



Inside My Life

Local architect Juliet Whelan talks about what inspires her work with Jibe Design.

BY SARAH SCHAFFER

The inspiration for her last project: I finished work on [an entry for] a design competition for the Philadelphia Housing Authority at the beginning of the summer. The site was located where an old Louis Kahn housing project had been. My partner, Naquib Hossain, and I were chasing Kahn's ghost a bit on that one.

Her favorite artist: Wisawa Szymborska is a poet whose work makes me concentrate very hard and clears away some cobwebs.

What's on her bedside table: A satin face mask and *Dwell* and *The New Yorker* magazines.

How Philadelphia has informed her design style: Philadelphia inspires me with ideas of salvaging and reclamation. I am moved by the counterpoint of old and gritty with new, chic, and elegant.

What gets her through a project: Anxiety.

The piece in her home that best speaks to her aesthetic: When I bought my house, I found three large mysterious iron hooks in the basement and hung them on my living room wall above the sofa—they're durable and rough, but carefully composed and elegant.



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: Juliet Whelan; the exterior of Whelan's PHA project; the architect's living room; her garden; the interior of her PHA competition entry.



What music she's listening to: Right now I hear a flock of birds fussing outside. I can't design or write with music on. But at night I enjoy bopping around the house to Michael Jackson at the pinnacle of his career.

Her sense of style in clothing: Comfortable, colorful—I went through a no-blue-jeans phase a while back—and quiet, with an undercurrent of funky.

What drives her in her work: I'm pretty self-motivated, though the tax man also nudges me along.

Her dream project: In Houston there's a nondenominational public chapel designed by Philip Johnson and hung with [Mark] Rothko's last paintings, called the Rothko Chapel. I'd love to design a public place for secular worship in Philadelphia.

Her favorite place to relax: My garden, even though it's very much a work in progress.

Local architect Juliet Whelan has created living spaces, furniture, and gardens for clients across the region. Her minimalist design solutions focus on the intersection of utility and comfort, blending existing structures and new construction using earth-friendly materials whenever possible. Visit jibedesign.net.