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Profile
The Art Lover, by Lynne Lavelle
Turn-of-the-century architect/designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh combined Arts & Crafts with Art Nouveau to create the “Glasgow Style.” 6

Recent Projects
Penthouse Tribute, by Nancy A. Rahling
A storied apartment within NYC’s Osborne building is newly renovated by Zivkovic Connolly Architects. 10

Beaux-Arts Boudoir by Annabel Hsin
Kirk E. Peterson & Associates Architects renovates a master bath and dressing room to complement a 1912 Beaux-Arts home in Piedmont, CA. 16

Product Report
Tomorrow’s Arts & Crafts Lighting
Four manufacturers discuss the next phase of an iconic lighting style 22

Book Review
William Hodgins Interiors, by Stephen M. Salny, reviewed by Kiley Jacques 63

The Forum
The Buildings We Love, by Alvin Holm
Ornament signifies that a building is loved. 64

Departments
Advertiser Index 26 Calendar of Events 4
Buying Guides

In this issue you will find 18 Buying Guides on our issue theme: Interiors. The Guides contain information on suppliers, manufacturers, custom fabricators, artists and artisans, as well as many photographs of their work. The Guides range from Furnishings to Lighting and Wood Interior. They form a most comprehensive source for professionals working in restoration, renovation and traditionally styled new construction.

Historical Products Showcase .......................... 28
Furnishings .................................................. 34
Murals & Mosaics .......................................... 35
Columns & Capitals ....................................... 36
Wood Flooring .............................................. 37
Non-Wood Flooring ..................................... 38
Interior Molded Ornament ............................ 39
Decorative Painting & Finishes ....................... 40
Ornamental Ceilings ..................................... 41
Ceramic Tile .................................................. 42
Interior Lighting ......................................... 45
 Mantels & Fireplaces .................................. 48
Stairs & Railings .......................................... 51
Registers, Grilles & Radiators ....................... 54
The Period Bath ......................................... 56
The Period Kitchen ...................................... 56
Wine Cellars ............................................... 59
The Wood Interior ....................................... 60
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Calendar of Events

PALACES FOR THE PEOPLE: GUASTAVINO AND AMERICA'S GREAT PUBLIC SPACES EXHIBIT, March 26 - September 1, 2014. This traveling exhibition examining the work of Rafael Guastavino Sr. (1842-1908) and his son, Rafael Jr. (1872-1950) will set up at the Museum of the City of New York in NYC. It features the innovations of the Guastavino Fireproof Construction Company (1889-1962) and has been expanded to include 20 key Guastavino spaces in the five boroughs. For more information, visit www.mcny.org.

NATIONAL PRESERVATION INSTITUTE: HISTORIC PRESERVATION SEMINARS, April - May 2014. The National Preservation Institute will conduct a series of training seminars for professionals in management, development and historic, cultural and environmental preservation in many cities across the country. Seminars, case studies and small group exercises will highlight state-of-the-art practices in historic preservation. For more information, visit www.npi.org or email info@npi.org.

TRADITIONAL BUILDING CONFERENCE SERIES, April 2-3, 2014. The first stop of this year’s Traditional Building Conference Series will be in Washington, DC. The event theme, “Creative Crossroads: Makers, Innovators & Tradition,” will feature an intensive two-day symposium for architects, contractors and design professionals, as well as the chance to earn AIA continuing-education credits. For more information, call Carolyn Walsh, 781-779-1560 or Judy Hayward, 802-674-6752 or go to www.traditionalbuildingshow.com. For sponsorships, contact Peter Miller, pmiller@aimmedia.com.

SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS ANNUAL CONFERENCE, April 9-13, 2014. The Society of Architectural Historians will hold its 67th annual conference in Austin, TX. The conference will feature the SAH Austin Seminar, “Austin and the Place of Historic Architecture in Rapidly Growing Cities,” 35 paper sessions and workshops, as well as study tours of the host city’s architecture and landscape. For more information, visit www.sah.org.

ICAA’S GRAND TOUR OF SICILY: PALERMO TO TAORMINA, April 25-5, 2014. ICAA in conjunction with Classical Excursions will lead its fourth guided tour through Sicily, Italy. The itinerary begins in Palermo and includes visits to the Valley of the Temples at Agrigento, daytrips to Ragusa Ibla and Noto, walking tours in Siracusa and ends with a night in Taormina. For more information, go to www.classiciist.org.

TRADITIONAL BUILDING CONFERENCE SERIES, May 7-8, 2014. The second stop of this year’s Traditional Building Conference Series will be in New Orleans, LA. The event will feature an intensive two-day symposium for architects, contractors and design professionals, as well as the chance to earn AIA continuing-education credits. For more information, call Carolyn Walsh, 781-779-1560 or Judy Hayward, 802-674-6752 or go to www.traditionalbuildingshow.com. For sponsorships, contact Peter Miller, pmiller@aimmedia.com.

GREENBUILD 2014, October 22-24, 2014. Greenbuild’s international conference and expo will be held at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, LA. It is dedicated to green building products and services and will feature three days of educational sessions, green building tours and seminars. For more information, visit www.greenbuildexpo.org.

APT QUÉBEC CITY 2014 CONFERENCE, October 26-30, 2014. The Association for Preservation Technology International will host its annual conference at the Fairmont Le Château Frontenac in Quebec City, Canada. The event theme will be “Métissage: The Fruitful Encounter of Differences,” which reflects both the spirit of the host city and the coming together at this year’s conference. For conference updates, visit www.apti.org.

ARCHITECTURE BOSTON EXPO, October 28-30, 2014. The Boston Society of Architects will host its trade show and conference at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, Hall C, in Boston, MA. Participants will have the chance to earn continuing education and AIA/CES Learning Units. For more information, visit www.abexpo.com.

SGAA ANNUAL SUMMER CONFERENCE, June 9-12, 2014. The Stained Glass Association of America will host its summer conference at The Elms Resort & Spa in Excelsior Springs, MO. This year’s theme “The Artist’s Retreat at The Elms,” will feature workshops on stained-glass windows, church symbols and restoration painting as well as an optional winery and stained-glass tour of historic St. Joseph. For registration and conference updates, visit www.stainedglass.org/html/SGAACconference.htm.

AIA 2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION AND DESIGN EXPOSITION, June 26-28, 2014. The AIA 2014 National Convention & Design Exposition will be held at McCormick Place in Chicago, IL. The event, “Design with Purpose,” will allow participants to explore new trends with over 800 exhibitors and have the chance to earn Learning Units through entrepreneurial and business-focused education classes and tracks. For more information, visit www.aia.org.

TRADITIONAL BUILDING CONFERENCE SERIES, July 16-17, 2014. The third stop of this year’s Traditional Building Conference Series will be in Boston, MA. The event will feature an intensive two-day symposium for architects, contractors and design professionals, as well as the chance to earn AIA continuing-education credits. For more information, call Carolyn Walsh, 781-779-1560 or Judy Hayward, 802-674-6752 or go to www.traditionalbuildingshow.com. For sponsorships, contact Peter Miller, pmiller@aimmedia.com.

TRADITIONAL BUILDING CONFERENCE SERIES, September 25-26, 2014. The fourth and last stop of this year’s Traditional Building Conference Series will be in St. Paul, MN. The event will feature an intensive two-day symposium for architects, contractors and design professionals, as well as the chance to earn AIA continuing-education credits. For more information, call Carolyn Walsh, 781-779-1560 or Judy Hayward, 802-674-6752 or go to www.traditionalbuildingshow.com. For sponsorships, contact Peter Miller, pmiller@aimmedia.com.

PRESERVING THE HISTORIC ROAD 2014 CONFERENCE, September 26-28, 2014. Historic Roads will host its biennial conference in Savannah, GA. The three-day event is structured around educational sessions, seminars and field tours of the host city’s historic roads’ sites. For more information, visit www.historicroads.org.

DESIGNDC 2013, October 1-3, 2013. DesignDC 2014 will be held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC. This three-day conference is designed to connect attendees to cutting-edge technology and projects, as well as provide opportunities to mingle with AIA members of the Washington, DC, Northern Virginia and Potomac Valley areas. For more information, visit www.aiadesigndc.net.

GREENBUILD 2014, October 22-24, 2014. Greenbuild’s international conference and expo will be held at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, LA. It is dedicated to green building products and services and will feature three days of educational sessions, green building tours and seminars. For more information, visit www.greenbuildexpo.org.
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"There is hope in honest error, none in the icy perfection of the mere stylist." — J.D. Sedding

The city of Glasgow on Scotland’s west coast is renowned for its industrial heritage, feats of science and engineering, and its contributions to culture and art. From John Logie Baird, inventor of television, to economist Adam Smith, and numerous actors, writers and poets, Glaswegians’ mark on the world is profound. But few match the legacy of architect, artist and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh, the father of "Glasgow Style."

"He was one of the most creative architect/designers working at the turn of the last century," says Pamela Robertson, senior curator and professor of Mackintosh Studies at Glasgow University’s Hunterian Museum. "In common with many of his contemporaries he believed that the architect was responsible not just for the fabric of a building, but for every detail of its interior design. He was one of the most sophisticated exponents of the theory of the room as a work of art, and created highly distinctive furniture of great formal sophistication. His achievements continue to inspire today."

Mackintosh was born in the Townhead area of Glasgow on June 7th, 1868, the fourth of William Mackintosh and Margaret Rennie’s 11 children. Playground taunts over his limp and dropped right eyelid caused him to seek solace in the countryside, where he developed a lifelong love of landscapes and flora. Mackintosh was, however, a product of his city. He lived in Glasgow for most of his life, where the River Clyde — its gateway to the world — exposed him to the trappings of the Industrial Revolution, mass production, and the art and culture of a globalizing Far East.

At age 15, Mackintosh enrolled at the Glasgow School of Art (GSA), regarded then and since as one of the most prestigious academies in Europe. Under headmaster Francis Newberry, who brought with him from London a keen interest in William Morris and the Arts & Crafts movement, the school had recently departed from pure fine arts education to embrace a range of crafts, including pottery, textiles, metalwork and stained glass. Mackintosh continued to take evening classes while pursuing a career in architecture, first with an apprenticeship for local architect, John Hutchinson, before transferring in 1889 to the larger firm of Honeyman and Keppie.

