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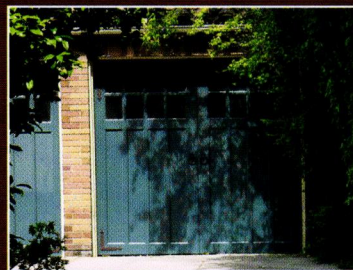
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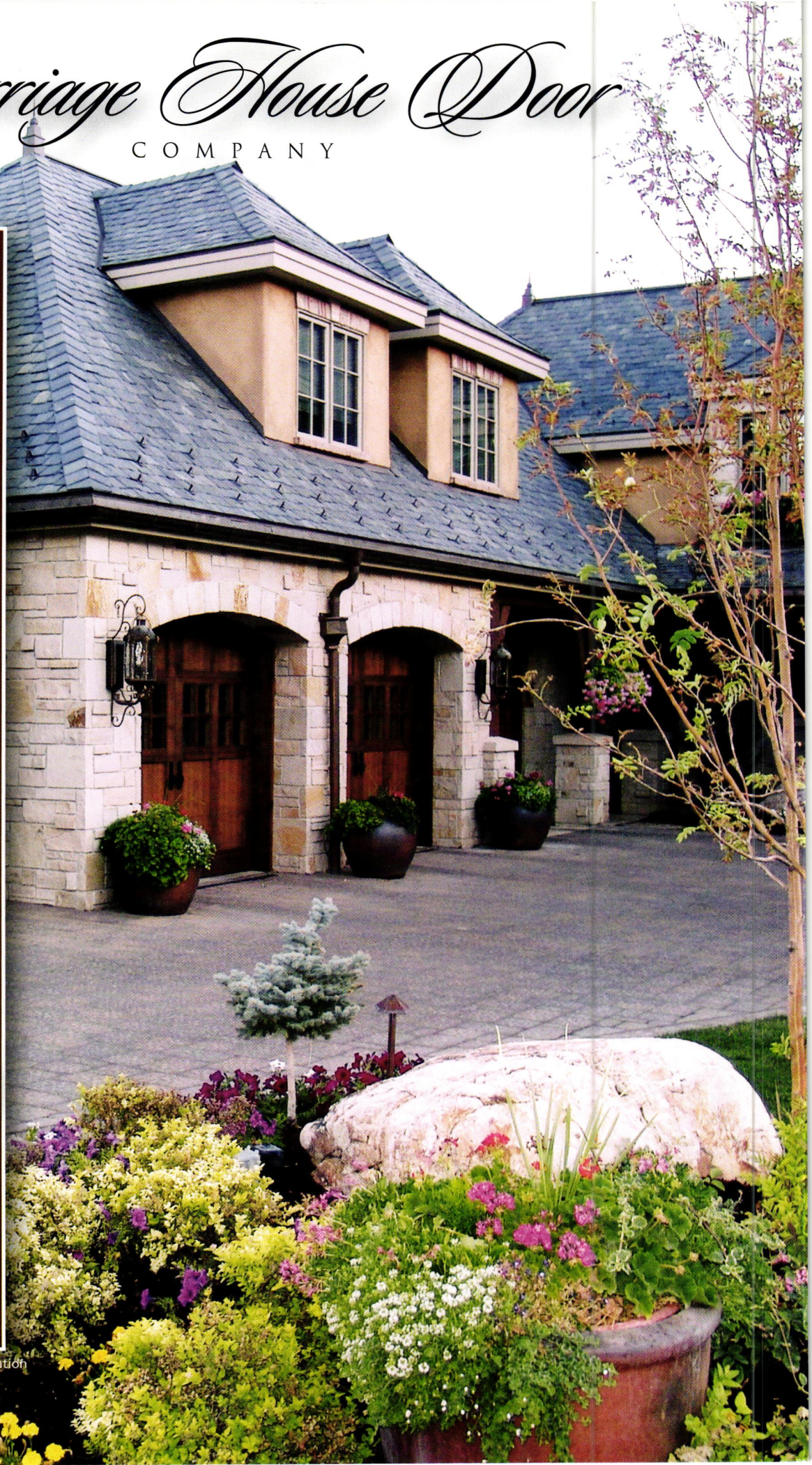
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Teamwork



This past fall, a group of my dearest friends volunteered one weekend to put a final coat of paint on my house, which had been scraped, sanded, and primed over the summer months. With paintbrushes and pails in hand, we hit the ladders, and within two days, we got two-thirds of the house covered in a shade of Benjamin Moore called "pigeon gray." It was so beautiful to see everyone pitching in and getting the job done, and inside my friends' children happily watched the "Wonder Pets," a cartoon on the Nick Jr. network about a turtle, duckling, and guinea pig helping others in need. Their theme song is "What's Going to Work—Teamwork!" I felt that was our theme song for the weekend, too!

When I look through the pages of *New Old House* magazine, I see that same level of dedication to teamwork in the projects we feature: architects, builders, designers, and craftspeople coming together to create beautiful living spaces. And without all of these different skills coming together, we would not

see such beautiful results.

Peter Zimmeran of Peter Zimmerman Architects built a French villa in Philadelphia's Main Line. Without the efforts by the masons, stone carvers, and other craftspeople working in harmony on the project, the house would not be as beautiful and alive as it is today.

Russell Versaci writes in his column about the need to get back to basics, which he describes as the architecture of common sense based on tradition and community living. And when it comes to building our homes and communities, the only way to get the best results is if all the players involved work together: the architects, builders, and developers. It is only through this teamwork that we can create wonderful, livable new old houses. We hope that you enjoy this issue and that it brings you ideas for your own projects—no matter how big or small.

Nancy E. Berry,
Editor

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EDITOR Nancy E. Berry
EDITOR-AT-LARGE Russell Versaci
CONTRIBUTORS J. Robert Ostergaard
 April Paffrath
 Rob Leanna
EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD Christine G. H. Franck
 Jonathan Hale
 Sandra Vitzthum

DESIGN DIRECTOR Sylvia Gashi-Silver
ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR Karen Smith
ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR Jessica Salas-Acha
COLOR SPECIALIST Nathan Winter

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PRODUCTION ARTIST Mark Sorenson
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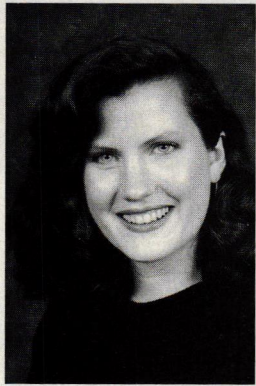
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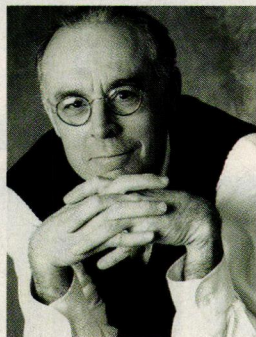
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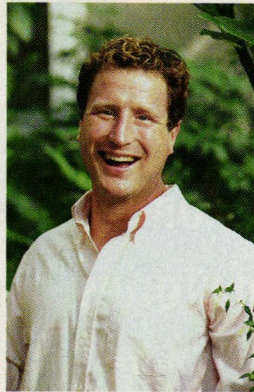
Christine G.H. Franck is a designer and educator with a practice in New York City. She is the former director of the academic programs of the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical

America (ICA&CA). She sits on the board of directors of the ICA&CA and the management committee of INTBAU and holds a master of architecture from the University of Notre Dame. She was honored by the Prince of Wales with the first Public Service Award of the Prince's Foundation for her outstanding contribution to the study of architecture and design.



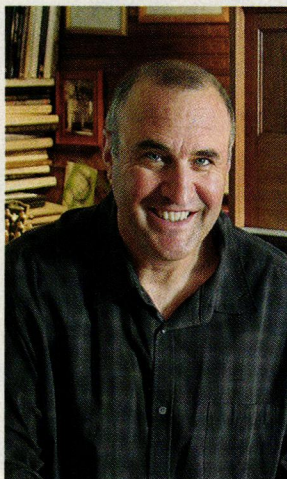
Editor-at-Large **Russell Versaci** is a residential architect who has spent two decades designing traditional houses. He attended the Harvard University

Graduate School of Design in 1973 and received his graduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Fine Arts in 1979. He has designed traditional country houses, cottages, and farmhouses, as well as restorations and significant additions to period homes. Also an author, Versaci's debut book is titled *Creating a New Old House* (Taunton Press, 2003).



Michael Weishan is host emeritus of PBS's "The Victory Garden" in 2001 and has shared his design tips, expert advice, and trademark sense of humor with gardeners of all levels. In addition to head-

ing his own design firm, Michael Weishan & Associates, which specializes in historically based landscapes, he has written for numerous national magazines and periodicals and authored three books: *The New Traditional Garden*, *From a Victorian Garden*, and *The Victory Garden Gardening Guide*. Weishan lives west of Boston in an 1852 farmhouse surrounded by three acres of gardens.



For more than 30 years, **Eric Roth** has been capturing life through the lens, which has guided him on local, national, and international journeys. He has shot for such publications as *Traditional*

Home, *Metropolitan Home*, *Elle Decor*, and *Coastal Living*. He lives in Topsfield, Massachusetts. He has two lovely daughters.

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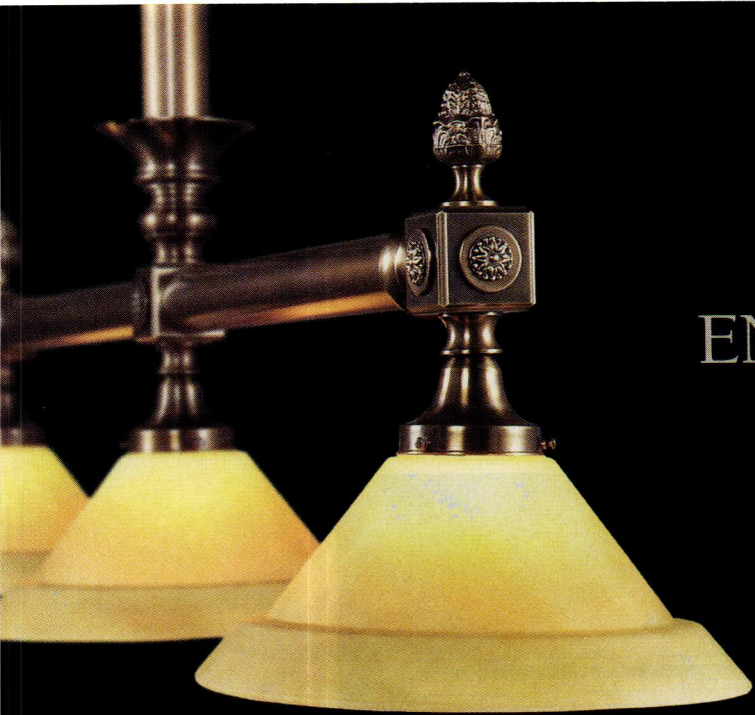
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Back to Basics

A return to the architecture of common sense. TEXT BY RUSSELL VERSACI

American home building is in a total meltdown, but what seems like a train wreck may turn out to be a blessing in disguise. We can seize this opportunity to start building better homes again.

Everything we have tried in the past half century has failed to make America a better place to live. We have tried Modernism. We have tried suburban subdivisions. We have tried production home building. Nothing has worked for the better.

With the industry broken in so many ways, it's time for a change. The recent and now certain death of the suburban subdivision and its cookie-cutter production methods opens up home building to a new dawn. But how do we let the sun shine in?

The answer is to go back to basics—an architecture of common sense based on tradition and community living. Instead of homes that are built to fall apart and are unlovable, clustered in sterile subdivisions and demeaning warehouse districts, we will build new old houses in hometowns designed around the old-fashioned concept of “neighborhood.” These neighborhoods will look a lot like the places we Americans have grown to cherish: traditional homes in small towns that are rooted in place, built to last, and tailored to our needs—in short, lovable homes.

Things will be different this time around because we can't turn back the clock and go back to making houses by hand. It is far too expensive, and there are simply too few artisans out there to build the old-fashioned way. Instead, we must turn to manufactured home building, where economies of scale and process translate into affordability.

There are three important players in the home-building industry who need to embrace these new challenges: archi-



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itects, developers, and builders.

Architects. Many architects have spent decades slowly re-learning the lost art of traditional architecture. They are ready to reclaim the turf of the small house from builders whose industrial-strength solutions drove the charms of the American home into suburban tract-mansion purgatory.

Developers. By now developers have seen the wisdom and financial rewards of creating new traditional neighborhoods that are desirable and market-friendly alternatives to sprawl. New small-town communities are prospering despite the current economic downturn.

Builders. The curtain is just beginning to rise on building houses in a factory, where high-quality materials, precision machinery, efficient delivery schedules, and environmental stewardship all converge in a promising nexus. The time has come for builders to open their minds to new home-building scenarios.

To improve American home building, we need to harness the power of all three groups, a tri-legged stool of support for a new paradigm: good traditional architecture, hometown communities, and factory fabrication. To succeed, each group must invest in two common-sense approaches: green building and off-site construction.

Green building has long been the common-sense way to build. For traditional homes, this approach is as old as the sun. It means working with Nature's gifts rather than working to outsmart them. Instead of using technology to work around Nature (such as using insulated glass walls, smart-wired thermostats, and air conditioning) you build a good roof overhang, site a house for natural heating and cooling, and open windows for cross-ventilation. Building walls with high thermal mass; recycling natural materials like iron, brick, and wood; and working with the natural landscape are second nature to tradi-

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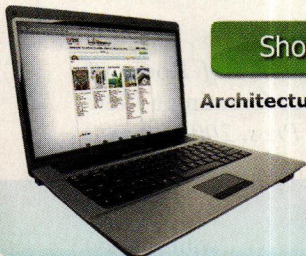
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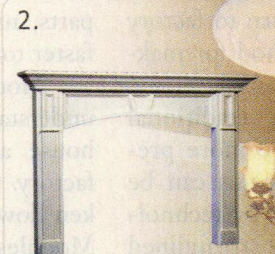


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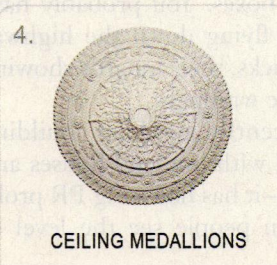
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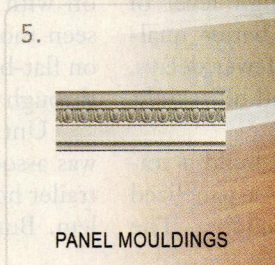
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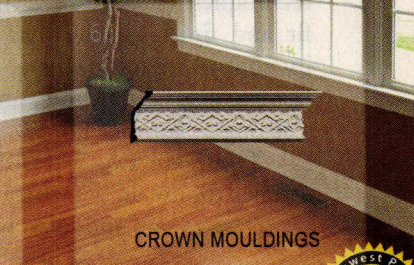
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Tucker Bayou, the 2007 *Southern Living* Idea House. The innovative custom modular home was a result of a collaboration between Looney Ricks Kiss Architects, St. Joe Company, Haven Custom Homes, and *Southern Living* magazine.

tional building. Now being promoted as “green building,” these tried-and-true solutions show us the way forward.

Unlike green building, off-site construction is a new twist, but a necessary one. While building by hand is by no means a lost art, it is an extremely expensive one, and most of us simply cannot afford it. If we truly want to make home building better, we must turn to factory fabrication as a viable method for making affordable traditional homes.

In a factory setting, traditional design and detailing can be more precisely crafted, building systems can be developed and made better by technology, and the process can be streamlined and improved over the on-site, stick-built methods that have changed little since the Middle Ages. Building off-site in a factory uses efficient fabrication techniques to achieve a high level of fit and finish—as well as better quality control, reduced waste, fewer delays, faster construction time, and ultimately, a stronger, sturdier home.

There are two ways to build a traditional house in a factory: a panelized kit of parts and modular building. The

first is easier to understand because it is much like the Sears kit homes of yesteryear. All of the building parts are pre-cut and assembled into components that are shipped knocked-down to a building site, where they are put together by a builder. As the house goes together piece by piece, the process looks a whole lot like stick building, except there are fewer parts, many of which are prebuilt and faster to install.

Modular building is more difficult to understand because it involves a whole-house approach to construction in a factory. Conceptually, the house is broken down into sections called modules. Modules look like clam-shell boxes that are bolted together side by side to make up a floor of a house. To make a whole house, several floors of modules are stacked on top of each other and capped off with roof boxes. You probably have seen modules flying down the highway on flat-bed trucks, their innards showing through plastic wrappers.

Until recently, modular building was associated with low-end houses and trailer homes—it has had a big PR problem. But when people see the level of

quality and detail that modular technology can offer in a traditional home, that problem will be a thing of the past.

Modular building can deliver a precisely built, well engineered house that is made to more stringent standards than stick building and is nearly finished inside and out. The windows and doors are in, the interiors are dry-walled and painted, the kitchen and baths are installed, and the heating, plumbing, and wiring systems are all done. In short, the future house is about 80 percent complete.

