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a kitchen takes the spotlight

dishwashers load up

gen-x style

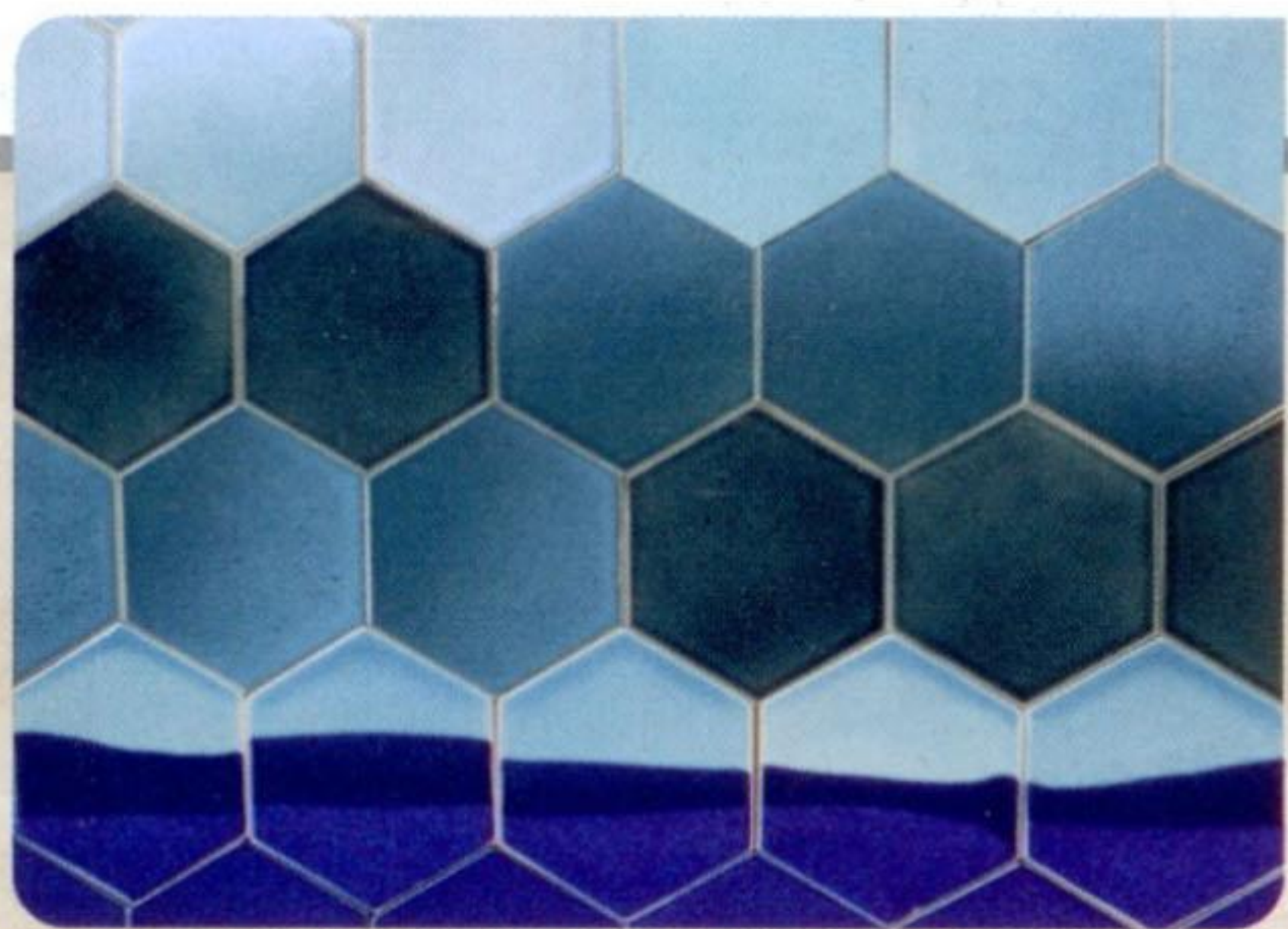
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Amy Lau's Top Product Picks



Fictional serial killer and blood-spatter specialist Dexter Morgan would probably feel at home in the all-white dining room conceived by interior designer Amy Lau for *Metropolitan Home's* recent Showtime House in New York City. After all, the stylishly immaculate and somewhat macabre room was designed to reflect the many layers of his character—his meticulous turn of mind, his sense of artistry and the rituals that surround each of his kills.

But the environment, with its hand-embroidered upholstery and walls, as well as its 1,500 cast plastic body parts, is also a reflection of Lau herself, or more specifically, her approach. "While other designers may like to go to showrooms to pick out pieces, I really prefer to hand-create," she said. "For the Dexter dining room, I worked with around 20 artists and craftspeople to create one-of-a-kind pieces. I like to do total environments where all of the pieces have a dialogue with one another and come together as a community to tell a certain story."

Similarly, for her bathroom installation at the Kohler Design Center in Kohler, WI, Lau designed tiles to tell the "story" of Oia, a community on the Greek island of Santorini and one of Lau's favorite places in the world. Produced by **Heath Ceramics** for **Ann Sacks**, the hexagonal-shaped Caldera tiles (1) are matte and glossy and glazed in 12 different colors, ranging from white and pale blue to turquoise and navy, to evoke the island's famed body of water for which the collection is named.

