

DH Home

INSIDE: 150 Must-Haves for Spring

DALLAS/FORT WORTH'S HOME AND GARDEN MAGAZINE

DESIGN SECRETS

WHAT'S HOT
FOR 2014:
DALLAS' BEST
DESIGNERS
SHARE ALL

Do the hustle!
Shop far-out
finds on page 52

WWW.DHGMAGAZINE.COM



MARCH/APRIL 2014 \$5.99

DIET WARS:
WHAT'S THE BEST TAKE-
HOME DIET FOR YOU?



Southern Comfort

**SHELBY AND RICH FLATEN'S UNIVERSITY PARK HOUSE
IS JUST THE RIGHT MIX OF CLASSIC AND MODERN.**

text by LAURA KOSTELNY photography by STEPHEN KARLISCH styled by BILLY WILNER flowers by HAILE WOSSEN

Cynthia Collins says that it was important to choose the right piece for above the mantel in the den because it's visible from the entry. The piece is by Stephen Pentak. Cynthia and the homeowners worked together to provide plenty of seating for the family of five. The French coffee table is from Blue Print. The antique beams on the ceiling are from Pennsylvania.







Shelby Flaten says the kitchen is a pretty popular gathering space. "Our kitchen has a fireplace, and it adds so much ambience," she says. The bricks are antique, the tile is from Ann Sacks, and the cabinets are custom. The design team also added an old-school column cornice. "It's a very English detail," Cynthia Collins says. With all the texture on the walls and floors, the cream paint on the walls feels good.

right: Flaten with two of her three kids and doggy Berkeley.



P **PEOPLE OFTEN REFER TO THEIR DESIGNERS** as "lifesavers." But Shelby Flaten considers her friend and interior designer Cynthia Collins of Collins Interiors all that and more. "Anything she tells me, I 100-percent trust," she says. "She's been good for my marriage. There's no controversy when it comes to making decisions. My husband, Rich, and I trust her so much."

The Flatens began working with Cynthia almost 16 years ago when Shelby sought her counsel on their previous home on Bryn Mawr. But Shelby stresses that the relationship is much more than merely professional. "She's a great friend, first and foremost. Our children have grown up together," she says.

When the Flatens decided to move a few years ago, they were delighted to find that a house Cynthia had worked on with Caroline Eastman, architect David Stocker, and contractor Manning & Snelling was on the market. The couple jumped at the chance to buy the house, which had been built in 2004. The home's design team took much of its inspiration from the houses of the

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 103



WE LOVE THE MIX IN THIS HOUSE. IT'S JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF PROPER AND CASUAL. WE COULD PUT ON AN EVENING GOWN AND CURL UP ON THE SOFA.

*"Cynthia Collins
has been great
for my marriage.
There's no
controversy. We
just trust her so
much."*

—SHELBY FLATEN



this page: (clockwise from top) Designer Cynthia Collins chose a piece by Jeanne Jackson for above the custom mantel in the formal living room. "She's an artist that we've been working with forever. She does abstract landscapes," Cynthia says. Jeanne's work is available at BluePrint. The antique sideboard originally belonged to Rich Flaten's great-grandmother. The artwork hanging above is by Austin-based artist Eliza Thomas. She combines handmade silks with lighting and writing, and Cynthia framed it in Lucite to contrast the wood of the sideboard. The dining room table and chairs were also Rich's great-grandmother's. The aragonte bowl is from BluePrint, and the lighting is by Visual Comfort.

opposite page: Cynthia says that the goal for the breakfast nook was to be super kid friendly and fun. "The dining room is so formal, and this room plays off of that nicely," she says. The room is oval, and Cynthia needed to take advantage of all the available space. She opted for a Parsons table and the iconic Tulip chair. "I liked that it's actually old—Saarinen—even though it looks very modern," she says. She found the Weir rug in New York, and the light fixture is Circa Lighting.







» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 99

1930s. "We had a gable done out of stone—it's low. A lot of the homes from the 1930s have a combination of stone and brick that's painted," Cynthia says. So they followed suit and painted it. Additional elements such as the roof, which is crafted from antique clay tiles, an antique door from Paris, and an arched entrance leading to the door make the house feel very much like something of a different era. The scale is also measured. "It's a large house, but it doesn't have the feel of a new, large house," Cynthia explains.

