

WIZARD OF AHHS

*The
Amazing
adventures
of a super
graphic
designer*

No one ever encouraged Kathy Kozan to become an artist. She was told she had to be more practical. Her father suggested she become a teacher. And although she taught for a time, the undeniable need to create led to a career as a decorative artist with clients such as McDonald's and Disney.

Kozan is the one they call for special effects. She created the airbrushed clouds and scrim in Nike Town. And for a McDonald's corporate promotional meeting when the film "Jurassic Park" was in theaters, she created a giant

dinosaur head. With a reputation for innovation, Kozan Studios produces unique murals, faux finishes, custom stencils, *trompe l'oeil*, props, wall installations, backdrops and custom art furniture.

Expect the unexpected of Kathy Kozan. With cartoons and mythology as inspirations, her imagination created a living space that could be mistaken for fantasyland. Her wish for the space: "a treat for all the senses [with] elements of surprise and discovery."

Tucked inside her West Loop design studio, Kozan's residential retreat is full of



Kathy Kozan

playful twists. Novel use of color and unconventional furnishings transform this 1,000-square-foot space into a vivid world of make-believe.

Traditionalists, beware! Humor is Kozan's guide, because she thinks a living space should be "filled with the people and things that are most important to you - and laughter." You won't find Flash Gordon here, but you will be greeted by a 56-inch-high Toontown-style chair Kozan built out of medium-density fiberboard and painted peacock blue; its seat cushion is covered in hot pink fabric with lime green polka dots. Nearby, a towering violet vase is filled with mossy green, fiberglass banana leaves.

Across the living room, a life-size robot, painted steel blue and fire engine red, houses an entertainment center. This Kozan prototype sports flashing eyes and shiny metal gauges that are old mechanical fittings picked up in secondhand stores.

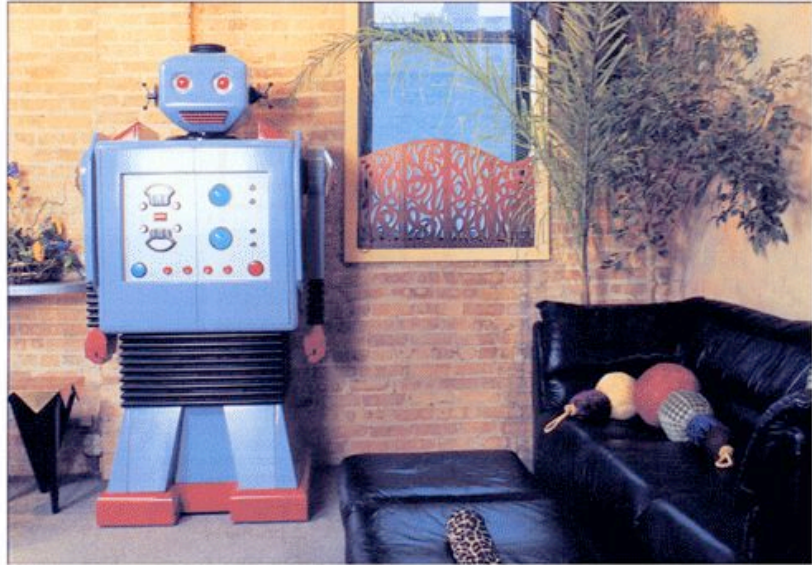
For the bedroom, Kozan designed a bed with a brushed-aluminum wing headboard. It frames a royal blue velvet comforter trimmed in silver cord with royal, goldenrod, violet and maroon satin pillows and a zebra tail as accents. Sheer metallic fabric gathers vertically around the box spring atop a cinder-block base. The walls are painted violet and aubergine.