As a student, Mackintosh accumulated an impressive roster of prizes and accolades, including the second Alexander Thomson Traveling Studentship for Public Design in 1890. Committed to "furtherance of the study of ancient classic architecture," the award’s 60 pounds funded Mackintosh’s seminal architectural tour of Italy, Antwerp and Paris. Surviving sketchbooks demonstrate the young architect’s increasing maturity, which primed him for Glasgow’s late-19th-century peak in reputation for architecture and design.

Upon his return, Mackintosh resumed his position at Honeyman and Keppie by day and his studies at GSA by night. Together with fellow GSA students Margaret McDonald (whom he married in 1900), her sister Frances, and Herbert MacNair, he formed "The Four," a group of artistic visionaries whose unique take on Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau earned the moniker "Glasgow Style." With Newberry’s support, the group debuted an exhibition of metalwork, posters and furniture at the 1896 Arts and Crafts Exhibition in London, showcasing Glasgow Style’s blend of Celtic imagery and abstract motifs, the most enduring of which was a cabbage-
1. The Hill House is widely regarded as Scottish architect and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh's finest work. Completed in 1904 for the publisher Walter Blackie, every element of its interior was designed by Mackintosh and his wife Margaret. The house has been faithfully restored by the National Trust for Scotland and is open to the public. Photo: courtesy of the National Trust for Scotland

2. Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928) was born in Glasgow and lived in the city for most of his life. As one of "The Four," he was at the forefront of the Scottish Arts and Crafts movement, and designer of its most famous motif - the "Glasgow rose." He worked for the architecture firm Honeyman and Keppie for most of his career, before retiring to the South of France.

3. Mackintosh's entry to the German design journal Zeitschrift für Innendekoration's 1900 competition to design "A House for an Art Lover" was much admired but rejected for late submission. The portfolio of designs remained unrealized until 1989. Prints: courtesy of House for an Art Lover

4. House for an Art Lover opened in Glasgow's Bellahouston Park in 1996. The design and construction team analyzed Mackintosh's competition entry as well as other completed buildings by the architect to faithfully represent his vision. Photo: courtesy of House for an Art Lover
like flower, the “Glasgow rose.”

By the exhibition, Mackintosh had several important commissions under his belt and an increasingly strong design aesthetic. His commercial work at Honeyman and Keppie included an office building for the Glasgow newspaper The Herald (1894), Martyr’s Public School (1895) and a new building for his beloved Glasgow School of Art (1896). Considered his masterwork, the latter’s two phases integrated Scotland’s early Baroimages style with the looming 20th century’s materials and technologies.

Mackintosh’s fusion of influences defied clear association with prevailing trends. His admiration for the simplicity, textures and forms of traditional Japanese residential design, and Arts & Crafts architects such as J.D. Sedding, was at odds with the emerging Modernist movement’s definition of the home as “a machine for living.” And though less ornamental than the Victorian style, his integration of Art Nouveau and Scottish themes rejected the extremes of raw industrialism.

Mackintosh’s view of the home as a work of art, for and by the individual, drew wide acclaim in continental Europe. In Austria, he contributed to the eighth Vienna Secession, an exhibition of young artists and architects, and he also held exhibitions in Germany, Turin and Moscow.

In 1900, Mackintosh entered German design journal Zeitschrift für Innendekoration’s 1900 competition to design “A House for an Art Lover.” Though disqualified for late submission of some interior drawings, German architect Hermann Muthesius said of the design, “The exterior character of the building exhibits an absolutely original character unlike anything else known. In it we shall not find a trace of the conventional forms of architecture to which the artist, as far as his present intentions were concerned, was quite indifferent.”

“A House for an Art Lover” remained but a few sheets of paper until 1989, when civil engineer Graham Roxburgh decided to turn Mackintosh’s ideas into reality. An assembled team of architects, designers, builders and craftsmen, led by Andy MacMillan, the Head of Architecture at GSA, referenced Mackintosh’s completed buildings to flesh out the technical details of his sketches. The building opened in Glasgow’s Bellahouston Park in 1996 and retains strong ties with the GSA as a center for the visual arts.

Mackintosh’s most celebrated commission, Hill House (1904), owes much to “A House for an Art Lover” and an earlier residential commission, Windyhill (1900). Publisher Walter Blackie commissioned Mackintosh to design not only the house and grounds, but also the furniture, fittings and decorative schemes. The architect’s wife, Margaret, designed and produced many of the textiles, as well as a “sleeping princess” gesso fireplace panel. Allegedly, Mackintosh advised the Blackies on which flowers to place in the living room, to avoid clashes with the decor.

Situated high above the River Clyde, in the Helensburgh area of Glasgow, Hill House’s simple form is a mix of Arts and Crafts, Scottish Baroimages and Japonisme. Its light-filled rooms take advantage of the site’s expansive views and have undergone a faithful restoration by the National Trust for Scotland. Mackintosh’s signature “Glasgow rose,” strong vertical lines and cut-out squares feature in every room, which vary in tone from the dark, masculine library to Margaret’s silk hangings and elongated female forms in the main bedroom.

Despite his popularity in continental Europe, Mackintosh’s holistic approach to design had a limiting effect on his career at home. Few private patrons
5. The influence of Mackintosh’s wife, Margaret, is much in evidence at Hill House. Her lighter, softer design took was a balance to Mackintosh's more masculine color schemes, cut outs and strong, vertical lines.


6. Mackintosh believed that the architect was responsible for every element of a building, from the fabric itself to every element of its interior design. High-backed chairs were a signature of his “total packages,” and feature throughout Hill House (right) and the Mackintosh Collection, held at Glasgow University’s Hunterian Museum (left). Photo (right): courtesy of the Hunterian

7. The Mackintoshes designed these ca. 1900 lead-and-glass panels for their apartment at 120 Mains Street, Glasgow. The stylized stem and leaf form was a common theme in Mackintosh’s work. Photo: courtesy of the Hunterian

8. From 1923 to 1925, Mackintosh experimented with bold commercial textile designs, many of which were based on stylized plant forms. They were among the most progressive in Britain at the time. Photo: courtesy of the Hunterian

in Glasgow had the financial means to commission his “total packages,” yet he was notoriously unwilling to compromise.

One notable exception was temperance advocate Catherine Cranston, who commissioned Mackintosh to design and furnish a series of tea rooms, from their high-backed chairs, light fittings and wall decorations down to their cutlery. The most famous, the Willow Tearooms (1903) at 217 Sauchiehall Street, was at the center of the movement to entice the working class away from “the demon drink” and reopened following a full restoration in 1983.

Mackintosh resigned, despondent, from Honeyman and Keppie in 1914 and moved to London with Margaret at the onset of the First World War. He continued to work on interior commissions, and experiment with bold, geometric textiles, before hanging up his architect’s hat forever with a move to the South of France in 1923. There he returned to his love of landscapes, and spent the last years of his life painting watercolors.

More than a century since the peak of his career, Charles Rennie Mackintosh remains a considerable influence on the city of Glasgow and on architecture and design at large. The Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society, an independent non-profit charity, was formed in 1973 to promote awareness of his life and works through lectures and tours. In addition to several private collections, the largest single holding of his work is found at Glasgow University’s Hunterian Museum, as is The Mackintosh House – the reassembled interiors from his Glasgow home.

Mackintosh died on December 10, 1928, having met his own artistic standard. “Art is the flower. Life is the Green Leaf. Let every artist strive to make his

WEB EXTRAS
For additional photos and other content, see the web version of this article by visiting “The Magazine” on Period Homes’ home page - www.period-homes.com.
Zirkovic Connolly Architects recently completed a renovation of a storied apartment within the Osborne, a Romanesque/Renaissance Revival apartment building close to Manhattan’s Carnegie Hall. Polished Venetian plaster in a robust red adds depth and richness to the foyer, which is furnished with antique pieces. The architects replicated the original door architrave and shallow cornice after studying and measuring those in other Osborne apartments. Photo: Bruce Buck

OPPOSITE: Newly designed Brazilian mahogany paneling and cabinetry bring elegance to the office. The original parquet floor was restored and reconfigured to accommodate changes to the room’s perimeter. Photo: Brian J. Connolly

Penthouse Tribute
The Osborne, the rust-colored Romanesque/Renaissance Revival fortress that watches over Manhattan’s Carnegie Hall like a hawk, has a star-studded, storied history. Since its opening in 1883, the luxury apartment building, whose glittering Byzantine-style lobby showcases sculptures by Augustus St. Gaudens, murals by John LaFarge and work by Tiffany Studios and French designer Jacob Adolphus Holzer, has been the residence of choice for musicians, writers and artists. The building that counted conductor Leonard Bernstein and pianist Van Cliburn among its tenants also was home to Lorenzo Alvary, a bass who voiced character roles at the Metropolitan Opera for some three decades before retiring in 1978.

During his career at the Met, Alvary played 53 roles that he performed 983 times. He made a voice for himself by singing the part of Antonio in Mozart’s “Nozze di Figaro” and Alcindoro in Puccini’s “Bohème.” Alvary and his wife, Hallie, occupied one of the Osborne’s 10th-floor penthouses, and as time went on, they bought two adjoining units, ultimately assembling a 3,000-sq. ft. space that served as home as well as office and rehearsal space for the opera singer.

When the Alvarys passed away, the penthouse co-op was passed down to a granddaughter. It was she who commissioned the award-winning firm of Zivkovic Connolly Architects in New York City to refresh and restore it in keeping with the more contemporary lifestyle of her and her family. “She was very close to her grandparents, and she has a very strong emotional attachment to the penthouse,” says Brian Connolly, AIA and a member of the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland. “She wanted to keep as much intact as possible because she had so many good memories of her time spent there with her grandparents. She and her husband, an international banker, split their time between New York and Geneva, and they also wanted to live in the Osborne with their sons when they are in New York.”

