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PERSONAL TOUCH

DISTINCTIVE FINISHES, FURNISHINGS AND ACCESSORIES
IMBUE A HOUSTON HOME WITH A CUSTOM IMPRINT.

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ARCHITECTURE / CRAIG STITELER, CRAIG STITELER DESIGN
HOME BUILDER / KARL HANSEN, K&C CLASSIC HOMES

In the family room of this Houston home, interior designer Sarah Eilers paired a Hickory Chair sofa from Bunch & Shoemaker wearing Lee Jofa fabric with a Formations coffee table from Culp Associates. Throw pillows, including one in Penny Morrison's Pasha fabric from Allan Knight and Associates, provide a pop of color. The antique chandelier is from Art & Antique Hunter.



Some may view an antique rolling pin as simply an old kitchen utensil. But when interior designer Sarah Eilers spied a collection of them that belonged to client Jamie Sanford's grandmother, she saw a design opportunity. "I try to include elements that are meaningful to the homeowners whenever possible," says Eilers, who commissioned a local artist to assemble those pins and a few others into a piece now decorating a wall in her client's breakfast room. The interior designer then proceeded to artfully arrange fishing rods and baskets in the husband's study. "He loves to fish, and displaying items such as these helped put a personal stamp on the house," she explains.

Eilers' desire to create a home unique to its inhabitants is a common theme throughout her projects. "In this case, Jamie came to us with some inspiration pictures, giving us a sense of her style but no distinct direction," says Eilers, whose project designer, Laura Beth Rickaway, helped bring

this home to life. "When that happens, we take the client shopping and expose them to as many ideas as possible." From the onset, the interior designer strives to decipher the homeowners' individual preferences and include them throughout process.

That level of interactivity was just what Jamie envisioned when she and her husband, Key, purchased the Acadian-style home in Houston's Memorial neighborhood. After years of small-town life in Katy and with three grown sons out the door, the couple wanted to start fresh—while bypassing the construction stage. "We didn't want to wait two to three years for completion, so when we found a spec house with a good floor plan and a flexible builder, we went for it," Jamie says.

Builder Karl Hansen was just beginning the trim phase when the Sanfords came along. "It soon became a custom home," he says, adding that he happily accommodated requests for interior changes. "In particular, they wanted cabinets and moldings specific to their needs." But the

The Matt Camron Rugs & Tapestries Tabriz rug inspired the family room's color scheme. The Charles Miller lounge chair and ottoman from ID Collection, both sporting a Kerry Joyce pattern from George Cameron Nash, complement hues in the floor covering. The round oak antique table is from Back Row Home, and the Peter Fasano fabric-clad draperies are also from George Cameron Nash.



Opposite: The dining room's chandelier, from Tucker Payne Antiques in Charleston, South Carolina, hangs from a custom plaster ceiling by Segreto Finishes. Custom chairs from Woodland Furniture in Idaho Falls, Idaho, covered in Colefax and Fowler fabric from Culp Associates, pull up to a Keith Fritz dining table from EC Dicken. Underneath is a Matt Camron Rugs & Tapestries rug.

Below: A French chestnut credenza from Joyce Horn Antiques graces the foyer. The antique French stanchion mounted as a custom lamp is from Carl Moore Antiques; the artwork by Elizabeth Chandler is from Gremillion & Co. Fine Art. Another rug from Matt Camron Rugs & Tapestries completes the opening tableau.





Opposite: A Gregorius Pineo chandelier from Culp Associates illuminates the breakfast room's antique table from Back Row Home. Barley-twist chairs by Panache Designs from ID Collection tout Lee Jofa fabric backs and seat cushions wearing Holly Hunt's Great Plains fabric. Displayed on the wall is an art piece Vestige created using antique rolling pins from the homeowners' collection. The rug is from Matt Camron Rugs & Tapestries.

Below: The kitchen's custom cabinets feature a finish by Segreto Finishes. Twin lanterns from Brown light an island topped with quartzite from the Designer Stone Center; Hickory Chair counter stools wear Perennials fabric from David Sutherland. The Duquesa field tile that rims the room and the Duquesa Alba Mezzanotte tile on the stove backsplash are both from Walker Zanger.



residence's rustic French exterior, a collaboration with architect Craig Stiteler, remained intact. "Part of the home's attraction is that it's not just another Mediterranean-style house," the architect explains. "Things like the brick walls and slate roof with clay hips and bridges set it apart."

