

DESIGN AT ITS BEST

HOUSE & GARDEN

DECEMBER 2003

HOLIDAY STYLE

HOW TO DRESS UP YOUR TABLE

BRING YOUR GARDEN INSIDE

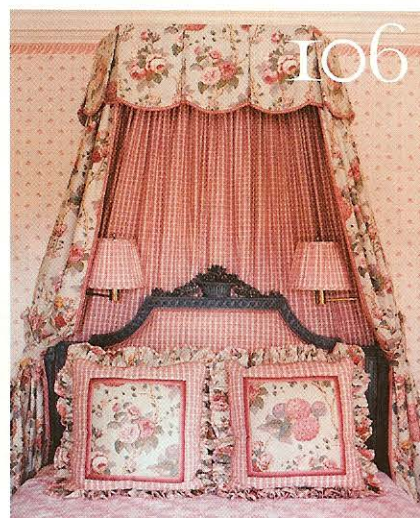
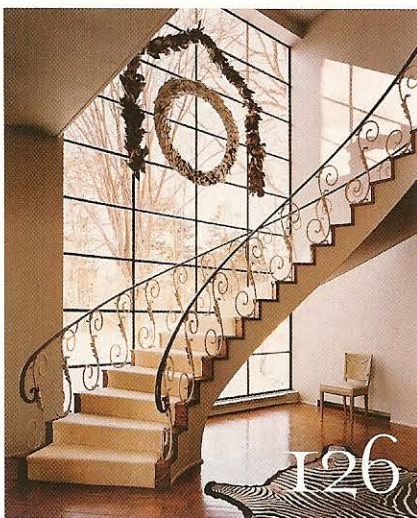
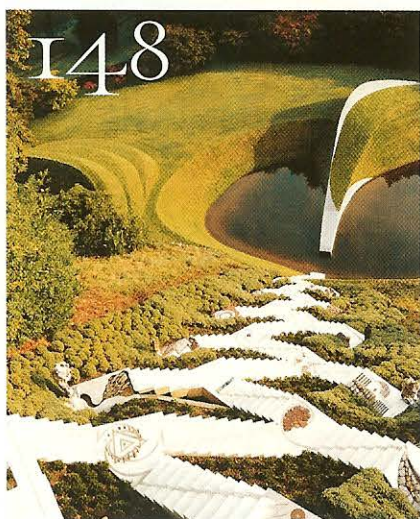


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HOUSE *december* & GARDEN

Celebrating the beauty and diversity of great design



Designers Keith Irvine and Jason Bell put a
fresh spin on **PALM BEACH TRADITIONAL**

French mix master Jacques Grange animates a New York
apartment with **CONTEMPORARY SPIRIT**

Lady Iveagh restores
NEO-PALLADIAN SPLENDOR in Wilbury Park

Charles Jencks reinvents the
MODERN GARDEN as a cosmic wonderland

An **ART DECO** house by Edward Durell Stone
presides over a Christmas tree farm in Pennsylvania

A dark wooden table with a brass bowl of patterned ceramic eggs and a dark elephant figurine on a colorful tiled floor.

grand tour

DESIGNERS KEITH IRVINE AND JASON BELL
RESTORE A GRAND 1920S PALM BEACH HOUSE
AND MAKE IT A WELCOMING SHOWPLACE FOR
THE OWNERS' ENGLISH AND FRENCH ANTIQUES



In the loggia, opposite page, a vintage ebonized carved wood coffee table is silhouetted above bright hand-painted tiles that the homeowners found. ■ On the patio, this page, are a pair of Bellagio chaise longues by Cast Classics.

PRODUCED BY JAMES SHEARRON PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIC BOMAN WRITTEN BY BETH DUNLOP

**YELLOW GIVES THE
LIVING ROOM A
NECESSARY AND
BEAUTIFUL LIGHTNESS.
THE DAMASK CURTAINS
AND CHINOISERIE
VALANCES ON THE
LARGE WINDOWS ARE A
TRIBUTE TO THE LATE
BILLY BALDWIN**

On July 22, 1929, *The New York Telegram* announced the marriage of one of Palm Beach's most eligible bachelors. "Maurice Fatio Wed," read the headline, and the story went on: "Mr. Fatio, of course, is widely known as an architect. He is responsible for many of the imposing structures which have been placed along the ocean and lake shores at Palm Beach, where he has also been a conspicuous figure in fashionable life."