The restoration of the penthouse in the National Register building relied not only upon the granddaughter’s memories but also on on-site studies of other apartments in the building. “It is typical in an architecturally historical building such as this for us to visit a couple of its apartments,” says Connolly,
"But residents of the Osborne seemed especially proud of their homes and were surprisingly eager to open their doors to us and share notes on original detailing. So, in this case we were able to see almost a dozen units, and we were able to research and replicate missing architectural elements, confident that we were being faithful to the building's quirky architectural history."

One major project was the restoration of the penthouse's once-rich parquet floors, which had suffered from much wear and water damage before the Alvarys bought the apartment. The decision to cover the wood with wall-to-wall carpeting was driven as much by convenience as it was by the fashion at that time. "We really wanted to bring the parquet back because the complex geometric designs are a hallmark of the Osborne apartments and one of its most treasured features," says Connolly. "We had the flooring contractor disassemble them piece by piece and carefully restore them. In some cases, the parquet and the borders had to be reconfigured to suit adjusted room layouts, but about 90 percent of the wood is the original pieces."

The penthouse's distinctive moldings also were restored, or in cases where pieces were missing, replicated. "Some were so encrusted by paint or had otherwise been compromised over time that we could not salvage them," he says. "It required some architectural forensic work, but we made plaster casts so we could do a perfect match."

The penthouse had remained virtually untouched for a half century, and aside from
aesthetic considerations, there were floor plan issues to be resolved. "Because the space had been assembled over time – two 750-sq.ft. units were added at different times to double the size – the back had a rather hodgepodge arrangement resulting from growing by accretion rather than design," says Connolly. "Given its proximity to Carnegie Hall, the building was originally designed with rehearsing musicians, actors and singers in mind so the walls were extra thick – some were 12 inches thick – to provide soundproofing between units. And many of the partitions in the back of the penthouse were in fact thicker structural walls and could not be moved or removed."

Notwithstanding these restrictions, the architects were able to slightly reconfigure the back to give it a better flow. Each of the original units had only one bathroom, and the firm reconfigured these three. The firm also came up with a solution for an enlarged master suite that includes a large fourth bathroom featuring his and her dressing rooms. They left one of the biggest and most significant rooms, Alvary’s corner office, largely in place although its character was changed.

“The irregularly jogged and T-shaped hallway that was produced when the units were added was clearly an afterthought,” says Connolly. “The Alvarys simply removed portions of walls to connect the three units, but we streamlined the circulation to make it look deliberate. And we widened it near the kitchen and dining room so it looks like a sequence of spaces instead of an elongated passegway.”

Windows throughout the penthouse were replaced with energy-efficient double-glazed ones. “Apparently, no windows in any of the apartments had been changed since the building had become landmarked in 1991, and the ones we designed to closely replicate the originals have since become the de facto model for any future replacements,” says Connolly.

Electrical, heating and plumbing systems were upgraded and discreetly installed without sacrificing the original architecture. The ductwork for the central air conditioning system was routed above the hallways, bathrooms and closets so ceilings in the main rooms did not have to be dropped or punctured with grilles.

For the most part, it was decided to allow the rooms to maintain the functions they had had when the Alvarys lived here. “Thus, one of the rooms off
From left: The master bath, enlarged and moved, was made more opulent than the original and brought up to date with a tub, shower and his and her vanities. Photo: Brian J. Connolly

The original bathroom of the original apartment now serves as a powder room for guests. To lessen the original utilitarian feel, the vanity and medicine cabinet were designed as furnishings. The walls and floors are marble with light decorative accents. Photo: Bruce Buck

The dining room, which retains the Alvary's table, chairs, crystal chandelier and china, looks much as it did when they lived there. The centrally placed painting by Fernand Leger is from their collection. The millwork, wallcovering and draperies are new. Photo: Bruce Buck

FROM LEFT: The master bath, enlarged and moved, was made more opulent than the original and brought up to date with a tub, shower and his and her vanities. Photo: Brian J. Connolly

The original bathroom of the original apartment now serves as a powder room for guests. To lessen the original utilitarian feel, the vanity and medicine cabinet were designed as furnishings. The walls and floors are marble with light decorative accents. Photo: Bruce Buck

The original bathroom, which is off the hallway, was very utilitarian, but the architects made it more decorative as it serves more as the guest powder room these days.

In addition to the kitchen and bathrooms, the family room and the office got significant makeovers. Alvary's office was repurposed as a gentleman's library by adding new bookcases and Brazilian mahogany paneling of a handsome design whose proportions accommodated various nuances around the perimeter of the room.

"Two of the walls had mahogany-framed windows, and one had a mahogany door," says Connolly. "And there were awkward wall jogs where the building's plumbing risers were concealed. The sequencing and spacing of the paneling handsomely tied together the four disparate walls and also absorbed the irregularities such that they looked deliberate rather than accidental."

A formerly sealed off fireplace was opened and reactivated at one end of the family room. Over
the years, the building's superintendent had made a policy of salvaging historic components from apartments that had been gutted or modernized, often with the attendant removal of original detail. Two original wood mantelpieces had been stored in the basement, and one of these was refinished and reused in the Alvary apartment with only minor adjustments to its dimensions. The fireplace surround was newly decorated with bronze mosaic tiles that pay homage to the color and intricate tile patterns in the Osborne's iconic lobby.

The owners wanted to keep most of the Alvary furnishings, including the dining table and chairs. And the granddaughter wanted to highlight her grandparents' art collection, which includes works by Pablo Picasso, Stuart Davis, Henri Matisse and Fernand Leger.

Manhattan interior designer Marcy V. Masterson, who was charged with brightening the rooms, reupholstered the furniture in rich, lively colors and hung the paintings on walls painted vibrant shades of yellow and red to show them off. She added drapery treatments whose styles contemporize the past while complementing it.

The most dramatic new decorative architectural detail is found in the living room, where the architects designed millwork and cabinetry to house the client's collection of heirloom Chinoiserie porcelain and to frame an enormous oil portrait of Alvary in full costume for a Met role. The singer, pictured in his prime, looks out over the room, nodding as if in approval of the changes in his longtime home. — Nancy A. Rahling

WEB EXTRAS
For additional photos and other content, see the web version of this article by visiting "The Magazine" on Period Homes' home page — www.period-homes.com.
Kirk E. Peterson & Associates Architects renovates a master bath and a dressing room for a 1912 Beaux-Arts residence in Piedmont, CA. All photos: Irene Johnson photography

Beaux-Arts
PROJECT: Master Bath and Dressing Room, Piedmont, CA

ARCHITECTS: Kirk E. Peterson & Associates Architects, Piedmont, CA; Kirk E. Peterson, principal

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Shaddle Construction Inc., San Leandro, CA

Boudoir
The City of Piedmont, overlooking San Francisco Bay, is surrounded by California's scenic Oakland Hills. A small city of just 1.7 square miles, it is known for its high quality single-family homes, blue-ribbon school system and five well-tended city parks. In the Roaring Twenties, Piedmont was called the "City of Millionaires" because there were more millionaires per square mile than in any other in the country.

The city is home to a 1912 Beaux-Arts residence located on a tree-lined street of stately mansions. Always lovingly cared for, the house has been standing for almost as long as Piedmont was named a city on January 26th, 1907. When the living room ceiling showed signs of water leakage from the master bath, the current homeowners were quick to enlist the help of local architect Kirk E. Peterson & Associates with plans to renovate the bath and convert an adjacent bedroom into a dressing room.

On the home's exterior, Federal details meld harmoniously with the Beaux-Arts architecture. Inside, the two-story foyer features a grand curving staircase that leads to an open hallway with Classical columns supporting a cornice characterized by a fully developed order of triglyphs, metopes and guttae. downstairs, both the living and dining rooms have handsome fireplaces as focal points, complemented by custom casing, trim and molding. On the ceilings there are distinctive plaster garlands in elliptical patterns. This high style home deserved a master bath to match. Having worked with the homeowners on redesigning the living room mantel, Peterson was the logical choice — and a member of INTBAU College of Traditional Practitioners. Applicants for this prestigious organization, a part of the Prince's foundation, are required to have produced at least five years of high standard traditional work.

"The question of style for the master bath was never discussed specifically because the obvious thing to do was to design it in the Beaux-Arts details of the home," says principal Kirk E. Peterson. "In this town, there are people who take these old houses, gut them and try to make them look like Dwell magazine inside. I don't do that kind of work. I design around the vocabulary that had already existed in the house."

The 150-sq.ft. master bath had been renovated 20 years ago. A doorway off to the side opened to a wall of cabinets, a marble floor, double sinks and a hot tub with a curved shower enclosure that also enclosed one of the two windows in the room. A water closet tucked in a nook contained a bidet as well. While functional, the bath wasn't aesthetically pleasing nor did it complement the rest of the home.

The clients decided they no longer needed the hot tub or the bidet, and in lieu of double sinks, they opted for a single basin and a separate vanity table for jewelry and cosmetics. "There were two things that needed to happen for the design," says Peterson. "First, it needed to function well. In a lot of these old houses there were a lot of doors and windows for circulation so the space is very tight. Then there is the classical Beaux-Arts orientation of trying to get all the pieces symmetrical and balanced."

To achieve the symmetry, the single doorway was swapped out for French doors and moved on axis with a freestanding tub placed between two windows on the opposite wall. The vanity table is positioned at the midpoint of another wall and is flanked by two leaded-glass mirrored closets.
Federal details on the home’s original windows were repeated on cabinets above mirrored closet doors throughout the bath and dressing room.
Picking up on the Federal details from the windows, the design is repeated on the mirrored cabinet doors above the closets. But the symmetry could not be continued on the fourth wall so, as a compromise, it was brought up to the ceiling.

“There are these plaster garlands in the living and dining rooms so we found a plaster artist to reproduce that on the ceiling,” says Peterson. “However, the rooms were oval where these garlands appeared, which allowed for elliptical patterns. The bathroom is almost square but not quite. I tried to design an elliptical but the pattern wouldn’t have been obvious so I made it into a circle instead but couldn’t position it equidistance from the four walls. I spent a lot of time trying to figure out the right distance and now it looks quite regular even though it isn’t. Overall, it’s a strong aesthetic tool.”

