time.

**NN** *Thank you so much! It's been an amazing journey since I founded Noz Design. Had tremendous support from everyone in the design industry. I am very grateful. I did not set out to be a designer, but it was always in my heart. I learned hand drafting in my freshman year of high school; it changed how I saw space and was the first time I'd thought about perhaps having a career in architecture—the closest word I had to "interior design" at the time.*



**ABOVE** In a Potrero Hill residence, a 1929 former firehouse, Noz Nozawa, painted the walls with moody Benjamin Moore, 'Spellbound'. The sculptural chenille sofas are by Modshop. The tubular chrome table is by John Liston, who shows at Coup d'Etat.

**BELOW** For a Colorado residence, Nozawa designed an abstract fireplace surround of tiles by Fireclay. The pattern was inspired by fractal abstraction. Wallpaper by Phillip Jeffries.

**OPPOSITE** A chandelier by Anna Karlin hovers above a Roche Bobois sofa. Wall decorative painting by Caroline Lizarraga.



**CH** After a corporate marketing career, you started designing for clients and created a compelling Instagram account with vivid imagery and lively text. Finally, your images caught the eye of many design editors in 2019, just before Covid arrived.

**NN** *A national publication named me one of their 2020 Next Wave Designers. I also was chosen to be one of the New American Voices! The issue ran in September 2020. Two years later, I began to feel those acknowledgments' impact on my career. The phone never stopped ringing.*

**CH** And then Kips Bay Decorator Showcase, the most prestigious design showcase called.

**NN** *In 2022, the Kips Bay Decorator Showhouse in Palm Beach selected my design for a sitting room. It was an important business opportunity. More importantly, the experience introduced me to many wonderful people in our industry who've become dear friends in Palm Beach, New York, Denver, and Bentonville!*

# Design Profile

**CH** What is your design approach and philosophy as you move confidently forward? You said you are very client-focused.

**NN** *Every interior I create is “one of one.” I use no formula and no themes that I repeat. My clients’ unique desire is what keeps my design very custom. I converse, question, and bring their history and ideas to life. I become a “match-maker” for each project to introduce them to talented craftspeople and artisans who craft unique creations.*

**CH** Your portfolio feels exuberant.

**NN** *I truly love color, and as a counterpoint, I think of black and white and beige as colors. I conjure joy through my design work. When I can create a space that reconnects a family with their happiness and pleasure, it means I’ve done something meaningful.*



**LEFT** Nozawa selected white-washed Balinese carvings for cabinets and headboards. Caroline Lizarraga Decorative Painting painted walls. The blue panned light hovered bi by Irish designer Ray Power. Blue tiles by Popham at Ann Sacks in the bathroom make a graphic impression.

**BELOW** In Pacific Heights, Caroline Lizarraga painted the walls a rich orange with poetic ‘spilled’ gold resin ornamentation. Turquoise sofa from Anthropologie.

**OPPOSITE** In the blue bedroom, Caroline Lizarraga and her team painted the walls with abstract decoration.



**CH** You are enthusiastically flexible and versatile. You have created minimalist rooms and maximalists, always with verve and finesse.

**NN** *My goal is to create personal living spaces that bring my client’s vision to life. My role in my design work is often more like an artist, using color, texture, pattern, and style. I deploy a full palette of media to express different clients’ stories fully.*

**CH** You recently opened new San Francisco headquarters.

**NN** *It’s my first office, perfect for our team of seven, and near Alamo Square, close to bustling Hayes Valley. We take “walking meetings” in the park and buy excellent coffee from the Lady Falcon truck parked on the crest.*

**CH** Your design for this year’s San Francisco Decorator Showcase is getting raves for its vivacious style. It’s open through May 29.

**NN** *It’s my first San Francisco Decorator Showcase participation, and I am so excited. In the Sea Cliff residence, I transformed a theatre room and wine cellar downstairs. The concept is a meditation on stardust and the cosmos. It was inspired by noted astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson’s quote from his 2009 book, *The Pluto Files*, that we are all cosmically and atomically connected. Aesthetically, the room brings to life NASA imagery of nebulae and supernovas.*

**CH** What’s next for you in design? You have spoken of your exploration of traditional design and ornamentation.

**NN** *My eye and attention go through seasons, and presently I love the craftsmanship and detail in traditional design and architectural ornamentation. Opulence was my first love. I spent Saturday mornings in my girlhood in Southern California watching PBS “America’s Castles” studying mansions in Newport, Rhode Island, and Hearst Castle. I enjoyed learning the history of our masters of interior design. One of my favorite current projects is taking inspiration from esoteric Folk art. I’m studying Bavarian architecture and cottages across Europe. Bringing this project to life with many handcrafted details, I’ll finesse details and turn it into a unique, poetic residence.*