The tiles line the entire vignette, forming a dramatic envelope in which to showcase **Kohler's** Fountain-head Suite (4), which also makes Lau's list of favorite products, thanks to its "clean, modern look." "I love the sweeping, organic curves on the vanity front," she said. "It reminds me of the serenity of water."

Lau is also a fan of **Forms**, a collection of ceramic tiles designed by Angela Adams for **Ann Sacks** (3). Described by Lau as "earthenware with soft, organic lines," the tiles come in a variety of fresh-faced hues and, because each is individually placed, easily lend themselves to creating unusual and striking spaces. She added, "They remind me of French tiles in the 1940s and '60s."

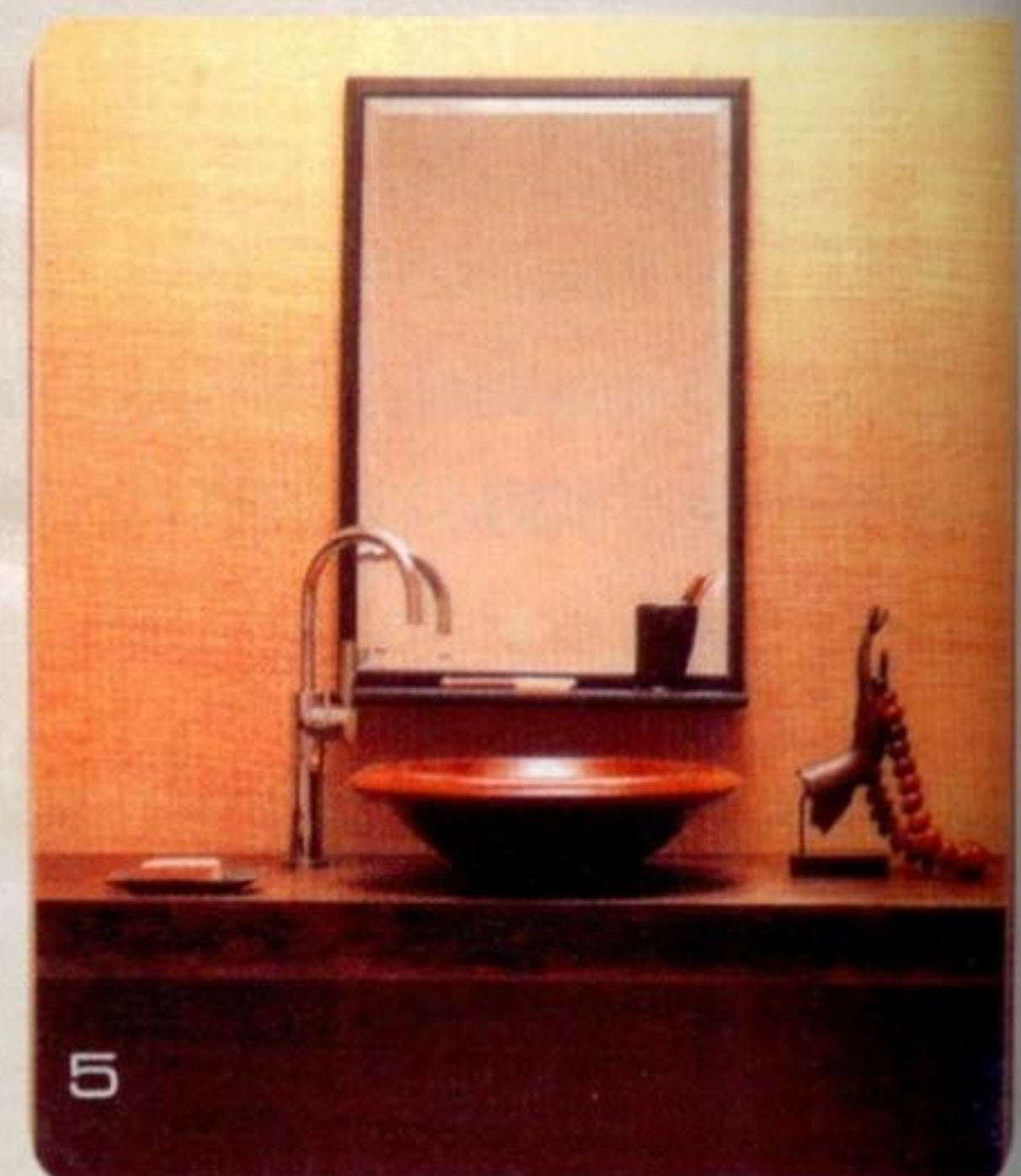
Lau is pairing the **Forms** tiles with **Neo-Metro's** 55-in. Ebb sink (2) in a bathroom currently on the boards. The wall-mounted unit features a stainless-steel basin and a cast resin deck that is available in 10 colors and can be internally illuminated for a wow factor in any bathroom. Lau noted, "It's artistic and quite beautiful."

PSCBath's Batho countertop sink in iroko (5) will also be making an appearance in another of Lau's projects. "I love the feeling of a wooden sink," she said, "and have an image of how I will use it—with a wood slab underneath." The effect, she imagines, will be suggestive of Japanese or American wood-working and contribute a very "hand-done" quality.

In today's world where mass production has heavily shaped the homes we live in, an emphasis on custom work and hand-fabrication must offer a welcome break for Lau's clients. A hands-on artist like Dexter would probably approve as well. ■



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—Alice Liao