Aside from the obvious advantage of being nearly complete, a modular house is a made-to-order one. This means it is not a cookie-cutter assembly line product, but one in which each house is individually built and can be custom-tailored to suit personal needs. You want those Plain & Fancy kitchen cabinets and Waterworks bathroom fixtures you saw in a magazine? It's done. Antique heart pine floors and custom trim moldings? They're yours. These and many other modifications can be accommodated in the production process. In the end, yours is a custom-built home that just happens to be built in a factory. And it costs a lot less to build.

Today we have a chance to return American home building to its rightful place as a source of national pride. We can make the new old house the essential home of new urban and rural home building—rich in character, sustainable, and made to order. Though these homes may be born on a factory floor, they will be virtually indistinguishable from those we Americans have loved for centuries. They will be the classic homes of tomorrow, beloved, inherited, and preserved by the next generations, breathing new life into America's story of home. **NOH**

Russell Versaci is the author of Roots of Home: The Journey to Creating a New Old House (Taunton Press, 2008).



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Neat & Tidy

New old pantries command order, prioritize service, and venerate charm.

TEXT BY JENNIFER SPERRY

For hundreds of years, pantries have proven themselves protectors of abundance. They are an American design tradition, and their endurance represents our continuity. Inside, well-stocked shelves instill comfort and reassure the well-being of family.

Like our Colonial predecessors, modern households maintain stockpiles of provisions, merging the store-bought with the homegrown and homemade. When kitchens and dining rooms can no longer cope, the pantry emerges as an accommodating storage collaborator.

Past Versus Present

Storage pantries are descended from the buttery (commonly known as butt'ry), named after the large barrels or "butts" of ale, wine, and liquors stored there. These rooms were housed in cool northern corners of Colonial homes. The butler's pantry emerged in grand estates during the nineteenth century, particularly its latter half. Sited between the kitchen and dining room as a buffer between dinner guests and staff, it allowed servers to plate meals and also stored china and silver. This upper-class feature eventually spread to middle-class homes.

During the twentieth century, the lack of storage in kitchens grew increasingly problematic, and pantry cabinets began to migrate beyond their confines. The Hoosier cabinet, a multipurpose furniture piece complete with cabinets and counters space, was popular from the turn of the century to the 1920s. In the 1950s, as refrigeration improved, prepared foods became more common, and kitchens gained additional cabinets and fixtures, America experienced a general recession in pantry construction.

Today, although kitchen cabinets and their storage feats are impressive, the desire for pantries is once again on the



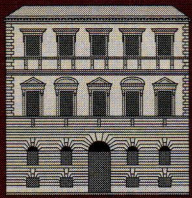
COURTESY OF PLAIN & FANCY

rise. During the 1990s, writes Catherine Seiberling Pond, author of *The Pantry—Its History and Modern Uses*, “A pantry revival in American homes [was] driven by a preference for separate food and dish storage and an emergent nostalgic appreciation of this valuable kitchen space.”

Plain and Fancy Cabinetry, located in Pennsylvania, designed this traditionally styled dish pantry. Note the use of beadboard and wood countertops.

The Right Fit

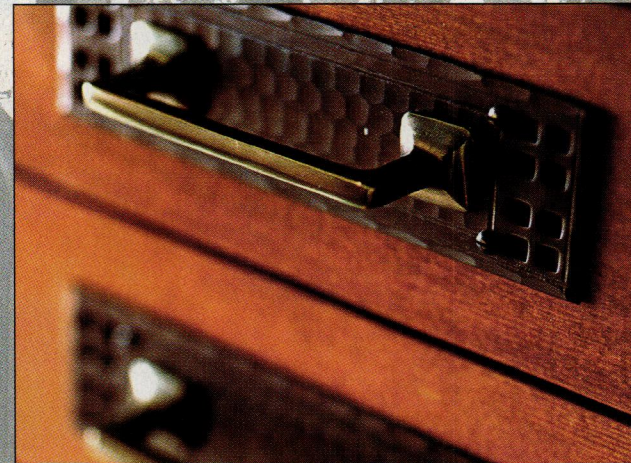
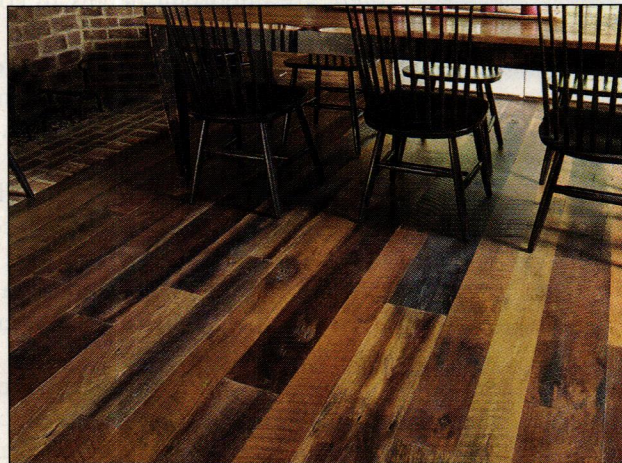
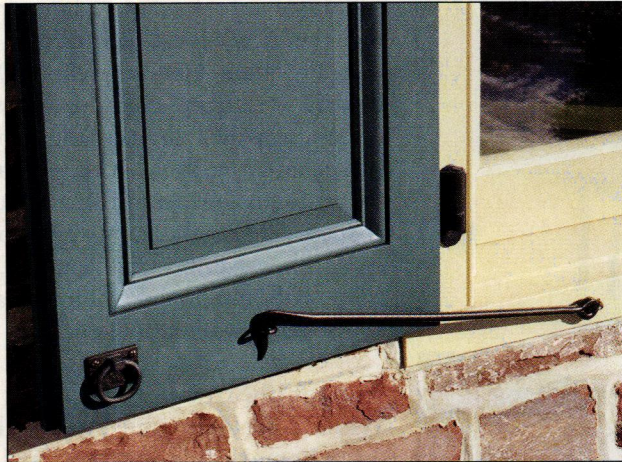
In remodeling or renovating an existing home, finding room for a pantry



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A window above the counters allows for additional light into a small pantry designed by Crown Point.

poses a challenge, especially considering kitchens' space-draining features, such as appliances, eat-in areas, built-in desks, and islands. Although butler's and food pantries are traditionally located between the kitchen and dining room and off the kitchen respectively, today's standards are flexible, and size and loca-

tion are customized to suit cooking and entertaining tendencies.

For modest homes, pantries work well when they double as circulation space, says architect Sandra Vitzthum of Montpelier, Vermont. Her designs commonly line a short hallway with pantry-style storage cabinets, forming a dual-use area.

Plain & Fancy Custom Cabinetry in Schaefferstown, Pennsylvania, crafts varying pantry styles, many of which assimilate into kitchen cabinetry without the need for a standalone room, says President George Achey. Options include a narrow slide-out drawer for spices, a wider drawer for cans and spices, and a walk-in corner pantry unit that extends 36 inches from the corner. If space allows, the company also crafts comprehensive butler's pantries, typically with mullioned window cabinets above and drawer storage below.

Thoughtful Details

While door styles and finishes depend on a home's style and personal taste, there are important details to consider when selecting and arranging cabinets. A simple rule of thumb governs the choice between open shelving and solid cabinets, explains Vitzthum. Open shelving is perfect for everyday needs, but cabinet doors are recommended for infrequently accessed objects to combat dust accumulation. Glass-front cabinets keep needed objects in plain sight; however, they, too, require occasional dusting and cleaning.

In place of a counter, Vitzthum often places a shallower upper cabinet on top of a slightly deeper, 30-inch base cabinet. "You don't want to waste prime storage space, which typically ranges from two feet off the ground up to six feet, with unnecessary counter space," she cautions.

Cabinet depth plays an important role in a food pantry. Vitzthum prefers one side lined with deep cabinets, and narrower storage, about eight inches deep, along remaining walls. "Eight inches of depth is typical, particularly above waist level," she says. "You don't want to have more than two cans in a row on a shelf. Things get lost in the back. Unused dead space would be better served by more maneuvering room.

"It's a really good idea to measure items you think are huge," she contin-

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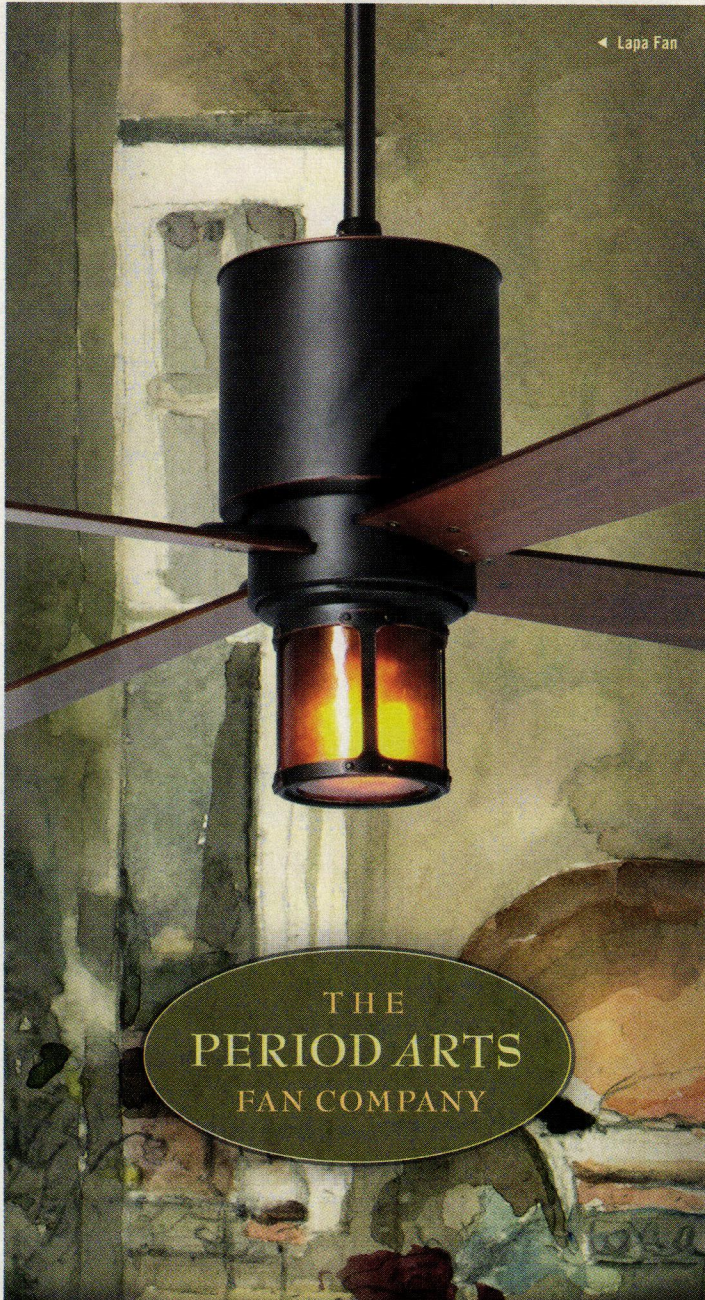
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COURTESY OF CROWN POINT CABINETRY

Crown Point created this built-in cabinetry inside an existing space.

ues. “People are sometimes surprised that items are not as large as they think.”

When located along an outside wall, food pantries benefit from the inclusion of a window, a design detail Vitzthum highly favors: “It allows you to see items in natural light.” Instead of doors, keeping a pantry open to the kitchen allows for quick access as well as free flow of light between the spaces.

Pantries also can alleviate crowding in the kitchen by accepting certain appliances. Pamela Shangraw-Murdough, owner of Kennebunk Kitchens & Baths in Maine, suggests including appliances, such as microwaves, which are not used everyday. For one project with an existing small kitchen and generous walk-in pantry, Shangraw-Murdough placed the wall ovens in the latter, explaining, “You put the food in and turn the clock on—an oven is not something you need to attend to all the time.”

Depending on their owners’ needs, walk-in pantries often blur the line between food pantry, china cabinet, prep area, and bar. For a home on New Hampshire’s Lake Winnepesaukee, Crown Point Cabinetry designer Karen Laskoske oriented the pantry’s cabinet design around dishes and serving ware. One factor contributing to this arrangement was the lack of a buffet or hutch in the dining room.

This utilitarian pantry was sited in the center of the home, reserving view-facing walls for the main living areas. The architect included a leaded glass window in one of the pantry’s interior walls, connecting the space to the home’s light and views. “Even if you are in the pantry opening a bottle of wine surrounded by interior walls, you can



Crown Point used a mix of glass-front and solid cabinets in this pantry, outfitted with a sink and dishwasher.

peer out the window and see through the home toward the lake,” explains Laskoske.

Butler's Pantries

Although kitchen staff is a rarity now, the butler's pantry still functions like its namesake, organizing serving trays, glassware, ice, wine, and other beverages for large parties and fulfilling guests' needs.

One major benefit of a butler's pantry, says designer Jim Balcom of Crown Point Cabinetry, is that drinks can be served outside the realm of a cook's busy workspace. For a traditional butler's pantry in a New Jersey home, Balcom designed custom cabinets, finished in creamy white milk paint. Visible from the kitchen via an arched opening, the pantry's craftsmanship is very much on display.

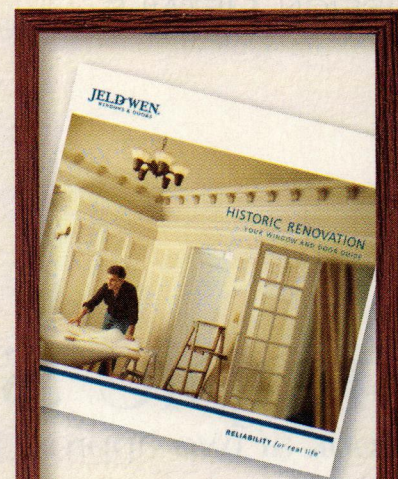
Glassware is stored in the upper cabinet, where two glass-fronted doors have eight individual panes of glass each. Below, an attractive counter of quarter-

sawn white oak tops a base of drawers, which organizes silverware and placemats. Crown Point's Newport doors, marked by a quarter-round bead that frames flat panels, grace a pair of side cabinets: one is customized with individual dowels for linen storage, and the other contains shelves.

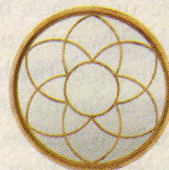
Assessing cooking and entertaining habits, collections, and bulk storage needs is a vital step toward achieving a pantry that harmonizes with the hum of a household. Whether it functions in full view or obscurity, attention to detail can affect not only its appearance, but also its practicality. A pantry that keeps foodstuffs safe, collections secure, and users well fed successfully fulfills its historic legacy. **NOH**

Jennifer Sperry is co-owner of Sperry Communications (sperrycomm.com) and a freelance writer based in New Bedford, Mass.

For Resources, see page 72.



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Simple Staircases

A look at two approaches to designing traditional steps. **TEXT BY NANCY E. BERRY**

Staircases not only offer a practical way to get between your home's different floors but also are an integral design element within the home—truly a focal point for the home. Whether a grand front staircase or a back hall stair, the design should always work into the architectural theme of the home.

There are as many stair styles as there are home styles, so your home design will determine your stair design. Today, many homes draw on the tradition of classical architecture to create neoclassical styles. The neoclassical incorporates balance and harmony of design, rather than strictly copying a historical style. There are also staircases that offer simply treads and risers without traditional handrail balusters and newel posts.

If you are working with a clean slate (new construction), placing the staircase in your home will be an easy task; if you are renovating your home, moving a staircase might be an expensive challenge. Stairs also take up space within the home and have a great impact on the overall floor plan—probably the greatest. If you are planning to replace a staircase, work with an architect before ripping out the old and incorporating the new. Also check your local building codes to determine stair regulations.

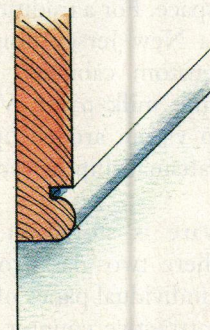
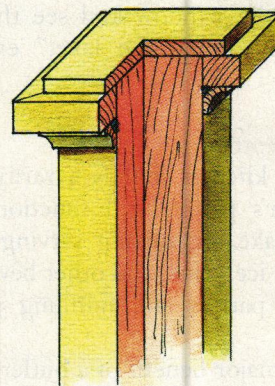
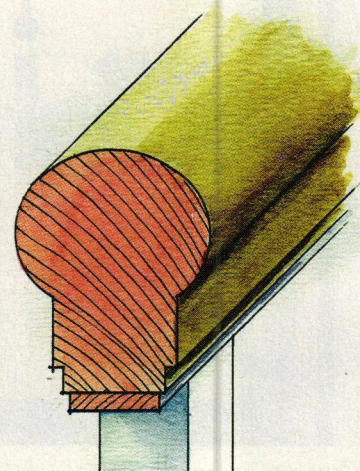
Cape Cottage

For this classic cottage's stair hall (shown right) on the island of Martha's Vineyard, architect Mark Hutker wanted

to achieve an open, inviting ascent to the second floor. Windows are located at the upper level to allow light to stream onto the stairway all day. Hutker created a straightforward design that enhances the daily event of using the staircase. "Our firm used honest and pure detailing in a logical fashion, as if a carpenter had simply used what he had at hand in the age when the Cape cottage was born," says Hutker. Joints are thought out to respect each element of the stairway on its own merit. "Discerning what each element adds to the composition is easy, like the ethics of a good wooden boat. There is nothing used that is not necessary to the overall function of the stair," he says.