Rosettes incorporated with recessed lights were placed at every interval where the garlands met the circular molding to further reinforce the symmetry. At the center, a chandelier gave the room its feminine touch. Matching sconces provide extra light on either side of the sink vanity, which is supported by antique legs Peterson found at Northridge, CA-based Vintage Plumbing Bathroom Antiques. Carrara marble tile was installed on the floor and is bordered by marble and glass mosaic tile featuring a quatrefoil design. Tucked in the corner, a frameless glass shower enclosure is the only modern element in the room.

A new door closes off the water closet where the bidet was removed. This provided space for a short hallway that leads to the adjacent dressing room where Peterson repeated the mirrored closets and Federal cabinets throughout. “There is a fireplace in between the two rooms and that created a challenge,” says Peterson. “If the fireplace wasn’t there, we would’ve ended up with a very different relationship between the two spaces.”

Searching for the right tub was quite the adventure for both Peterson and his client. “When we
went shopping for a bathtub, I asked my client to
’try on’ all those gorgeous tubs in the showroom
but we couldn’t find one that was just right,” recalls
Peterson. “We ended up using a 100-year-old bath-
tub from the maid’s room in the basement and it
was perfect. It was in good shape and the right size;
it was nice to reuse a piece original to the house.”

The Carrara marble in the bath was supplied by
Hayward, CA-based Pietra Fina. Other key sup-
pliers and installers include New York, NY-based
Artistic Tile (marble and glass mosaic tile); Oakland,
CA-based Wooden Windows (doors); Savannah,
GA-based Circa Lighting (recessed lights); Long
Island City, NY-based Nesle (chandelier and scon-
ces); Little Canada, MN-based Harrison Tile (instal-
lion); and Oakland, CA-based Roberts Electric Co. (installation).

“Architecture schools don’t really teach their stu-
dents to appreciate historic architecture so you
have to study and understand it on your own, and you
have to really like it to do this kind of work well,”
says Peterson. “You also can’t design good projects
unless your clients want you to and let you do it. My
clients were very collaborative and we talked about
everything. That’s why the design turned out so
successful. The space is dressy but comfortable and
somehow, despite all of the stone and mirrors, it’s
still a warm space.” – Annabel Hsin

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Tomorrow's Arts & Crafts Lighting

Illuminating the next phase of a brilliant product.

By Gordon Bock

No design force gave more innovative form and beauty to the birth of electric lighting than the Arts & Crafts movement of the early-20th century and, it could be argued, no lighting trend has been as influential and widespread as the revival of Arts & Crafts lighting over the last 25 years. Though elfin lanterns and lemon-orangey shades still cast warm, glowing pools of light over living rooms and lawns old and new, as the housing market inches back from the worst crash in a generation, it is interesting to hear what some seminal producers think the future might hold for this most iconic and successful of historical furnishings.

Given that Arts & Crafts was a design reform movement that pulsed with the future of housing from about 1900 to 1915, then swiftly died into the background after World War I as the winds of taste and economics shifted, some wonder if, a century later, its renaissance might follow the same trajectory. As the axiom goes, however, though history sometimes repeats itself, it is never in exactly the same way. "The original movement was short in terms of a period," says Ralph Ribicic of Mica Lamp Company in Glendale, CA, "but now Arts & Crafts design and lighting has earned its rightful place as a perennial. Like Tiffany lamps, while it may ebb and flow in popularity in the future, it has become a niche style that has moved into the mainstream."

Beyond Original Arts & Crafts

Nonetheless, all the companies note a continuing evolution in the look and appeal of Arts & Crafts lighting, especially when compared with what kicked off the renaissance some two decades ago. As Tom Richards of Old California Lantern Company in Orange, CA, says, "At the same time that we are seeing a diminishing response to the classic, straightforward lighting — those lanterns and fixtures so rectilinear they are almost chunky — there is a clientele with a real desire for limited edition, better quality items."

To that end his company has introduced a line with a variety of designs that move beyond the originals. "The upper end of our Wentworth Avenue series is in response not to collectors or purists but, say, folks who have read every book out there on architects Greene & Greene and want to continue that architecture." Richards adds,
“What still sells very well for us are our designs that capture the clean lines of Craftsman-built, American-made products, but add beautiful artwork – we call them filigrees – such as the peacock we introduced a number of years ago.”

Ribicic sees similar shifts. “What has happened is that the Arts & Crafts motif has really expanded to include the styles of the 1920s and ’30s where you get less simplistic lines,” he says. “It is not as serious as the original Craftsman designs.” Again, the morphing is most evident in the materials. “We see growing interest in natural and hand-made materials,” he adds, “especially forged iron – and have had good success with Cotswold Cottage-style fixtures in our Storybook series.” Ribicic also notes that consumers are changing on lens material. “We offer two shades of mica, and 10 to 15 years ago, it was all about the very evocative dark, amber look. Now I find there’s a direction to the lighter, stone-color mica and a Prairie-style appearance.”

“We’ve always made the whole gamut of fixtures, from indoor to outdoor,” says David Rose at Arroyo Craftsman in Baldwin Park, CA, and that includes two colors of mica, “with the darker type, the more traditional color, being much more popular.” He adds that they also offer a lot of different art-glass colors, “but the favorites are gold white, which is an iridescent color and white opalescent.” In terms of finishes, “the green verdigris patina was probably the most common choice 10 to 15 years ago, but now our bronze, which is a dark brown similar to what is called ‘oil-rubbed bronze’, has become a lot more popular color.”

Tim Wetzel at Rejuvenation Lighting & House Parts in Portland, OR, chimed in with another observation. “One thing we have observed in terms of trends, internally anyway, is a notion that a fluid, organic version of Arts & Crafts seems fresher and more appealing. This sensibility had been doing well for us a while, but you can draw only so many conclusions from sales.”

Targeting a Mercurial Market

Indeed, trying to read the tea leaves of any market remains dicey even in the Internet age, but in the rarified world of Arts & Crafts lighting it is compounded by customers who not only add interest in history and architecture, but with an intensity that runs from casual to compulsive.

Says Rose, “I do trade shows where you have got your really hardcore Arts & Crafts folks who think it is blasphemy to manipulate the style at all or do it in finishes that are not true to the original period. Then there are those who love Arts & Crafts things for the beauty of the look. It depends upon the group of folks you are talking to at the time.” He adds that the styles his company started with 20 to 25 years ago that are truest to the original period remain some of their strongest products, but that he also feels compelled to watch trends to a certain degree in order to maintain their level of business. “It’s really a tough call.”

Ribicic adds, “Purists tend to want the same designs made in the same way as a century or so ago – or what the L. & J.G. Stickley furniture company calls their re-issues.” That is still a big part of Ribicic’s market, with 70 percent of his designs having a connection to history. “We stick to our roots, but we also do more custom work responding to calls like ‘Can you make this for me, but change the finish and have fewer panels in it?’”

Richards has a telling anecdote about another segment of his clientele. “Many people say to me, ‘We don’t have a bungalow, but we are trying to teach our house to be a bungalow!’ This is a very clever way of explaining that, maybe they are trying to give some Arts & Crafts influence to one or two rooms, or perhaps the exterior is a skinned-over ranch house. They like the Arts & Crafts motif, but their intent is not for their house to be a full-fledged bungalow.”

Wetzel has a similar observation from a different perspective. “In my former 1991-era neighborhood, everything – from the general style to details like lighting – was drawn from a highly modified, but vaguely recognizable, version of Arts & Crafts. About the time developers building houses slowed way down due to the recession, we saw a change in the lighting market.” That begs the question, what will come when the construction market returns? “Maybe Arts & Crafts lighting will pick up where it left off.” Wetzel adds, “or maybe popular lighting will be more vaguely industrial style, nautical even. Nobody knows for sure, but as marketers, we ask ourselves that question all the time.”

Richards speaks for many in the historic design industry when he says, “It is difficult to sort out what is really going on. Is it a shift in the look and its desirability, or it is simply an economy that is still sputtering along, the aftershocks of the past five years of downturn?”
Clearly, a more sophisticated and broader market has had other influences. Says Ribicic, “When we started, Arts & Crafts lighting was so much about table lamps; they were art pieces, mood lighting.” Now he says there is a larger market for wall fixtures and chandeliers, which is consistent with the general lighting business. People now are also much more specific about what they want. “They know about patina finishes, for example,” he says.

Richards agrees and notes that the sweet spot in his market is often between the purist and the casual-interest buyer. “We gear our product line to folks who have a beginning, if not developed, appetite for all things Arts & Crafts and bungalow. They have real knowledge, and the economic strength to support it because, when they are building a house they are pretty much teaching the contractor how to build in the Arts & Crafts style, directing him or her to books and details.”

How do you hit such a moving market with a new product? These companies tell of a never-ending search for new historic lighting ideas in archives, museums and the Internet, but Wetzel describes an approach that, in one case, was particularly illuminating. “We started with classic trend-spotting by watching TV, reading blogs and magazines – whatever – to determine characteristics that were popular at that moment. When we saw indications of interest in big round light fixtures, industrial/commercial lighting from the early electric period, and wire as a design detail, we went to our library and looked for historic fixtures where all those characteristics seemed to intersect.” The result, he says, is a fixture called The Hood. “Lo and behold, it became a top seller, but it is never easy to make the right pick.”

**Born in the USA**

Yet another market force that has come to bear – but with surprising effects – is the influx of Arts & Crafts fixtures from offshore. As Rose puts it, “People are starting to get real strong with Made in USA products, so that falls right into our lap because everything we offer is made here.”

Moreover, Arts & Crafts consumers are motivated not just by patriotism but also by their discerning eye. “I hear it all the time,” says Rose, “the difference in quality compared to knockoffs is like day and night.” He acknowledges that his company’s product line is not a budget purchase, “but it is an investment because we have got product out there that was made 20 or 25 years ago that still functions like the day it came out of the box – and probably looks better with age.”

