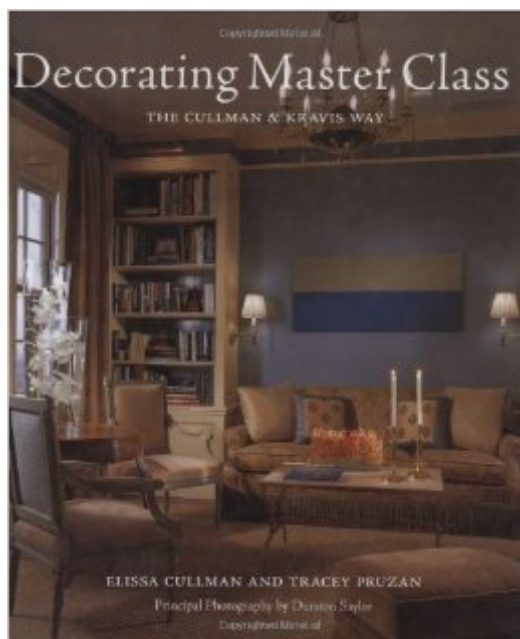


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# Decorating Master Class: The Cullman & Kravis Way



## Synopsis

Book by Cullman, Elissa, Pruzan, Tracey

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The concept of a "Master Class" is a course taught by a top, often world-renowned, professional in a field, to graduate-level students of the highest caliber. When you really understand what a master class is, you get a better sense of the proper audience for this wonderful book showcasing the work of Cullman & Kravis. BUT be prepared -- while the authors may have intended this as a book for the layman, it's for a more precise niche, either the very knowledgeable amateur, or the young professional hoping to work in ultra-high-end interior design. I would recommend it highly to someone just starting out in the design world, or someone who wants a better understanding of the options available to those with the checkbook to get anything they want. If, for example, you're planning a major interior design project and intend to work with a designer, this is a great primer on the process and details. It'll likely make you a far more informed client for the designer you'll ultimately choose. It is emphatically not, however, for the DIY reader. The authors assume that you'll be working with professionals, and present options accordingly. The guidelines in such areas as upholstery & trim, lighting, and flooring are invaluable, but such detail is for those who really want it. Your reaction may be, "Okay, that's more than I wanted to know." They also assume such luxuries as custom cabinetry, custom-colored rugs and upholstery, custom embroidery -- basically, an entirely custom environment. This is, after all, what Cullman & Kravis does so beautifully, but it may

not be of help to a reader looking for guidance in the real world. Such books by top designers are the "in" thing lately -- note Jeffrey Bilhuber's *Design Basics: Expert Solutions for Designing the House of Your Dreams*, Mariette Himes Gomez's *Rooms: Creating Luxurious, Livable Spaces*, Rose Tarlow's *The Private House*, Bunny Williams' *Point of View: Three Decades of Decorating Elegant and Comfortable Houses*, Michael S. Smith: *Elements of Style*, etc. They cover the length and breadth of interior design today, and they vary widely in their approach. "Decorating Master Class" is for those who want only the finest, and the authors assume their readers have the wherewithal to achieve it.

I decided to weigh in on this book because 1) I feel so strongly about it and 2) Because of the disparity of opinion regarding whether this book can be used by amateurs, or is simply for professionals only. I am a homeowner, with a limited budget, in the midst of a new home construction. I saw this book recommended in an issue of architectural digest as really forthcoming about the how-tos of decorating, not just pictures to drool over. I bought the book immediately and I love it. I can't tell you how valuable this book has been. I learned SO much. I read it through cover to cover, then reviewed every picture again to assess the details, the use of symmetry, asymmetry, patterns, textures, trims, recurring themes and color schemes. It was incredibly informative, useful and inspiring. It completely prepared me to choose the surfaces in my home. It was useful for planning design details, such as how high the mantel should be and the appropriate distance between furniture pieces and how to achieve layers of light. I have even purchased some of the resource material listed to further educate myself about antique rugs and furniture. This book is for everybody. It's gorgeous and incredibly helpful.

I bought it because of a reviewer's comment that headboards should be a certain height above the mattress, something I had not read anywhere else (and was having an issue with pulling a room together). Upon opening it, my initial reaction was similar to "For the Pros, By the Pros" in that you had to have means to appreciate and get benefit from it. But I've read it through twice and gotten something different each time. Although the rooms appear very traditional, as you look through you realize that the art and objects often are very modern. Then you realize the the design basics they lay out can be used with any style. The information covers all the bases (from architectural features, room layout, lighting through furniture, fabrics and decorations) and the order they are presented on are extremely valuable. And while yes, the rooms have stunning woodwork and high ceilings, the principles apply and can be adapted by those on any budget level. It's like clothing - there are many

price points but if you don't understand the basics, it's hard to pull off a cohesive style no matter what your budget is. Two additional things I loved about this book. First, books are incorporated throughout nearly every room and not just in bookcases. Second, I wished I could see even more of a room beyond the edge of a picture, and then I'd find it pictured from a different angle later on in to illustrate another section of the book. As a result, I went back over the pictures with a fresh eye to the design features I might have missed on the first pass. A terrific book.

This is a book I picked up, as I was attracted to the title. I read a review on that said it's not a book for the home decorator. I disagree, I think it's a text book style book good for anyone who decorates, and for anyone who needs a guideline of how to present a professional proposal; for the non professional it shows you how approach a project, and organize keep project records and files.

This book is especially helpful for those who do not wish to employ an interior decorator. It is filled with facts and information that is part of the basic knowledge of every designer. Guaranteed to be of great assistance.

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