Hutker chose to emphasize the strongest elements of the stair. On a practical point, natural wood is used where handprints would likely show on a painted surface. The newels and handrails are pine with painted pine balusters. The treads are oak with painted pine risers, and there are painted-pine stringers. Hutker used a primer and three finish coats of oil-based paint applied with a brush, as opposed to a roller, for a wonderful old-house feeling.

The tongue-and-groove wallboard is a 1" x 6" V-groove in a clear pine. The boards are vertically oriented to enhance the vertical feeling of the stair space. Simple flat-board casings are used for windows and doors. "We felt we had just enough different wood surfaces and finishes that added detail but would not be lost or complicate the simplicity of



From top: The handrail is an oval stock shape. The square newel post picks up the detailing of the balusters. The treads are left in a natural wood tone, while the risers are painted a crisp white.



BRIAN VANDEN BRINK
This sweet stair hall in a seacoast cottage has a simple, straightforward staircase. "We wanted the space to look like it has always been there," says Hutker.

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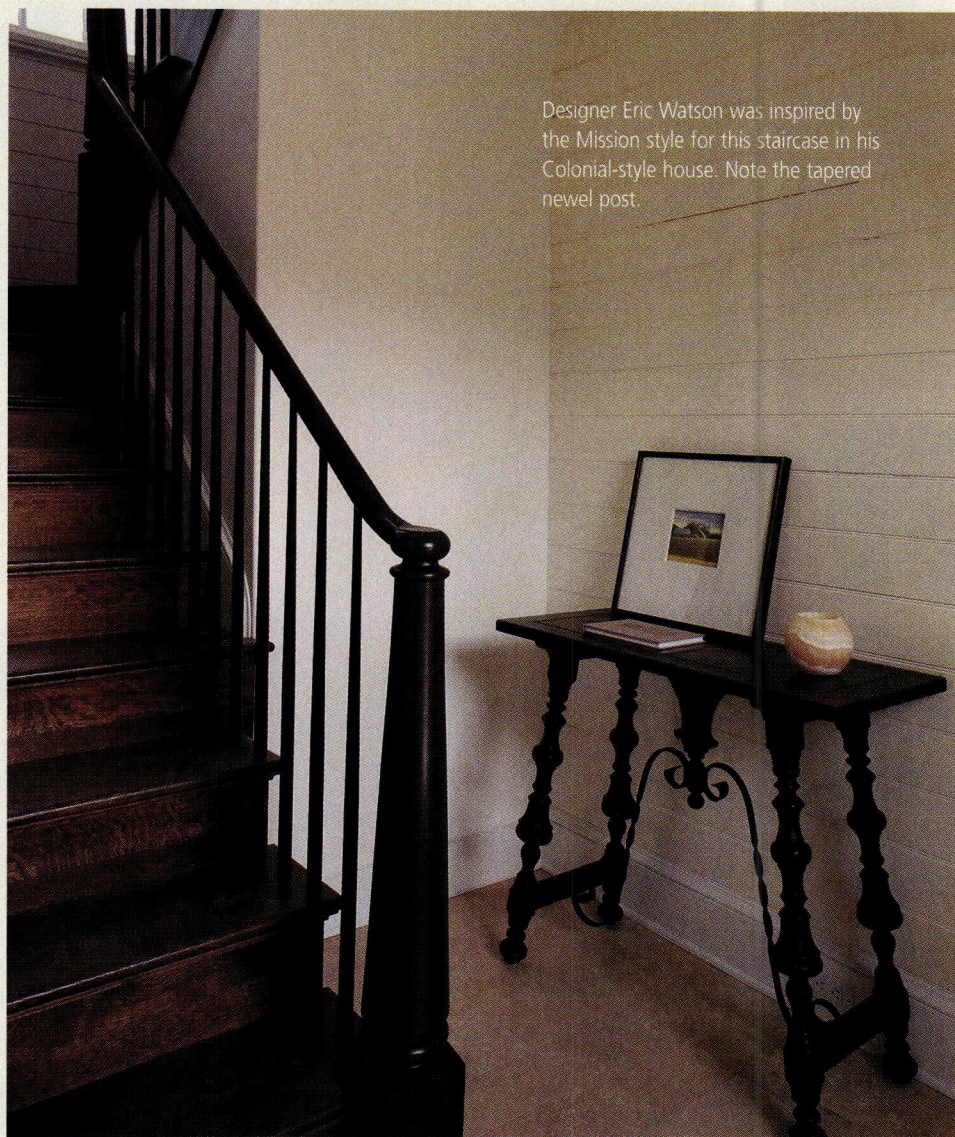
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DESIGN DETAILS



Designer Eric Watson was inspired by the Mission style for this staircase in his Colonial-style house. Note the tapered newel post.

RICHARD SEXTON

the design," says Hutker. "We wanted to do what a carpenter might have done at the turn of the last century. The design is simple, plain, and honest."

Eclectic Colonial

After designing 25 houses in a neo-traditional Florida beach community, architect Eric Watson decided it was time to design his own home there. His inspiration came from Dutch Colonial, French Colonial, and Mission styles. Intermingling these design elements was quite a challenge, but Watson pulled

it off effortlessly. The stair hall is one aspect of this combination of designs. The entry foyer is nestled between two guest rooms and is "orchestrated to heighten the experience of arrival in the second-floor living room culminating in the park vista," says Watson. A Creole-influenced tapering newel post and Shaker-style tapering spindles made a simple yet elegant stair rail. The treads and risers are stained a dark oak to match the floors on the second floor while contrasting with the stone tile floor in the foyer. The newels and spindles (or

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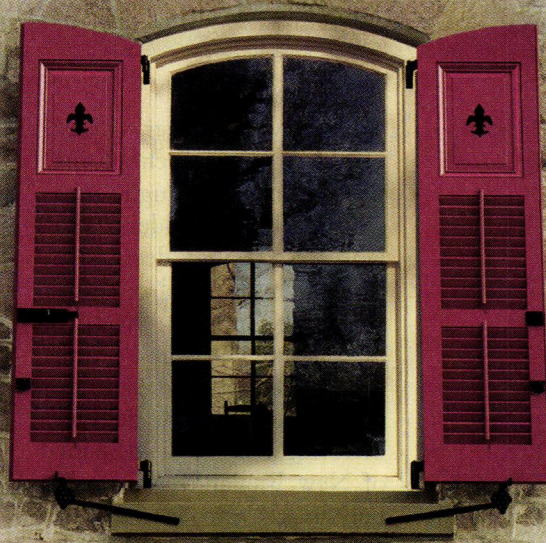
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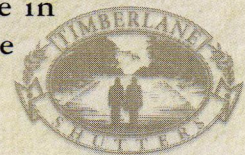
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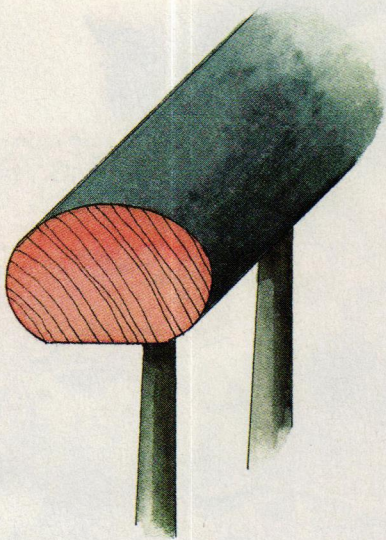
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Eric Watson designed
an flat oval handrail and
tapered newel post for
the staircase.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROB LEANNA

balusters) are painted black. The walls
have horizontal 1" x 6" boards with a
simple bead. The staircase is a switch-
back configuration, which means the
second flight turns 180 degrees from the
first staircase, typically at the landing.
Watson creates harmony between his-
torical styles in this entry hall. **NOH**

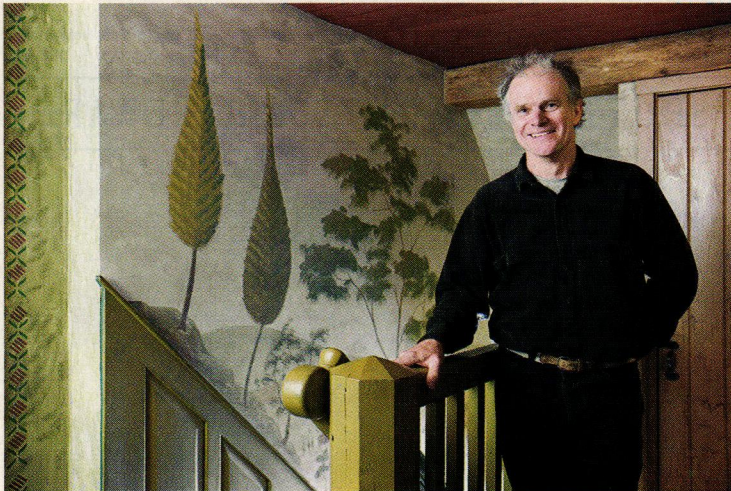
*Excerpted from Architectural Trim
(Rockport Publishers, 2007). To order a copy,
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For Resources, see page 72.

Painter's Folly

Artist Tony Castro brings walls in Maine to life.

TEXT BY SALLY LAMOTTE CRANE PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH



Decorative painter Tony Castro is a master at transforming walls into works of art.

Decorative painter Tony Castro spends much of his professional life high atop scaffolding or ladders, the better to restore decorative ceilings and walls in early American homes, meeting houses, and churches. Using the knowledge and skill he has gained through decades of restoration work in many of New England's finest old buildings, Castro lends an air of authenticity and character to new old houses with each brush stroke.

Castro, who lives in New Gloucester, Maine, is a master of trompe l'oeil designs (a French term for images meant to "fool the eye," cleverly implying three-dimensional depth within a flat design) found in many Victorian homes. He also creates Rufus Porter-style murals for rooms in the same





In a new old Colonial-style house in Maine, Castro created Rufus Porter-like murals.

color and character as the early 1800s originals, sometimes adding landscape scenery that might have personal meaning to the current homeowner.

There is a long tradition of decorative painting in America that precedes the American Revolution. Faux, or false, finishes painted on wood in a Colonial home could resemble the grain of a more exotic hardwood or marble; painting was also a less expensive way to achieve the look of fashionable European wallpaper. Throughout the colonies, these ornamental painters traveled from town to town. One of the most influential muralists of the early nineteenth century, Rufus Porter, developed his own techniques and materials, which he later published. On top of dry plaster, Porter painted murals in hundreds of New England houses, characteristically depicting grass and trees in the foreground, houses in

the middle distance, and water scenes or mountains in the background. His peer, Moses Eaton, and Eaton's son were known for their stenciling work; a frieze—usually a swag—encircled the top of a room, and vertical patterns of stencils—flowers, leaves, weeping willow trees, stars, hearts, and pineapples—were painted on a whitewashed wall.

Born in rural Sherman, Connecticut, in 1949, Tony Castro was influenced as a boy by the artistic sensibilities of his father and uncle. His father, a commercial designer and fine artist, taught him about engineered art, establishing vanishing points and depicting three dimensions. His uncle taught him how to paint with watercolors. "I was not encouraged to be a professional artist," says Castro. "My parents sent me to college at the University of Connecticut to become an engineer." He credits his

mother for his love of old houses and their histories. "I loved going out into the woods near Sherman and finding old foundations and artifacts." He goes on to say, "I enjoyed the mystery of finding out about life in earlier times."

In his early 20s, Castro made his way to northern Maine, where he eventually joined a large painting company in which the members all belonged to the same church. "Like a Quaker organization, there was camaraderie in working with your brethren," he says. "Even today, it's always my friends and family who work with me." Castro enjoyed the projects that required graphics, today reflected in the link between the lines designed and painted on school gymnasium floors and the lines of Victorian trompe l'oeil design.

In the late 1980s, Castro formed his own company while restoring the ornate



decorative designs on the buildings at the Norlands Living History Center, the estate of a former Maine governor. In 1999, he was awarded a prestigious Maine Preservation Honor Award. Castro explains that he learned his craft by studying historical records, attending conferences, and, most important, determining the intent and techniques of the original artist. "It fit right into my interests," he says. "The restoration part is about conserving the original artwork, making it stable, fixing plaster cracks or replacing missing chunks, and painting in missing areas in a way that is seamless and even. The only way to tell new from old is to use the fluorescence

of ultraviolet light, which makes the touched-up portion look different.

"You have your eye intently on what the original artist did," adds Castro, "whether using a stencil or a pounce pattern, which is a perforated pattern that the artist hit with a muslin bag containing charcoal, thereby leaving tiny charcoal marks as guidance." Playing a detective's role, Castro asks, "How did they paint certain lines so straight without masking tape? A line would be straight for three feet, roughly the length of a brush stroke," In response, Castro made up his own instrument, a straight edge that sits three-quarters of an inch off the surface. He runs the

Castro is a master at trompe l'oeil designs—shown on these pages is a ceiling he painted in an old Victorian in Maine.

metal portion of the brush that connects the hairs to the handle along this edge, and its distance from the painted surface gives him a greater perspective. "All of these techniques definitely taught me how to do decorative painting. Also, the matching of colors is very challenging. Even in a new old house, the colors have to be right to be authentic."

When creating an original mural, Castro's frieze usually carries around the entire room. "Almost always, the



Castro often works with stencilling to recreate designs that have been lost.

corner disappears, like looking off in that direction," he says. "If the architecture of the room has a post in the corner, it will look like a porch post with the view going on right behind it." Castro draws the horizon at seated eye level, which "is instinctually natural," he says. Also, the lower the horizon, the more he incorporates sky, resulting in a less busy, more tranquil foreground.

Instead of old distemper paints, Castro says, "I use high quality theatrical scenic paints that don't project any sheen; they're wonderful pigments." According to Castro, a Rufus Porter-style dining room mural could be finished in a week or less. It goes particularly fast if using stencils and sponges, like Porter. "For owners of a new old house," says Castro, "the hand-made look is what they love about an old house."

He also is contemplating painting murals on large canvases (one wall would be one canvas), which could be hung like wallpaper in a room. The advantages would be that "they are very durable, there would be no cracks showing, as in plaster, and they could



be hung with a paste that could be removed to allow for transport to a future home." Castro also relishes the opportunity to paint original trompe l'oeil designs, such as faux Delft tiles around a fireplace, in new or renovated homes. He says, "The great thing about decorative painting in the 1800s and today is the fun of the illusion."

Sally LaMotte Crane is a freelance writer and editor who resides along the coast of Maine.

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Winter Bloomers

Hellebores offer color in the garden during cold weather. TEXT BY MICHAEL WEISHAN

For those of you basking in the warm climes of the South and Southwest, the words “winter blooming” probably don’t have special significance. After all, a good portion of your plant palette flowers between September and March. So what’s special about hibernal blossoms, you ask? Well, here in the Northeast, or in the Midwest where I grew up, or for that matter, anywhere that winter temperatures regularly dip below freezing, a plant that’s brave enough to bloom through the vicissitudes of frost and rime seems downright magical. And in fact, throughout history, plants that remain not only green but growing throughout the winter months have long been ascribed mystical powers. Of these, perhaps the most famous, and most certainly my favorite, are the hellebores, otherwise known as Christmas or Lenten roses.

Few other plants have been in human cultivation longer than hellebores. Native to the mountainous Caucus region, hellebores appear very early on in Greek mythology, where the progenitor of many modern hybrids, *H. Niger*, was fed to the daughters of Proetus, King of Argus, to cure insanity. Nor was herb’s fame limited only to problems of the mind: hellebore was widely regarded as a bane to witches and other harmful spirits, and was considered the perfect ingredient for breaking spells and enchantments. Carried by the Romans to all parts of their empire, hellebores could until quite recently often be found in the country gardens of England and France, specifically planted right beside the door to keep evil at bay. Of course a pagan plant with such powers was quickly subsumed into Christian mythology as well; its common name, Christmas Rose, comes from the touching legend



of Madelon, who accompanied the shepherds at the birth of the Christ child. Despairing of having no gift to present in the depth of winter, not even simple flowers, Madelon began to weep. An angel, taking pity on her kindly soul, led the girl from the stable, and touched the barren winter ground, where a hellebore immediately sprung up in full bloom.

Interestingly, while famous throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages for its curative powers, the hellebore’s long medicinal use has always skirted with disaster. All species of hellebores contain potent alkaloids that are fatal if consumed in high quantities. (Alexander the Great, for one, may have met his end from an overly large dose of hellebore.) Even the plant’s name signals danger: from the Greek *hellein*, to kill, and *bora* food, warning of the dire results that come from overconsumption.

