

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2003 \$5.50

# VERANDA







OPPOSITE: Antique Oushak rug sets the tone for the master bedroom. Handpainted French 19th-century iron bed with gilt trim and cut crystal adornments draped in Colefax and Fowler floral chintz. Other antiques include an English mahogany bench, French needlework and English bureau.

FOLLOWING PAGES, TOP LEFT: Keeping room's collectibles of pewter and horn displayed on 19th-century Dutch walnut shelf. Redware lamp. FOLLOWING PAGES, BOTTOM LEFT: Cowtan & Tout fabrics on sofa, ottomans, hatchet wing chair and Travis club chairs. Manuel Canovas fabric on foreground chair. Clarence House fabric skirts table. Above window hang 19th-century painted game boards. Mantel holds American black ironware. Tole clock is 19th-century French. Oushak rug. FOLLOWING PAGES, RIGHT: Early 19th-century New England cabinet holds collectibles including redware, 19th-century American carved wood cigar man and starburst, face jugs and youngest daughter's handwoven baskets. Clarence House fabric on seats of late 19th-century painted metal armchairs. Drapery fabric by Colefax & Fowler.

n a rainy summer evening, interior designer Jane Williamson welcomes an inquisitive guest into her cozy Atlanta apartment; a pair of large glasses is pushed casually onto her head, holding back her characteristic blonde hair. Everywhere there are fabulous furnishings, pictures of her family and "her babies,"—which evidently include more than a dozen impeccably groomed dogs she's loved through the years. Books are stacked all over, and on the top, the title *A Breed Apart* speaks volumes.

Williamson settles into a straight-back chair next to a fresh flower arrangement. A fan busy in her hand, she is the quintessential Southern matriarch, and her eyes sparkle as she prepares to discuss one of her most beloved subjects, the interior of a recently completed Buckhead home.

"Here we go, missy," she says setting the glasses on her nose. At 72, she has earned the right to call those half her age whatever she wants, especially when discussing centuries old, rare antiques.

The Atlanta homeowner's mother was an avid collector and passed along a foundation of knowledge and an appreciation for fine things to her daughter. The mother had long recommended Williamson's design services, and in 1993, when the homeowner saw the designer's work published in *House Beautiful* as "Best Showhouse Room," she arranged a meeting to discuss her home.

"She had a great dog, so I liked her," says Williamson with her usual candor. They have been working together in a curious employee/client, advisor/apprentice, surrogate mother/daughter-type relationship ever since. "We just melded together," Williamson says of her unofficial protégé. "She loved learning, and this has been the most rewarding, endearing,

exciting decorating job I've ever had."

"What I love about Jane's style," says the owner, "is all her rooms are comfortable, welcoming and elegant. Not untouchable. Also, I enjoy things that were made by hand. In the keeping room there's ironware that women once used to prepare meals, and in the front hall handpainted platters. I really like the old art form, and Jane was able to complement my taste and feelings with her whole scheme."

A collector since seventeen, the homeowner wanted to incorporate items she had acquired and expand the knowledge her mother instilled in her. "She had grown up in an environment of taste, culture and knowledge, but I saw where her vision had stopped with nineteenth-century pottery, folk art, Chippendale and early New England," says Williamson. "Now we've surpassed that. We're buying tole, gilt, painted furniture, papier mâché, French and Italian furniture. And I began her collection of nineteenth-century dog paintings."

"Jane definitely has a vision, and she wants only the best for her clients," says the owner. Such as the chandelier that finally became a fixture in the dining room. "I kept putting it on hold," Jane remembers. "The hold would go off, and I'd put it back on—for a year. I was determined!"

"We've had some good laughs," admits the homeowner. "And found some really incredible pieces. How can this little table have so much power?" she says about an Italian coffee table with carved legs and marbled top. "Wonderful!"

"What a thrill, to collaborate with a client who has this level of excitement!" says Williamson, who claims she is always learning and always teaching. "If you don't learn something new every day, you might as well go bury your head." □

















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# HERITAGE

## PASS IT ON

INTERIOR DESIGN BY JANE WILLIAMSON  
ARCHITECTURE BY WILLIAM T. BAKER & ASSOCIATES  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID SCHILLING  
TEXT BY AMANDA LESTER TRELINO



For the home of an Atlanta family, residential designer William T. Baker referenced a New England vernacular. On the landing are 19th-century English pewter peacocks, RIGHT: Interior designer Jane Williamson chose Cowtan & Tout fabrics for windows, Travis loveseats, 19th-century English wing chair and pillows, custom made by Terry Greenfield. Travers fabric on seat of 18th-century English armchair. Canine portraits and papier mâché pug tole tray are 19th-century English. Oak 18th-century tavern table faces mantel displaying a collection of miniature chairs. Oushak rug. FOLLOWING PAGES: Undersize curtains allow space for custom interior wooden shutters. Handpainted chest and English Chippendale mirror, both 18th-century, complemented by 19th-century English redware plates. Floor lamps by Cedric Hartman.







DOG PAINTING













RIGHT: Focal point of dining room is an 18th-century French cartoon, painted on canvas as a tapestry study. French chandelier, c. 1820, combines doré, iron, crystal and gilt. "My client adores saffron," says Williamson, pointing out the wool fabric on dining chairs with prominent nail heads. Table set with antique Chinese porcelain in tobacco leaf pattern. Laden with Chinese blue and white porcelain, 18th-century English sideboard is flanked by antique high-back chairs. French pewter lamps. Irish woven corn husk rug from Stark. ABOVE: Three-panel screen covered in 19th-century French wallpaper. Curtain fabric by Travers. Rare tole trolley bar glides on casters and features a pierced gallery for glassware and liquors. Carved oak William and Mary commode. Floral arrangements by Shaun O'Dwyer. FOLLOWING PAGES: Blue tole miniature harp rests on French rosewood and gilt pedestal table. Clarence House fabrics for drapery and Travis loveseat. Manuel Canovas fabrics on Louis XVI chair, one of a pair, and 19th-century English slipper chairs, which face a French table with *églomisé* glass. Oushak rug.