Ribicic has a similar take. “When a lot of the Van Eerp-style or Mission-style lamps started to be made offshore, they flooded the market and the designs became more of a commodity. They would try to go after the mushroom shape, for example, not quite hitting the mark. It all boils down to feeling and finding the unique Arts & Crafts lines, curves and proportions. Thank goodness people see the difference in the lamps we make – it is all in the details.”

Sums up Richards, “In the entire Arts & Crafts lighting world as a group, there is a much higher percentage of customers that want to buy American-made. They seek it out partly because it is in keeping with a historic period when products were made in America, and partly because the whole mindset of restoring houses involves trying to find original pieces that fit. It has been a blessing for everyone.”

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1704 UgMO Technologies ............................... 33
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1682 Heritage Wide Plank Flooring ............... 37
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210 Decorators Supply Corp. ......................... 39
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800-231-7500 www.americanincalings.com
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800-992-8700 www.classicceilings.com
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941-723-2288 www.metalceillingexpress.com
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60 Authentic Designs ................................ 46
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877-778-4042 www.deeplandingworkshop.com
1728 Forbes & Lomax LLC ............................ 47
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470 Steptoe & Wife Antiques, Ltd ............... 51
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Manufacturer of custom wood & aluminum-clad windows: any geometric shape, numerous wood species & complete finishing capabilities; historical replicas; custom wood doors in numerous species with complete finishing options; screen doors, casings & moldings.
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Monarch Stone International supplied the Historic European Cobblestone, (reclaimed antique sandstone cobblestones in 5x8-in. rectangles) for this 10,000-sq. ft. driveway and motor court in San Diego, CA.

Kayne & Son fabricated the historically styled hardware for this custom door.

Marvin Windows and Doors
888-537-7828; Fax: 651-452-3074
www.marvin.com
Warroad, MN 56763
Manufacturer of all wood & clad-wood windows & doors: round top, oval, casement & double hung; custom shapes & historic window replication; dual durometer, bulb & leaf weather stripping; storm windows; numerous design choices & glazing options.
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Parrett Windows & Doors
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www.parrettwindows.com
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Historical Products Showcase continued

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888-788-2013; Fax: 208-788-2577
www.rockymountainhardware.com
Hailey, ID 83333
Manufacturer of handcrafted solid-bronze architectural hardware: sinks; faucets, bath & kitchen accessories; 7 different finishes; traditional, contemporary & other styles.
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The model CSB34 casement adjuster from Phelps Company is shown in the oil-rubbed bronze finish; this traditional design is crafted from solid brass and hand polished.

This custom door set was designed and fabricated by Rocky Mountain Hardware.

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www.thebrasscenter.com
New York, NY 10022
Distributor of architectural hardware, plumbing, kitchen & bath accessories; residential & commercial projects; traditional & contemporary styles.
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This faceted elliptical knob is available from The Brass Center in both door and cabinet sizes, and in a variety of finishes.

Dutch Doors from Vintage Doors, such as the Spanish cedar model DD205 shown here, allow fresh air in while keeping pets and children safely inside.

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San Rafael, CA 94901
Custom fabricator of wood carvings: hand-carved decorative moldings, capitals, brackets, furnishings, onlays & mantels; large-scale capacity for residential & religious buildings throughout the U.S. & Europe.

Crown Point Cabinetry
800-999-4994; Fax: 603-370-1218
www.crown-point.com
Claremont, NH 03743
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Manufacturer of Early American door, window & furniture hardware: 19th-century shell-shanked crystal, porcelain & wood trimmings; brass, bronze, nickel-silver & wrought iron; custom-plated & -patinated finishes; restoration work.

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Gaby's Shoppe
800-299-4229; Fax: 214-748-7701
www.gabys.com
Dallas, TX 75207
Manufacturer of hand-forged wrought-iron drapery hardware & accessories: custom rods, finials, brackets & holdbacks; European metalworking skills; handcrafted & hand finished.

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www.hoahe.us
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Supplier of door, window, cabinet, furniture, electrical & bath hardware: original antique & vintage reproductions; Federal, Victorian & Arts & Crafts styles; hardware specialists available to assist with renovation projects.

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Mural paintings are one of many specialty wall treatments by Buon Fresco.

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www.allenmetals.com
Talladega, AL 35161
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Architectural Accents
404-266-8700; Fax: 404-266-0074
www.architecturalaccents.com
Atlanta, GA 30305
National supplier of architectural antiques: mantels, doors, hardware, tile, columns, furnishings, mirrors, statuary, fountains, iron railings, gates, chandeliers, sconces & exterior lighting; antique heart pine flooring.

Bendix Architectural Products
973-473-4780; Fax: 973-473-4785
www.bendixarchitectural.com
Passaic, NJ 07055
Manufacturer & distributor of machine-carved decorative wood moldings & ornament & hand-carved elements: corbels, onlays, stair parts, legs & corner posts; doors & mantels; American maple, cherry & red oak, hickory & alder; custom carving upon request.

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414; Fax: 801-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84081
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www.sylvanbrandt.com
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Historical Arts & Casting designed and fabricated the Corinthian capital for this fluted column.

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www.carlsonsbarnwood.com
Cambridge, IL 61238
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Chesnut Specialists, Inc.
860-283-4209; No fax
www.chesnutspec.com
Plymouth, CT 06782
Supplier of re-milled flooring from antique barn lumber: authentic antique planks, hewn beams, weathered siding, original flooring, antique heavy timber & salvaged logs for milling.

Foster Wood Products
800-682-9418; Fax: 706-846-3487
www.fosterwood.com
Shiloh, GA 31826
Supplier of specialty wood products: reclaimed heart pine & hardwood flooring & paneling; longleaf & new heart pine; old-growth white pine; treated porch flooring; hand-hewn & hard-to-find beams.

Random-width wide-plank oak from Chestnut Specialists can be used to create custom flooring.

The wide-plank flooring for this house was supplied by Heritage Wide Plank Flooring.

Heritage Wide Plank Flooring
877-777-4200; Fax: 631-996-5022
www.hwfpf.com
Riverhead, NY 11901
Supplier of wide-plank flooring: old-growth eastern white pine, heart pine, red pine, birch, cherry, walnut, hickory, white oak & maple; custom wood paneling; mantels; mills reclaimed lumber from old structures.

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Non-Wood Flooring

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www.americanslate.com
Louisville, KY 40210
Supplier of natural-slate roofing tile: 16- to 24-in.; other sizes & graduate roofing available on request; greys, greens, black, purple & multicolors; paving and floor tile; thicknesses up to 1-1/4 in. in some colors.

American Slate supplies slate flooring tile in many colors and in two sizes: 12x12-in. and 24x24-in.

Antigua Del Mar Tile & Ceramics, LLC
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www.antiguadelmartile.com
Santa Monica, CA 90403
Supplier of handmade terra-cotta brick & tile: for all construction details; authentic reproductions of glazed ceramic tile from historical Mediterranean architecture.

This terra-cotta flooring was supplied by Antigua Del Mar Tile & Ceramics.

Cantera Especial
800-564-8608; Fax: 818-907-0343
www.canteraepecial.com
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
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EverGreene Architectural Arts, Inc.
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www.evergreene.com
New York, NY 10001
Decorative-arts studio, conservator & restorer; architectural ornament & color schemes; paint analysis & fine arts conservation; Studio E., Inc., hand-painted wallpaper.

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www.realmilkpaint.com
Quakertown, PA 18951
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Klise's carved linear molding pattern D2938 has a 4-in. face width and is style of 13/16 in. thick; it is one of seven new carved frieze/chair rail moldings in the firm's stock assortment.

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U.S. & British-based manufacturer of landscape ornament & architectural cast stonework: planters, fountains, sundials, statues, garden furniture, balustrades, gazebos, follies, columns, porticos, doors & window surrounds, cornices, molding, mantels & more; custom components.
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Buon Fresco used venetian plaster as faux tile for this residence.

Cornice #6310 and niche cap #7821 from Felber Ornamental Plastering Corp. were used in this custom wall installation.

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San Rafael, CA 94901
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American Tin Ceiling's pattern #22 in silver washed pewter, bordered by filler and C2 crown molding, was used for this parlor ceiling.

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The ornamental tin panels for this ceiling were supplied by Classic Ceilings.

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Chicago, IL 60609
Manufacturer of classic architectural elements: plaster crowns, ceiling medallions, ceilings, niches & swag; 13,000 appliques for woodwork/furniture; 900 sizes of column capitals, pilaster capitals, corbels & columns; 15 styles of traditional wood mantels; classically inspired grilles; since 1883.
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This Old English ceiling was created using hand-cast plaster panels from Decorators Supply.

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This Old English ceiling was created using hand-cast plaster panels from Decorators Supply.
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www.metalceilingexpress.com
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www.shanko.com
Doer Park, NY 11729
Manufacturer of decorative metal walls & ceilings: 2x2 ft. & 2x4 ft. for nail-up, 2x2 ft. & 2x4 ft. for lay-in grid; finishes include steel, brass, copper, chrome & pre-painted white; perforated for acoustics.
Click on no. 1730

W.F. Norman Corp.
800-641-4038; Fax: 417-667-2708
www.wfnorman.com
Nevada, MO 64772
Fabricator of sheet-metal ornament & tin ceilings: hundreds of stock designs of cornices, moldings, bracket, backsplashes, pressed-metal ceilings, siding, roofing, cresting, kitchen equipment & more; duplication from samples or drawings.
Click on no. 520

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www.traditionalproductgalleries.com

W.F. Norman Corp.'s expansive stock of sheet-metal ornament includes pressed-tin ceiling and cornice panels.
Ceramic Tile

American Restoration Tile, Inc.
501-455-1000; Fax: 501-455-1004
www.restorationtile.com
Mabelvale, AR 72103
Manufacturer of custom ceramic tile for restoration & new construction: mosaics; floor, wall, subway, kitchen & bath tile; custom matching of glazed & unglazed tile; all sizes.