For his part, Stiteler chose authentic-looking materials that react well to the area's humidity. For instance, "integral plaster that is hand-troweled has the depth of an old-world finish and stands up to the elements better than synthetic stucco," he says. The architect, who opted for clay brick over concrete for the same reason, wanted the house to have a timeless look, accomplished through honest, traditional materials.

By her own admission, Jamie felt overwhelmed at the prospect of tackling the interiors of such a large home

alone, so she contacted finish designer Leslie Sinclair for assistance. With her guidance, they settled on pale blue for the kitchen cabinets, but for the remaining interior decisions Sinclair recommended Eilers, who took the lead from there. The interior designer invited the wife on a whirlwind tour of shops and showrooms, a hands-on experience that delighted the homeowner. "Playing a role in picking every single thing was my favorite part," says Jamie, who reveled in touching fabrics and test-driving chairs. Already in place, the home's reclaimed antique heart pine flooring, purchased through The Woodshop of Texas and salvaged from the American Crayon Company in Ohio, and a network of salvaged ceiling timbers provided the backdrop for the owners' vision of timeless interiors with contemporary art accents.



Builder Karl Hansen worked with project manager Danny St. Andrie to build this residence, equipped with an outdoor dining area. A Janus et Cie table pairs with upholstered chairs from Patio 1, while teak benches from Westminster Teak in Live Oak, Florida, supply additional seating. The copper lantern is from Janet Wiebe Antiques.



A selection of rugs cemented the home's color scheme. In the family room, for instance, a soft blue-and-beige Tabriz rug sets off the neutral-tone sofa as well as the wood-framed chair sporting a bold indigo-and-white pattern. "When you enter the house you see right through to the family room, so it needed a 'wow' factor like that chair," Eilers says. Similarly, the neutral tones of the dining room's Oushak rug drove the choice of pale linen on the chairs, while a whisper of blue on the draperies made of Kerry Joyce fabric ties back to the hues originally established in the kitchen.

Also in the dining room, a delicate crystal chandelier suspended from the custom plaster groin-vault ceiling is one of several light fixtures employed as a statement piece. A more masculine French wood-carved version

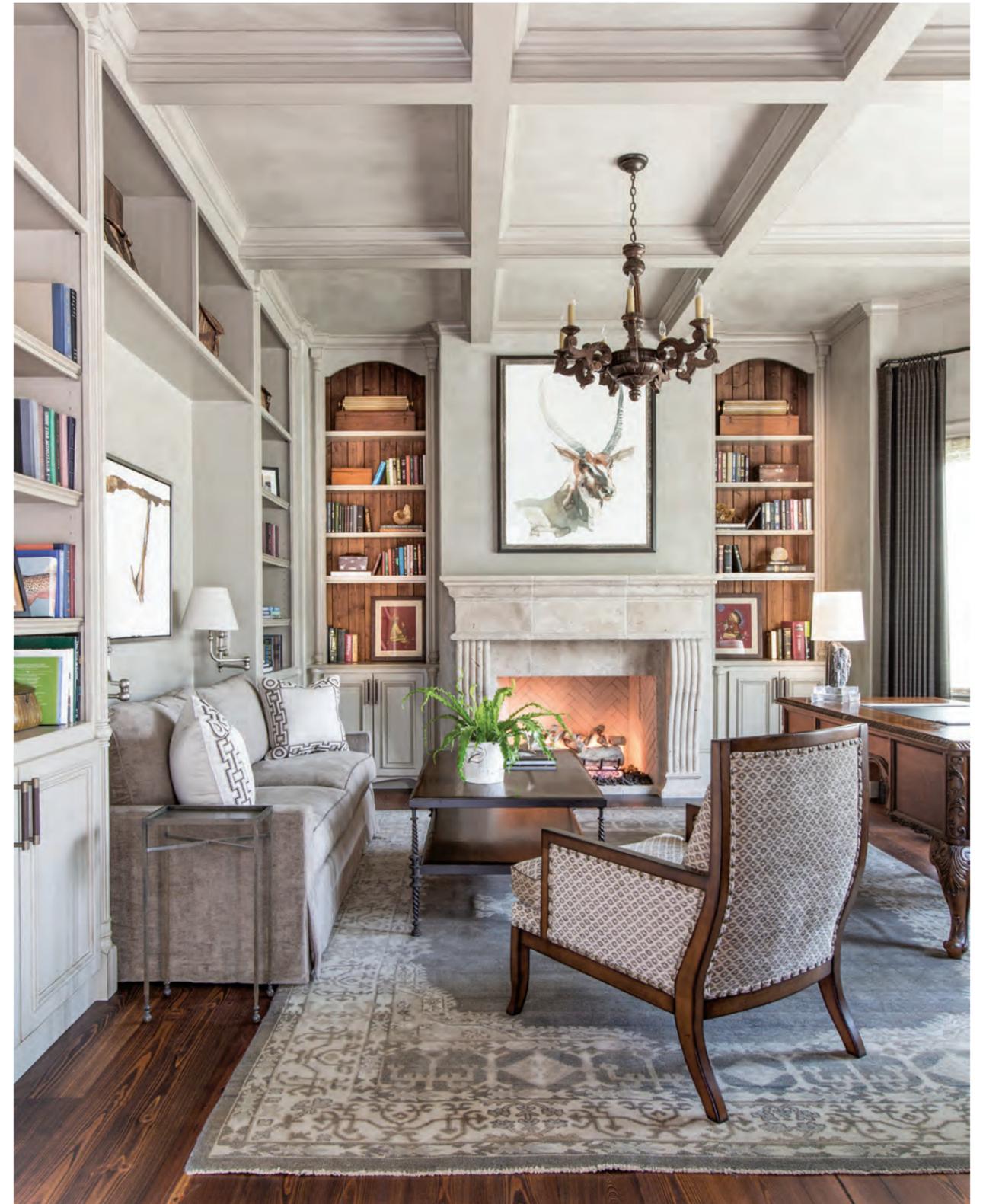
hangs from the study's coffered ceiling, and in the stairway a trio of suspended iron-and-glass lanterns complements the geometry of the iron-and-wood switchback staircase. "The goal was to have a cohesive mix of antique and contemporary lighting," Eilers says.