Fortunately, nowadays interest in hellebores bears far less risk, being entirely limited to the plants charm-

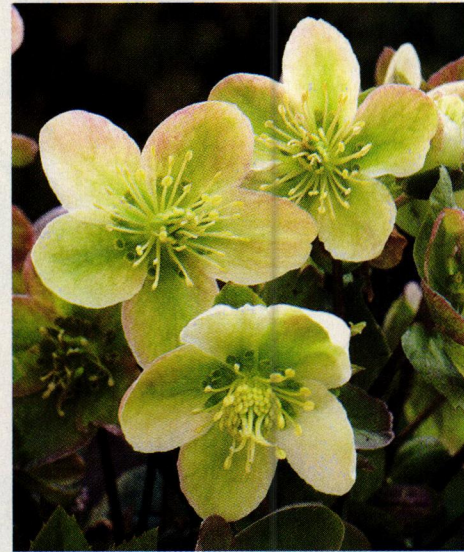
Above: Helleborus ‘Early Purple.’ Opposite: ‘Peggy Ballard’ seedlings.

ing evergreen foliage, and its enchanting habit of blooming right through the snow. Unlike many other advertised “winter bloomers” that actually flower in only mild climates, while skulking guiltily in Northern gardens until early spring, hellebores truly do bloom when they are supposed to over most of their range. Here in my zone 5B garden, flowers often arrive early in December, and continue to bloom, on and off through the drifts, right into early March.

And, to make the situation even more delightful, hybridizers have recently taken a keen interest in the clan, interbreeding species to produce an incredible host of new cultivars, most labeled with some version of *Helleborus x hybridus*. The flowers, which can be single or double, now come in a wide variety of colors, from white to pink to magenta, as well as pale greens, blues



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and spotted versions. Of particular interest are several new varieties available from Burpee's Heronswood Nursery: 'Kingston Cardinal,' with mauve, fully double flowers; 'Green Heron,' a single chartreuse; and 'Snow Bunting,' with white petals and a green center. Many of the original species also have considerable charm; I happen, for instance, to find the strangely contorted foliage and flower of *H. Foetidus* pleasing quirky.

In terms of culture, few plants could be more obliging—if grown within very precise parameters—a warning not wisely ignored by the aspiring hellebore aficionado. Part of the problem is that culture instructions for many hellebore

varieties are often insufficiently specific, and this can lead to disaster. A perfect example is a label from a hellebore I recently purchased: "moderate to partial shade, adequate moisture" is all it said. Though that sounds sufficient, it really isn't, and explains why for years I tried to grow hellebores and failed miserably. I planted them in a shady spot as instructed, watered sufficiently, and sat back to await the grand results. And wait. And wait. While the plants didn't quite die, they certainly didn't thrive, either. By mid-winter the foliage looked terribly ratty, and the few flowers that eventually arrived didn't merit the decrepit look the plant held for much of the season. Then

A collection of *Helleborus Hybridus*. Top row, left to right: 'Party Dress,' Yellow Spotted, Eric Smithii Silvermoon, 'Party Dress' pale pink. Bottom row, left to right: Hybridus Cream, Argutifolius, White Spotted, 'Gunther Jurgl.'

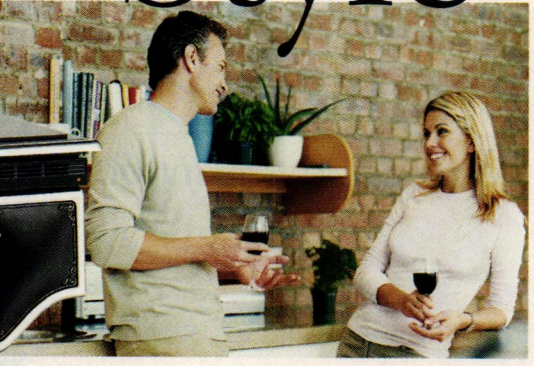
by chance I was sent some of the newer hybrid species to trial, and I decided to plant them in a particularly protected spot, away from harsh winter winds, under a large Hinoki cypress where the soil was amply moist and well amended with compost. This combination of rich soil, moisture, and winter protection proved the key, and here my hellebores have taken off, slowly expanding to carpet the entire area under the tree.



One final caveat: Although hardy into Z4, hellebores need ample snow or other protective cover to survive that far north, and there, they will bloom later in winter, hence their other common name, Lenten Rose. Also, in extreme northerly climes, the foliage does not remain evergreen. But given the right spot, these plucky little plants are remarkably enduring, and will brighten even the darkest winter corner of your traditional garden. **NOH**

Michael Weisban is a writer and owner of Michael Weisban & Associates. He is the author of The New Traditional Garden and The Victory Gardening Guide.

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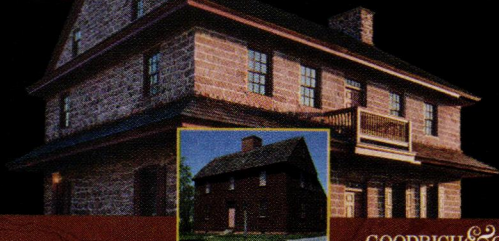
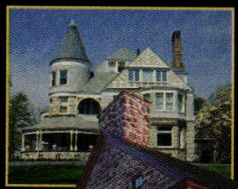
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Color in the Kitchen

Farrow and Ball introduces vibrant hues for the new old house kitchen.

Many readers have inquired as to how to add color to their new old house kitchens—which are so often finished in whites or creams. Farrow and Ball advocates for color in the traditional kitchen. The company created a kaleidoscope of color for this enchanting space. The walls are painted in “Lancaster Yellow,” cabinets and trimwork are painted in “Drawing Room Blue,” and the floor is painted a shade called “Terre d’Egypte” (a burnt red). Pairing traditional kitchen elements (such as open shelving, deep window sills, wooden countertops and flooring, and an AGA range) with nontraditional colors (bright blue, deep red, and cheery yellow) can create a fresh look for the kitchen. For more information, visit www.farrow-ball.com.



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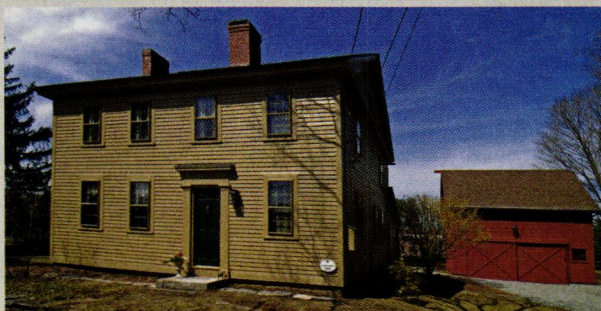
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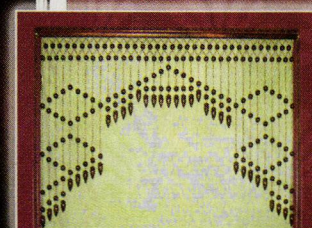
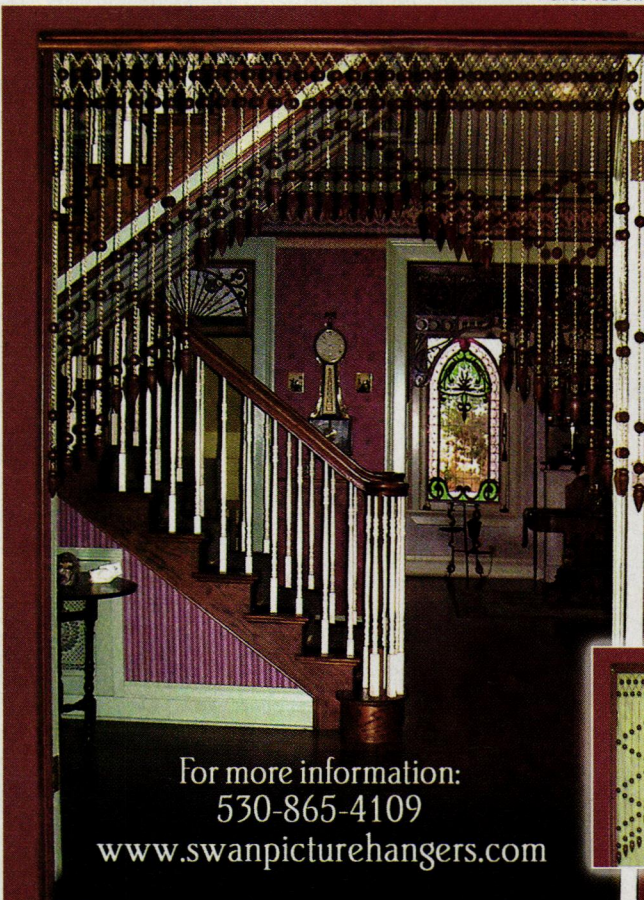
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The vernacular architecture of the French countryside and pastoral homes designed nearly a century ago by firms such as Mellor, Meigs, and Howe were among the inspirations for this new old house built along Philadelphia's "Main Line." The sense of compression and expansion inside the house is replicated in the landscape designed by Charles Hess Landscape Architects. Walking down the rear terrace toward the garage, one comes to an open area containing a timbered trellis and fountain. Continuing further, there is a contraction where the mass of the family room interjects itself. Beyond the family room, the space opens again in a small cottage garden.



House and Garden

Peter Zimmerman Architects creates
harmony between home and landscape in
Pennsylvania.



TEXT BY J. ROBERT OSTERGAARD PHOTOS BY TOM CRANE AND ERIK KVALSVIK



PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS FOR OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

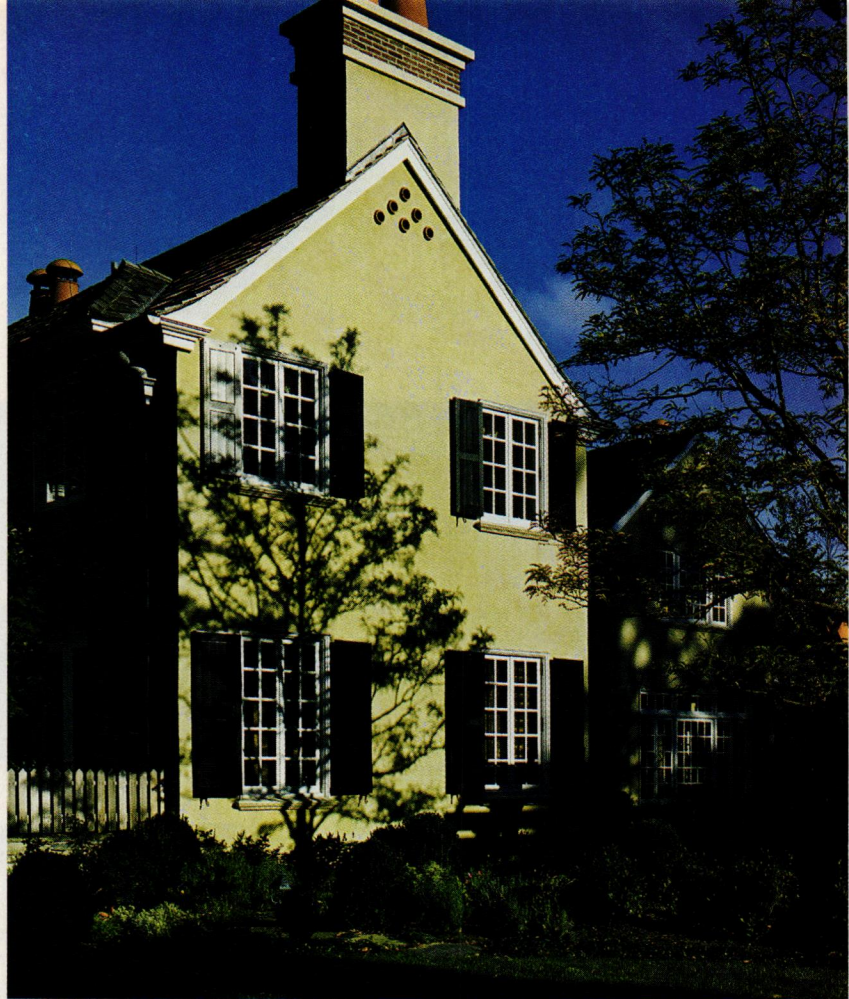
A house is more than just a collection of rooms. How each room is conceived—its scale, its details, its relationship to other rooms—and how we move about physically within each room affect our awareness of a house and color our perceptions of it. Peter Zimmerman, a Pennsylvania-based architect, explains it more succinctly: “Architecture is experience.” A new old house Zimmerman’s firm recently designed offers a sophisticated example of this philosophy as well as a model of successful design.

Along with project architect Mark Hoffman, Zimmerman and his team were originally asked to renovate an existing house on Philadelphia’s “Main Line” for a couple with one child already in college and another soon to leave for college. When it became apparent that their house could not be effectively recast to meet their needs, the homeowners decided to take it down and rebuild on a portion of the existing footprint. The resulting design was inspired by the Main Line architectural vernacular built nearly one hundred years ago by firms such as Mellor, Meigs, and Howe, and was shaped by Zimmerman’s intuitive understanding of the appropriate orchestration and composition of spaces, both inside and out.

Despite having a somewhat blank slate from which to begin, Zimmerman did face one important constraint: a narrow lot with a short setback. His solution was to orient public spaces at the front of the house and place family spaces to the rear, reaching out into the landscape. The public rooms—the entry, living room, stair hall, study, and dining room—are formal, and the garden room, rear hall, family room, home office, kitchen, and service rooms have appropriate degrees of informality.

The thoughtful arrangement of interior spaces is carefully composed to be experienced unconsciously by guests entering the house. The entry is atypical: It is neither a narrow, constricted hallway nor a cavernous space with ostentatious stair. (In fact, the stair is to the right in a dedicated stair hall.) Instead, the entry is a well-proportioned and well-appointed room where homeowner and guest may linger. “It’s really a receiving spot, not just a gesture that looks toward a stair,” Zimmerman says. “It’s a place to meet people, welcome them

Opposite: Rustic details such as exposed beams and chestnut millwork speak to a level of informality appropriate for a family room. The hand-carved limestone fireplace is meant to be a focal point, but it is not a static tableau. The homeowners use all six of the home’s fireplaces throughout the winter. Windows to the left and at the end of the room have views out to the formal gardens, the fountain, and the timbered trellis. To the right, French doors lead to a casual garden space adjacent to the home office and garage. Top and bottom right: The existing pink stucco originally covering the house was stripped and replaced with stucco meticulously sandblasted to expose the inherent aggregate to achieve an appearance reminiscent of an aged French country villa.





in, take their coat, have an early conversation, and not feel you have to immediately move on.”

Even so, this is not a static space. There is a discreet dynamic at work here and throughout the house: a carefully organized sequence of compression and expansion. “You experience a sense of compression coming down the driveway,” Zimmerman says, “and then an expansion at the wide entry court. There is another slight compression in the entry, but it resolves itself as you are pulled toward the light from the adjacent garden room and living room.”

This dynamism draws you along within the house, but Zimmerman was careful to modulate this effect. “The hallways are wide,” he states, “so you don’t have the level of compression you sometimes feel in hallways that makes you pop out of them at the other end as quickly as you can. We didn’t want you to feel hurried or manipulated through the space. Doing this creates a more relaxed living environment.”

Another force at work here is a careful orchestration of light. When you reach the dining room and turn back, your gaze meets a large mirror placed with precise deliberation in the entry hall. “It reflects the natural light from the surrounding rooms, and it’s important because it completes the view,” Zimmerman says. “Many architects speak of the procession through a building, but in my opinion, recession is equally as important.” Looking back through the rear hall from the garden room, there is a rhythm of light and dark from windows and French doors, terminating at the home office, which is brightened by windows on two sides. “You end in a room that’s incredibly well lit,” he explains, “which tells you subliminally there’s a garden space there.”

Creating a relationship between the garden spaces and the interiors was also an essential part of Zimmerman’s plan. “If you are going to create a transparency between the inside of the house and the landscape, it’s more than just visual; it’s what the mind’s eye sees.” Zimmerman goes on, “If you give enough

Opposite: The latticework ceiling in the garden room is a lighthearted detail, but this room does not give merely a playful nod to the landscape; it is more intimately connected to the garden than any other room. As Zimmerman points out, you must step down to enter the room, so you are in closer proximity to the gardens both physically and psychologically. The limestone floor—employed also in the rear hall—joins this room to the flagstone terrace beyond the windows and French doors. Top right: The stair hall is off to the main entryway and displays a collection of antique oils. Right: The entry is within a walled motor court, and there is a mere four-inch step from the gravel surface to the block in front, then another six-inch step up into the house, so the house is thoughtfully grounded in its environment.



Another distinct ceiling treatment is found in the rear hall, which complements and validates the ceiling in the garden room.



windows in the round, such as in the garden room or the family room with views on three sides, the mind's eye can connect the landscape behind the walls. By raising the ambient light level in a room so it is equal to that of the light outside, when your eye travels to the window, light levels are such that your eye penetrates right through the glass."