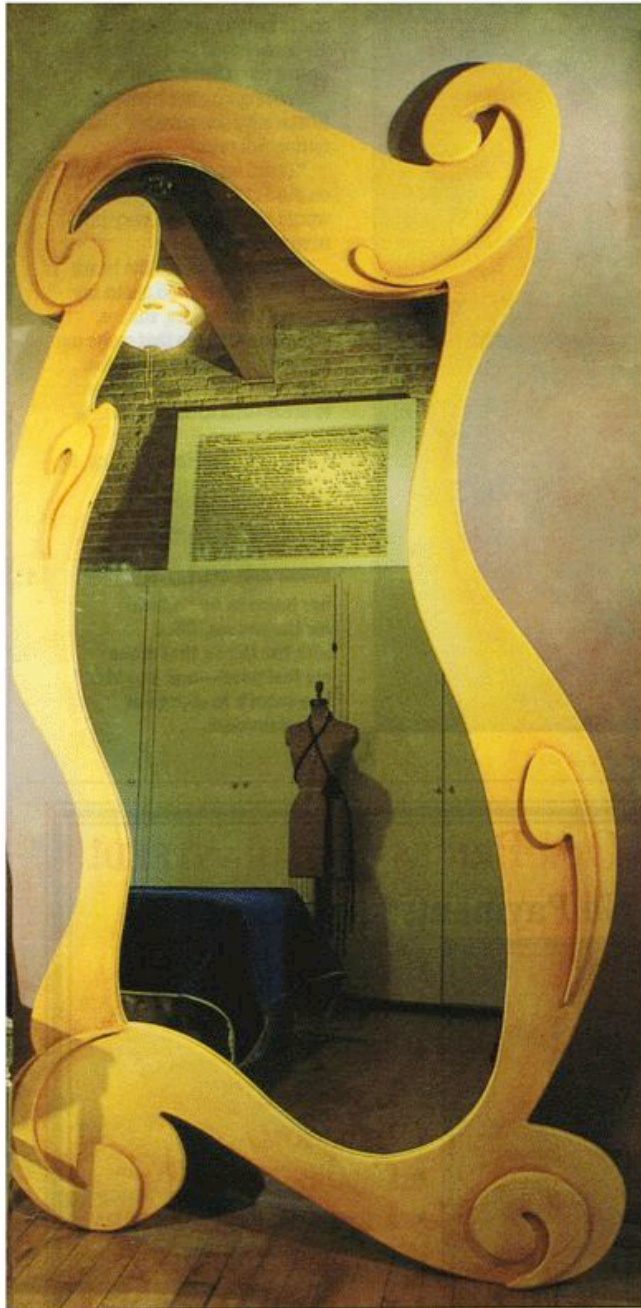
As a backdrop, a *trompe l'oeil* violet swag tops black-and-white striped drapes. And beside the enormous golden Alice-in-Wonderland mirror frame Kozan designed is her silver-leaf chair - also her work.

Lending zest to the loft's cartoon-like atmosphere is the use of unusual surfaces, finishes and combinations of materials Kozan is noted for. One free-form wall is painted of light cinnamon randomly brushed over with strokes of dark cinnamon, goldenrod and maroon and studded with irregularly shaped molds covered in copper leaf.

Nearby, the wall unwraps in two spiral columns painted a goldenrod base with cinnamon, royal and violet ragged on for contrast. Living room curtains really are sheets of lead draped over copper pipe.

With such an irrepressible style, Kozan left no room untouched. A cut-out of an archer sits atop the kitchen





cabinets and a ghost painting of Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" decorates the bathroom walls. Even the laundry is covered in natural muslin drapery with colorful, hand-stenciled designs by Kozan.

Unfazed by her unusual surroundings, Kozan says the space seems natural to her.

"Since we are all the product of what we have done, where we have been, so is my living space, and like me, I envision it constantly changing and evolving, keeping the things I hold most important, letting go the things that are not, and always learning."

Because she believes everyone is unique, she feels "personal space should be a reflection of who each person is."

In designing her home space, Kozan says she gave her imagination full rein:

"There were no restrictions on me as to what the space would be. So it was a very intuitive process."

"If home is where the heart is, I want to feel good about my space. I want colors, shapes, objects around me that make me feel good, make me smile, feel safe, free to be myself-a place to dream and to inspire me."



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