In a final flourish, Eilers seamlessly related the interiors to the outdoor living spaces. In lieu of a matchy-matchy approach, she mixed cast-aluminum sofas with a zinc-and-teak coffee table in the covered outdoor living area and blended slipcovered chairs and teak benches in the space's dining area. "It's easy to one-stop shop for outdoor furnishings," she says, "but a collected look creates a connection from inside to outside and ties everything together." ■

The covered outdoor patio is a four-seasons gathering spot. Croquet aluminum chairs and a sofa, all from Summer Classics in Pelham, Alabama, flank an antique coffee table from the homeowners' collection. Splish Splash Pools designed and installed the swimming pool, visible in the background.

Below, left: An antique walnut commode from Giana Allen Design in Atlanta occupies a vestibule in the master bedroom. The trumeau mirror is from Maison Pernoud; the Jan Showers Collection Venetian Series lamp is from David Sutherland.

Below, right: An antique trestle table from Janet Wiebe Antiques and a Noir Swedish bench accommodate games and craft projects in the bunkbed room. The homeowners purchased the chairs from Meredith O'Donnell Fine Furniture. Material by Jim Thompson Fabrics from Culp Associates conceals the beds beyond.



The study features custom plaster walls and cabinet finishes by Segreto Finishes. Beneath an antique chandelier from Brown sit a Paul Ferrante coffee table from George Cameron Nash, a Theodore Alexander armchair from Bunch & Shoemaker and an A. Rudin sofa wearing Kerry Joyce fabric also from George Cameron Nash.

The master bedroom's custom plaster walls by Segreto Finishes highlight an Alfonso Marina bed wearing Pindler fabric on the headboard; bedding is Leontine Linens. Another Jan Showers Venetian Series glass lamp tops a Bernhardt chest. The iron side table is by Noir, the rug is from Stark, and the draperies feature Clarence House fabric from Culp Associates.



Below, left: The master bathroom tub enjoys natural light through the window, which wears a Hartmann & Forbes grass-weave shade from Culp Associates. A garden stool from Mecox serves as a table, while the sconces are from Joyce Horn Antiques. Custom plaster is by Segreto Finishes, and the honed white Venatino marble floors are from Walker Zanger.

Below, right: A pair of A. Rudin swivel lounge chairs from EC Dicken clad in Zoffany fabric flank a walnut table by Giana Allen Design. The tufted round ottoman fabricated by Lozano Upholstery also wears Zoffany; the Formations bench underneath the window is dressed in Pindler fabric. The French chandelier is from Joyce Horn Antiques.

