



2021  
NEXT LEGENDS

## Welcome to the MODERN SOUTH

Thoughtful, visionary, and wildly innovative: from Austin to Atlanta, Nashville to Charlotte, a look at the insatiably cool design playground that is the South today. Up first: **SIX DECORATING STARS** at the top of their games, each offering a novel take on a classic Southern tradition. Chintz? Fancy curtains? Bring them on.

*PLUS: What's with Virginia? How the Commonwealth became a laboratory for American design*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Michel Smith Boyd • Caroline Gidiere •  
Heather Chadduck Hillegas • Barrie Benson • Matthew Carter • Jason Arnold

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN DEVRIES; STYLING BY RACHAEL BURROW; PORTRAITS BY (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) CHRISTOPHER JAMAR PAYNE; MARIAH OLDACRE; DAVID HILLEGAS; LYDIA BITTNER-BAIRD; BRIE WILLIAMS; ZEKE RUELAS.

# MICHEL SMITH BOYD

NO ONE IS MORE EXCITED about tomorrow's decorating landscape than Atlanta designer and Bravo star Michel Smith Boyd. "Clients are hungry for more indulgent interiors and more willing to take risks," says the Louisiana native, whose product designs reflect the same imaginative ethos, from Nepalese woven rugs in tailored menswear motifs like pin-stripes to his graphic Bespoke Rugs collection. "Everything must evolve or run the risk of being left behind, design included," says Boyd. "I want to see history mixed into more contemporary layers of Southern design, thereby creating exciting new narratives."



## SHAPING A VISION

The four megastars with Southern roots lighting Boyd's path



**PAUL WILLIAMS**  
The pioneering Black architect, from a Memphis family, "designed for Eva Gabor, Cary Grant, and Lucille Ball."

**CECIL HAYES**  
"The first designer of color to appear in *Architectural Digest* and among the first with a furniture collection."

**ROBERT BROWN**  
"[The Atlanta designer's] rooms and aesthetic always feel decisive and masculine but with a light hand."

**SUZANNE KASLER**  
"Her work is the epitome of Southern charm and lays the groundwork for others to follow."



ILLUSTRATIONS: MITCHELL CORNIN; BLIND: PAUL WILLIAMS; THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES/CECIL HAYES; RHEINSTEIN: ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN DE VRIES; TRIM: BAMBOO FABRIC; AND ASHOK FABRIC; LAUREYAN; GLENN

This luxurious **Tuxedo daybed** "merges my contemporary sensibilities and romantic Southern ideals perfectly."



## SOUTHERN REVIVAL

### The Cocktail Terrace

"No one throws a soiree quite like a Southerner. We've mastered the art of entertaining, indoors and out."

- 1. Halle hanging lantern, \$1,285; circalighting.com.
- 2. Qeeboo Modern planter, \$269; 1stdibs.com.
- 3. Check fabric, to the trade; kirkbydesign.com.
- 4. Baldwin Swivel lounge chair, \$4,663; palecek.com.
- 5. Dorsey console, \$4,600; madegoods.com.
- 6. Amalfi Deep Tuxedo sofa, \$8,895; janusetcie.com. For additional items shown in the illustration, see *The Sourcebook* (pg. 94).

"One of my minimalist faves. The architecture this **layered console** provides from repetition and scaling makes it worth its concrete weight."

## SOUTHERN REVIVAL

### The Gracious Garden Folly

"To me, a folly is like a piece of art, intended for secret gardens or as a cool shelter at the end of a lap pool. It's a place to gather at sunset."

"Our **bamboo fabric** is a spin on a ticking stripe, perfect for a lampshade."



- 1. Pagoda lantern, from \$3,250; jamb.co.uk.
- 2. Ashok fabric, \$205 per yard; pennymorrison.com.
- 3. Empire ottoman, from \$1,475; bunnywilliams.com.
- 4. The Linen Collection lamp, to the trade; royhamiltonstudio.com.
- 5. Little Bamboo fabric, to the trade; heatherchadducktextiles.com.
- 6. Essential Gimp trim, to the trade; janetyonaty.com.
- 7. Montgomery rectangular tray, \$895; ralphlauren.com. For additional items shown in the illustration, see *The Sourcebook* (pg. 94).