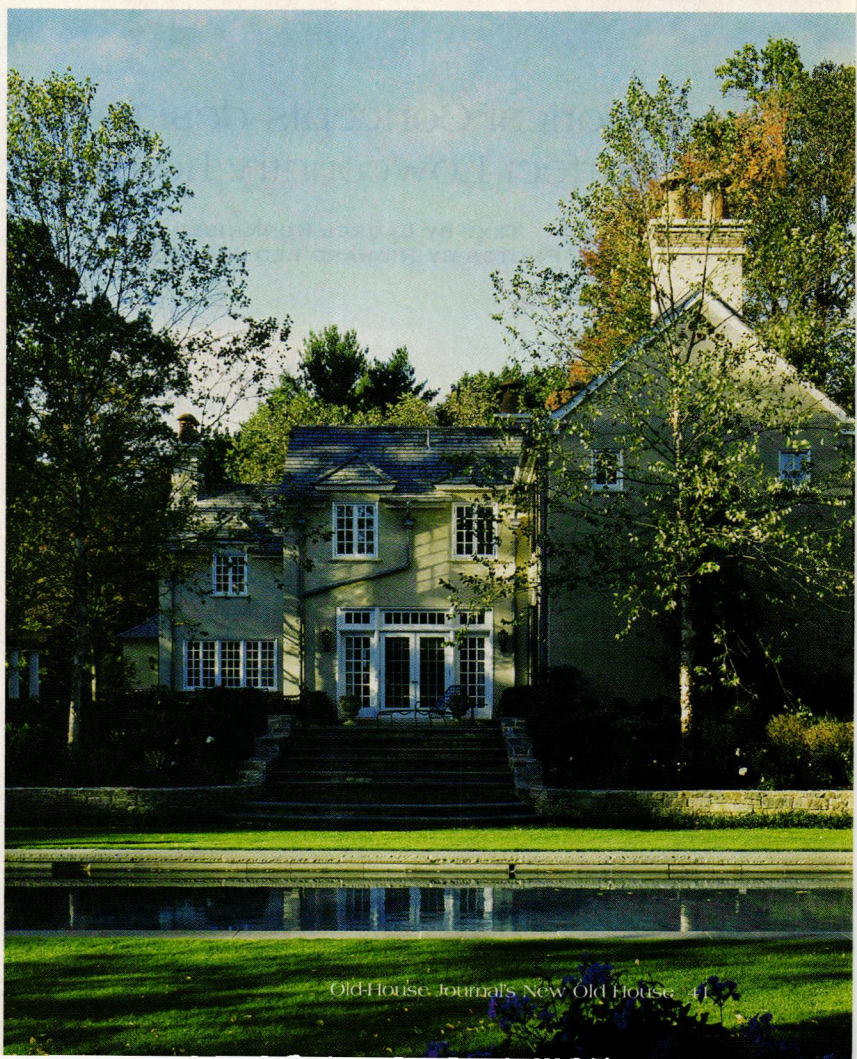
Strengthening the relationship between interiors and exteriors was also accomplished by matching the level of formality inside and out. The living room and garden room, for example, look out on a neatly tailored flagstone terrace where steps lead down to a meticulously landscaped pool and pool pavilion. From the study and the rear hall, the view is out to the formal rear terrace, an elegant fountain, and a Doric-columned timbered trellis. The home office looks out exclusively to a casual garden space, reminiscent of a kitchen garden or herb garden, which is bound by the family room, office, and garage. The family room straddles both worlds: "In the family room, you are very aware of the formal terrace to the left," Zimmerman says, "and to the right the more intimate garden that's adjacent to the garage."

The connection between interiors and exteriors is further reinforced by using the same dynamic of compression and expansion. Walking down the rear terrace, for example, you feel a sense of expansion on reaching the timbered pavilion, compression when passing the family room, and expansion once again on reaching the kitchen garden. "These sorts of clues are important and necessary," Zimmerman says, "and when taken together, they are what allow us to achieve our primary goal of creating the most positive experience we can for the homeowner." NOH

J. Robert Ostergaard is a freelance writer living in Brooklyn, New York.

For more information, see Resources page 72.

Top: Views from both the living and garden room follow terraced steps toward the pool pavilion, lazily reflected in the landscaped pool. Bottom: The reciprocating view from the pool pavilion returns a linear gaze across the pool toward the centrally located French doors that access both garden and living rooms.



Of Time and Tide

Historical Concepts designs a
perfect Lowcountry home.

TEXT BY LAUREL KORNHISER
PHOTOS BY RICHARD LEO JOHNSON







Egrets, storks, and herons saunter in the tidal pools; raccoons, minks, foxes, and bobcats prowl the nearby forests. Ospreys, eagles, and hawks keep a sharp eye from overhead, while the redfish, flounder, and bass fan the streams and salty waters. Thousands of acres of marsh grasses, the backdrop for this wild scene, shapeshift from season to season. Spring and summer greens become the russet reds of autumn, which in turn glow golden in the light of the winter sun. Positioned for multiple views of this lively spectacle on Spring Island, South Carolina, is a gracious home designed by Terry Pylant, principal of Historical Concepts based in Peachtree City, Georgia.

Though built less than a decade ago, this Lowcountry home suggests that it has evolved over a century or two. Reminiscent of the Greek Revival style popular in the early nineteenth century, stately columns form a line along the front porch. A triptych of steeply pitched dormers rises from the hip roof. Set back from the main portion of the house, wings extend from each side. An arbored walkway, fronting what appears to be three stables but is actually the garage's façade, leads to the kitchen and gathering room wing, accessed via a breezeway. This sense that the home has accumulated its pieces over time was deliberate: "The house is meant to look old," Pylant says. "It is meant to look generational."

An island situated between Beaufort and Hilton Head, Spring Island preserves its pristine natural character through strict conservation measures and stringent architectural guidelines. Homes built on the island must reflect the area, relate to the site, and align with Lowcountry vernacular. Pylant did his homework: "The design was inspired by different aspects of plantation homes I had seen and studied in the area. It is very much in the local vernacular but is designed as something unique." In addition to satisfying local codes, the home naturally needed to fulfill the clients' program as well—in this case, providing ample space for entertaining and accommodating visiting family and guests. Though boasting 6,000 square feet, the house, with its varying rooflines and stepped-down progression to the two wings, suggests a more modest scale. "One thing that was important," Pylant says, "was to control the

Opposite page: The elegant central stairs stop midway at a vaulted landing, where a wonderful array of collected antiques and oil paintings is exhibited. This page, top: Beautiful custom built-ins showcase the owner's extensive library and painting collection. This page, bottom: The design highlights an open provincial-styled kitchen, exuding cozy comfort from every corner.









mass and break that down. The center portion, which includes the drawing room, library, and dining room, is forward of the wings, and we added the height there." The ceilings over the drawing room, which runs the length of the main portion of the house, reach the 12-foot mark, but their coffered design and the thoughtful furniture groupings make the space feel more intimate. As the house lengthens into the two wings, the height dips; when the extremities are reached, the ceilings measure seven feet.

This positioning of the forward main portion and receded wings also allows multiple exposures to the ever-changing views. The show begins at the front door. When visitors step into the entry, they can see through the drawing room, beyond the broad back porch, and across the deck to the marsh—cocktail hour means stunning views of the setting sun. To eliminate potential interruptions to this long-range scope of the scene, Pylant says, "We pulled the steps at the rear wide so there would be no railing impeding the view when people walked through the front door." The set-back wings enjoy three-sided exposure to the surrounding natural environment.

The south wing houses the kitchen, gathering room, and breakfast nook, and it is this wing that most strongly suggests incremental evolution. "The kitchen looks as if it is a separate building itself," Pylant explains. Rather than continue the heart pine flooring found in the other rooms, Pylant recommended the use of old Savannah gray brick for the kitchen area: "It is indigenous to the area and gives the feeling of age. It also makes it feel like this part of the house was built at a different time. Even the porch off the breakfast room looks like it had been enclosed with casement windows at a later time." Amplifying that effect of age is the painted yellow pine ceiling and washed pine walls. This use of wood and of heart pine cabinetry "softens the edges of the brick, which is very textural," Pylant says. The red check patterns, warm woods, farmer's table, and other antique furnishings make these informal areas feel cozy, an effect enhanced by the surrounding live and laurel oaks protectively shading the wing.

In the master wing on the north side of the house, the marsh is never out of sight. The clients were a bit surprised when Pylant suggested that, rather than placing the usual mirror over the vanity, it would be "fun" to install a window over

each sink. The rising sun backlights the marsh, an inspiring scene to start the day. "You are going to use the bath every day. What could be better when brushing your teeth," he asks, "than to look out at the marsh?" Privacy is not an issue, so the clients can enjoy their view even while in the shower, where a glass block half wall is topped by a broad plate glass window. If even closer contact with the outdoor elements is desired, a mere step through a full-length glass door leads to an outdoor shower and deck shielded by a seven-foot privacy wall.

Guest rooms are tucked in the spaces above the expansive drawing room, traditional library, and formal dining room. A sweeping staircase, its newel post custom designed by Historical Concepts, guides guests past antique oil portraits, papered walls, and retrofitted period light fixtures to rooms whose peaked ceilings, four-poster beds, and nineteenth-century dressers transport them to times past. Additional guests are accommodated in rooms above the three-car garage. This building, sited perpendicular to the kitchen wing so as not to interfere with any views, suggests a stable. "It does have a tack room," Pylant explains, "because the client had horses. She kept saddles and such in the garage. We wanted to tell a story with the garage and not compete with the house." Led to it by a side road, cars enter from the back. "You don't have any sense of this being anything but a stable, as the front doors are board-and-batten stable doors."

As Terry Pylant and his associates approach the projects they undertake for Historical Concepts, a firm devoted to applying traditional and classical principles to create timeless places, they imagine generations past and future, creating fictional accounts of the home's life and history. "We do develop a story. You have to if you want to create a great place. We get into it by imagining how it would have developed and evolved over time." With the design of this Spring Island home, the architect and these clients have added a human chapter to the animal fables that have long played out through the forest and marsh. NOH

Laurel Kornhiser is a the editor of La Vie Claire magazine. She lives on Cape Cod.

For Resources, see page 72.

Opposite page: The custom sweeping staircase leads to second-floor guest rooms over the library and dining rooms.



NESTLEDOWN

Nestledown Farm

The arched front entry doorway initiates the invited to a classic theme drawn from surrounding garden trellises and dispersed throughout the new old farmhouse.



A clever union of wood and ledge rock makes for an intriguing country house.

TEXT BY MARY GRAUERHOLZ PHOTOS BY ROBIN STUBBERT STYLING BY BASIA HALIK





Nestled down—part stone, part board-and-batten, all gorgeous—is the best kind of puzzle. The lovely bedrock country house, linked with a walkway to a wing composed of barnwood, appears to have been tucked into the countryside of Ontario, Canada, for generations. Most people viewing the home, set on 125 verdant acres outside the village of Mildmay, would think that the stone house was the original homestead and that the wooden half of the structure was added in modern times.

But then those people probably don't know architect John Rutledge. The sly Rutledge, of John Rutledge Architect in Goderich, Ontario, designed the stone house and linked it to the original wooden structure for an age-old look. "It looks like the stone house was there first, but it's the other way around," Rutledge says. "It's actually two houses linked by an enclosed breezeway. I fooled around with the layers of time."

The lovely mind tweak is just one of the appealing aspects of Beverley and John Wilson's retirement home, a sheep farm in the village of Mildmay, which lives up to its other moniker, the 40 Hills of Carrick. The property, a collection of barns and sheds (including one that the Wilsons call "John's Pouting Shed"), is dotted with pasture land, ponds, and flower gardens rolling gently into vistas that only God could create. The magic of the house, though, is straight from architect Rutledge.

Rutledge specializes in renovations that treat history and architectural style with respect. "One of my specialties is adding layers of time to a new house or new addition," he says. The Wilson project has a unique twist, however: The rock exterior was designed to look like a stone house from the 1800s.

The plan, so perfectly executed, fulfilled all of Beverley and John Wilson's dreams of a country home. The couple had been living in Toronto when they took an early retirement—he from sales and marketing and she from real estate—to move to their acreage and start their new life. When the house burned, they built an aluminum-clad structure as a three-car garage on the bottom floor and living quarters upstairs. When they were ready to extend the garage—which they now call their coach

Architect John Rutledge connected the original wooden structure to the new stone main house via a scaled breezeway and refocused landscaping.





house—their hearts were set on a home with a sense of history and heritage. As Beverley recalls, “John and I said, if we were going to do this, we wanted the new structure to look like an old house.”

Rutledge used the historic schoolhouses in the region as inspiration to create a home that is more country house than farmhouse. The interior’s pale walls, glossy dark-wood floors, and subtle architectural lines create an ambience that is cozy yet sophisticated. The intimate interiors come from a suggestion of small proportions, which Rutledge achieved with a mix of shapes and materials. “If you get a room too big, it’s not comfortable to sit and talk,” he says.

The warmth also emanates from sheets of light that spill through generous corner windows in every room, another effect planned in detail. “The placement of the house captures the south and west light, usually the best light,” Rutledge explains. The large windows are positioned close to the floor to further enhance the natural lighting. “I never scrimp on window size,” Rutledge explains. “Most of the time I make windows one or two times bigger than most people would.”

Visitors enter the single-story stone house through an arched door in striking red, a hint of the elegant lines in the home’s interior. In the entryway, a groin-vaulted ceiling—an umbrella-like design—begins an elegant repetition of curved lines. A narrow hallway with a barrel-vault ceiling leads toward the bedroom suites, ending with an arched window. Rutledge accomplished the arches and vaulted ceilings by curving dry-wall. “It’s not terribly expensive, but it looks expensive,” he says.

A left-hand turn from the entryway leads to the combination kitchen and living room, Beverley’s favorite space in the house. “I love cooking in this kitchen,” she says. “I think it’s the layout, the brightness of it.” Guests enjoy sipping drinks before dinner at the convivial counter area that separates the kitchen and living room. The nearby dining room seats 16.

The wood-burning fireplace in the living room is an enormous beauty, built with Bruce Peninsula ledge rock, the same stone as the exterior. The energy-efficient Rumford design, says Rutledge, “is all in the proportion of the firebox and chim-

Views of the original structure emanate through the oversized living room windows, along with swaths of southern-exposure sunlight.

The arched theme is carried throughout the farmhouse, in doorways leading to and from the elegant eat-in kitchen, as well as in the kitchen window.







IT ALL BEGAN IN A GARDEN.

ney, designed to lift the smoke but radiate heat into the house.” The room is large enough to accommodate the fireplace, which has the powerful effect of a piece of art. “I try to balance all the functional things in a house with all the delightful things,” Rutledge says.

Above the rock fireplace is an almost-life-size portrait of Preston Lambing, a regal purebred British Suffolk ram and one of Beverley Wilson’s fondest memories. “He was the first ram we ever had,” she says. Preston (named after Canadian politician Preston Manning) is gone now, but his offspring still gambol outside. The original 100-year-old barn, in view from the fireplace, adds to the country charm.

A breezeway leads to the board-and-batten coach house, which has a large wood-paneled room outfitted with a wood stove, and several bedrooms upstairs that are sometimes rented to wedding couples.

Here the Wilsons pursue their dream of a working farm, tromping from the sheep barn to the Amish-built Josiah’s Barn, caring for their sheep, and in the spring, birthing lambs. The lifestyle change, from urban Toronto to rural village life, is more than worth it. As Beverley says with a pleased laugh, “I gave up my mink coat for manure.”

The combination of aesthetic allure and country charm keeps the couple entranced with Nestledown as they approach the 10th anniversary of their move into the country house. For that matter, John Rutledge himself remains enamored with the place, long after finishing the project. “It’s one of my favorite houses,” he says. “I could move in there quite comfortably myself.” NOH

Mary Grauerholz is the communication manager of the Cape Cod Foundation and a freelance writer.

For resources, see page 72.

A less formal back porch overlooks the 100-year-old barn that houses John and Beverley’s flock of purebred British Suffolk sheep.



Historic



A refurbished back patio off the kitchen takes in the views of the Colorado Street Bridge in Pasadena, California.

Resurrection



Eight dilapidated California bungalows on the National Register of Historic Places get a fresh start and some new company.

TEXT BY NIGEL F. MAYNARD
PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER CONSIDINE

This photo shows the final restoration work completed on one of the original buildings dating to 1920. Opposite page, top: The new old construction complements the essence of traditional regional architecture. Opposite page, bottom: The original unrestored structure reveals some of the more extensive damage resulting from years of neglect and vandalism.



Located about 10 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles, Pasadena is an urban lover's paradise. It's one of California's most impressive cities, blessed with fine shopping and dining, noted cultural institutions, a colorful history, and affluent neighborhoods. Hard to imagine, then, that such an attractive town would have its share of urban blight—and in one of its most prestigious neighborhoods. The Vista del Arroyo Bungalows was such a place before it was transformed and expanded into a gorgeous pedestrian-friendly development along the city's Arroyo Seco Park.