Designs in Tile
530-926-2629; No fax
www.designsinstile.com
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067
Supplier of custom historic tile & murals: specialists in Victorian & English/American Arts & Crafts tile & murals; coordinated borders & field patterns; plain, 3x6-in. subway tile & molded trim; historic mosaic flooring.

To order product information from a company in this Buying Guide, go to www.period-homes.rs and click on the appropriate reader service number.
Interior Lighting

Arroyo Craftsman
888-227-7696; Fax: 626-960-9521
www.arroyo-craftsman.com
Baldwin Park, CA 91706
Manufacturer of solid-brass post- & column-mount, wall-mount & hanging garden lights; brass chandeliers, sconces, table lamps & flush ceiling mounts; Arts & Crafts tradition; custom work; lanterns, pendants, chandeliers.
Click on no. 733

Crenshaw Lighting
540-745-3900; Fax: 540-745-3911
www.crenshawlighting.com
Floyd, VA 24091
Manufacturer of custom lighting fixtures in all styles: design services; historic restoration & reproduction; on-site services.
Click on no. 1128

Deep Landing Workshop
877-778-4042; Fax: 410-778-4070
www.deeplandingworkshop.com
Chester, MD 21620
Designer & manufacturer of interior & exterior lighting fixtures: stylized reproductions rooted in the Colonial style.
Click on no. 809

Fine Architectural Metalsmiths
845-651-7550; Fax: 845-651-7857
www.iceforge.com
Chester, NY 10918
Custom fabricator of metalwork: gates, fencing, railings, lanterns, chandeliers, sconces, grilles, fire screens, kitchen equipment & more; forged iron, bronze, copper & stainless steel; specialty finishes; design through installation services.
Click on no. 2640

Forbes & Lomax LLC
212-486-9700; No fax
www.forbesandlomax.com
New York, NY 10018
Manufacturer, supplier & retailer of authentic period electrical accessories: switches, dimmers & outlets; nickel, antique bronze, stainless steel, unlacquered brass & “invisible,” historic reproductions.
Click on no. 1728

Herwig Lighting
800-643-9523; Fax: 479-968-6422
www.herwig.com
Russellville, AR 72811
Custom manufacturer of handcrafted interior & exterior lighting fixtures & more: cast-aluminum benches, bollards, fences, gates, plaques, signage, street clocks, posts to 14 ft. & columns; since 1908.
Click on no. 9130

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414; Fax: 801-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84081
Designer & custom fabricator of ornamental metalwork: benches, columns, balustrades, lighting, gazebos, fencing, grilles, doors, windows, skylights, finials & more; cast iron, bronze, aluminum & wrought iron/steel; many styles; restoration services.

Authentic Designs
800-844-9416; Fax: 802-394-2422
www.authenticdesigns.com
West Rutland, VT 05776
Manufacturer of Early American & Colonial lighting fixtures: brass, copper, terne metal & Vermont maple; interior & exterior mountings; CUL/UL-listed for wet & damp locations; lanterns, sconces, table lamps, chandeliers & pendants; custom work available.
Click on no. 60

Herwig Lighting manufacture this Arts & Crafts-inspired lighting fixture.

This chandelier was designed and fabricated by Crenshaw Lighting.

Arroyo Craftsman manufacture this Arts & Crafts-inspired lighting fixture.

Forbes & Lomax LLC manufacture this lead-coated-copper hanging lantern, model #6-1251, from Deep Landing Workshop, is 10½ in. wide and 21 in. tall.

Fine Architectural Metalsmiths custom fabricates chandeliers, sconces and lanterns.

The Invisible Lightswitch is one of many dimmers, outlets and switches available from Forbes & Lomax.
Interior Lighting continued

House of Antique Hardware
888-223-2545; Fax: 503-233-1312
www.hoah.us
Portland, OR 97232
Supplier of door, window, cabinet, furniture, electrical & bath hardware: original antique & vintage reproductions; Federal, Victorian & Arts & Crafts styles; hardware specialists available to assist with renovation projects.
Click on no. 339

House of Antique Hardware manufactured this English Victorian chandelier with etched-glass shades.

Wiemann Metalcraft
918-592-1700; Fax: 918-592-2385
www.wmcraft.com
Tulsa, OK 74107
Designer, fabricator, finisher & installer of custom ornamental metalwork: railings, fencing, gates, columns, balustrades, lighting, grilles, doors & hardware, balconies & more; all cast- & wrought-metal alloys, finishes & architectural styles; since 1940.

Wollen Mill Fan Co. manufactures decorative ceiling fans with cast-bronze, iron or aluminum fittings.

Wollen Mill Fan Co.
717-382-4754; Fax: 717-382-4275
www.architecturalfans.com
New Park, PA 17352
Supplier of belt-driven ceiling fans: some built from patterns in Smithsonian exhibit; iron, bronze & aluminum with mahogany blades; handcrafted by old-order Amish; assembled to specifications at PA studio.
Click on no. 316

Crenshaw
Craftsmen Residential Collection
592 Paradise Lane, Floyd, VA 24091 - www.crenshawlighting.com - 540.745.3900 / 540.745.3911

Click on no. 1128
Mantels & Fireplaces

Agrell Architectural Carving specializes in high-end decorative carvings, such as this intricately detailed wood mantel with a ram’s head.

**Agrell Architectural Carving Ltd.**
719-948-4554; Fax: 719-948-4285
www.agrellcarving.com
Pueblo, CO 81001
U.S. & British-based manufacturer of landscape ornament & architectural cast stonework: planters, fountains, sundials, statues, garden furniture, balustrades, gazebos, follies, columns, porticoes, doors & window surrounds, cornices, molding, mantels & more; custom components.
Click on no. 4020

Haddonstone (USA), Ltd.
719-948-4554; Fax: 719-948-4285
www.haddonstone.com
Pueblo, CO 81001
British-based manufacturer of English stone: fireplaces, surrounds, cornices, columns, mantels; hand-carved classical & modern ornaments; for residential & commercial interiors;
Click on no. 4020

Heritage Wide Plank Flooring
877-777-4200; Fax: 631-996-5022
www.hwpf.com
Riverhead, NY 11901
Supplier of wide-plank flooring; old-growth eastern white pine, heart pine, red pine, birch, cherry, walnut, hickory, white oak & maple; custom wood paneling; mantels; mills reclaimed lumber from old structures.
Click on no. 1682

King Architectural Metals
800-542-2379; Fax: 800-948-5558
www.kingmetals.com
Dallas, TX 75228
Wholesale supplier of ornamental & architectural metal components: for wrought-iron staircases, handrails, gates, fences, mailboxes, doors, screens, awnings & fireplace screens; decorative elements.
Click on no. 270

Stone Legends
800-398-1199; Fax: 214-398-1293
www.stonel egends.com
Dallas, TX 75217
Manufacturer of cast-stone architectural elements: benches, gazebos, pavilions, pavers, columns, balustrades, fountains (garden, wall & pool & geyser), entries & more; planters & urns in all sizes & shapes; cast & carved stone.
Click on no. 470

Brandt, Sylvan
717-626-4520; Fax: 717-626-5867
www.sylvanbrandt.com
Lititz, PA 17543
Supplier of 18th- & 19th-century building materials salvaged from old houses & barns: columns, doors, shutters, mantels, sinks & bathtubs; antique & resawn flooring; antique heart pine, ancient oak, chestnut, white pine & hemlock; radiators; since 1960.
Click on no. 3950

Decorators Supply Corp.
800-792-2093; Fax: 773-847-6357
www.decoratorssupply.com
Chicago, IL 60609
Manufacturer of classic architectural elements: plaster crowns, ceiling medallions, ceilings, niches & swags; 13,000 appliqués for woodwork & furniture; 900 sizes of column capitals, pilaster capitals, corbels & columns; 15 styles of traditional wood mantels; classically inspired grilles; since 1883.
Click on no. 210

Steptoe & Wife Antiques, Ltd.
416-780-1707; Fax: 416-780-1814
www.steptoewife.com
Toronto, ON, M6G 2G1 Canada
Supplier of cast-iron architectural elements: spiral & straight stairs, staircase kits, railings, gates, grilles, fireplace grilles, arbors & cresting; cast iron, aluminum, bronze & wrought iron/steel.
Click on no. 470

Agrell Architectural Carving specializes in high-end decorative carvings, such as this intricately detailed wood mantel with a ram’s head.

This fireplace mantel is one of many styles available from Decorators Supply.

This fireplace screen from Fine Architectural metalsmiths features a bronze antelope.

Haddonstone’s Tudor chimney piece is shown here with optional slips and a hearth.

Steptoe & Wife Antiques supplied this cast-iron fireplace grille.
Stone Magic
800-597-3606; Fax: 214-823-4503
www.stonemagic.com
Dallas, TX 75217
Manufacturer & distributor of easily installed mantels with the look & feel of cut limestone: cast stone & marble; stock & custom; traditional, French & modern styles.
Click on no. 9067

Zepsa Industries, Inc.
704-583-9220; Fax: 704-583-9674
www.zepsa.com
Charlotte, NC 28273
Engineer, custom manufacturer & installer of Classical & contemporary architectural woodwork: railings, stairs, wine cellars, mantels, paneling, furniture & more; for estate-level residences, yacht interiors & select commercial commissions.
Click on no. 1675

These custom-built bookcases and mantel were created by White River.

White River Hardwoods-Woodworks
800-558-0179; Fax: 479-444-0406
www.whiteriver.com
Fayetteville, AR 72701
Manufacturer of architectural millwork: Mon Reale moldings, authentic hand-carved line of adornments for cabinetry & furniture in linden, cherry & maple; linenals, mantels & range hoods in stock.
Click on no. 1099

Wiemann Metalcraft
918-592-1700; Fax: 918-592-2385
www.wmcraft.com
Tulsa, OK 74107
Designer, fabricator, finisher & installer of custom ornamental metalwork: railings, fencing, gates, columns, balustrades, lighting, grilles, doors & hardware, balconies & more; all cast- & wrought-metal alloys, finishes & architectural styles; since 1940.