The Swiss-born Fatio, who was one of the finest architects to work in Palm Beach, designed grand oceanfront houses for clients with such names as Vanderbilt, Widener, and Phipps. But this one is a somewhat smaller house, tucked amid the dense vegetation of a side street in Palm Beach. Fatio built this house for himself and his bride, novelist and socialite Eleanor Chase. It is a refined Spanish-Mediterranean work with discreet stylistic allusions to the Italian—the kind of understated architecture that was Fatio's hallmark. The Fatics didn't live in it long: in Palm Beach's heyday, houses that architects designed for themselves were great objects of real estate desire. Still, this house found an indelible place in Palm Beach history.

Today it offers an homage to Fatio; much the same and yet changed, it's restored and renewed, a house that



TRADE SECRETS FURNITURE The red bergères near the fireplace are French Directoire. The Louis XVI painted chairs are the clients' own. **FABRICS** The custom-designed sofas and armchairs by Irvine and Bell are covered in Brunshwig & Fil's Le Lac. The damask curtains and valance trim are from Scalamandré. **CARPET** Antique English needlepoint. **PAINT** The wall panels are glazed in three tones of daffodil yellow.



IN CONTRAST TO THE SUNNY LIVING ROOM, THE DINING ROOM, WITH ITS DARK CRANBERRY WALLS, EVOKES NIGHT. THE COFFERED CEILING, WITH PAINTED CANVAS INSETS, AND THE STARK CHANDELIER MAKE IT A DRAMATIC SPACE

perpetuates the spirit and allure of Palm Beach without being the slightest bit fusty. It is both a showcase for a fine collection of furniture and a home affable enough that it looks like the current owners have been in it a long time. And, indeed, they are old-time Palm Beachers: he spent part of his childhood in a sprawling oceanfront house designed by the other great Palm Beach architect of the era, Addison Mizner. The owners knew less about Fatio, but when one of them studied the architect and his work, he says, "I simply fell in love with him."

Though this Fatio house was well built, the years had not been kind to it. When the owners bought it, in 1999, the facade was intact, but much of the once remarkable interior workmanship had been lost. The finely milled paneling in the living room and the carved wooden doors had been removed. Thick gold paint obscured the elegant dining room mantelpiece. An open loggia had been enclosed. The owners turned to the New York decorating firm Irvine, Fleming, Bell. "We took everything back to the original," says Jason Bell, who praises the "perfect-sized rooms, long rather than square. They're big but not gargantuan."

The entry hall, with Directoire chairs and an eighteenth-century Louis XV *trumeau* mirror, gives what Bell's partner Keith Irvine calls "just a hint of what's inside." The walls are rough-plastered, then stippled in "a fabulous mottled glaze in melon."

Original photographs from the collection of the architect's daughter,





TRADE SECRETS FURNITURE The Sheraton pedestal table is flanked by an English Regency server, ca. 1820. FABRICS Curtains are a discontinued F. Schumacher neoclassical chintz. The English Regency black lacquer and painted dining chairs have cushions in Lee Jofa's Key West Stripe. CARPET Patterson, Flynn & Martin's Fairmont. PAINT The walls are stipple glazed in a custom dark cranberry red.

THE MASTER BEDROOM IS A DREAMY SEA OF BLUE. THE PAINTED AND GILT POSTER BED SITS LIKE A SHIP AT ANCHOR, SOFTENED BY THE PALE WALLS, PLUMP UPHOLSTERED SEATING, AND BILLOWING CURTAINS

Alexandra Fatio Taylor, allowed a cabinetmaker to re-create the living room's wood paneling, and helped Irvine find a set of Italian doors that are a close match to the dark-stained originals. Irvine painted the wood in pale decorative shades. The wall paneling is glazed in three tones of daffodil yellow, "so that when you're in the room by day, it has a great depth, and at night it absolutely glows," Irvine says.

The proportions and scale of the living room always made it impressive, and now it is even more so. "It is the most spectacular room in any house I've ever owned, or in any I grew up in," an owner says.

The couple love color, which makes the Scottish-born Irvine and Alabama-bred Bell a felicitous choice. The house was also a decorator's challenge. Irvine and Bell needed not just to bring the house back to life but to make it into a showcase for the owners' large collection of very fine French and English eighteenth-century antiques. "Generationally and geographically, the pieces seemed too fine and subtle to hold their own against the strong 1920s Hispanic backgrounds," Irvine says.

In the living room, which is anchored by an eighteenth-century Regency needlepoint carpet, Irvine and Bell re-covered overstuffed chairs in "madly overscaled" Brunswick & Fils chintz. Windows have yellow damask curtains with chinoiserie valances that are Irvine's ode to legendary decorator Billy Baldwin.