The Bungalows area had a storied past. The collection of eight single-family houses was built from 1920 to 1938 as part of the Vista del Arroyo Hotel, a desirable resort destination for well-heeled East Coast and Midwest vacationers. "The bungalows were on the grounds of this 25-acre resort hotel where people from the East would spend their winters," says Tim Lefevre, CEO of Woodland, California-based Lefevre Corp., one of four principals that developed the project. (Lefevre, Concert Realty Partners, architectural firm Moule & Polyzoides, and Boyd Willat formed Vista de la Puente Partners LLC to develop the project.) During World War II, the Navy used the main hotel as a hospital; the building eventually became the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in the 1980s. The bungalows were abandoned, however, and eventually deteriorated to a state of disrepair,

even though the eight houses and the main hotel were placed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 1981. This listing may have been a contributing factor in the property's prolonged neglect. "It had to do with the owner, who bought the property from the federal government in the 1980s but was never able to sell it because the bungalows couldn't be torn down," Lefevre explains. "That sort of hamstringing the development."

While other developers may have lacked the creative capacity to see the opportunity to incorporate historic structures into a new development, Vista de la Puente Partners did not. In fact, Lefevre comments that the homes were the main driver of the plan. "We decided early on to make the bungalows the centerpiece of the new development."

The state of the bungalows was probably enough to scare the faint of heart. When Vista de la Puente bought the property in 2002, it encountered decaying millwork, torn screens, shattered windows, and graffiti-tagged walls. "They were in a state of total dilapidation," Lefevre says. "They hadn't been occupied and maintained since the 1950s."

Architect Moule & Polyzoides organized the three-acre project into three neighborhoods: At Grand Court, it restored the existing eight bungalows to their Mediterranean-inspired grandeur and added four new ones, bringing the total units to 12; they tucked the five units of Bridgeview Court on a hill



behind the Colorado Street Bridge, and Arroyo Terrace, with its eight units, is located in front of the bridge. Featuring a combination of condos and townhomes, the two- and three-story buildings are marked by wrought-iron detailing, terracotta tile roofs, and colored stucco; landscaped exteriors include lush gardens, loggias, and outdoor spaces. Most of the original trees were saved, and each building has underground garages so that cars do not dominate the streetscape.

“The new architecture complements [the old buildings]” but does not imitate them,” Lefevre says. “A prerequisite of putting new buildings on a national historic site is that the Department of Interior does not want you to imitate the older buildings. The buildings are done in a style that we call traditional Los Angeles regional architecture, kind of in the vein of Wallace Neff, and it really was in contrast to these bungalows—but in a subtle way.”

Perhaps the project’s most significant quality is its location and proximity to many of the things that make life enjoyable, such as parks, cinemas, and markets. It’s one of the reasons Marion and Robin Campbell bought their 2,200-square-foot home in Grand Court. “The neighborhood sits in a prime location and within walking distance to Old Pasadena, its nightlife, and cultural attractions,” says Robin. “There’s a kind of urban appeal to it,” he continues, “but that’s on one side. On the other side, you’re facing the Arroyo Seco, where you can





fish and walk the dog, and it links to the Brookside Park area, the Aquatic Center, and the Rose Bowl. So you have this ideal location on the cutting edge of the cultural and historic side that's balanced with the wilder, rustic recreational side."

The neighborhood is "far enough away that you don't get the noise and you don't hear the traffic, but you're close enough to walk," Marion says. "We have a view of the San Gabriel Mountains and the Arroyo, and at night you can see the top of Library Tower in downtown L.A. It's just a unique property."

Attracted to the history of the place, the couple bought a unit in one of the eight refurbished bungalows; then Marion, who restores historical homes, performed minor surgery. The Campbells were satisfied, for the most part, with what the developer had chosen for the interiors, but they felt the kitchen was a little too modern. "I would have kept it like it would have been in the 1920s," Marion says. They added built-in cabinets to the bathroom, opened up the interiors with new doors, and added a dining room and a sleeping loft. The house has a prominent view of the Colorado Street Bridge, which is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and its constant presence plays a role in the décor. "Our place is filled

with Pasadena history," says Marion. "We furnished our spaces with period pieces, and hanging on the wall are paintings of the bridge and something from *Scientific American* that talks about the bridge when it was built in 1913."

The Vista del Arroyo Bungalows development does more than simply restore a site to its former glory—it has created a neighborhood with a diverse mix of buyers. It's also a boon to the surrounding community. "It removed an absolute blight," Lefevre says. "In addition to being ugly, it was a site for all sorts of illegal stuff. So as far as the neighborhood is concerned, it removed that whole element, which is much appreciated. But I think it ultimately increased property values. It basically finished a revitalization of that area that started with the closing of the old hotel and the acquisition of the property by the federal government." NOH

Nigel Maynard is a freelance writer living in Washington, D.C.

For Resources, see page 72.

Above: An inviting flowered courtyard with a central fountain connects two of the new buildings together.



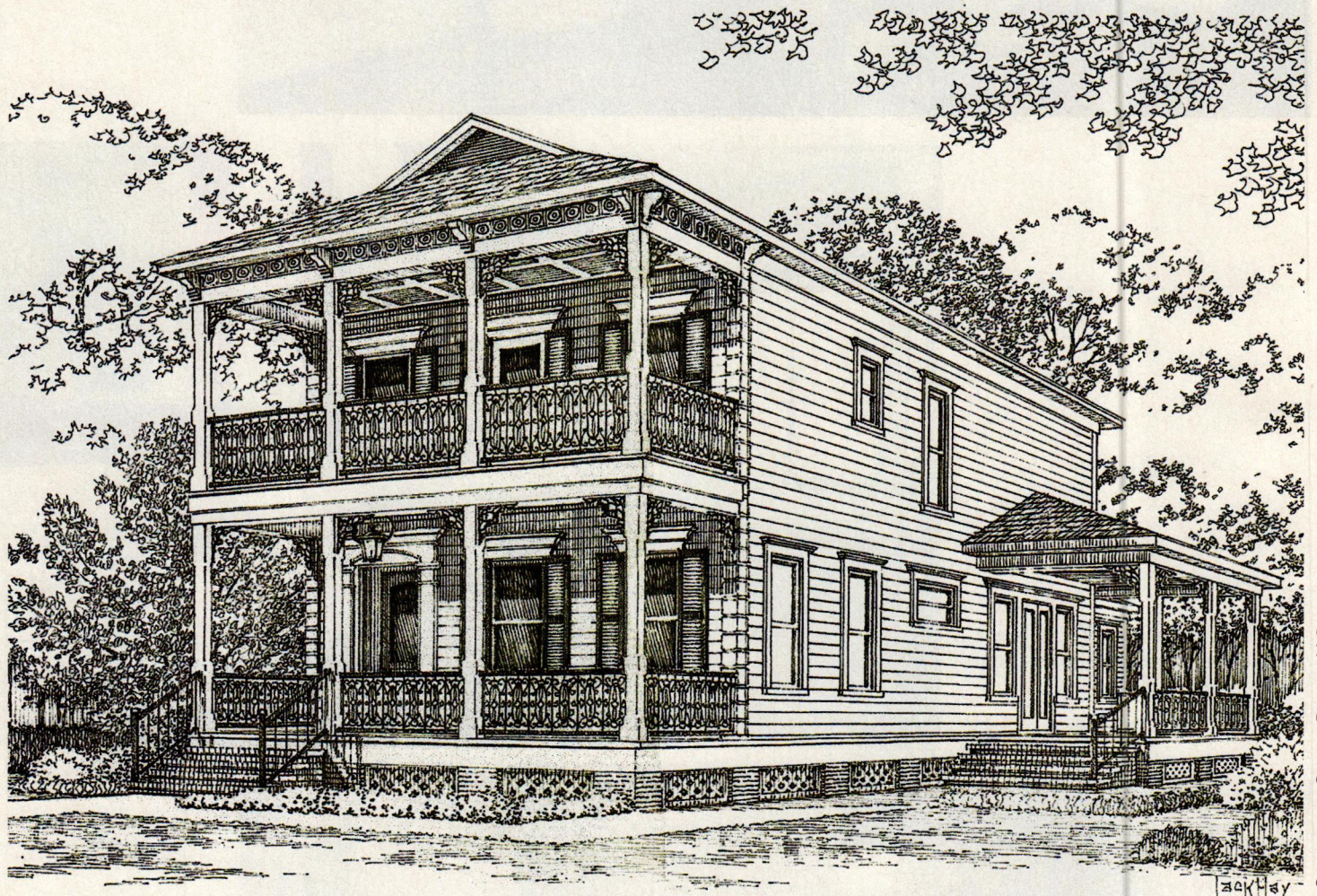
This page: The renovated units feature standard design elements—from kitchens to baths—awash with period details.



Southern Tradition

TEXT BY NANCY E. BERRY

Sam Gianukos of Creole Design, LLC, won first place for the design of this southern vernacular house at the Traditional Building Show.



COURTESY OF CREOLE DESIGN, LLC

The third biannual Traditional Building Design Challenge took place during the Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference in New Orleans. The American Institute of Building Design, the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America, and *New Old House* magazine, in conjunction with the Preservation Resource Center's Operation Comeback program, challenged architects to design a new old house that would fit into one of New Orleans' recognized historic districts.

Working with set parameters, such as lot size, square footage, and style, the task for three days was to design and hand-draw a new old house for one of New Orleans' historic neighborhoods within the footprint of a fictitious house that

has been lost. Architect Sam Gianukos of Creole Design, LLC, of Houston, Texas, won the competition with the design of a southern house with a two-story porch and traditional New Orleans vernacular detailing. The two-story porch has been a popular feature on southern houses for centuries and is in keeping with many of the existing homes in New Orleans. The modern interior layout includes a foyer, dining room, great room, kitchen, and pantry as well as a bedroom and full bath on the first floor. The second floor features three bedrooms and two full baths with access to the second-story porch off the master bedroom. The well-executed design would fit in well into an existing historic neighborhood or new traditional neighborhood development. **NOH**

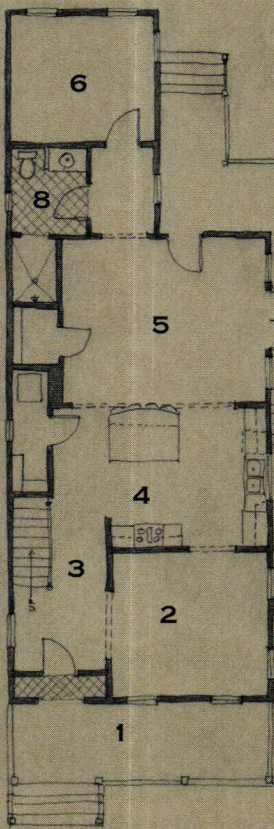
Southern Vernacular

House Dimensions:

MAIN LEVEL - 1,129 SQUARE FEET

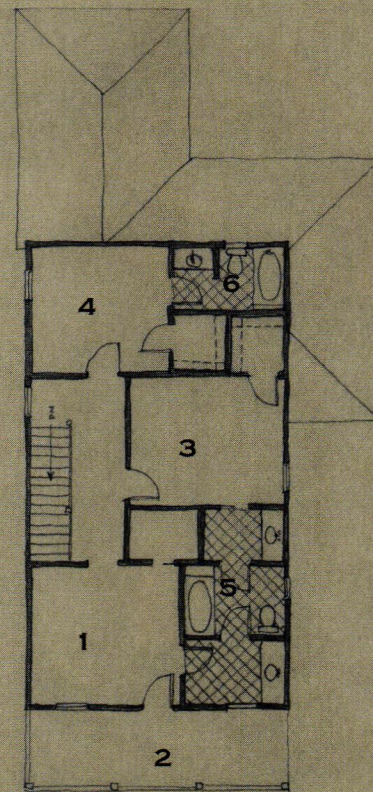
UPPER LEVEL - 856 SQUARE FEET

PORCHES - 571 SQUARE FEET



First Floor

- 1 FRONT PORCH
- 2 DINING ROOM
- 3 FOYER
- 4 KITCHEN
- 5 GREAT ROOM
- 6 BEDROOM
- 7 PORCH
- 8 BATHROOM



Second Floor

- 1 MASTER BEDROOM
- 2 PORCH
- 3 BEDROOM
- 4 BEDROOM
- 5 BATHROOM
- 6 BATHROOM

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Craftsman Design

Jonathan Miller Architects creates a harmonious Craftsman-inspired house for Traditional Building's Design Challenge competition. TEXT BY NANCY E. BERRY



COURTESY OF JONATHAN MILLER ARCHITECTS

The first annual Traditional Building Design Challenge took place during the Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference in Chicago. The American Institute of Building Design, the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America, and *New Old House* magazine put eight architects to task to design a new old house that would fit into one of Chicago's nationally recognized historic districts—the Ridgeland/Oak Park, the Gunderson, or the Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie School of Architecture historic district.

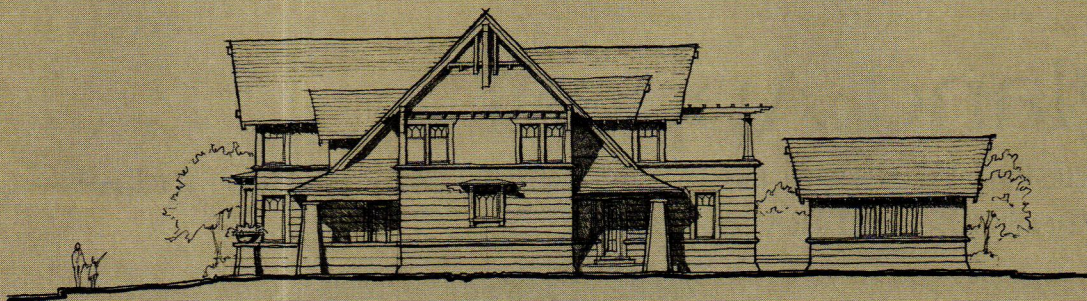
Working with set parameters such as period (1880 to 1920), lot size (50 by 125), square footage (2,200 to 3,200), and style (Foursquare, Prairie style, bungalow, or Victorian), the competitors had three days on the show

floor to complete the renderings and floor plans by hand and then present them to the judges.

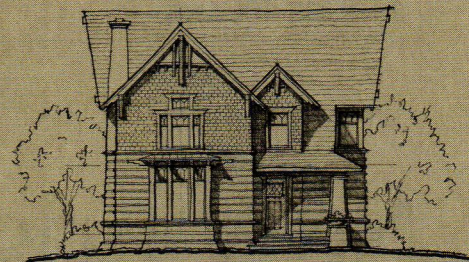
Architect Jonathan Miller's winning entry is a Craftsman house with Prairie-style detailing. His design influences were homes located in the neighborhood of Oak Park, as well as work by architects Frank Lloyd Wright and John S. Van Bergen. The highlights of this Design Challenge winner are its open floor plan, grand fireplace, spacious kitchen, wine bar, walk-in pantry, laundry room, and mudroom. Each bedroom has its own bathroom suite, and the master bedroom features a private outside terrace.

