

THESE 13 ROOMS FROM THE KALEIDOSCOPE PROJECT HAVE US DREAMING OF A GETAWAY

A group of 23 BIPOC designers transformed a historic Berkshires hotel into a vacation-ready destination.



By SARAH CHOI

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The Cornell Inn, a collection of historic guest buildings in the picturesque Berkshires village of Lenox, Massachusetts, dates back to the 18th century. Now, thanks to a new showhouse initiative called the [Kaleidoscope Project](#), a group of 23 talented interior designers is reimagining the hotel and giving it a fresh new start.

But this is more than your average showhouse. Partners Amy Lynn Schwartzbard, Patti Carpenter, and Liz Nightingale enlisted 23 BIPOC designers to permanently overhaul 18 of the inn's guest rooms, plus a lobby, a dining room, and the bar. What's more, proceeds from the project will provide scholarship opportunities for young people of color interested in pursuing careers in creative fields. "It was time our industry showcased diverse talents of designers with unique points of view," Schwartzbard told ELLE DECOR in an email.

The participating designers were given a theme and a corresponding color palette to work with: rest (neutrals), reflection (cool colors), or rejuvenate (warm hues). The resulting rooms have their own distinct ambience while still feeling part of a cozy, cohesive whole, from a traditional take on New England style in a bedroom by [Shawna Underwood](#) to a glitzy gold-and-velvet barroom by [David Santiago](#). "All

the designers knocked it out of the park!” Schwartzbard said. “And each of their rooms really reflect who they are.”

The revamped rooms will be on view to the public through June 6 (tickets available [here](#)); the following day, you’ll be able to book any of them for your own summer Berkshires getaway. Here’s a preview.

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KUTANA ROOM BY EVERICK BROWN



Frank Frances Studio

[Everick Brown](#) drew on geography, culture, and people for the inn’s lounge. Kutana translates to “meet, encounter, or come upon” in Swahili—a perfect analogy for Lenox, where cultural venues like Jacob’s Pillow, Tanglewood, MASS MoCA, the Clark Art Institute, and the Williamstown Theatre Festival attract audiences from all over the world. It’s at the “intersection of rural meets global; modern meets rustic;

and artsy meets small town,” according to Brown, contrasts he incorporated into his design, with white chairs from Design Within Reach, sculptural black side tables from [Sunpan](#), and a modern chandelier from Hudson Valley Lighting.

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NILE JOHNSON ROOM BY NILE JOHNSON



Frank Frances Studio

Self-care is the aim of designer [Nile Johnson](#)'s eponymous bedroom. It's a simple yet welcoming space with neutral accents like the gray ceiling (Charcoal by Benjamin Moore) and the smoke-colored bed from [Sunpan](#). “The only requirement was to come as you are, and the room would receive you that way,” Johnson said. He accessorized the room with elements like the Circa Lighting chandelier, a photograph from Uttermost, and a dresser from Universal Furniture. According to

Johnson, working on the inn project with such a talented cadre of BIPOC designers was “pure magic.”