

Real Estate

Sound Off:
Are Realtors
busy during the
pandemic? **M2**

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND [SFCHRONICLE.COM](https://www.sfchronicle.com) | Sunday, July 26, 2020 WB/PN

Stylish living on Joy Street

Kelly Finley heads design firm with philanthropic arm **M6**



Sen Creative

For this Tudor in Oakland, East Bay-based interior designer Kelly Finley of Joy Street Designs added modern flourishes like a patterned backsplash, stainless steel appliances and wooden display shelves.



Open Homes Photography

Price Point

Five-bedroom home at Jordan Park offers updated amenities and a two-car garage.

M4



Pendry Residences Park City

Getaway

Luxury homes at Pendry Residences Park City in Utah designed by S.F.'s SB Architects.

N1



Office downtown? Office downstairs.

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COVER STORY

DESIGNER PROFILE

Kelly Finley fashions vibrant, high-end interiors

By Jordan Guinn

Stylish, driven and altruistic, interior designer Kelly Finley finds meaning and purpose in beautifying living spaces.

Her design philosophy is simple.

"Everyone deserves to live in a home they love which can only be achieved when the space is personal, functional, and comfortable," said the founder and principal designer of Joy Street Design, a four-person operation based in the East Bay.

Finley puts action behind her words. Since 2018 the Chicago native has operated the "Joy Street Initiative" a philanthropic arm of her design firm that arranges interiors for nonprofits. She's especially proud of the work she's done with Oakland Elizabeth House, an organization that offers transitional housing to women with children who have experienced homelessness, violence and addiction.

Finley also recently hosted a giveaway for an essential worker in Washington D.C. Her firm donated \$5,000 to do an interior makeover, while securing in-kind donations of furniture to offset the overall costs.

Her interest in interior design blossomed later in life. For years, Finley, a graduate of Stanford's law school, worked as a litigator for a legal firm in San Francisco. She started Joy Street Design from her home in Bernal Heights in 2011, before moving to Los Angeles for her husband's work in 2012. Her first client in Los Angeles happened to be a colleague at the law firm in San Francisco, and Finley developed her portfolio from there.

She and her husband moved back to the East Bay in 2015 and since then she has attracted clients from across the



Liz Daly Photography

This condo in Lake Merritt, designed by Oakland's Kelly Finley, features a contemporary fan and patterned pillows.

country.

In this interview with the San Francisco Chronicle, Finley talks about her favorite homes to decorate, why she's committed to charity and what it's like being one of the few Black interior designers in the Bay Area.

Q: How did you start your firm, and how did you choose its name?

A: I started business while I was still practicing as an attorney, so I couldn't use my name. My husband and I owned a house in Bernal Heights on Joy Street. It's a quintessential San Francisco street. It's a one-block street

Details

Kelly Finley, founder and principal designer, Joy Street Design.

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that's literally stairs. I needed a name and my husband suggested I call it Joy Street. I loved it. I've thought about changing it, but I love it too much to change the name now.

Q: How did you get involved in interior design?

A: I was a white-collar litigator for a law firm in downtown San Francisco for about six years. I

liked what was doing, but it wasn't something I wanted to do everyday. While working at the firm I started taking night classes at Berkeley extension. I took a class on drafting. Then I took another class, and another. Two years later I was taking three classes while working 60 or 80 hours a week.

Q: What made you decide to start the Joy Street Initiative?

A: I grew up in Chicago and everything I achieved is because I had people help me. My grandma raised me when she didn't have to. I had teachers and others who helped me. For years I was figuring out how to give back. Ultimately, I wanted to create a nonprofit that provides the same services we give to our paying clients to those who could never afford it.

I like to think we give dignity and hope. We furnish rooms with new items and have professional people paint their space. We do this by donating 10% of our profits to the initiative. Those donations pay for the labor and our design partners often provide furnishings.

