

**AT HOME**



Michael Hunter

One kid-room treatment that's gaining in popularity is the vacation home bunk room, as designed by Lindsey Herod of Lindsey Herod Interiors.

# It's a big-kid world

Designers help create rooms for children — from toddler to teen — as they grow up

By **Diane Cowen**  
STAFF WRITER

**B**y the time they're 3 years old, most kids are potty trained and can dress themselves, even if their tops and bottoms or left and right shoes don't always match. This age is a perfect time for the transition from the crib to their first big-kid room.

Every child is different, of course, but if they're still in a crib much past 3, they could be climbing out on their own, posing a safety risk. Three Houston interior designers — Katie Davis of Katie Davis Design, Hallie Henley Sims of Hallie Henley Design and Lindsey Herod of Lindsey Herod Interiors — have helped clients with the nursery to big-



Melissa Fitzgerald West

Designer Katie Davis says furniture should be timeless and long lasting, even in a kid's room.

kid-room transition, and they've done it with their own young children, as well.

Big-kid rooms last through adolescence, and with the right planning, much of the room can stay the same throughout their childhood, simply updating the surface layer as they age. All three designers said they want furniture that will work for young children and teens, too, then adapting storage, décor and bedding to the children's taste as they age.

"The kids are always excited about it and, of course, the majority of girls have more opinions than the boys do," said Sims, whose daughter, Scarlett, is in a big-girl room while son Patterson is still in his crib. "We're installing a room soon for a

**Home continues on D6**

**MUSIC REVIEW**

# Common and Houston Symphony totally rock the Hobby Center

By **Chris Gray**  
CORRESPONDENT

For the Houston Symphony, summer means reaching out to new audiences. A few weeks back, it meant free concerts at Miller Outdoor Theatre and its Neighborhood Series, as well as tributes to Led Zeppelin and Whitney Houston. On Friday and Saturday, it was Grammy- and Oscar-winning rapper Common,

who electrified Hobby Center (the orchestra's temporary home) without a whiff of novelty.

When Common appeared with the symphony in September 2019 — making history as the first rap artist to join the orchestra onstage — it was for one show only; this time, it was two. In truth, the performance — I caught Saturday's — felt more like a Common show that happened to



Melissa Taylor

Common performed two shows with the Houston Symphony over the weekend.

feature a major symphony orchestra.

With one notable exception — his gospel-steeped Oscar winner, "Glory," which scaled a mountaintop of emotions at the concert's climax — it probably would have sounded just fine without the orchestra there. However, the extra musicians thickened the sound during Common's more kaleidoscopic songs and added welcome elements of

dramatic tension at crucial moments. Plus, they seemed to be having a lot of fun.

Because Sarofim Hall is angled less steeply than Jones Hall, the orchestra was somewhat concealed by the soft lighting and Common's formidable backing band spread left-right across the stage: bassist, keyboardist, drummer, DJ, backing vocalist, flutist and gui-

**Music continues on D2**

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## FILM

# Keke Palmer on 'Nope,' Jordan Peele and the appeal of being herself

By **Samantha Chery**  
WASHINGTON POST

Keke Palmer doesn't want to be "one-note."

It makes sense: In two decades in Hollywood, she's played everything, including a spelling bee champion, a stripper, an enslaved woman and the first Black Cinderella on Broadway. In her new film, "Nope," she takes on the role of a Hollywood horse trainer confronting potentially deadly invaders. Naturally.

On screen, Palmer has committed to rediscovering herself over and over as she continues her chameleon-like streak through the business.

Since her big break as Queen Latifah's niece in the 2004 comedy film "Barbershop 2: Back in Business," Palmer, 28, has captivated audiences in movies, on television shows, through albums and EPs, and with live musical performances. At 20 years old, she became the youngest talk-show host in television history with the premiere of "Just Keke."

Whether on set or online, Palmer's persona

is infectious, as seen in her performance in "Nope," which has been met with glowing reviews and gleeful anticipation.

Palmer plays the spunky and enterprising Emerald Haywood, the inquisitive sister to Daniel Kaluuya's more silent and serious character, OJ, in the latest movie written, directed and co-produced by "Get Out" filmmaker Jordan Peele. The horror flick follows the duo as they attempt to capture evidence — and monetize on their discovery — of a mysterious flying object that has terrorized their family horse ranch. To do so, the siblings must put aside their conflicting demeanors and get help from electronics store employee Angel Torres (Brandon Perea) and cameraman Antlers Holst (Michael Wincott).

Palmer spoke with the Washington Post about the many jobs she holds, the detriments of living superficially and why working on her first Peele project was so refreshing.

**Q: How is playing**



Universal Pictures

**Daniel Kaluuya, left, Keke Palmer and Brandon Perea star in "Nope."**

**Emerald Haywood different from your other roles? Why is it important for characters like her to be portrayed in movies?**

**A:** Emerald exists in life. I think it's so important to show diverse Black female characters. In my life, I'm also the kind of female who wavers both on masculine and feminine energy. I pull from both ends, and I think most of us are that way in life, no matter what gender we are. That's also really important to showcase in film and television. I really

love having a character that redefines what people think about women.

That also played into my balance of what strength looked like for Emerald, because she's not just strong. She's soft. I think that's also important as a Black woman; I don't want to be one-note and be strapped, because that's an annoying stereotype.