# HEATHER CHADDUCK HILLEGAS



RICHLY LAYERED interiors that look effortlessly collected are especially hard to achieve, says Birmingham-based designer Heather Chaddock Hillegas. She knows the delicate balance well, as her own history is steeped in this brand of dynamic traditionalism. Growing up in a 190-year-old Virginia home that bore heavy influences of Colonial Williamsburg, her true north became visionaries like Nancy Lancaster, who "brought an English sensibility and a love of pattern that made everything pretty." Today, the former magazine editor studies botanical specimens for her hand-printed fabric line with the same fervor she brings to historic renovations. "It's a challenge to reinvent old houses for modern living, but it excites me."



## BY THE BOOKS

From Hillegas's library: road maps for exceptionally warm, welcoming style by four Southern design luminaries

- 1. **At Home**, Suzanne Rheinstein (Rizzoli, 2010). "A great red-brick Georgian with fancy curtains and painted floors in the Blue Ridge Mountains consumes 43 pages of this book. Every detail inspires me." Plus: 2. **Amelia Handegan: Rooms**, Amelia Handegan (Rizzoli, 2016).
- 3. **One Man's Folly**, Julia Reed (Rizzoli, 2014).
- 4. **Coming Home**, Historical Concepts (Rizzoli, 2012).





## CAROLINE GIDIERE

PROFESSIONAL DECORATORS were not a thing growing up in Florence, Alabama,” says Caroline Gidiere. “My mom hung her own wallpaper, drove to stores in bigger cities to find the best fabrics, and knew a fireman who did upholstery in his spare time.” It didn’t occur to the now Birmingham-based designer that this industrious good taste could be woven into a career—until Gidiere, too, began spending her off hours (from her former law career) similarly and looking to the confident lessons of Charlotte Moss, Betsy Brown, and Miles Redd (“he made Southern design cool”). With a recent launch of a rug line based on tile designs from Bunny Mellon’s Oak Spring Farm, one can’t help but think Gidiere is doing the same.



“This **Robert Kime** print is just the right pitch, the perfect shade of blue, and holds everything in balance.”

Modern disruptors: “**Leopard and check sofa pillows** break up all the butterfly pattern.”

### SOUTHERN REVIVAL

## The Slipcovered Sunroom

“Gathered slipcovers, rattan, and drapery with tiebacks are all nods to deep, Southern tradition, but the pattern à la française adds a touch more sophistication and formality.”

1. **Pierre Silk Gimp trim**, to the trade; fschumacher.com.
2. **Chou fabric**, \$192 per yard; robertkime.com.
3. **Bali Cotton Fan Edge trim**, to the trade; samuelandsons.com.
4. **Classic garden stool**, \$149; ballarddesigns.com.
5. **Maison Baguès Gilded Bronze coffee table**, similar styles available; 1stdibs.com.
6. **Leopardo fabric**, to the trade; scalandre.com.
7. **Otani fabric**, \$318 per yard; robertkime.com.
8. **Francois Silk Brush fringe**, to the trade; fschumacher.com. For additional items shown in the illustration, see *The Sourcebook* (pg. 94).

## ART OF THE DROP-IN



“Southern culture is all about ‘company coming.’ How will we access the patio? Is the ottoman flat enough for a tray of crackers? Will the fabrics survive a cocktail party?”

—CAROLINE GIDIERE



“I love a little Champagne coupe—so much chicer than a flute! I’m crazy for these by Richard Brendon.”  
**Small fluted coupe glass**, \$144; richardbrendon.com.

### GIDIERE’S HOUSE COCKTAIL: THE FRENCH 75

“This is a hit, even for those who aren’t fans of gin. It’s easy enough to pass on trays, but you can also just put the gin mixture in a pitcher on the bar beside the uncorked Champagne and ice. People can easily help themselves.”

