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## EcoHero

### EcoHeroes of Sustainable Design: Robin Wilson

March 22 2011

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*Kennedy Green House designer Robin Wilson worked the four principles of eco-design—recyclable, reusable, sustainable and non-toxic—before sustainability was an industry trend. All photos: Robin Wilson Home*

Sustainable interior design is good design. In a world where concerns about the environment have become mainstream, interior design

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### Win It!



As featured on EcoStiletto, slip into super-comfortable satin ballet flats from Extra Seed, which are vegan made from upcycled scrap fabric with recycled tire soles, worth \$38, which we're giving away this week in eco-swap. How do you win? Simply by signing up for our free weekly Newsletter, EcoStiletto Subscribers get automatic entry into \$250+ weekly eco-swap giveaways and \$250+ monthly sustainable shoe giveaways. Yes, you read that right. Nope, no string. Shouldn't you be signing up right about

things. Should I be signing up right about now?

## EcoHero & Living Archives

EcoHeroes of Sustainable Design: Robin Wilson

EcoHeroes of Sustainable Design: Kirsten Flynn

EcoHeroes of Sustainable Design: Jessica Helgerson

EcoHeroes of Sustainable Design: Natalie Norcross

Eco-Hero: A Bash, Please Bachelorette Bash

Eco-Hero: A Bash, Please Wedding

Eco-Hero: A Bash, Please Birthday

A Bash, Please Picnic

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Kim Barnouin Tells All

Kim Barnouin's Vegan Holiday Secrets

Kim Barnouin is Life-Changing

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Just Your Average, Everyday Skinny Bitch

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Is Jim Denevan a Whirling Dervish?

Jim Denevan: The Thanksgiving Connection

Farm-to-Table Visionary Jim Denevan Is Gardenless

Crushing On Cri de Coeur Vegan Shoes & Boots

Our Latest Obsession: Neaurara Vegan Shoes

Sweet Dreams Are Made Of This: Recycled, Sustainable Environment Furniture

EcoStiletto's Two-Year Anniversary Party Proves Earth Day is Every Day in L.A.

Sneak Peek at Fall's Best Sustainable Shoes

Carbon Neutral Travel

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Flu-Fighters

Ani Phyto's Raw Food Desserts

Green Your Garden: Garden Organics, Garden Nerd, Heart Beet Gardening and Seeds of Change

Top Three New Eco-Friendly, No VOC Paints

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Plan A Sustainable "Exquisite Corpse" Party: Bash Eco Events, MyPunchBowl.com and TreeCycle Paper

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Eco Past Earth Day at Williams Sonoma, Pottery Barn and West Elm

Eco-Flooring Options at Vinegar Hill: Vidrepor, Unity Creations, FLOR, Target and Coverings, Etc.

Green Lawns That Really Are: LEHR, Brill and Eco-Lawn

Glare-Free & Green: Kathy Pryzoda on CFL Lights at Home

Danny Seo's Tips to an Eco-Friendly Backyard Barbecue: Green Hearts, Brimmette and Method

seeks to minimize the impact of a product's manufacture, use or disposal.

But let's make it personal: Are you tired of coming home to a uninspiring space, but worried that crunchy granola or austere uber-modern eco-friendly design options might make it too cool to be comfortable? Think again. Today's sustainable design takes "reuse, reduce and recycle" to new heights in creativity and sophistication. This month, we feature a new crop of interior design mavens who think outside the box to prove that chic and eco-friendly go hand-in-hand. *Part Four of Five.*

Eco-friendly and wellness guru **Robin Wilson** is a living, breathing interior design empire. She launched her New York design firm, Robin Wilson Home, in 2000, creating stunning, healthy eco-sanctuaries from the foundation to the furniture. Her client list boasts high-profilers such as the Clintons and the Kennedys, and she authored a book—*Kennedy Green House*—based on her part in Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s house renovation. She is also the first woman to license her name for eco-friendly kitchen cabinetry.

Robin's philosophy centers on the big picture--not just sustainable design, but how an eco-friendly home promotes wellness and health in our homes. She focuses on materials that are sustainable, reusable, recyclable and non-toxic. And in an effort for us to live well, she launched **The Nest Store**, a line of home products created from eco-friendly materials.

*EcoStiletto: How did you get involved in sustainable design?*

Robin Wilson: I started my company in 2000. I was involved in sustainable design before it was called sustainable design. From my early background in Austin, TX, I was aware of how the ecosystem in your homes and community are intertwined. Having suffered from allergies, it is my belief that the indoor air quality can affect one's health, and sustainable design can influence your environment, home and lifestyle.

*ES: Your work has been described as "classic with a modern touch." Where do you get your inspiration?*

RW: I love classic movies, architects like Paul R. Williams and Frank Lloyd Wright, and the fashion sense of people like Audrey Hepburn, Diahann Carroll and Lena Horne. The important thing to remember is that classic design is timeless.

*ES: What eco-design elements did you use for Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s house?*

RW: I was part of a design team led by the client, two architects, a builder, and a project manager. And our focus was utilizing as much reclaimed materials of the old house as possible, while identifying products that could be recycled or up-cycled. So, the countertops from Eco by Cosentino came from recycled sinks, tubs and mirrors. John Yarema, our phenomenal custom flooring expert, reclaimed as much as the old floor as possible. We focused on the four principles of eco-friendly design: recyclable, reusable, sustainable and non-toxic. We used low-VOC Benjamin Moore paint and solar shingles, and hybrid hot water systems that create instant hot water so that you're not running the shower for 10 minutes to get warm.

*You've done projects for high-profile clients. Who is one dream celebrity you would like to add to that list?*

RW: I would love to design Tyler Perry's house. He is a phenomenal pioneer in his profession, and he wants to do a green house. And he is someone who will continue to influence future generations with his work and with his empowerment platform.

*ES: Who's your eco-hero and why?*

RW: Rachel Carson. She was the author of *Silent Spring*, which advanced the global environment movement that led to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*KT: What's the biggest green change you'd like to make in your life--even if it's impossible right now?*

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Home

Eco-Reupholstering with Rubie Green, Mod Green  
Pod and Zafu Kapok

Hot Trends in Eco-Friendly Alcohol from  
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Insider's Guide to a Greener Kitchen with Anna  
Rosemann, Nature Mill, Kenmore, GE, Viking and  
Thermador

Living Al Fresco: Green Furniture from CB2 and  
Heather Road, Solar-Powered Sun Lamps from

Creating an Impossible Right Home.

RW: I would like to build my own dream house, as eco-friendly as possible.

Want more? This month's sustainable design EcoHeroes includes **Natalie Norcross**, **Jessica Helgerson**, **Kirsten Flynn**, **Michaela Scherrer** and **Robin Wilson**. Check back next week!

*Kaleena Thompson is a regular contributor to Luxury Home Quarterly, Green Building + Design, Halogentv.com, Orlando Home & Leisure, and MARCH magazines, where she covers eco-friendly fashion, trends, sustainable design and architecture, and humanitarian and philanthropic efforts. Kaleena loves a high-heeled pump, enjoys a good read, and indulges her inner cupcake foodie.*

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