



Bohemian Rhapsody

With colorful styling and eclectic decor, Kyle Freeman's (budget-friendly) Jamaica Plain apartment is breaking all the rules.

By CHRISTIE MATHESON
Photographs by ERIC ROTH

Kyle Freeman's apartment in Jamaica Plain often has a new look – but there's rarely anything new in it. Call her the master of reuse. Freeman's one-woman company, Cloud 9 Organize & Redesign, helps people transform their homes simply by rearranging and restyling things they already have. And she does the same thing in her own space. "I think of my apartment as my playground," she says.

Not long ago, Freeman, 35, was a social worker. She spent a lot of time in other people's houses and found herself dreaming about how to rearrange her clients' living spaces. (She held back, of course.) Now Freeman is so immersed in design that she blogs for Apartment Therapy, a slick website (apartmenttherapy.com) reporting on fresh looks and home trends nationwide. Still, Freeman says, she *doesn't* design her home based on the latter. "I notice trends, but if something doesn't resonate with me, I'm not going to incorporate it," she says.

Yet her home's boho-chic aesthetic is very of-the-moment: liberal use of many rich, warm colors; resourceful blending of classic and mid-century-modern pieces; creative mixing and matching of textiles; and playful use of art and accessories. And her approach is itself an emerging trend, speaking to the public's growing awareness of sustainability and green living (not to mention the desire for affordability in an uncertain economy).

Light-filled and loaded with color, her 1,200-square-foot space is a warren of quirky rooms in a 1909 building linked by their warmth and unconventionality. "Don't be wed to rules," she says. "You don't have to use furniture the way that it's 'supposed' to be used." In her living room, she incorporated bedroom pieces – a little red-and-green vanity chair and three daybeds (legs cut down) that she used to create makeshift couches.

Of course, sometimes there are needs that can't be met by anything already in the home, and in those cases, Freeman will add items to fill in the gaps – always looking to vintage and antique goods first. If she tires of a piece of furniture, she reinvents it. She spends more on textiles than anything else in her apartment, and recently discovered modern-fabrics.com, which sells materials reclaimed from the furniture industry.

Her space isn't grand or perfect in the traditional sense, but it's perfect for her and her dog, Arlo. "I've been here for five years, and I feel lucky to live in a space that's so nurturing," she says. She is constantly tweaking it, not because she's dissatisfied, but because she's always imagining ways to make it a little better, lovelier, more *her* – and she's making these changes, she says, without expanding her carbon footprint. ■

Christie Matheson is the author of *Green Chic: Saving the Earth in Style*. Send comments to magazine@globe.com.



APARTMENT AS THERAPY Kyle Freeman (shown at bottom) understands the appeal of tossing everything and buying new furnishings but says she "can't stomach it, environmentally." Instead, she reinvents old pieces with fresh-looking reclaimed fabrics. "It's easy," she says.



In Living Color To expand your home's palette, Kyle Freeman suggests you:

- Find art in unexpected places. "I framed my brother's art-class color-theory exercises. I had them framed in an off-center way, so they look like modern artwork."
- Pair intense colors with neutrals. "I have bright-green chairs with my simple wood dining table, and I stacked two bright-red end tables to make a counter in my kitchen."
- Be bold in the bathroom. "Paint it a bright color or display colorful artwork - people don't put enough artwork in the bathroom."
- Cover everything! Fabric is a quick and easy way to make a bold change without a big investment - or a permanent commitment. Re-cover throw pillows, reupholster dining chairs, or reinvent tables and desks. "You can make an interesting tabletop out of almost any piece of wood if you cover it with fabric."



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