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In Dexter's Show House, Even the Chairs Are Bound

By JOYCE WADLER

“**T**HAT room actually has that kind of hospital smell,” a smart young thing in a cocktail dress said, exiting a bedroom designed for

television's “Nurse Jackie” at the opening of the Metropolitan Home Showtime House in TriBeCa last week. In fact, the room, designed by CHRISTOPHER COLEMAN and ANGEL SANCHEZ, had no smell at all, but such is the power of design. There were, however, playful nods to the hospital theme: a vanity with a light table (excellent for reading X-rays); pill-patterned wallpaper; a daybed fashioned from an old massage table. The matching wheeled bedside tables had a medicinal-industrial look, though they were hard to place.

“Dialysis tables, used,” Mr. Coleman said. “I bought them from a medical supplier, but the originals didn't come in fun colors, so I lacquered them in turquoise and white. I cut down the base and use automobile lacquer. I have this GUY IN LONG ISLAND CITY.”

The show house, created by some 14 designers and architects to publicize the six original series in Showtime's fall lineup (several rooms are dedicated to each show) is set in two penthouses of the Tribeca Summit at 415 Greenwich Street. Witty and inventive, it's proof that designers do indeed have a sense of humor, though it's helpful to know the shows.

“Dexter,” for example, is about a serial killer with a moral code who binds his victims, then stabs them in a room meticulously protected from splatter with plastic wrap. The modern, open dining-kitchen-living area designed for him here has white-wrapped dining room chairs (bound with seat belts, it turns out); a subtle silver DNA pattern worked into the white tile around the

fireplace; and, in a bassinet, a decapitated teddy bear wrapped in cellophane. (For those unfamiliar with the show, Dexter is becoming a dad this season.) The one touch of red is on the handles of the carving knives. The room's designer, MARIE AIELLO, tall and good-looking enough to be a model, got into the act with a white wrap dress by Dolce & Gabbana.



NURSE JACKIE Master Bedroom

Designers: Christopher Coleman and Angel Sanchez

“I'm wearing Dexter's kill room in a dress,” Ms. Aiello said. And of her décor: “I don't think he's black or white, hence the color palette for the space. I choose shades of gray.”

And, as the fake fire in the fireplace faltered, she told her assistant with a nod, “MARIA, the fireplace.”

This is the thing about designers at their show houses on opening night: they are like debutantes with their gowns, perpetually distracted, smoothing things out. RICHARD MISHAAN, who got the “Tudors” job, was down on the floor in the living room of Henry VIII's TriBeCa bachelor pad, smoothing the hem of laser-cut black drapes with the feel of grilled ironwork.