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Defying Expectations

CHARLOTTE DESIGNER JOHN BOSSARD MELTS THE DESIGN AESTHETICS OF HIS SOUTHERN ROOTS WITH AN INNATE INTERNATIONAL STYLE AT HIS CLIENTS' TRADITIONAL HOME IN PALM BEACH.



Opposite: The lakefront house looks like old Palm Beach with its classic architectural details and lush landscaping. This page: The entry staircase includes a gallery of important art, hung "salon style" to add layers to the space.



John Bossard loves to tell the story about a young woman who saw him in the grocery store recently and started speaking to him in Italian. She just assumed, based on his dress and demeanor, that he was from a fashion capital. And it's no wonder—he's dashing, tall, thin, loves a scarf and a cashmere sweater, and has perfect hair, coiffed or just obedient. He laughs mischievously, "I told her, 'I'm Southern, from Augusta, born and raised.'"

However, Bossard does travel internationally for work, with clients around the world, so his mind-set is totally global. He has developed an affinity for Chinese porcelain, French fauteuils, Indian chintzes, and Oriental rugs. And his sense of style respects his sense of place while transcending the stereotypical. To look at him, you expect his work to be edgy, modern, and remarkably tailored. To see one of his projects, you recognize that his aesthetic and his heritage are expressed in traditional, classic, and fashionable spaces. He's a Southern traditionalist with a New South appreciation of the cosmopolitan. "Age in a house is comforting," he says, "as long as it's not dowdy."

Bossard's longtime clients' house in Palm Beach is a prime

Golden-yellow hues continue in the living room where Bossard plays refined versus natural, laying a seagrass rug to act as a foil for more formal pieces—like the bullion-fringed trefoil ottoman, gilt sconces and coffee table, and fine-legged wood pieces.

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Opposite: Bossard hung silk window treatments with wide vertical stripes in the living and dining room. "You can't go wrong with a stripe," he says. The rods are gilt mahogany. Above: The collection of blue-and-white ceramics throughout the house is mostly Delft.



example. The house looks old Palm Beach, but it was actually built more recently. "It was a 90s spec house, which meant drywall heaven," Bossard says with a smirk.

The designer and his team took advantage of the lush, waterfront property on Lake Worth and, as he says, "gave it an old soul." They added a

dado, reconfigured rooms, and made the house a true family home, able to withstand on-the-move teenagers and place-to-be party hosts.

As much as Bossard worked on the bones of the house, he also incorporated antiques the family had inherited and collected over the years. "When I can, and if the collection is

Above: The dark-green lacquered Asian commode greets guests in the entry hall. The hexagonal detail on the mirror brings balance to the classic-transitional space. Right: A round dining table sits squarely in the center of the room. "It fit with the architecture, and I always like a round table when I can make it work," says Bossard. The custom lampshades on top of the Directoire commode come to figurative life with the addition of ball fringe.





good, I like to use what's already there," he says. The dining room's Scandinavian chandelier is a case in point. Delicate and yet grand, the chandelier and Swedish sconces act as glamorous jewelry in the space, a fitting exclamation point to the custom-colored de Gournay paper on the walls. "We wanted that golden yellow to evoke the sunlight that streams through the windows all day. At night, the color is even more magical," the designer says.

Such references to the outdoors recur throughout the house. Bossard incorporated a lot of blue because of the lakefront site, but he stayed

away from the typical coastal, second-home palette. This is the owners' primary residence, so the blues he chose in the main house tend to be richer and more stately. It's in the pool house that the color goes

Left: Custom white solar tiles cover the walls in the Gilded Age-style kitchen. Below, left: The powder room gets a bit of flash with the Sherle Wagner gilt fixtures at the sink. Right and below: Bossard wanted the guest bedroom to be both "fresh and comfortable, evocative of the environment." So he paired an embroidered silk Lee Jofa print by Suzanne Rheinsein with a Phillip Jeffries green cloth on the walls.





a little lighter and a bit more whimsical.

Throughout, Bossard added details that merit further study. His lampshades are almost all trimmed, fringed, and pleated to lend another element to the layering that gives the house a sense of age. "To just do pleats would be awfully boring," he says. "I love fringe, and embellishment is part of my nature."

While the house is top-to-bottom tailored, it isn't rigid. Bossard loves a little happy tension, as seen in understated materials paired with luxurious silk pieces, embroidered lampshades next to linen slipcovers,

Opposite: An oasis of cool reigns in the master suite where Bossard hung a collection of intaglios over the antique secretary. Above: Bossard compares the layering and lining of fabrics on beds and windows to the importance of wearing a slip with a dress. "It softens the lines," he says. Above, right: The ladies' sitting room includes a linen velvet upholstered daybed. Right: A reading nook with comfy chair and ottoman provides a place of respite in the master bedroom.

and family antiques that get moved around to keep things fresh. It's a reflection of him that he enjoys including in his projects—international style with a Southern accent.



BOSSARD AND HIS TEAM TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE LUSH, WATERFRONT PROPERTY AND, AS HE SAYS, "GAVE IT AN OLD SOUL."



Above: The poolside veranda provides the perfect setting for day or night entertaining. Left and below: A printed linen decorates the pool-house bedroom. Opposite: Keith Williams of Niviera Williams Landscape Architecture walked the tailored yet tropical line in the garden by designing lush views punctuated by sculpted paths.

