

THE NEW JOYS OF COOKING: *The latest systems, the best in lighting, and tips for kitchen colors*

# loftlife

THE LOFTSTYLE GUIDE TO LIFE IN THE CITY

- A Loft on Wheels in Amsterdam
- The Private Lives of Top Bloggers
- Secrets of Recycled Kitchens
- Michael Cunningham's NYC Tales
- Hit the Volume: New Audio Toys

**JOHN GIDDING'S  
TOP YOUNG DESIGNERS** PAGE 48

**INSIDE PORTLAND** PAGE 74

**SPECIAL:**

**THE KITCHEN  
ISSUE!**

**NEW YORK** PAGE 56



**AMSTERDAM** PAGE 40



**CYBERSPACE** PAGE 68



\$4.99US/CAN



loftlifemag.com



# The Lovely Ladies of Cyberspace

Click here to learn what inspires top design bloggers, how they discovered their online voice, and how they translate it at home

Story by Cate West Zahl

Ten years ago, there was nothing democratic about the design world. The hierarchy of magazine editor to interior designer to consumer was tightly controlled. Today, everything has changed. If anything, the editor's relationship with the blogosphere is a symbiotic one. Here, we've turned the tables, showing the faces and spaces behind seven exceptional design blogs from around the world. As it turns out, women are on the cutting edge of this phenomenon. Try not to act surprised.

edit and refine my space," she admits. Carlson's heroes include Scandinavian greats such as Marcel Breuer, Eero Saarinen and Walter Gropius. As a result, her house is pared-down and laid back, coinciding with her town's rustic vibe. While they live on opposite coasts, the duo's favorite aspects of their homes are outside. For Carlson, she loves her outdoor shower that's open to the elements. Meanwhile, Connolly appreciates her outdoor porch. "It makes entertaining so easy," she says, "with just a hint of street life in the background." [remodelista.com](http://remodelista.com)

## Remodelista

During simultaneous renovations on their living spaces, childhood friends Julie Carlson (right) and Francesca Connolly (left) realized they had collectively amassed a huge amount of information on design files and fixtures. "We shared a reverence for good architecture and have an eerily similar aesthetic—a shared design DNA, we call it," says Carlson. So in the summer of 2006, they launched Remodelista for those experiencing the renovation process. Today, the blog has over a million monthly visitors.

With inspirations such as Ted Meuling and Paola Lenti, it's no surprise that Connolly describes her home's aesthetic as "comfortable classic with a bit of glamour." Representing the East Coast, Connolly lives in a recently overhauled brownstone in Brooklyn Heights. Carlson, on the other hand, lives in Mill Valley, California, in a shingled bungalow style house. "Perhaps it's my Swedish heritage, but I'm constantly trying to



Photography: This page, Josh Groves. Opposite, Ilisa Rissman.

**“I like that our home is comfortable and full of the things my husband and I have collected over the years. We just moved to London a few months ago, and I was surprised at just how quickly our flat felt like home right after hanging a few paintings and unwrapping some odds and ends.”**  
**—Katie Hager**



### Better Living Through Design

The premise of BLTD is simple: provide purchasable content and great sources for the modern home—from hard-to-find items to inspirational interiors. It started five years ago when Kris Bernard (top) and Katie Hager (bottom) met at a party in Brooklyn and discovered their mutual appreciation for good design. According to Hager, “BLTD was started in hopes that we could create a resource for items actually available in the ‘click and buy’ sense.”

And that’s what BLTD does very well. “The aesthetic we lean towards is modern. Especially anything with an eye towards straight lines and innovative manufacturing techniques or materials,” says Bernard, who teaches architectural drafting at Pratt. Her interests are focused in design that which result

in the reduction of cost, space, and environmental impact.

With quirky touches like a Stormtrooper head from *Star Wars*, a regal gold-leafed colonial mirror, and cartoonish oil paintings, Bernard describes her home’s décor as “modern, simple, livable and comfortable, but injected with a sense of humor.”

Her BLTD partner Hager lives in London and brings the international, European influence to the site that makes the content all the more expansive. Her space is a bit more refined and pared down, with inspirations such as Patricia Urquiola and Marcel Wanders. “I go for an eclectic mix,” says Hager. “I love modern things, but I also like the history of antiques and flea market finds.” [betterlivingthroughdesign.com](http://betterlivingthroughdesign.com)

Photography: This page, top image, Theo Jemison. Opposite, Brandon Sawaya.



**“My motto is that life is in the details—and that goes for my home, too. My favorite pieces are the little things that tell a story.”**  
**—Cassandra LaValle**

### Coco + Kelley

Located in Seattle, Cassandra LaValle started Coco + Kelley in 2007 when her best friend persistently sent her links to other blogs. “I had no idea what they were, but I knew I wanted to create a space where I could post and keep track of all my favorite finds from fashion and interior design magazines,” she recalls. And it was the fashion aspect of her blog that caught our eye and the way she merges those disciplines together as well as why she’s a contributing blogger for us. Her aesthetic is feminine and mature, frequently featuring chintz, bright colors, and layered interiors with non-offensive feminine touches. Readers describe it in three words: glamorous, classy, and fun.

