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right Plaster-coated walls, coffered ceilings and windows of French oak set a welcoming tone in this architecturally appealing home, which Barbara Westbrook complemented with "furnishings that have presence along with a feminine grace." opposite "A well-decorated room should feel like an invitation, something we all wish to offer and receive, a gesture that is... the very definition of graciousness," says Westbrook, pictured in her Buckhead office. The curves of an antique Venetian settee have a showstopping effect in an entry foyer.



NEXT CHAPTER

BARBARA WESTBROOK'S DEBUT BOOK, *GRACIOUS ROOMS*, TRANSLATES THE DESIGNER'S POLISHED AND PATINAED INTERIORS TO A CAPTIVE AUDIENCE. SHE SPEAKS TO *AH&L* ABOUT NEW VENTURES AND TIMELESS DESIGN.



INTERVIEW BY
Suzanna Cullen Hamilton
PHOTOGRAPHERS
Erica George Dines and
William Waldron

Murano glass lamps, silk curtains in a broad stripe and judicious use of color provide a bold and beautiful backdrop in this bright master bedroom designed by Westbrook.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ERICA GEORGE DINES FOR WESTBROOK INTERIORS

WHAT MADE YOU CONSIDER A BOOK AT THIS POINT IN YOUR CAREER? After working with a New York PR firm, a book seemed like the next logical step for my business. A seasoned book agent gave me the confidence to move ahead with Rizzoli, which was my first choice for a publisher.

WHAT DOES GRACIOUS ROOMS SEEK TO CONVEY TO READERS? I want readers feel that the book is accessible, so that they can interpret our design principles in their own homes. Whether creating a casual or formal interior, I hope the book is both an inspiration and a reference for classic interiors.

TELL US ABOUT THE PROCESS OF CREATING THIS BOOK. Atlanta photographer Erica George Dines is superb at capturing the feeling of my rooms, while writer Heather Maelsaer has a lyrical way of writing that perfectly conveys my thoughts about design.

WHAT MADE THE PROCESS FULFILLING? That made the process fulfilling.

WHAT ARE THE HALLMARKS OF A WESTBROOK INTERIORS PROJECT? We strive to make our projects warm, comfortable and approachable. Regardless of the style of a particular house, our projects feel timeless and substantive. I'm meticulous about organization and details, so project designers Kim Winkler and Elizabeth Hanson keep our projects on track, while office managers Kathy Wedbush and

Laurie Stephens ensure the business runs efficiently.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM OTHERS THAT'S BEEN FORMATIVE IN YOUR OWN DESIGN PRACTICE? I worked for Gandy-Peace and Nancy Braithwaite before launching my own business in 1992. Charles Gandy taught me that ample storage space provides optimal organization and that it's a luxury in an office or a home. From Nancy Braithwaite, I learned that sophisticated paint colors have a subtle yet powerful impact on spaces.

HOW HAS YOUR WORK CHANGED SINCE YOU FIRST BEGAN YOUR CAREER? My work has become more organic as I've become more instinctive. I've learned to trust my eye and not be afraid to change things at the installation if something resonates better in a different place in the room. I've also gotten bolder with clients in my recommendations. As a result, I feel that my work has gotten richer and more sophisticated.

WHAT'S NEXT ON YOUR HORIZON? I'll travel throughout 2015 to promote the book, and I look forward to meeting a broad audience that will bring in new projects in different areas of the country. I'm also thrilled that we will publish [e-magazine] *Workbook* by Barbara Westbrook online four times each year, with new ideas and inspirations in every issue.



Atlanta interior designer Barbara Westbrook's debut book, *Barbara Westbrook: Gracious Rooms* (Rizzoli, \$50) reveals her principles for creating homes with both polish and patina. Rich with advice, inspiration and classically inspired Southern charm, *Gracious Rooms* treats readers to a visual feast of more than 10 light-filled homes, including lake retreats, contemporary homes and historic mansions. An Atlanta design industry veteran who studied under the tutelage of Southern greats Nancy Braithwaite and Gandy-Peace, Westbrook is known for imparting a comfortable elegance into her designs, and her signature aesthetic is beautifully conveyed throughout the 240-page tome, whether it's the significance of symmetry, using color to unify spaces or setting the mood with materials.