

# MILLEU®

FALL 2020







# *Southern*



# Sensibilities

An aerial photograph of a lush, green landscape. In the foreground, there are several large, mature trees with dense foliage. In the middle ground, a small, square brick building with a conical roof and a window is situated on a grassy hill. The background features more trees and a body of water, possibly a pond or a stream, reflecting the surrounding greenery. The overall scene is peaceful and idyllic.

Barbara Westbrook collaborated with an architectural team to create a new South Carolina Lowcountry home that appears to have arisen out of the past

INTERIOR DESIGN BY *Barbara Westbrook*  
ARCHITECTURE BY *Historical Concepts*  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Eric Piasecki*

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPH BY *Erica George Dines*  
WRITTEN BY *Edward McCann*









Opening page and this page: A new house, designed by Historical Concepts, replicates the kind of dwelling one would find in South Carolina's Lowcountry, circa 1810. The sixteen hundred acres of grounds include a natural pond and rice fields, as well as centuries-old oak and magnolia trees. The house and grounds are designed to be both formal and immediately accessible, as a way to foster an indoor/outdoor living dynamic





Above: A view from the home's trophy room into what is referred to as the storytelling room culminates in a perspective on the magnificent oaks that grow nearby. Draperies from Pindler and Chelsea Textiles complement the indoor/outdoor setting. Right: In keeping with Southern homes of the intended period, the storytelling room features ceiling fans, these from Woolen Mill Fan Company, composed of waxed mahogany blades and fitted with antique-style pulleys. The room is painted with Pratt & Lambert's Chalk Grey.













The kitchen's expansive work and eating island was designed by Historical Concepts; its heavily distressed gray finish was executed by Bob Christian, a noted decorative artist. Rose Tarlow Melrose House Brighton Station lamps, made of copper, brass, and blown glass, illuminate the space. The four-burner range is from La Cornue. Left: A vigorously articulated rounded brick pizza oven occupies a corner of the room—and it is often in use.



This page: A circa-1920 painted and ebonized pinewood dining table from ROBUCK in the breakfast room is lit with a Mulligans Early American-style iron-armed chandelier by Holland MacRae. The chairs by Formations are upholstered with a Chelsea Textiles fabric. Right: The house's long gallery is illuminated by a series of The Urban Electric Co. globe lanterns. The window draperies are made with Sandra Jordan alpaca wool. A walnut architect's desk dates from the early nineteenth century.















In the master bedroom, a brick fireplace provides a warming glow at the foot of a Rose Tarlow Melrose House walnut bed. The draperies are a combination of Elitis linen, de Le Cuona flax linen, and Rogers & Goffigon linen tape. The Gustavian chairs, painted blue, are circa 1790. A custom butterfly infinity mirror, designed by Jocelyn Marsh, serves as a visually animating detail. The iron floor lamp is an antique.



The master bath is painted with Pratt & Lambert's Seed Pearl. Elements in the room include Hector Finch prismatic globes, evocative of the Art Deco, Art Deco-style Reed wall sconces, a Pennsylvania-style Windsor armchair from Warren Chair Works, and a golden harp. The rectangular bathtub, handshower, and the sink and faucet are all Waterworks.











Above: The reading room is lit with natural light and a vintage brass and tole five-lamp fixture. A Formations chair with a Holland & Sherry tweed trimmed with Samuel & Sons grosgrain ribbon is set at a walnut desk from Rose Tarlow Melrose House. The bench is upholstered in leather from Moore & Giles. Right: The doors and trim in a guest bedroom use Benjamin Moore's Golden Chalice. The armchair is from Paul Ferrante, and features a Rogers & Goffigon striped cotton fabric. The drapery fabric is Lewis & Wood.







**BORDERED BY SALTWATER** and marshlands, the coastal Lowcountry of South Carolina has a culture, geography, and cuisine all its own. Spanish moss, sweetgrass, and sea turtles lend the region an almost mystical allure, a timeless quality that can easily draw visitors into the past.

Located an hour inland from Charleston and Hilton Head Island, a remarkable new home whose interiors were designed by Atlanta-based Barbara Westbrook seems to have arrived from that past. It's a place whose spirit dates to 1810, whose style is adapted to the region's subtropical climate, and whose generations of imagined occupants modified its design by bringing the kitchen indoors, by enclosing a deep porch with glass, and by filling in stable doors to create a guest suite. Set on sixteen hundred acres with a natural pond and rice fields, the house is surrounded by enormous live oak trees that have been growing for centuries.

The structure was developed by a team of academics, designers, and historians at Historical Concepts, an architectural partnership with offices in Atlanta and New York, whose founding principle is to imagine the history of a property and home. This project embodies their ability to interpret and update past styles so as to evoke how a house might have originated and how various buildings on the property may have been used and changed, repurposed, or added to over time. This completed project by Historical Concepts is so noteworthy that it is featured in their forthcoming book, *Visions of Home*, to be published by Rizzoli this spring.

"We don't ever want something to feel like a period piece," says Andrew Cogar, the firm's president. "We want it to live as the clients live today, while keeping a sense of belonging and connection to place." Cogar's colleague, Terry Pylant, adds, "This house feels like it's always been there, yet it still feels fresh."

This fresh finished product is the result of a collaboration among homeowners who are stewards of the land, an architectural firm with a deep understanding and respect for history, and an interior designer with a refreshing take on Southern style. "I certainly believe a Northerner can 'do' Southern design," says Westbrook, the principal of Westbrook Interiors, "but this client wanted a true Southerner to design for her." Westbrook, who was raised in Alabama and Virginia and has lived in the South all her

life, adds, "The client wanted someone who had an intrinsic Southern sensibility, and I fit that bill."

Westbrook, whose reputation is built on classic, comfortably tailored spaces—and on client relationships that last for decades—relished the opportunity to collaborate with the team at Historical Concepts. "I was introduced to them years ago," she says, "and I'd worked on a project with Terry before, so I knew who I was dealing with and how great they were. It was such a good experience—very creative and organized at the same time. In fact, we all went together to Vintage Lumber, south of Atlanta, to pick out the reclaimed beams and flooring."

Those rustic pine floorboards seen throughout the house were treated in a traditional method of filling holes with cork to retain the texture and patina of the wood. The library is paneled with felled cypress that was found on the property and milled locally; in the kitchen, all of the wood—including the island, cabinetry, and ceiling trusses—was hand-painted for a weathered feel. Adds Westbrook, "The refrigerator is hidden behind a custom piece designed to look like an old ice box, and opposite the island is an enormous brick pizza oven, used on a regular basis."

Regarding furnishings, Westbrook says, "These are traditional spaces with very tall ceilings, so it was important to get the scale right. We're not in California, so things can't be overstuffed, yet you want to create the feeling of cocooning. We did this partly by adding textured area rugs that lend a sense of warmth."

That sense of warmth is extended through the display of the homeowners' art and their personal collections. "This is a couple that likes a full house, and they've each built a variety of collections: everything from blue and white Ming china and first edition books to snow globes. It's intensely personal, and it's so satisfying for them—and for me—to be able to edit and display these items throughout the house."

At the conclusion of the project, the clients gave Westbrook the best compliment an interior designer can hope for. "They told me, 'When our family and friends first come to visit, they say that the house really feels like us.'" ■

**Interior designer Barbara Westbrook answered the clients' request to highlight items that were personal to them, while appealing to her own aesthetic.**



*“Inside, the house is a mix of style—personal to the client and very interesting for me.”*

*—Barbara Westbrook*