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Stone Magic is one of several custom finishes available for Stone Magic's fireplace mantel, the Radcliffe.
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- Architectural Resource Group
- Daddy Van's
- Hamilton Sinkler
- Old California Lantern
- SkyLift Roof Riser
- Snoblox
- The Woods Company
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For more information, please contact:

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jhite@aimmedia.com

**Peter H. Miller**  
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rexsellsdirect.com
Stairs & Railings

Fine Architectural Metalsmiths
845-651-7550; Fax: 845-651-7857
www.iceforge.com
Chester, NY 10918
Custom fabricator of metalwork: gates, fencing, railings, lanterns, chandeliers, sconces, grilles, fire screens, kitchen equipment & more; forged iron, bronze, copper & stainless steel; specialty finishes; design through installation services.

Click on no. 1719

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414; Fax: 801-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84081
Designer & custom fabricator of ornamental metalwork: benches, columns, balustrades, lighting, gazebos, fencing, grilles, doors, windows, skylights, finials & more; cast iron, bronze, aluminum & wrought iron/steel; many styles; restoration services.

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Tel: (800) 461-0060
info@steptoewife.com
www.steptoewife.com
The Kensington Staircase

CLICK ON NO. 470

King Architectural Metals
800-542-2379; Fax: 800-948-5558
www.kingmetals.com
Dallas, TX 75228
Wholesale supplier of ornamental & architectural metal components: for wrought-iron staircases, handrails, gates, fences, mailboxes, doors, screens, awnings & fireplace screens; decorative elements.

Click on no. 270

Beauty & Economy

Stairways Inc
4166 Pinecrest, Houston, TX 77018
800-231-0793 • 713.680.3110
www.stairwaysinc.com

CLICK ON NO. 4870
To order product information from a company in this Buying Guide, go to www.period-homes/rs and click on the appropriate reader service number.
These forged-iron stairs and balcony railing – designed, fabricated and installed by Wiemann Metalcraft for a residence in Wichita, KS, feature a polished bronze cap rail, sconces and decorative elements.

Wiemann Metalcraft
918-592-1700; Fax: 918-592-2385
www.wmcraft.com
Tulsa, OK 74107
Designer, fabricator, finisher & installer of custom ornamental metalwork: railings, fencing, gates, columns, balustrades, lighting, grilles, doors & hardware, balconies & more; all cast & wrought-metal alloys, finishes & architectural styles; since 1940.

Zepsa Industries, Inc.
704-583-9220; Fax: 704-583-9674
www.zepsa.com
Charlotte, NC 28273
Engineer, custom manufacturer & installer of Classical & contemporary architectural woodwork: railings, stairs, wine cellars, mantels, paneling, furniture & more; for estate-level residences, yacht interiors & select commercial commissions.
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516-488-0628; Fax: 516-488-0728
www.aagrilles.com
New Hyde Park, NY 11040
Custom manufacturer & designer of perforated sheet metal & linear bar grilles: floor, wall, sill, ceiling, radiator & HVAC applications; aluminum, brass, bronze, steel, stainless steel; ornamental & decorative functions; affiliates of the American Institute of Architects NY chapter (AIANY) and the US. Green Building Council (USGBC).
Call for more information.

CoCo Architectural Grilles & Metalcraft
631-482-9449; Fax: 631-482-9450
www.cocometalcraft.com
Farmingdale, NY 11735
Custom fabricator of metalwork: linear bar grilles, perforated sheet-metal grilles & custom metal products; stainless steel, brass, bronze & aluminum; satin, mirror-polished, statuary bronze, antiqued, blackened bronze, anodized-color & baked-enamel finishing options.
Click on no. 1720

Brandt, Sylvan
717-626-4520; Fax: 717-626-5867
www.sylvanbrands.com
Lititz, PA 17543
Supplier of 18th- & 19th-century building materials salvaged from old houses & barns: columns, doors, shutters, mantels, sinks & bathtubs; antique & resawn flooring; antique heart pine, ancient oak, chestnut, white pine & hemlock; radiators; since 1960.
Click on no. 3950

Decorators Supply Corp.
800-792-2093; Fax: 773-847-6357
www.decoratorssupply.com
Chicago, IL 60609
Manufacturer of classic architectural elements: plaster crowns, ceiling medallions, ceilings, niches & swags; 13,000 appliqués for woodwork/furniture; 900 sizes of column capitals, pilaster capitals, corbels & columns; 15 styles of traditional wood mantels; classically inspired grilles; since 1883.
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Architectural Grille
800-387-6267; Fax: 718-832-1390
www.archgrille.com
Brooklyn, NY 11215
Supplier of grilles: custom perforated & linear bar; aluminum, brass, bronze, stainless steel & steel; variety of finishes; stock sizes; water-jet & laser cutting.
Click on no. 2220

CoCo Architectural Grilles & Metalcraft manufactured this grille for a residence on New York City’s Park Avenue.
Fine Architectural Metalsmiths
845-651-7550; Fax: 845-651-7857
www.icforge.com
Chester, NY 10918
Custom fabricator of metalwork: gates, fencing, railings, lanterns, chandeliers, sconces, grilles, fire screens, kitchen equipment & more; forged iron, bronze, copper & stainless steel; specialty finishes; design through installation services.
Click on no. 2640

Grate Vents
815-459-4306;
Fax: 815-459-4267
www.gratevents.com
Crystal Lake, IL 60014
Manufacturer & distributor of wood floor, wall & baseboard grates: from 2x10 in. to 20x32 in.; egg-crate & louvered designs; registers, grilles, baseboards & radiator covers; all wood species.
Click on no. 5040

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414;
Fax: 801-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84081
Designer & custom fabricator of ornamental metalwork: benches, columns, balustrades, lighting, gazebos, fencing, grilles, doors, windows, skylights, finials & more; cast iron, bronze, aluminum & wrought iron/steel; many styles; restoration services.

Reggio Register Co., Inc., The
800-880-3090;
Fax: 978-870-1030
www.reggioregister.com
Leominster, MA 01453
Manufacturer of decorative & functional cast-iron, brass, aluminum, steel & wood grilles: historic & contemporary designs for forced-air & high-velocity systems; large selection of sizes in stock.
Click on no. 5810

Steptoe & Wife Antiques, Ltd.
416-780-1707;
Fax: 416-780-1814
www.steptewife.com
Toronto, ON, Canada M6G 2G1
Supplier of cast-iron architectural elements: spiral & straight stairs, staircase kits, railings, gates, grilles, fireplace grilles, arbors & cresting; cast iron, aluminum, bronze & wrought iron/steel.
Click on no. 470

Wiemann Metalcraft
918-592-1700;
Fax: 918-592-2285
www.wmcrali.com
Tulsa, OK 74107
Designer, fabricator, finisher & installer of custom ornamental metalwork: railings, fencing, gates, columns, balustrades, lighting, grilles, doors & hardware, balconies & more; all cast- & wrought-metal alloys, finishes & architectural styles; since 1940.

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Brandt, Sylvan
717-626-4520; Fax: 717-626-5867
Website: www.sylvanbrandt.com
Supplier of 18th- & 19th-century building materials salvaged from old houses & barns: columns, doors, shutters, mantels, sinks & bathtubs; antique & resawn flooring; antique heart pine, ancient oak, chestnut, white pine & hemlock; radiators; since 1960.

House of Antique Hardware
888-223-2545; Fax: 503-233-1312
Website: www.hoah.us
Supplier of door, window, cabinet, furniture, electrical & bath hardware: original antique & vintage reproductions; Federal, Victorian & Arts & Crafts styles; hardware specialists available to assist with renovation projects.

Subway Ceramics
888-387-3280; No fax
Website: www.subwaytile.com
Supplier of historically authentic ceramic tile: field tile, moldings & trim pieces; mosaics; Victorian style.

Hamilton Sinkler
212-760-3377; No fax
Website: www.hamiltonsinkler.com
Manufacturer of decorative registers & vents, door & window hardware, cabinet hardware, bathroom accessories & more: brass, bronze & nickel; custom work.

The Period Kitchen

Brandt, Sylvan
717-626-4520; Fax: 717-626-5867
Website: www.sylvanbrandt.com
Supplier of 18th- & 19th-century building materials salvaged from old houses & barns: columns, doors, shutters, mantels, sinks & bathtubs; antique & resawn flooring; antique heart pine, ancient oak, chestnut, white pine & hemlock; radiators; since 1960.

Click on no. 3950

E.R. Butler & Co.
212-925-3565; Fax: 212-925-3305
Website: www.erbutter.com
Manufacturer of Early American door, window & furniture hardware: 19th-century shell-shanked crystal, porcelain & wood trimmings; brass, bronze, nickel-silver & wrought iron; custom-plated & -patinated finishes; restoration work.

Click on no. 2260
Why would you select cabinetry from Crown Point?

Finish
Our finish process sets us apart. We carefully hand wipe stains which are then protected by an incredibly durable and equally beautiful oven baked topcoat. Looking for a painted finish? We offer hand brushed paints from Farrow & Ball and the Old Fashioned Milk Paint Company.

Quality
The finest quality cabinetry starts with the finest quality materials and workmanship. This is why Crown Point crafts 1" thick doors and drawer fronts, and hand fits each one into our 1" thick, true mortise-and-tenon face frames. We employ precision milled joinery built around our all-wood box because we want it to last a lifetime. If that rings familiar, it’s because our cabinet construction is reminiscent of a time when cabinetmakers were recognized as furniture makers.

Style
Crown Point Cabinetry has long been recognized for our attention to style. Starting with our finely crafted inset cabinetry, we create distinctive and well thought-out designs. There’s Victorian, with wainscot posts, beaded frames and antique glass doors. Designing for a Bungalow? Tapered legs, Craftsman doors and quartersawn oak gives you an historically accurate Arts & Crafts style. Our patented Square Channel face frames, Cascade door and terraced islands create the perfect Prairie. If only a contemporary style will do, exotic Zebrwood and Bamboo in a flush full overlay construction give you the ultimate in Modern.