COVER STORY

DESIGNER PROFILE



Sen Creative

Left: A built-in window seat overlooks the backyard of this Houston home whose interior was designed by Kelly Finley of Oakland's Joy Street Design. **Above:** Finley likes to incorporate vibrant flourishes into her interiors.

Q: What made you join the Black Artist Design Guild?

A: I joined because there are very few Black designers in the Bay Area. The guild helped create more of a community for me through hosting events and meeting people. I had a desire to connect with other Black designers. It's been helpful, especially during the pandemic, meeting weekly on Zoom, learning about Black makers and artists and people you can use in your spaces.

It's a great fellowship. There's a great network of designers in the Bay Area, but it's lacking in that type of diversity. It's been an amazing experience. I'm very happy that I found it.

Q: What are your favorite

types of homes to work on?

A: Love a variety of architectural styles, but I especially love an old Craftsman or Victorian. And there are a lot of them in the East Bay. I love them because they have all these challenges. Do you keep the wood? Do you paint the wood? There's something really gratifying about taking a space that had a life before and modernizing it without losing its character. I love incorporating color, texture and wallpaper into my designs. I'll put wallpaper between wood paneling and make it work. Those are the spaces I enjoy. I prefer older homes to new construction because they're more engaging from a design standpoint.

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Today: Is Bay Area traffic back?

Charts show traffic patterns that were much lower at start of the pandemic are edging back to normal.



Throughline
Presentation and perception of arts may never be the same after Bay Area emerges from pandemic. **J1**



Food + Wine
Ice pops have evolved from fruit juices to sweet and spicy flavors inspired by world traditions. **L1**

San Francisco Chronicle

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Parents try to fill void with 'pandemic pods'

By Jill Tucker

The fear and desperation erupted just over a week ago as parents realized schools would not reopen in August as hoped, and their kids would be stuck in front of screens, again, learning to read and solve equations despite a largely disastrous two months of distance learning in the

Online extra

The latest "Fifth & Mission" podcast explores whether "pandemic pods" are more of a solution or a problem. sfchronicle.com/fifth

spring.

Privileged parents — those with money and connections — banded together to do

something about it.

In the past week alone, tens of thousands of families in the Bay Area and across the country have found each other on Facebook, created contact lists organized by city or school, and formed "pandemic pods" — in some cases offering educators \$100 an hour or more to tutor or teach small groups in

Education continues on A19



Gabrielle Lurie / The Chronicle

James Thomas of San Leandro helps his son Jamal Lee Jr., 10, with a project as his other son, Javaughn Thomas, 7, watches.

SEEING SOME SILVER LININGS — AND A FEW DARK CLOUDS



Gabrielle Lurie / The Chronicle

Movie fans settle in to watch "The Shining" at a San Mateo drive-in. Avoiding crowds keeps the public safer.

Hope: Progress in drugs, behavior stirs optimism

Bay Area: San Quentin rehab projects canceled by coro-

Concern: Rule-breaking wedding sparks outbreak

Test sites lag in areas that need them most

By Cynthia Dizikes and Joaquin Palomino

As the coronavirus dug into the Bay Area's low-income Latino and Black neighborhoods this spring, doctors and community leaders pleaded for more testing sites.

But even as access to testing grew in wealthier, whiter parts of several Bay Area counties, community testing sites lagged or offered only limited hours in communities of color where the virus was spreading fastest, according to a Chronicle analysis of test-site data from March through mid-July.

Richmond and San Pablo — predominantly Latino, Asian American and Black working-class cities — have some of the highest infection rates in Contra Costa County. Yet they still have about the same number of community testing sites as Walnut Creek, an affluent, mostly white city with half the population. Walnut Creek had 4 cases per 1,000 people compared with 13 in Richmond and 19 in San Pablo, as of Friday.

East Oakland, the epicenter of Alameda

Testing continues on A16

Coronavirus update

As of 8:30 p.m. Saturday

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