Miller recommends that the house be finished with a clay tile roof, cedar shake siding, horizontal board and batten, timber eave brackets, and exposed dovetail rafters. **NOH**

Craftsman House



Side Elevation



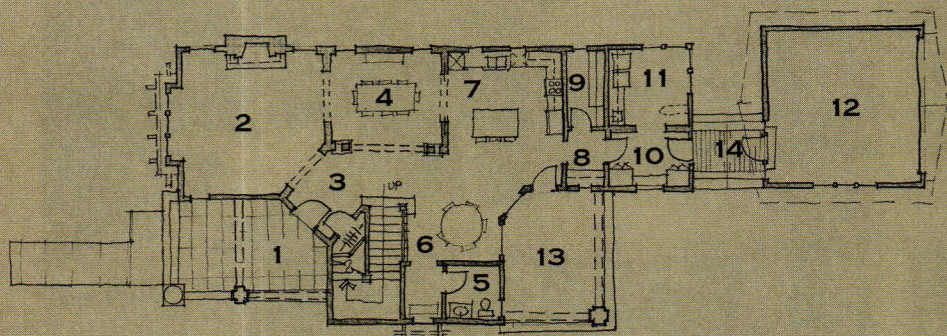
Front Elevation

Square Footage:

MAIN LEVEL - 1,762 SQUARE FEET
UPPER LEVEL - 1,503 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL 3,265 SQUARE FEET

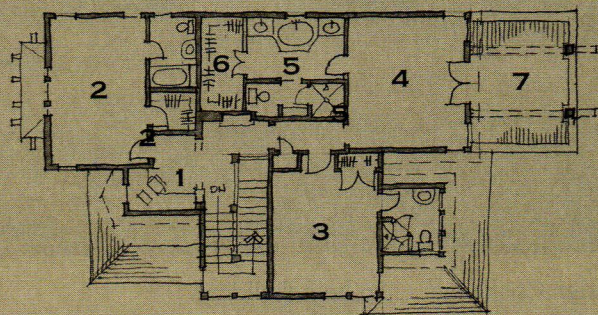
House Dimensions:

36',8" WIDE BY 70',8" DEEP
(NOT INCLUDING SEPARATE GARAGE)



First Floor

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1 FRONT PORCH | 8 WINE BAR |
| 2 LIVING ROOM | 9 PANTRY |
| 3 ENTRY | 10 MUDROOM |
| 4 DINING AREA | 11 LAUNDRY |
| 5 POWDER ROOM | 12 GARAGE |
| 6 BREAKFAST NOOK | 13 COVERED PORCH |
| 7 KITCHEN | 14 TERRACE |



Second Floor

- | |
|--------------------|
| 1 COMPUTER STATION |
| 2 BEDROOM |
| 3 BEDROOM |
| 4 MASTER BEDROOM |
| 5 MASTER BATH |
| 6 MASTER CLOSET |
| 7 TERRACE |

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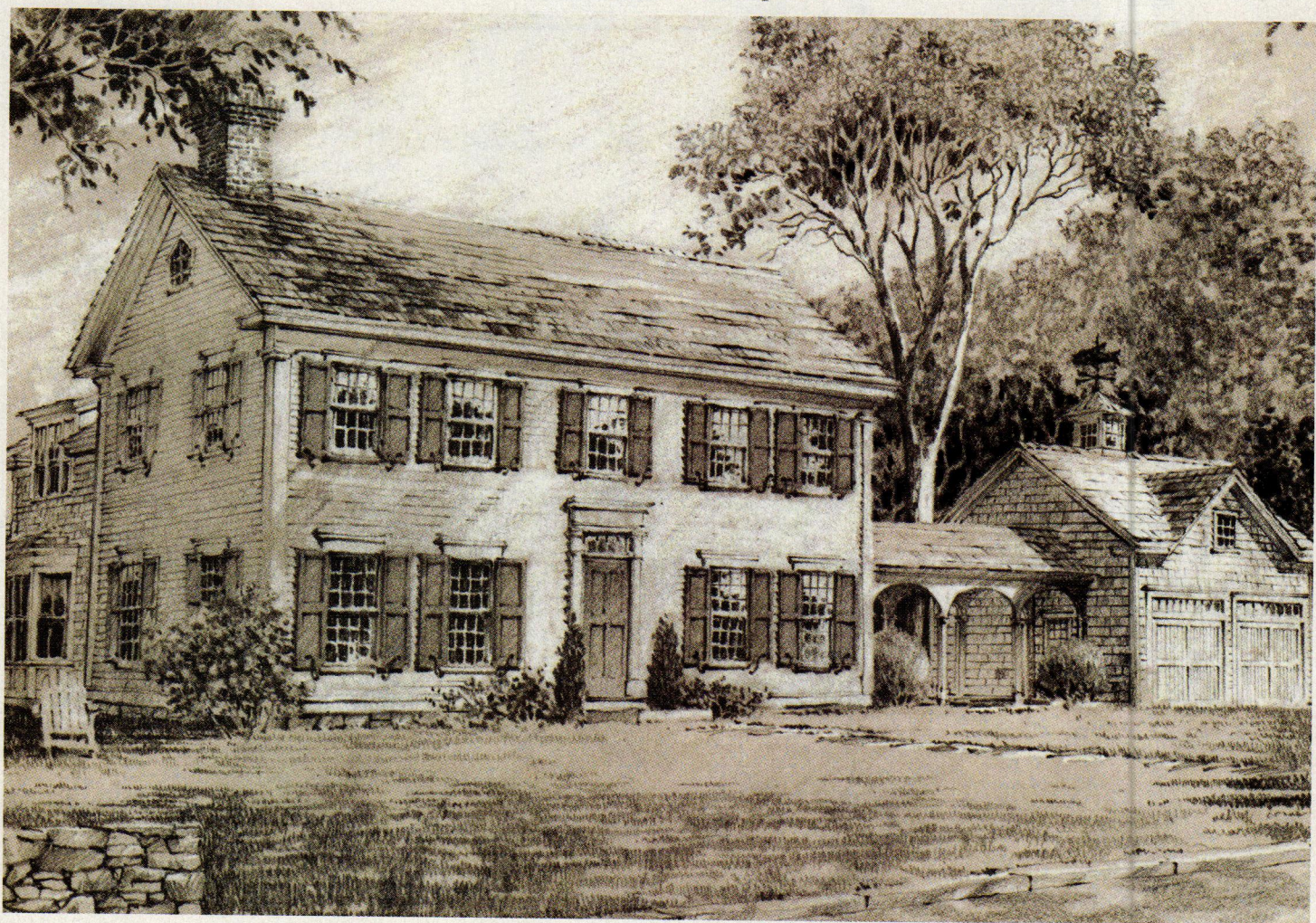
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New England Appeal

Frank Shirley adapted historical American home design principles to today's living for this New England new old house plan.



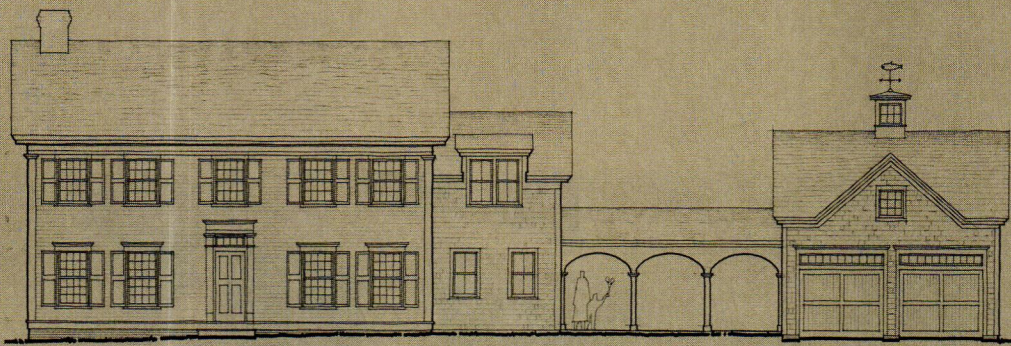
COURTESY OF FRANK SHIRLEY ARCHITECTS

The second annual Traditional Building Design Challenge hosted in Boston brought about this wonderful traditionally style home designed by first-place winner Frank Shirley of Frank Shirley Architects of Cambridge, Massachusetts. The design of this Design Challenge winner had to fit into the historic district of Old King's Highway on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Shirley chose a building that is true to Cape Cod's rich architectural vocabulary—it would sit well with the area's Saltboxes and Capes—yet carries an ambitious set of modern features and comforts. Shirley chose clapboard and shingles appropriate for the region. The clapboard is reserved for the front of the house (the formal side), while more economical materials such as shingles are used for the side and rear walls as well as for the carriage house—a true Yankee approach

to homebuilding.

The interior spaces in older homes had clear distinctions between public and private areas. This new old house design also maintains traditional public spaces (the front hall, living room, and dining room), which are located on the first floor at the front of the house, while the private rooms, (the bedrooms and kitchens) are located at the rear and on the second floor of the house. To accommodate today's lifestyles, the kitchen serves as a transition point from public to private zones and opens onto a breakfast nook and family room.

A charming breezeway connects the two-car garage, which has traditionally styled doors. The breezeway is also a practical architectural element to go from house to garage during New England's Nor'easters. **NOH**

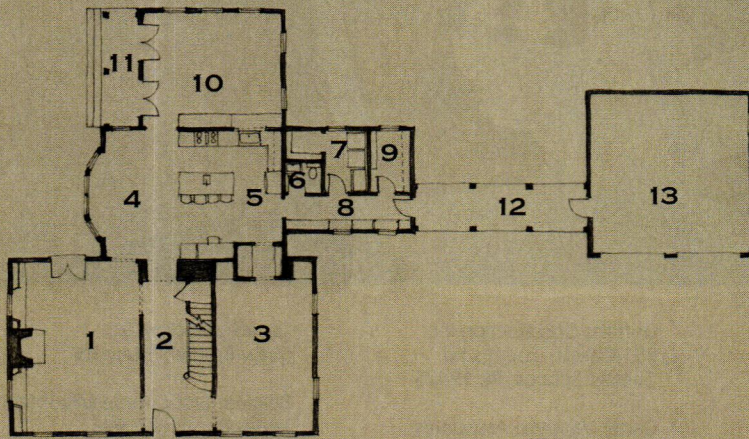


Front Elevation

Square Footage:

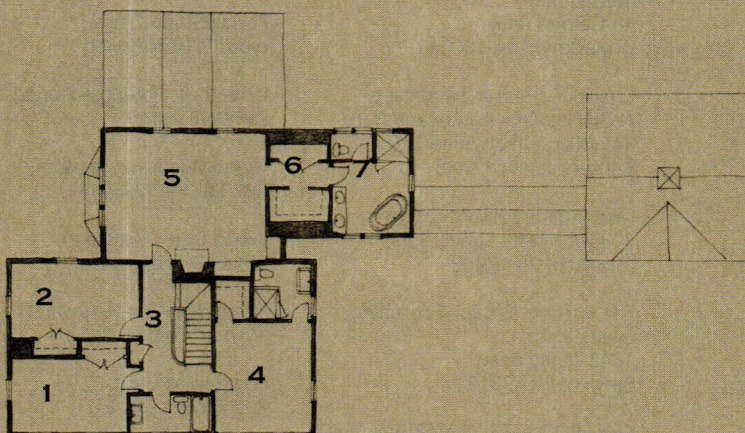
MAIN LEVEL - 1,950 SQUARE FEET
 UPPER LEVEL - 1,625 SQUARE FEET
 GARAGE - 485 SQUARE FEET
 BREEZEWAY 140 SQUARE FEET
 98 FEET WIDE BY 56 FEET DEEP
 (INCLUDING BREEZEWAY AND GARAGE)

House Dimensions:



First Floor

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1 LIVING ROOM | 8 MUDROOM |
| 2 FRONT HALL | 9 WALK-IN CLOSET |
| 3 DINING ROOM | 10 PORCH |
| 4 BREAKFAST NOOK | 11 FAMILY ROOM |
| 5 KITCHEN | 12 BREEZEWAY |
| 6 POWDER ROOM | 13 GARAGE |
| 7 LAUNDRY | |



Second Floor

- | |
|------------------|
| 1 BEDROOM |
| 2 BEDROOM |
| 3 HALL |
| 4 GUEST BEDROOM |
| 5 MASTER BEDROOM |
| 6 MASTER CLOSET |
| 7 MASTER BATH |

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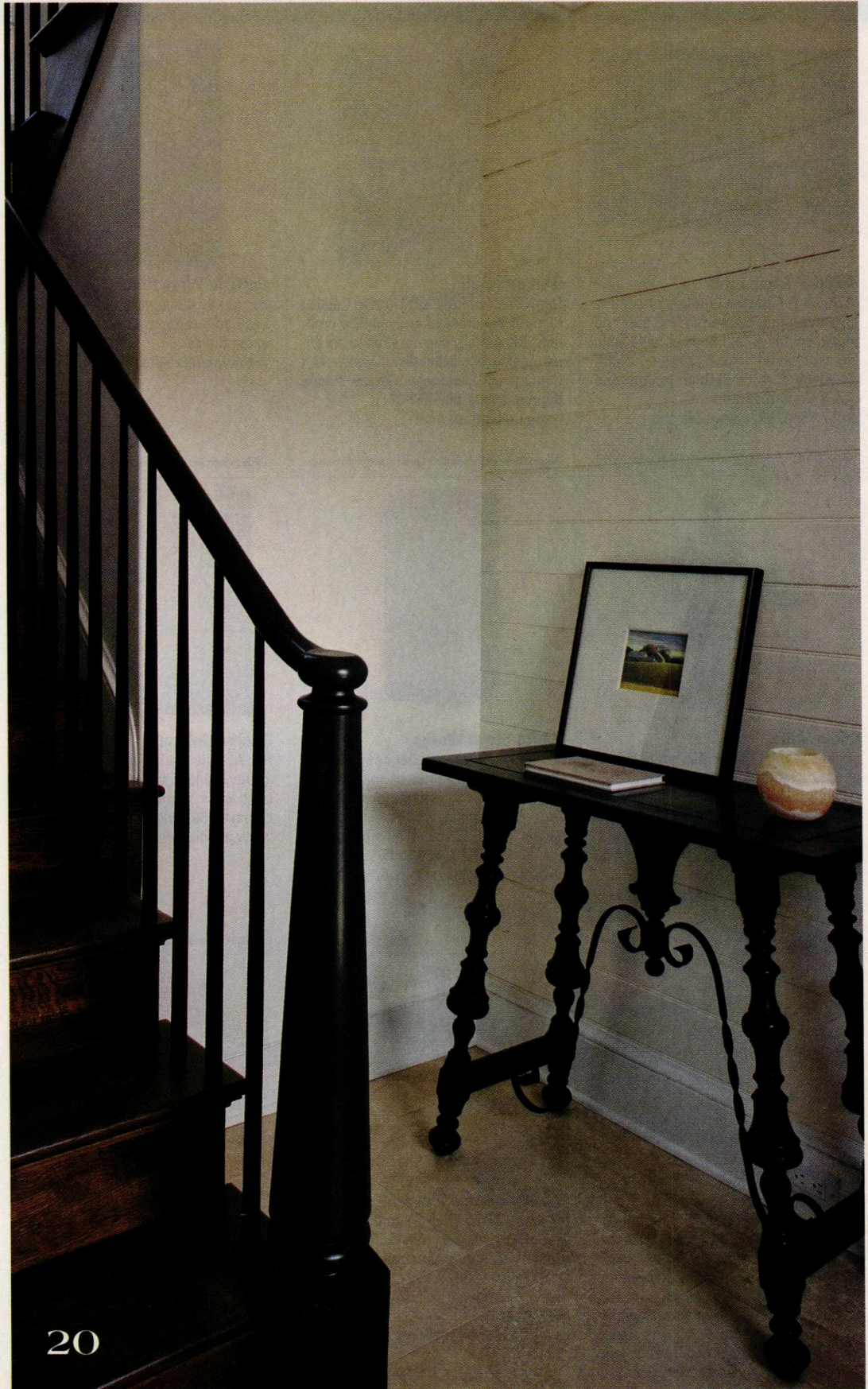
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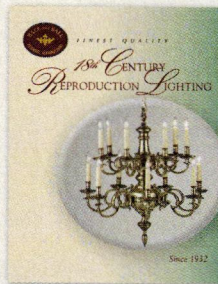




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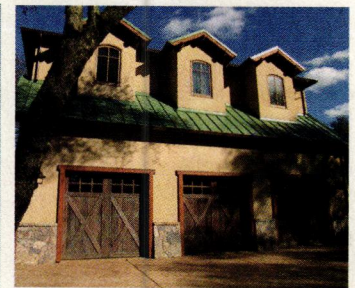
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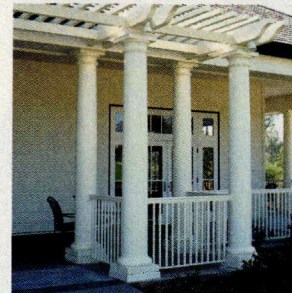
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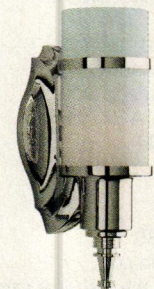
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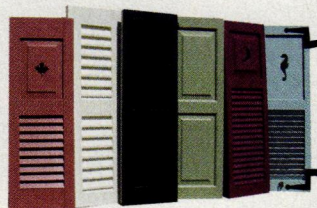
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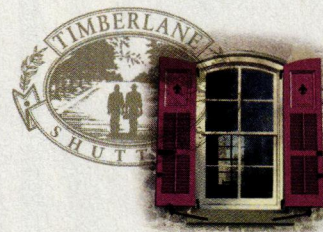
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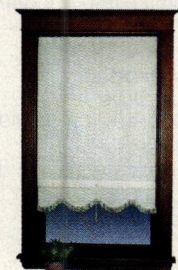
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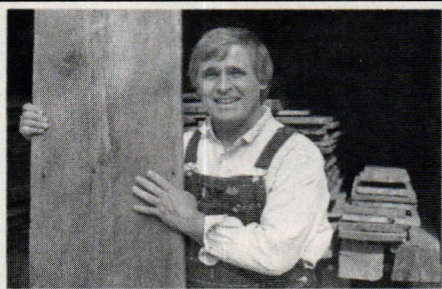
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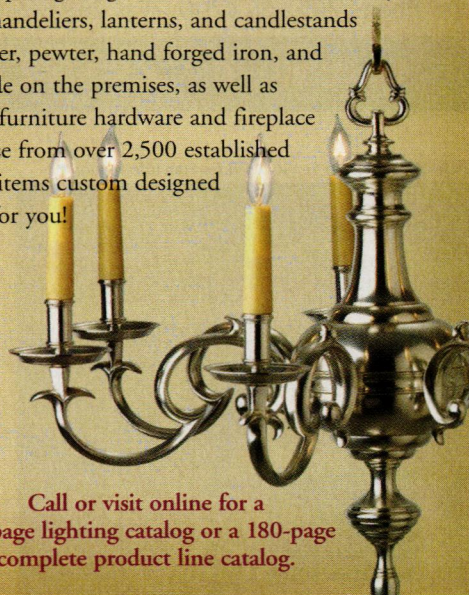