The three pillars she focuses on are interiors, fashion, and entertaining, with a particular focus on color palettes and trends. When it comes to her own space, she’s all about the details. “My favorite pieces aren’t large—they’re the little

things that make up a room or have a story behind it. Linens brought back from France, my first piece of Hermès china, a gorgeous crystal vase found in a thrift store, my first piece of art—they tell a story and a history. It’s what’s within the walls that matter most. Locations can change, but the pieces remain the same,” says LaValle.

Her motto for her Seattle home is “nothing too overdone,” with an emphasis on entertainment, seen in her proper bar set-up, casually situated on a two-level white console table. She embraces being a woman in the best possible way, but doesn’t take herself or her brand too seriously. She also recently began her own company, also called Coco+Kelley, which does everything from event planning to interior design. “We do urbane interiors and stylish events for modern sophisticates across the country,” says LaValle. [cocokelley.blogspot.com](http://cocokelley.blogspot.com)

## Automatism

Based in Ottawa, Canada, Lori Langille (right) started Automatism in 2006 for her friends so she could post all the things she came across online. She never dreamed it would be anything more than that, but as people started taking notice (and her traffic started to rise), she decided to go with it. “I gradually became more interested in developing my blog as a little online magazine where I could share my interests with like-minded people. I love the sense of community in the design blog world—I’ve met a lot of truly lovely people through it.” Unlike the blogs out there with strict themes, Langille’s rule for the type of content she posts is simply whether she likes it or not. “I’m just as interested in writing about art, books, or illustration as I am about interior design. The one common theme is my somewhat minimal aesthetic—I like interiors and art that can breathe,” she says.

Her tiny apartment in Ottawa—less than 800-square-feet—is flooded with light that “makes up for the lack of room,” she says. Langille’s influences are Charles and Ray Eames and Isamu Noguchi, and when it comes to decorating her space, she focuses more on the feel and less on the stuff. “I do strive for a serene environment where I feel relaxed and creative, which is why I’m drawn to minimalism.” Her all-time favorite piece of hers? “Definitely my set of two Danish teak mid-century chairs and my matching side table that were my grandmother’s,” she says. “My mom gave them to me years ago. I feel so lucky to have them.” [lorilangille.blogspot.com](http://lorilangille.blogspot.com)



## The Style Files

From her stand-alone house in The Netherlands, located 20 minutes away from Amsterdam, Danielle de Lange started The Style Files back in 2006 to document global design. With an emphasis on the Dutch, the blog reflects the author’s day job as an interior stylist and location scout. She’s known for posting sparse, not-so-standard interiors. And her renovated house reflects just that, with a lack of any decoration on the walls, a pile of wood placed in a corner, and an open-layout kitchen.

“My design style is basic and modern. My goal is to make a client’s house warm and inviting,” says de Lange. You can buy into her look, too. In 2007, she opened Le Souk, an online store with hard-to-find Danish products. [style-files.com](http://style-files.com)

**“Lately I’m influenced by Brit Pop. I’m constantly changing my space around—which, at this point, has become an online joke.” –Victoria Smith**



Photography: This page, bottom image, Angie Cao. Opposite, top image, Martin Lipman, bottom image Jeff Jenkins.

**“My home is a mélange of vintage items I’ve found in flea markets and thrift shops. I like there to be a unique, eclectic look with useable and comfortable furnishings.” –Kim Johnson**



## Desire to Inspire

It all started on Flickr for founder Kim Johnson (left) and Jo Walker. “We met on the site, as she shared my passion for discovering the most eye-catching interior design photos. We quickly had so much traffic that we realized we could start a blog with the same concept,” recalls Johnson. Currently, Desire to Inspire is *the* place to find the best interior images online. Devoted to showcasing larger-scale photos of interiors and exteriors, the majority of the content is from the best lensmen in the field, making it a place for both design fan and art lover alike.

Johnson lives in Ottawa (along with her boyfriend and her seven cats) where she’s a web developer for the Canadian government, and lives in a colorful home with a recently renovated kitchen, her favorite space. “I love how the living room and dining room are now open to each other,” she says. “My kitchen is now a dream, and I love spending time in there and cooking up a storm.” Her favorite home treasure? “It’s a toss-up between my white Panton S Chairs and the DIY couch my boyfriend and I built.” [desiretoinspire.net](http://desiretoinspire.net)

## SF Girl by Bay

Back in June of 2006, Victoria Smith was set on having her space featured on the blog Apartment Therapy. She needed a place to store the pictures of her 800-square-foot pad in the Pacific Heights neighborhood of San Francisco, and started her own site to do so. Sure enough, AT ran the feature, which led people to visit her blog, so she kept updating it. “Blogging encapsulates my three main loves—design, photography, and writing,” she says. “I find it the perfect creative niche for me.” Her blog is much like her place: bohemian, modern, and crafty.

She averages two-to-four posts a day, showcasing everything from scanned Polaroids of local scenes to loft spaces in Amsterdam.

Smith’s space is full of her favorite things, including an Art Deco buffet she bought for five dollars and refurbished herself. “I don’t like cookie-cutter, typical catalog-looking spaces. I like the unexpected, and I’m very inspired by vintage-modern furnishings,” she says. This appetite for quirky finds sets her blog apart. [sfgirlbybay.com](http://sfgirlbybay.com)

EXIT