**Q: You've also previously talked about colorism in the entertainment industry. What does an opportunity of this scale mean**

**to you?**

**A:** I'm not the first or the only dark-skinned woman that's received opportunities on this scale, but I think this just continues to redefine the concepts of what beauty is, what power is, and what it means to be a leading lady and somebody that is seen as a fierce leader.

All these different levels of representation are important. People see themselves on screen or see people that relate to them, and it continues to give positive reinforcement. It doesn't mean every single (story) has to be that way. But I think when it comes to something like this, we have a lot less of it than I think we should and we could, so I'm just grateful to be a part of it, to be able to play in that space.

**Q: You were eager to work with Jordan Peele. What drew you to his work, and what was it like on set getting to work with him?**

**A:** He's just so thoughtful, and he has something to say. I really connect with Peele's films: His approach to

filmmaking is very much like an artist, like somebody who's done a painting or sculptures. It's very open-ended, but it has a direct view. It's specific. When you really take a deep dive into it, you'll realize that every stroke was connected to the next. And even still, within that, it's up for your interpretation. That is just so unique.

I can be very journalistic and observational. I think there was half of me that was really watching, learning and creating the space for mentorship to learn from the relationship that Jordan had with his producers and ... actors. I felt like I was going to an art school, and I got an internship to watch Jordan Peele film a movie.

He empowers the other people on set. He has a clear vision, but he also trusts the people that he's hired. As an actor, I just wanted to make sure that I was listening and making sure that I could tell his story, because I also really believed in what he was trying to do. It's just a very cool and genuinely collaborative process.

## HOME

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boy who is going into sixth grade. He helped select fabric, and it was exciting to see how much pride he had in his room and how it would function. Kids grow so fast. He's going to blink and be in high school, so I have to be thoughtful that what we're picking out is not too juvenile."

That means having a bed that's full or queen size with a nice dresser that will last through childhood. Bookworms will want a chair; gamers or those who do school or homework from their rooms will need a desk.

From there, it's about taste, gender and budget.

For girls, it's fairly easy. Many love purple and pink, rainbows, unicorns and anything to do with princesses. Boys are more into animals and dinosaurs before they become obsessed with Legos. These may sound like gender stereotypes, but more often than not, that's how they roll, the designers said.

"My own daughter is opinionated about the artwork she creates and wants access to her toys and stuffed animals. I can have a beautiful base of furniture, window and wall treatment, and then give her the freedom to go to town with her stuff, so we have a bulletin board where she can put all of her artwork and photos of her friends."

Kids with their own room might get a full or queen-size bed or a daybed with a trundle — a second bed that slides under — and kids who share a room might need twin-size beds in order to fit the room.

Davis said the larger beds add flexibility in the home if there's no dedicated guest room. If grandparents visit, they can sleep in the child's larger bed and the child sleeps elsewhere.

"I don't focus on young fabrics or young items in the room. I really want the bed, dresser and window treatments to be a one-time investment — a 15-year investment," Davis said. "They might have Spider-Man sheets when they're 3 and white sheets when they're a teenager."

Durability is a factor, so all three designers recommend performance fabrics or those with stain-resistance treatments for easy cleanup — even in households where food and drinks aren't allowed in bedrooms. There's always something that can spill.

When floors are wood or hard tile, a plush rug allows for



David Tsay for HGTV Magazine

**Color and pattern get bold play in children's room treatments by designer Hallie Henley Sims.**



Melissa Fitzgerald West

**Artwork with airplanes represented the taste of one of designer Katie Davis' clients.**

softer play on the ground. Even a thin cotton rug that's machine washable and can be replaced in a few years is a reasonable option.

Parents don't need to break the bank on kids rooms draperies, especially if color schemes, paint and bedding will change in a handful of years. That said, window shades or curtains should be blackout to help younger kids sleep well.

Since children have a considerable amount of stuff, you need to pay attention to storage

and display space. Having baskets, boxes, shelves and other storage options help kids be responsible for picking up after themselves.

For those who like to play dress-up, a small rolling rack provides a place to keep costumes and accessories. Kids who play with Legos need a workspace, boxes for the colorful bricks and a place to display their best creations.

Avid readers — from picture books to chapter books — will need a bookshelf to keep things tidy and maybe a cushion on a



Jack Thompson

**Sims used purple geometric wallpaper in this room. Younger girls like softer shades, then go bolder as they age, Sims said.**



Michael Hunter

**Designer Lindsey Herod uses wallpaper in children's rooms, either the full room or as an accent wall.**

window seat or a comfortable chair with a task light.

When younger kids transition to their teen years, desks and electronics — for gaming or otherwise — become more important. One more kid-room treatment that's gaining in popularity is the bunk room — often a room in a grandparent's vacation home when they're planning for regular sleepovers or multigenerational vacations.

One of Herod's clients has an eight-bedroom ranch house with three bunk rooms so they can host lots of people. Another

has a lake house with eight beds, some of which are queen-size bunk beds, so couples can sleep there if they need to.

"(You) can be bolder with color in a child's room — kids are never going to say don't use too much color. They want their stuff out, knickknacks and trophies," Herod said. "Kids want to be able to show off their room, have friends come over and be proud of it. It's their own little entertaining space."

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