

**MARNI JAMESON**

AT HOME



## You see, there was this critter

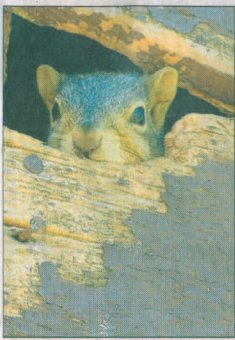
The question from the audience at a book signing recently triggered so many migraine memories, I feared they would form a brain clot. "What's your worst home remodel horror story?" the woman innocently asked.

I steadied myself against the table. Was it the two sofas that arrived upholstered with the fabric inside out? The patio that collapsed, forming a three-foot sinkhole off the kitchen? The house we bought, then learned when the rains hit that the roof leaked like cheesecloth? Because having a stroke in front of all these people would be bad form, I quickly collected myself. "Well, there was this possum," I began with a deep cleansing breath.

I flashed back to the first of three homes my husband and I built, in this case rebuilt. In the heat of July, a horrible stench overtook the site, a smell so vile that the workers — not a particularly sensitive bunch considering they thought nothing of eating their lunch while leaning against a PortaPotty — evacuated and refused to return. Before abandoning me, one worker said, "You should find what died under your house." "Something died?" I asked. "Like a mouse?" "That ain't no mouse, lady."

I hit the Yellow Pages and found a thin, serious man, who pulled up and handed me his card: "Dead Under The House Animal Removal Expert." He took a deep sniff. "Possum," he said with certainty. "You know by the smell?" I asked. (Now there's an art.) He slipped his pipe-cleaner body into a space-suit, donned a headlamp, and wriggled under the house, which I would not have done for a lifetime supply of Manolo Blahnik pumps. Eventually, he emerged with a squirming canvas bag and a face full of disappointment. "I couldn't get her." I looked at the undulating bag.

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HERALD-TRIBUNE ARCHIVE

### Editor's note

Harold Bubil is on vacation. His Letter From Home column will return soon.



Artichoke lamp, \$595



Lotus chandelier, \$9,850

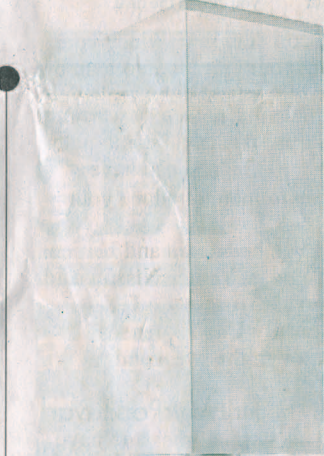
# Lighten UP



Mibo Clacket Lane table lamp, \$160



Karim Rashid's Soft table lamp, \$530



Inhabit Built by Even Steven lamp, \$219

Innovations in materials and manufacturing have blurred the line between art and function, and nowhere is that more evident than in home lighting.

Plastics, composites and natural materials, such as wood and glass, are bent, cut, molded and melded into striking shapes. When a light source is introduced, the resulting fixtures not only illuminate, they inspire.

Big, bold ceiling pendants are empathic style setters: Bear Creek Glass' Cloud collection features clusters of ethereal globes; smartly tailored cylinders printed with fresh new graphics kick up the chic factor at Design Public.

Large statement pieces and bold patterns are everywhere. "We are seeing more color in lamp bases, as well as patterns on the lamp shade, or encompassing the lamp as a whole," says Design Public's Ali Beckford.

Pushing the imaginative envelope even further, designer Chris Duffy of Duffy London, offers wall-hung light boxes that feature images of chandeliers. Award-winning Patrick Townsend constructs fixtures resembling spacey satellites.

Many designers are also turning to recycled materials: Vitamin Design's Galliano light features reclaimed fir and a wind-downed twig pull. Stray Dog Design offers pieces crafted from reused tin, glass and even cement bags.

Whimsy finds its way into Urban Peel's huggable light pillow, and Design Public's Pet Lamp Dachshund. Bright and Bold's jellyfish floor lamp looks futuristic, even Seussian.

"Our clients have a sense of humor and a desire to put a little fun into their surroundings," says Jane Gray, head designer at Seattle's Stray Dog designs. "Adding a lamp or two with loads of personality is a great way to punch up your interior without spending too much money."

— Kim Cook, Associated Press



Christian Thirion chandelier (\$8,770)

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