The Golden Age surprises continue on the interior. The designers selected wood floors that were originally in a Mississippi plantation. "The width is kind of unusual," Cynthia says. "They're about 12 inches wide." The brick in the kitchen, mudroom, and screened-in porch is antique. Old wooden beams that adorn the ceilings in several of the rooms were found in Pennsylvania.

When it came to creating the detailed ceiling in the entry, the designers collaborated with a local craftsman to create a pattern. "We needed a detail to make the entry special. The profile needed to be tiny—the ceiling is low. But it makes that entry. It signals to people that they've entered a very special place," Cynthia says.

Shelby and Rich Flaten had visited the very special place many times when it belonged to the original owners. Shelby, who hails from Mississippi, says the house reminded her so much of the

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 105

this page: Designers Cynthia Collins and Caroline Eastman collaborated with a craftsman to create the patterns for the ornate ceiling and the handrail in the entry. "Even if something is subtle, it will stand out," Cynthia says. "This house is about being comfortable and beautiful at the same time." The Louis Philippe French commode is the perfect place for accessories like the selenite lamp and Liz Legg bowl from Blue Print. **opposite page:** Cynthia found the 1950s lacquered console with blue-jeweled handles in Paris. The homeowners had the English chairs in their previous home, and Cynthia recovered them in a "happy" color.





this page: (top) The Flaten girls kick back in style. The bedding is by Jonathan Adler. (bottom) The master bathroom was originally wallpapered, but the homeowner wanted to showcase her art so they painted the walls. Natural light streams through the eaves. Flooring is by Ann Sacks and the cabinets are reproductions of antique French commodes. The cowhide and the piece by Eliza Thomas hanging above the tub are from Blue Print. **opposite page:** The master bedroom is a serene retreat complete with antique beams and a fireplace. The custom headboard is from Collins Interiors, the sheets are by Leontine, and the coverlet is Matouk. The chair is covered in fabric by Kravet and the painting is by Brenda Bogart.



“It all just feels like an old Southern home, but it has all the amenities of a new house.”

—SHELBY FLATEN

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 103

South. “The five fireplaces, the wide-plank floors, the intricate ceiling—it all just feels like an old Southern home,” she says. “But it has all the amenities of a new house. When it went on the market, Rich and I knew this house had all the things we wanted.”

Once the family of five moved in, Shelby called on Cynthia to again work her magic. “Her style is unbelievable. She has such a great eye,” Shelby says. “I like fun and edgy and fresh mixed with classic and timeless. And she can do all that.”

Cynthia got to work reupholstering pieces that came from the Bryn Mawr house and adding new and unexpected elements to mix with Shelby’s collection of antiques. “Shelby was totally game for it. She has some beautiful antiques and they play out nicely with some of the more modern pieces. The art in the house is very contemporary, and it plays nicely with a French chest and the sideboard and dining-room table that were her husband’s great grandmother’s,” Cynthia says.

The art collection brings Shelby much joy. “The art is fun and abstract. I get everything from Cynthia through her store, Blue Print,” Shelby says. “There’s nothing in my house that she hasn’t put her stamp on. She can place things, and they are perfect.”

The house—and everything in it—has proven to be the right fit for the Flaten family. They love to entertain, and Shelby says the flow of the house is ideal for hosting dinner parties for two or three couples. “Rich loves red wine. I’ll cook a great Southern meal—my husband loves cheese grits—with good meat. We put it on the buffet, and we all fill our plates,” she says. “I love intimate dinners. It’s a treat to have people over in Dallas. There are so many great restaurants, but sometimes it’s more personal and intimate to have people over.”

So is this the forever house? Shelby laughs. “My husband is in commercial real estate, so stuff is always for sale in his mind. But we lived in our last house for 13 years, and I love the idea of our grandchildren growing up here one day.”

One thing is for sure: If they move, the Flatens will be giving Cynthia Collins a call. “I know this: If I move, Cynthia will be doing my house,” Shelby says. “As long as she’s living, Cynthia will be doing my houses.” ■