

RobbReport

# Home & Style

LUXURY RESIDENCES AND FINE DESIGN

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## NEW HEIGHTS

Crowning achievements in refined design  
from Moscow to New York

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FASHION-FORWARD FURNISHINGS FROM  
ARMANI/CASA, LORO PIANA,  
RALPH LAUREN & MORE



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# BAMO

Michael Booth was the lead designer on this Northern California residence. Exposed roof trusses and reclaimed knotty pine floors lend a rustic feel to the eight-bedroom ranch house near Carmel. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT:** Touches of formality prevail in the living room, where chairs from Ralph Lauren, lighting from Vaughan, and a console table punctuate the concourse that links the living and family areas.

# Portfolio



**F**OUR GOOD FRIENDS—Pamela Babey, Michael Booth, Gerry Jue, and David Moulton—were working for the renowned San Francisco designer Charles Pfister in the 1980s, collaborating with the best talents in the business. When Pfister died and his office closed in 1990, the four decided to found their own company, Babey Moulton Jue & Booth. In the best start-up tradition, they all worked out of Babey’s living room for the first week. Since then, Moulton has retired, Dorothy Greene and Steve Henry have joined as principals, the staff has grown to around 45, and the firm’s nickname, BAMO, has become the official moniker. But BAMO’s goals have remained consistent: The San Francisco team specializes in the interior design of high-end residences and hotels. Babey’s first assignment, completed in 1993, was the Four Seasons in Milan, and Jue recently supervised the design of a model unit for the Four Seasons Private Residences in Bangkok. In between, the firm has worked with Peninsula, Ritz-Carlton, and Mandarin Oriental, while also designing properties and yachts in California, Hong Kong, and Abu Dhabi. “Because of our training,” says Jue, “we understand an architect’s priorities, and all the firms we’ve worked with feel that their work has been enhanced by our contribution.” [MICHAEL WEBB]



OPPOSITE PAGE AND TOP LEFT: MATTHEW MILLMAN; BOTTOM LEFT AND TOP RIGHT: BLAKE MARVIN



## Does BAMO focus solely on five-star properties?

**Pamela Babey:** Not always; we sometimes tackle more modest houses and hotels. It’s the integrity of the design that matters. Whatever the budget, there’s a quality of understatement in much of our work.

## How do you allocate the office’s projects?

**Gerry Jue:** Depending on whether there’s a personal connection or a general inquiry, we would see who is most interested and available—unless everyone is dying to get his hands on a specific project, in which case it’s who jumps first.

## Does each partner specialize in a certain area?

**GJ:** While we are responsible for doing similar things and meeting the same goals, each of us has a different design background and brings a unique perspective. Like a chamber ensemble, we each make a distinctive contribution to the whole but play in harmony together.

## How have you addressed the issue of sustainability?

**Michael Booth:** It has always been an important concern. We recently designed a house in Portola Valley, [California,] where the clients were passionate about that issue, and it was a great learning experience for our team. The most important lesson was: Try to source all building materials from within a 500-mile radius—closer, if possible.

**NEAR LEFT:** For Tah Mah Lah in the Portola Valley, Booth worked with the architect to create a sustainable home. The owners wanted the feel of a barn, but with elegant furnishings. The living room opens up with pocketing glass sliders. **TOP RIGHT:** The master bathroom at Tah Mah Lah.



### Show Stoppers

“We’ve done two Decorator Showcase rooms in San Francisco,” says Michael Booth, who worked with partner Steve Henry on both. “They take a lot of time and money, and you cannot miss the deadline—it’s like a military operation.” In 2012, BAMO created a grand salon in a historic mansion, complementing the ornate mahogany millwork with contemporary art. The eclectic furnishings included a French art deco commode, and existing track lighting was pumped up to create a feeling of drama. In 2014, during a busy time for the firm, Booth settled for a small wood-paneled room in a house that the legendary Michael Taylor had designed in the 1980s. Booth and Henry invented a hypothetical client—a young musician with deep pockets—and gave him an elegant setting in which to practice. Gilded wallpaper was applied to the ceiling, faded wood paneling was waxed, and two Gerrit Rietveld armchairs provided comfortable seating. “They are favorites of mine,” Booth says of the classic chairs, “and I can’t understand why they don’t get more airtime in the U.S.”

**TOP LEFT AND RIGHT:** For the 2012 San Francisco Decorator Showcase, BAMO created an eclectic grand salon in a 1902 mansion, blending a smart mix that included an art deco burl walnut sideboard, found at Epoca in San Francisco, and pieces of contemporary art. **RIGHT:** In 2014, the same team designed a music practice room in a wood-paneled interior of a more recent vintage; it features a Le Pentagone chandelier by Jonathan Browning.