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Crown Point Cabinetry is a true custom cabinetmaker. Want a specific size, angle, shape, detail or configuration? No problem. This is what we do. Our mission is to build custom cabinetry that fits like a glove. Custom flexibility makes it happen.

Buy Direct
Crown Point Cabinetry is the only custom cabinetmaker that sells direct on a national and international scale. We have glowing referrals from Maine to Hawaii, from Minnesota to Bermuda. We design it with you, we build it for you and we deliver it directly to you.
The Period Kitchen
continued

Fine Architectural Metalsmiths
845-651-7550; Fax: 845-651-7857
www.iceforge.com
Chester, NY 10918
Custom fabricator of metalwork: gates, fencing, railings, lanterns, chandeliers, sconces, grilles, fire screens, kitchen equipment & more; forged iron, bronze, copper & stainless steel; specialty finishes; design through installation services.
Click on no. 2640

This rustic copper kitchen hood was designed and fabricated by Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414; Fax: 801-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84081
Designer & custom fabricator of ornamental metalwork: benches, columns, balustrades, lighting, gazebos, fencing, grilles, doors, windows, skylights, finials & more; cast iron, bronze, aluminum & wrought iron/steel; many styles; restoration services.

This room features a decorative grille from Klise.

Klise Mfg. Co.
616-459-4283; Fax: 616-459-4062
www.klisemfg.com
Grand Rapids, MI 49505
Custom manufacturer of decorative wood & metalwork: for interiors, cabinetry, wine cellars & furniture; catalog of 6,000 traditional & transitional designs available; residential & commercial projects; since 1910.
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W.F. Norman Corp.
800-641-4038; Fax: 417-667-2708
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Fabricator of sheet-metal ornament & tin ceilings: hundreds of stock designs of cornices, moldings, bracket, backsplashes, pressed-metal ceilings, siding, roofing, cresting, kitchen equipment & more; duplication from samples or drawings.
Click on no. 520

White River Hardwoods-Woodworks supplied the cabinetry for this kitchen.

White River Hardwoods-Woodworks
800-558-0119; Fax: 479-444-0406
www.whitecreek.com
Fayetteville, AR 72701
Manufacturer of architectural millwork: Mon Reale moldings, authentic hand-carved line of adornments for cabinetry & furniture in linden, cherry & maple; lineals, mantels & range hoods in stock.
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The Wine Rack Company
845-658-7181; Fax: 845-658-5309
www.thewinerackcompany.com
High Falls, NY 12440
Manufacturer & retailer of wine-storage products & wine-related accessories: designer & builder of custom wine cellars; residential racking systems made of non-aromatic cedar, pine, redwood, mahogany & oak.

Wine Rack Company created this custom mahogany wine cellar with racking from The Wine Rack Company.

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Agreg hand carved this French panel.

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www.decoratorssupply.com
Chicago, IL 60609

Manufacturer of classic architectural elements: plaster, crown, ceiling medallions, ceilings, niches & swags; 13,000 appliqués for woodwork/furniture; 900 sizes of column capitals, pilaster capitals, corbels & columns; 15 styles of traditional wood mantels; classically inspired grilles; since 1883.

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800-558-0119; Fax: 479-444-0406
www.whiteriver.com
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Manufacturer of architectural millwork: Mon Reale moldings, authentic hand-carved line of adornments for cabinetry & furniture in linden, cherry & maple; lineals, mantels & range hoods in stock.

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This ornate wood corbel was manufactured by White River.

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www.reggioregister.com
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Zepsa Industries fabricated three custom cherry stairs.
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Winning in White

William Hodgins Interiors
by Stephen M. Salny
W.W. Norton & Company, New York, NY; 2014
320 pp; hardcover; 280 colored images; $75.00
ISBN: 978-0-39373-346-4

Reviewed by Kiley Jacques

“Y ou can have any color you want as long as it is a shade of white,” is, perhaps, the most succinct expression of William Hodgins’ fondness for the non-color. It is also the departure point for Stephen M. Salny’s William Hodgins Interiors — the first monograph devoted to the designer’s career.

The book covers 40 commissions over five decades, accompanied by copious notes and background, and showcases the designer’s innate feel for high style, jewel colors and of course, white. A protégé of Albert Hadley, who viewed the color beige as “atmosphere,” Hodgins believes that “in a white room, furniture becomes either sculpture or accessory.” The results, according to Salny, are “as extraordinarily luxurious as they can be in a quiet, understated way.”

Salny’s study begins with Hodgins’s early life and greatest influencers, against a backdrop of grainy photography. He grew up in a “big grand house” in Hampstead, England, worked as a “gopher” at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in London, and also lived in Paris for a time, where he worked in the American Embassy’s grocery department. It was while selling shoes for Hudson Bay Company and cosmetics for Avon in Montreal, Canada, however, that design and color first caught his eye.

Hodgins went on to New York’s Parsons School of Design, where he executed his first real commission, and to an apprenticeship with Michael Greer, “whose ‘formulaic’ style he did not like but [from whom] he learned the business of decorating.” Hodgins moved to the firm of Parish-Hadley in 1964, where he learned “scale, color, integrity.” Five years later, he opened his own firm.

Among the early projects examined in William Hodgins Interiors are a residence in Beverly Farms, MA, where Hodgins incorporated wicker from “all kinds of dilapidated shops in New York,” and a mid-19th-century farmhouse in Cambridge, MA. Each demonstrates Hodgins’ ability to source and utilize rare antiques that personalize his signature palette. A glimpse inside Hodgins’ own residence, in Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA, proves that he lives by his own design philosophy. Among his many “found” objects is a mid-19th-century mahogany hall settle, which was once rain-soaked by the side of the road.

Salny’s text is brought to life with comprehensive gallery of classic Hodgins-ian materials and techniques, such as bleached floors, Brunschwig & Fils silk taffeta and trompe l’oeil. The author also points to the designer’s affinity for “slightly offbeat unusual chairs” used in nearly every project as a means of adding style to a room “without furnishing it too much.”

Hodgins frequently employs materials, from oxblood and chenille to tobacco leather and floral chintz to fortify a room, believing that “the character of a room comes from things around the upholstered pieces.” One prime example is the Chewing residence, noted here as “part urban, part suburban, part contemporary, part traditional.” The author notes Hodgins tendency to “reference history while lightening the weight of it.”

Hodgins many professional honors include being named ASID’s 2001 “Designer of Distinction” and his induction in 2007 into the New England Design Hall of Fame. He was also named one of Architectural Digest’s top 100 designers in the world; recognized by Town & Country as one of America’s finest interior designers; and called “a true maestro of impressionistic color and light” by Traditional Home.
Ornament is an act of love – or at least a token of esteem. We embellish what we revere. We adorn that which we love. We do not decorate the hero, returning from the wars, to make him pretty – we decorate him to pay him honor. Ornament is deep stuff, greatly misunderstood in recent years.

The reason that we see so little ornament in buildings of our modern culture is that we do not love them. Or perhaps we do not love them because they are unlovely, unadorned. Nor do we think it’s nice to love them – that is, to have a visceral, sentimental, soulful relationship to them – because they are after all products of our intellect, rationally conceived, cost-effective, piously functional, sleek, sensible and cool.

I participated in a heavily attended two-day conference in New York not too long ago on the topic of ornament in Classical architecture, and that can only mean that things are changing fast.

I can no more fully understand the return of the Classical – with its standard elements of columns, capitals, pediments, entablatures and an assortment of ornamental motifs like leaves, rosettes and garlands – than I could comprehend the loss of it. But I believe that it accompanies what Deepak Chopra has called “the final cataclysmic overthrow of the myth of materialism.” I assure you this is happening, and a larger, older, richer paradigm is taking the stage. (And the new science is on our side this time. More on that later.)

Ornament does many things for the article it graces. It may lighten or give weight, it may reveal or disguise, it may suggest usage or mystify. Ornament gives value and imparts meaning. These are all worthy roles, but it is important to remember that primary relationship between the maker and the artifact and the ornament as a badge of honor and affection.

There is a large and growing school of psychology that deals now with issues of the soul. James Hillman and Robert Sardello, for instance, would agree that ornament in this sense is good for the soul of the maker as well as for the soul of the user or the viewer, to say nothing of the soul of the artifact itself. When the Modern stripped ornament away, much of the soul in architecture was lost. And with it went the soul of our cities.

James Gleick in his popular book on chaos theory writes that to Benoît Mandelbrot, a contemporary mathematician whose concepts are affecting many fields, “the epitome of the Euclidean sensibility outside mathematics was the architecture of the Bauhaus...spare, orderly linear, reductionist, geometrical.” To Mandelbrot and his followers, the failure of Modernism is clear: Simple geometric shapes are inhuman. They fail to resonate with the way nature organizes itself or with the way human perception sees the world.

“A geometrical shape has a scale,” Gleick writes, “a characteristic size. To Mandelbrot, art that satisfies lacks scale...A Beaux Arts paragon like the Paris Opera has no scale because it has every scale. An observer seeing the building from any distance finds some detail that draws the eye. The composition changes as one approaches and new elements of the structure come into play.” So here we have New Science in praise of the old Beaux Arts.

Hildegard of Bingen was a 12th-century mystic, a nun, a writer, painter and composer of beautiful music. In a poem about creativity she wrote:

As the creator loves his creation
So the creation loves the creator,
Creation, of course, was fashioned to be adorned,
To be showered, to be gifted with the love of the creator.
The entire world has been embraced by this kiss.

This affectionate reciprocity of which she writes is largely missing from our designed environment today. Ornament is that kiss of the maker that marks the artifact for its own sake and then for the sake of the user.

Architecture begins as a ritual of celebration and must continue again in that spirit if we are to enter the 21st century with honor and grace. This is a bone-deep truth that is today again rising to the surface. A surface we may now embellish to our hearts’ content.

Alvin Holm is a Philadelphia architect (www.alvinholm.com) practicing in the Classical tradition. This Forum originally appeared in Steve Mounson’s blog, The Original Green. See more at: www.originalgreen.org/blog/god-is-in-the-details.html.
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