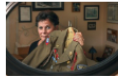




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Hillcrest color specialist competes on 'Design Star';



Jen Guerin of Hillcrest puts her skills to the test on "HGTV Design Star," which premieres Sunday. (/ K.C. Alfred / Union-Tribune)

By MICHAEL JAMES ROCHA JULY 12, 2009 | 2 AM

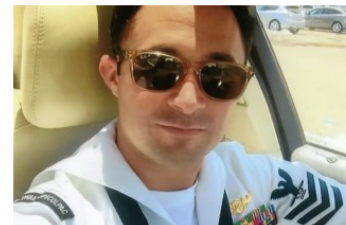
When she needs inspiration, designer Jen Guerin goes to her favorite store in San Diego: Architectural Salvage in Little Italy.

"I love that it's all about recycling," Guerin, 33, says of the preservation-oriented store on Kettner Boulevard that specializes in selling — and salvaging — home supplies such as windows, doors and bathtubs. "They can take something old and give

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it new life.”

Much like her favorite store, Guerin’s design ethos is very much eco-conscious.




“Save it, re-use it or paint it,” says Guerin, owner of JG Color Studios, which specializes in color design, color consultations and green spatial design.

Guerin’s design skills are put to the test as she joins 10 others on the fourth season of “HGTV Design Star,” which pits designers, home stagers, architects and artists against one another in a design-themed contest.

The show, which premieres Sunday at 10 p.m., was filmed in Los Angeles during a six-week period this spring. Sworn to secrecy about certain aspects of the show, especially the results, Guerin did offer some insights on how creativity and competitiveness play out on a national television show.

“The most difficult part, I think, was getting to know these amazing people on a personal basis even though you’re supposed to think of them as competition,” Guerin says.



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“That was difficult for me,” the Hillcrest resident says. “I am very competitive, so this was an interesting scenario. I don’t usually live with the people I’m competitive with.”

Contestants are given challenges each week, leading up to the finale on Sept. 13.

Guerin, whose studio is in Banker’s Hill, relied heavily on her skills as a designer and color expert during the competition. She is one of 151 color consultants in the United States certified by the International Association of Color Consultation.

“Being on the show is an exhilarating and challenging and exhausting experience,” says Guerin, who honed her artistic skills at San Diego State University, where she received a bachelor of fine arts degree. “We lived and breathed design.”

Through it all, Guerin never lost sight of her style, billed as “Bohemian and Baroque with touches of 1960s-inspired modern.”

It’s clean lines interspersed with “fluffy things,” Guerin says. How does her style fare against her competitors on the show?

“You’ll have to tune in and see,” she says.

DETAILS

“HGTV Design Star”Fourth season of design-themed competition. Winner gets own show on HGTV. Hosted by Clive Pearse. Judges include Genevieve Gorder, Candice Olson and Vern Yip.

When: Sunday, 10 p.m. Where: HGTV

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