A bar with tiled walls below Venetian-style murals leads to *(Cont. on page 162)*



TRADE SECRETS

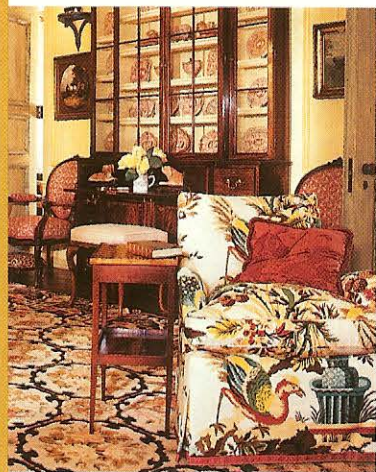
FURNITURE In the master bedroom, Irvine and Bell paired armchairs and a chaise with the homeowners' painted and gilt poster bed.
FABRICS Colefax and Fowler's Lincoln floral print covers a chaise armchair. On the canopy is a discontinued Brunswick & Fils glazed chintz, also used on the bergère near the fireplace.
CARPET An antique needlepoint.



trade secrets

IRVINE, FLEMING, BELL USES CHINTZ AS

1 SELECT A CHINTZ There are a myriad of approaches you can use to select a palette for a project. Irvine, Fleming, Bell turns to textiles. “Whereas some decorators might use a carpet as the base for a room, we begin by showing our clients chintz,” Jason Bell explains. “It helps us gauge their response to specific color combinations.” After everyone agrees on a fabric, the decorators pull colors from the pattern and use them to design different rooms, ensuring a consistent palette throughout the house. If the chintz you choose has a limited range of color, use additional shades in accents.



In the living room, left, custom-built armchairs, covered in Brunswick & Fils's Le Lac, are paired with an English Sheraton two-tiered table. An 18th-century English breakfront sits against the wall. The rug is an antique needlepoint. Below: Brunswick & Fils's Le Lac glazed chintz, shown in Cream. Irvine and Bell drew inspiration from this fabric, basing colors in other rooms on ones found in this pattern.



2 FORMAL RED

The dining room's curtains (in Schumacher's Neoclassical Vase), a Patterson, Flynn & Martin carpet, and raspberry-painted walls (red glaze over a Pepto-Bismol pink base) are all in keeping with red tones in the living room's chintz. The urns and the clean repeat in the curtains complement the architecture of the room with a minimum of fuss, and work with the clients' neoclassical Regency chairs. Red tones are also in keeping with the house's Spanish-style architecture, by Maurice Fatio. If you have trouble finding a chintz with a specific base color, Bell recommends dyeing a chinoiserie fabric the desired shade.



In the dining room, left, curtains and valances are Schumacher's discontinued Neoclassical Vase. English Regency black lacquer and painted chairs are covered in Lee Jofa's Key West Stripe. Christopher Norman's Lion Regency reproduction armchair, above. Fabrics, from left: Travers's Arabesque linen, in Scarlet; Schumacher's St. Claire le Chateau and Gold, in Pompeian Red and Gold; and Rose Cumming's glazed cotton Genges, in red.

AN IMAGINATIVE WAY TO CREATE A COHESIVE, COLOR-COORDINATED DECOR

3 INTO THE LIGHT Dark chintz isn't just for formal rooms. "It's possible to get more out of this fabric in a well-lit room," Bell says. This isn't the first time his firm used a dark fabric in a sunroom. "This chintz allowed us to create an anchor in a well-lit atmosphere," he says, "while lending a level of sophistication to the wicker." Green accents in the Clarence House textile relate to those in the living room chintz.

The sunroom's wicker and painted Louis XVI chairs are in Clarence House's Concert Fleurie. Bottom: Janus et Cie's Norfolk chair, Interior Loom collection. Fabrics, from top: Rose Cumming's glazed cotton Farnfield; Clarence House's glazed cotton Rubens Brun, and Schumacher's cotton Menagerie, all shown in black.



4 PROVINCIAL BLUE

The client wanted a blue bedroom, and Irvine and Bell obliged. Although the light blue is not reflected in the living room chintz, it is similar to the gray tones found there, which maintains the overarching color scheme throughout the house. Floral motifs and a curved edge soften the graphic quality of the stripe, and using light blue eases the impact of the pattern, helping the fabric blend with the walls and carpet. Note the careful attention paid to pleating the stripe on the valance. Classic, clean blue-and-white evokes the fresh charm of Provençal country interiors.

In the master bedroom, left, a chaise armchair is covered in Colefax and Fowler's Lincoln floral print, which is also used for the curtains and valance. Above: Rose Cumming's slipper chair, covered in Keisha, in blue. Fabrics, from left: Cowtan & Tout's Lincoln, in Colefax and Fowler Blue; Travers's Simone, in blue; Manuel Canovas's cotton Dorine, in blue. Sources, see back of book. □