ERIC PIASECKI

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The BAMO-designed sales gallery for the Four Seasons Private Residences in Bangkok has a mirrored foyer with grilles that shade full-height windows; the floor is polished marble. A show unit's master bedroom has a padded leather wall, and the bathroom has an Apaiser tub and a custom light fixture of bronze mesh.



### Model Behavior

Gerry Jue led the BAMO team that designed a four-bedroom display unit for a 73-story glass condo tower now under construction for the Four Seasons Private Residences in Bangkok. The location, on the Chao Phraya River, inspired the mirrored wall and polished brown-black marble floor in the foyer, which pulls in watery reflections through floor-to-ceiling windows. In the master bedroom, a wall is paneled with textured leather, complementing the custom sofa, Kalmar floor lamp, and vintage brass table lamps purchased from Collier Webb. The spacious master bathroom is lined with a subtly grained gray-white marble, and the tub and twin showerheads share a wet area. "We were working with a wonderful British architect, Andy Miller, who was formerly with Foster and Partners," says Jue. "Our goal was to create an interior for people who don't want to be bothered with furnishing a third or fourth residence. After seeing our show unit, people are buying a lot more four-bedroom condos, and the client is having to increase the supply."

### Eastern Accent

Pamela Babey and Dorothy Greene led the design team for the Han Yue Lou Hotel in Nanjing, the firm's first project in mainland China. The local owner wanted a place that would impress guests and attract business meetings and weddings. BAMO turned a modestly scaled lobby into a stunning composition of inlaid marble floors, mirrored walls behind geometric grilles, and a chandelier of gilded chains. In contrast, the lounge, which overlooks a Chinese garden, feels warm and intimate. Chairs are grouped around an open hearth, and an inset panel of richly grained marble provides organic decoration as in the early modern interiors of Adolf Loos in Vienna. "We gave the guest rooms a very cozy, residential quality," says Babey.

**RIGHT:** The foyer of the Han Yue Lou Hotel in Nanjing, China, evokes the glamour of a 1930s ballroom. There is a strong flavor of art deco—"an international style that resonates with Asian clients," Babey notes. **BELOW:** The lounge has a welcoming character that references traditional Chinese design.



CHESTER ONG



## BAMO's Top 10

**Pamela Babey > FASHION DESIGNER:** Valentino, for what they do! [Creative directors] Maria Grazia [Chiuri] and Pierpaolo [Piccioli] have taken the designs to a new modern standard. Artist and artisan collaborations—young artists and traditional Italian artisan work of high quality—bring everything into a fresh vision. There is a use of refreshing color, and every season has variations within it. ❖ **RESTAURANT:** Monsieur Bleu, Paris. It is modern, beautiful, with good food and great service. The interior is inspiring, the view is fabulous. ❖ **ART:** Manolo Valdés. The Velázquez influence and interpretation, along with the heads full of butterflies, make me happy, and that is what art should do! ❖ **FURNITURE:** The Brno chair. Ageless, lovely lines, and goes with anything.

**Michael Booth > ARCHITECTURE:** The Menil Collection in Houston. Elegant, simple, and sublime. ❖ **CAR:** What I drive: a Mercedes-Benz E350 wagon. But, if I had no children: a Bentley Continental GT Speed. ❖ **COCKTAIL:** Grey Goose martini, dry with a twist.

**Gerry Jue > DESTINATION:** Japan. I've been there 77 times so far, and it always fills me with wonder and awe. As soon as I think I've figured it out, I realize I don't know the first thing. ❖ **MOVIE:** *Vertigo*. I love seeing my hometown as it was the year after I was born. ❖ **GARDEN:** Bateman's, Rudyard Kipling's home in East Sussex. A beautiful Jacobean house surrounded by the most beautiful residential garden. We go every year. *BAMO*, 415.979.9880, [bamo.com](http://bamo.com) **H&S**



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** Bateman's, the historic home and garden of writer Rudyard Kipling, in East Sussex, England; a movie still from Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*; Tokyo, Japan; the Menil Collection in Houston, Texas; Mercedes-Benz E350 wagon; the Brno chair designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe; Manolo Valdés's *Odalisca VIII, 2004*; a martini with a twist of lemon.

MARTINI: WOLLEITZ/SHUTTERSTOCK; MANOLO VALDÉS: CHRISTIE'S IMAGES/RIIDEMAN IMAGES/PARAMOUNT GALLERY; CHAIR: DAVID MARLOW/IST DIBS; THE MENIL COLLECTION: DON GLENTZER; TOKYO: KITCHAKRON/THINKSTOCK; VERTIGO: MARY EVANS/PARAMOUNT PICTURE/RONALD GRANT/EVERETT COLLECTION; BATEMAN'S: TAVEL INK/GETTY IMAGES