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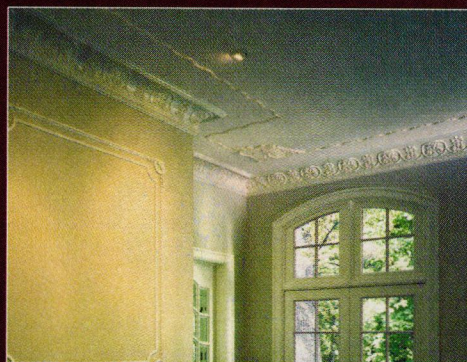
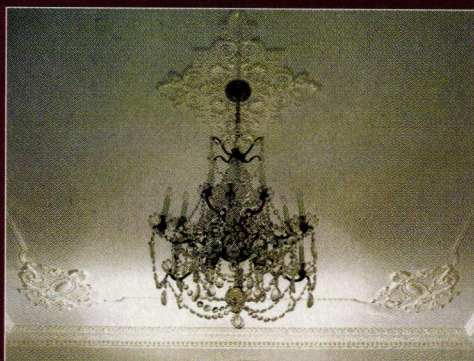
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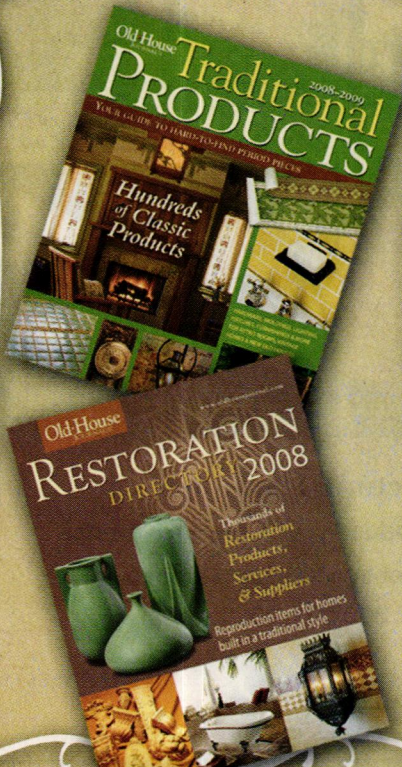
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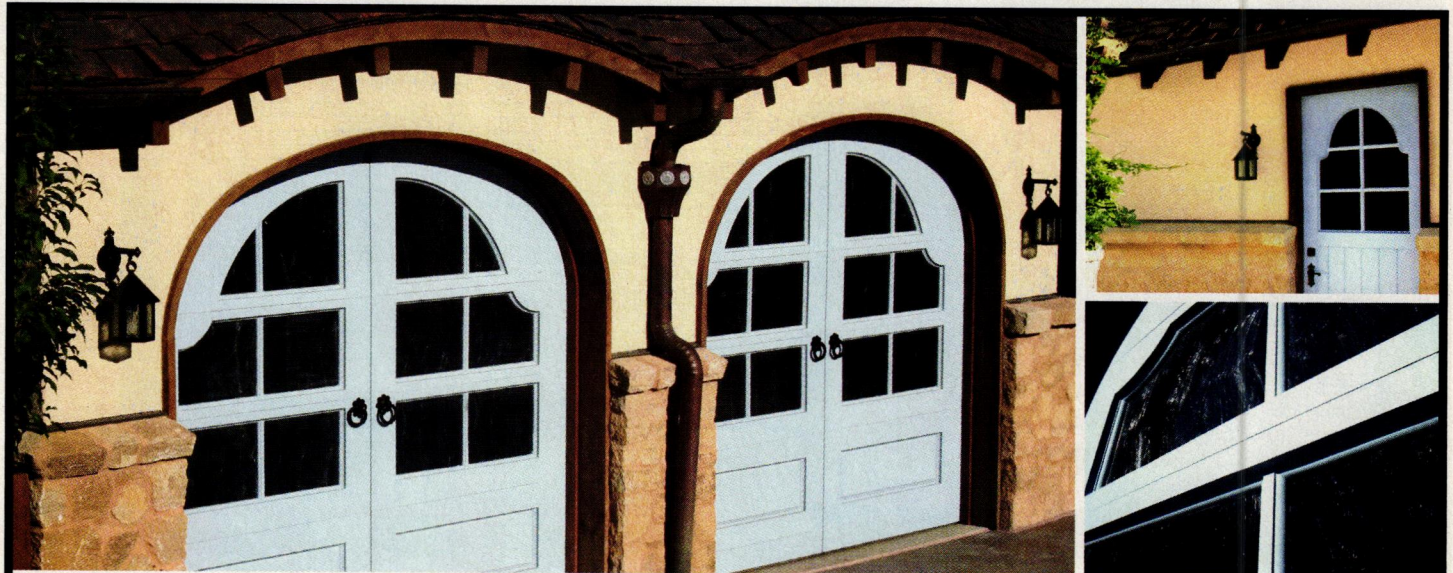
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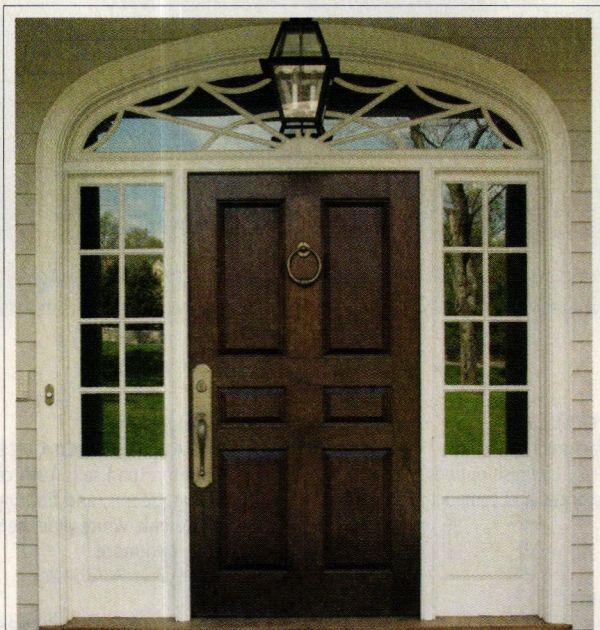
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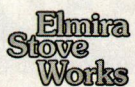
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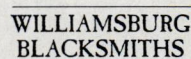
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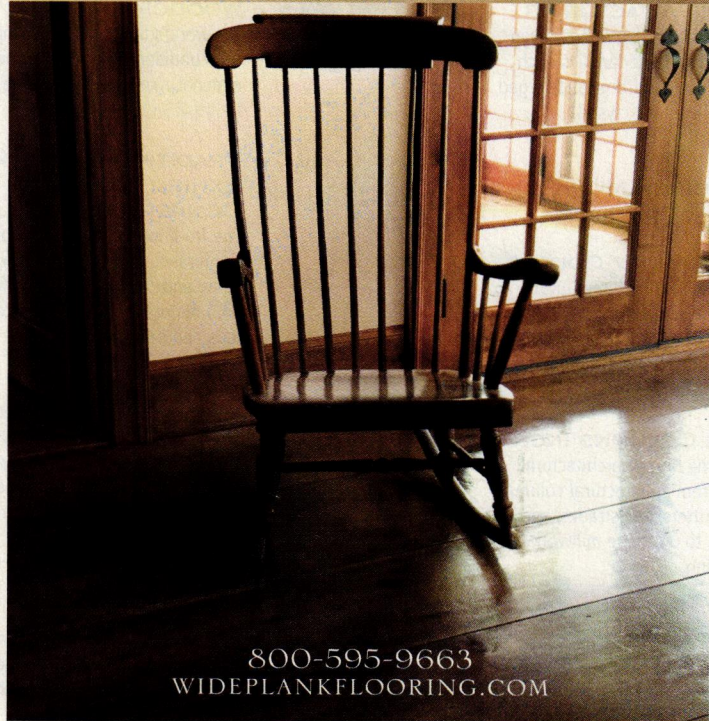
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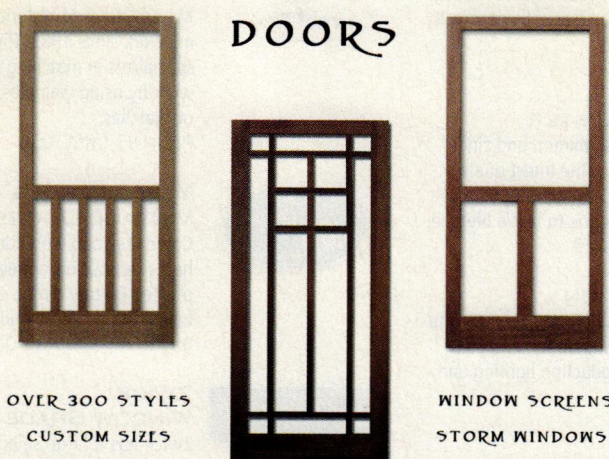


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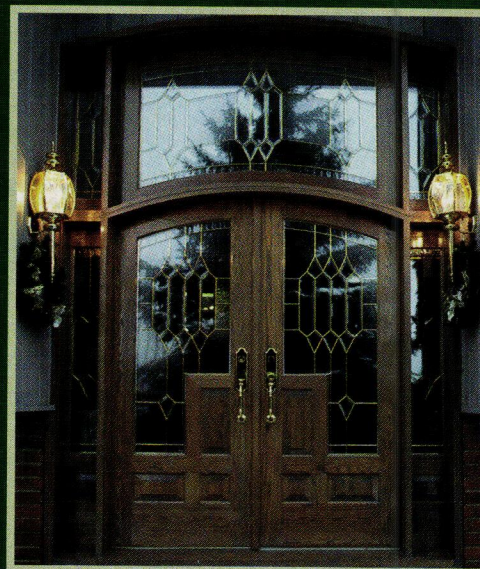
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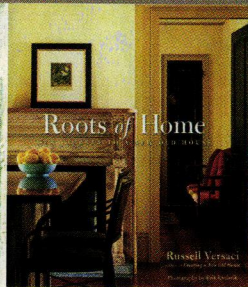
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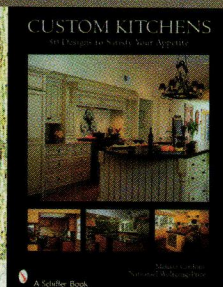
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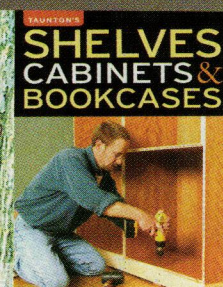
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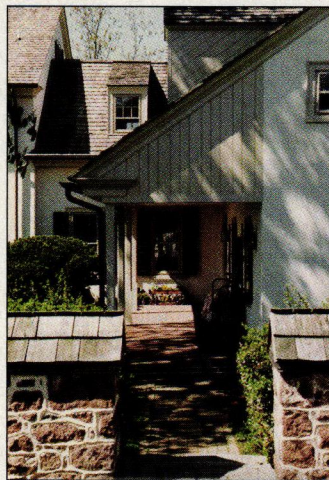
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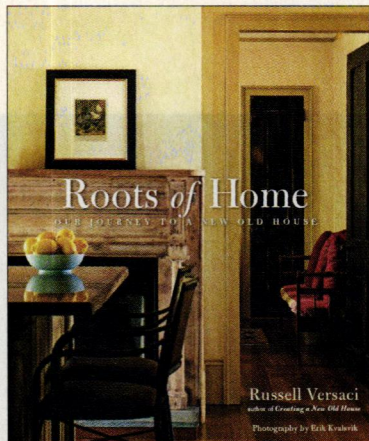
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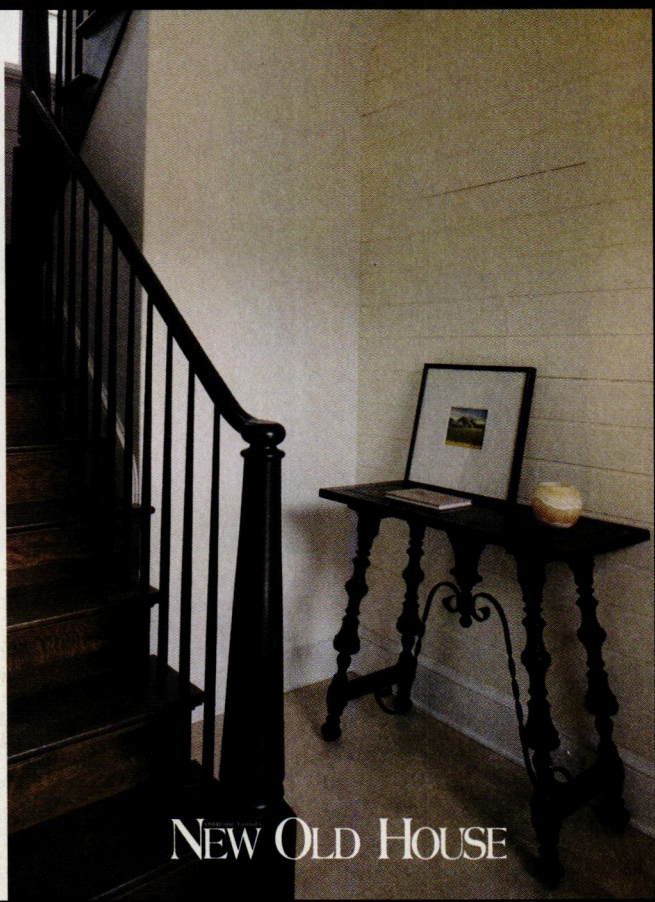
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Traditional Detailing

To achieve the look reminiscent of an aged French country villa, Peter Zimmerman Architects employed traditional materials in the project featured on page 34. Carved limestone tracings accent the custom mahogany casement windows in the formal areas of the house along the front, while openings in the informal

spaces are more simply detailed with wood jambs and limestone sills, thus developing a hierarchy within the detailing that corresponds to the hierarchy of interior spaces. The texture of the taper-sawn cedar roof complements the stucco and limestone. **NOH**

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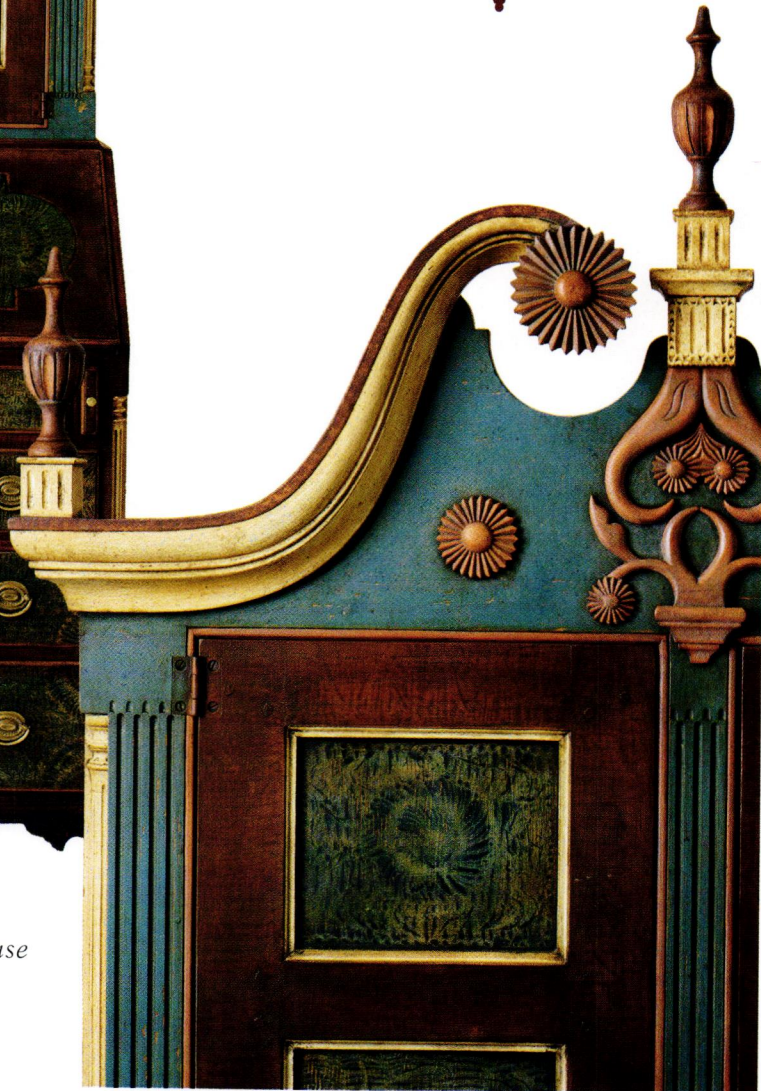
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