



Interior Design: Courtney Giles, Courtney Giles Interiors



Start with the Art

Wielding color and pattern, a designer updates this classic Atlanta residence for a vibrant, art-loving family.

WRITTEN BY CLAIRE RUHLIN | PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMILY FOLLOWILL
STYLING BY ALEXANDRA MORRIS



Hand-painted Zuber wallpaper makes a statement in the dining room, enhanced by millwork in Benjamin Moore's Stratton Blue. Both the tufted banquette fabricated by Corn Upholstery Co. and the cane-back Milling Road dining chairs by Baker are entertaining-ready.

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esigning a home with a friend is bound to be a deeply personal experience. But for Emily West—owner and director of Anne Irwin Fine Art, one of Atlanta's most respected art galleries—teaming up with designer

Courtney Giles on her family's new home was even more than that: It was a full-circle moment.

The two women first met nearly 20 years ago when the designer was sourcing artwork from the gallery where Emily worked at the time. "We soon became good friends," recounts Emily, who immediately admired Giles' eye for interiors. "I told her, 'Whenever I buy my big-girl house, I'm going to have you design it, and it's going to be amazing.'"

Years later, Emily and her husband, Alex West—founder and CEO of ArtCloud—followed through on that promise, enlisting Giles not once, but twice. The first occasion was for a midcentury-leaning residence the designer appointed accordingly with modern furnishings. But as their family grew, the Wests began to look for a more spacious abode that would allow their two young daughters room to grow.

They found a classic Buckhead estate that, although beautiful, was a departure from the modernity the couple was accustomed to. "I asked Courtney to come look at it with us," Emily recalls. "I knew it had really good bones; it just needed a bit of a revival."

Despite the contrasting disciplines of the two dwellings, Giles' expertise translated seamlessly. "It was clear we would need new furniture to fit the style of this home," Emily says. "But it was exciting to work with Courtney to figure out how we could insert our personalities and have our funkiness interspersed with the more traditional aspects of the architecture."

To capture the West's youthful spirits while counterbalancing their home's classical envelope, Giles embraced texture, pattern and color with enthusiasm. "Given our shared history, I already understood their preferences," the designer explains. "Emily and Alex are not neutral people; I always knew they were going to be more colorful than the average client."

Considering the couple's art-centric lives, the true anchors of the design were always destined to be their artworks. The West's meaningful

collection influenced the lively attitude of each room. In almost every case, Emily and Giles began with a specific art piece and its preferred location, *then* they'd decide the color of the side chair, pillows and objets to coordinate.

"It made the design process really fun," Emily shares. "Because I own a gallery, I notice many people coming in for art last, but I liked the idea of approaching the artwork first, before the fabrics." In the living room, for example, Giles pulled a pop of cobalt for the sofa pillows directly from the Kathleen Jones painting hanging above them. In the same space, an iconic nail polish drip painting by Scott Ingram serves as a focal point while tying in the vibrant reds and blues of the original scenic wallpaper in the neighboring dining room.

Blue-green hues lifted from this hand-painted panorama directly inspired the palette of these two formal spaces as well as the foyer. The designer then dialed up the picturesque mural's slight touches of periwinkle and red—repeating the former on the cane dining chair seats, the latter on the bespoke banquette and buffet lamps' shades. "These jewel tones kept coming up in our design conversations," Emily recalls. "So it was great to see them come to life."

The ripple of colors from room to room also reinforced traffic flow for entertaining. "We wanted these formal spaces to be versatile enough to accommodate how much Emily and Alex like to host," notes the designer, whose clients frequently throw everything from spirited happy hours to big formal dinners. "We greet people with champagne at the front door; we love having guests gather and mingle in our foyer," Emily reveals of the home's central hall.

"The Wests are cheerful, fun, happy people," Giles concludes. "They didn't necessarily want their house to look like everyone else's, so they were willing to take a few risks—which paid off because it's so uniquely them." Emily is equally as delighted that her and Alex's unconventional tastes were embraced. "What's amazing is that Courtney knew our personalities well enough to make suggestions that we almost always agreed with. I wanted everything to be colorful, lively and bright," adds the homeowner, using descriptors that could just as easily apply to the works hanging in her gallery. There is a common saying used to sum up this concept: Life imitates art.

Or, perhaps in this case: Art imitates life. ■



Mr. and Mrs. Howard for Sherrill Furniture swivel chairs mingle with a Lee Industries sofa in the family room, where Century Furniture's Lauren cocktail table rests atop Stark's Refraction carpet. Artworks by Sally King Benedict and Jennifer Cawley add interest.



Above: An antique armchair from Le Chateau—updated in Fabricut’s West Loop linen—contrasts with walls painted Farrow and Ball’s Dix Blue in the living room. Jennifer Daily artwork presides over the Bunny Williams Home Jian console.

Opposite: Mounted above a Hickory Chair sofa upholstered in Jane Churchill’s Loudon textile, a Kathleen Jones artwork inspired the splashes of cobalt seen in pillows of Schumacher’s Palermo mohair velvet. A Villa & House Jacques coffee table from JDouglas completes the scene.





Above: A vintage fan chair from Circa Who and a Visual Comfort & Co. floor lamp from Acquisitions—renewed with an Edgar-Reeves Lighting lampshade—establish a cozy corner in the primary bedroom. Jiha Moon artworks pop against a Barclay Butera Living in Style wallcovering by Kravet.

Opposite: Sharing the same space, Thibaut's Brentwood settee dons Kravet velvet. Rattan side tables and wicker brackets by Amanda Lindroth offer organic texture. Peter Dunham Textiles' Starburst linen graces the throw pillow.



Left: Bedecked in House of Harris' Baxter wallpaper from Travis and Company, one daughter's bedroom is a study in fun femininity. Currey & Company's Showy Owl table lamp sits atop a Worlds Away chest from JDouglas.

Opposite: A Serena & Lily canopy bed is framed by custom panels—crafted by Barter & Galambos—using a Nile & York textile from Jerry Pair. Pierre Frey's Panthere de Somalie cotton covers the bolster pillow and bench.