#### INGREDIENTS

1 cup Lemon Simple Syrup  
12 oz. Hendricks gin  
1 cup fresh lemon juice  
Crushed ice  
1 bottle good-quality Champagne  
Lemon rind curls

#### Lemon Simple Syrup:

Juice of 2 lemons  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup water

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Mix together first 3 ingredients in a large pitcher. Fill coupes with crushed ice. Add enough gin mixture to cover ice, and top with Champagne. Garnish with lemon rind curls.

**Make simple syrup:** Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer, and cook until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat, and cool; strain.

ILLUSTRATION, MITA CORSINI BLAND; TRIM AND FABRICS, BRIAN WOODCOCK; COCKTAIL, IAN PALMER



Painter **Jackie Gendel’s** mural design is “inspired by Pompeian frescos, Egyptian tombs, and the artistry of Jean Cocteau.”

### SOUTHERN REVIVAL

## Scenic Dining Room Murals

“We are seeing a refresh in panoramic wallpapers. It’s a traditional concept, but today, contemporary artists are translating their work into a repeat that becomes part of the fabric of a room.”

1. **Aventine fabric**, to the trade; dedar.com.
2. **Bondi fabric**, to the trade; malabarfabrics.com.
3. **Aurelia Crete border**, to the trade; samuelandsons.com.
4. **Barovier and Toso Vintage Murano mirror**, \$1,950; michelcontessa.com.
5. **Angelo Lelli Three-Arm chandelier**, auction estimate \$15,000–\$25,000; modernauctions.com.
6. **Robert Crowder Silk Moire wallpaper**, to the trade; harbinglerla.com.
7. **Peg Norriss The Golden Age wallcovering**, to the trade; fschumacher.com.
8. **Coalport Antique fruit cooler**, \$1,950; incollect.com.
9. **Double Cord piping**, to the trade; houles.com.
10. **Ombra fabric**, to the trade; rubelli.com.
11. **Barrie Benson Castellow dining chair**, \$1,600; highlandhouse.com.
12. **Faux Porphyry pedestal**, \$8,500; geraldbland.com.
13. **Vincent de Cotiis DC1630 dining table**, price upon request; carpentersworkshopgallery.com.
14. **Colibri fabric**, to the trade; zimmer-rohde.com.
15. **Vintage Opaline lamps**, \$4,537 for a pair; 1stdibs.com.
16. **Rain paint**, \$74 per gallon; sherwin-williams.com.
17. **Paolo Buffa Vintage Mahogany sideboard**, \$35,000; incollect.com.
18. **Barberini fabric**, to the trade; fortunyc.com.



“I love the juxtaposition of the traditional table with this **Calder-esque chandelier**. It feels almost like a floating mobile.”

## BARRIE BENSON

REACHING DOWN into the sublime, saturated depths of color is a skill that edges into alchemy for Charlotte, North Carolina, designer Barrie Benson. In her hands, yellow feels more familiar as citron and tonal pairings spark fireworks. Dimensional surprises, it seems, are foundational for the designer, who, in addition to her furniture line with Highland House and hardware with Addison Weeks, is developing a third artist collaboration for wallcoverings with Schumacher. “Working with artists brings me such joy and will be a focus for years to come,” says Benson. Being home during COVID-19 was a reminder, she says, of the importance of surrounding ourselves with good art. “It inspired me to continue growing my collection.”



## MUSEUM QUALITY

Benson’s go-to galleries for everything from Southern crafts to exceptional architecture

1. “**Bechtler Museum of Modern Art** in Charlotte is small and personal, which I love.”
2. “Houston’s **Menil Collection** is one of my favorite museums in the South. I am always struck by architect Renzo Piano’s restraint.”
3. “**Mint Museum** represents who Charlotte is as a city: current, global, with important regional arts and crafts.”

## Fancy, Billowing Curtains

“Big tasseled draperies can feel as hip and modern as anything else: well trimmed but not fussy, a central pair hanging straight while others are gracefully tied back.”



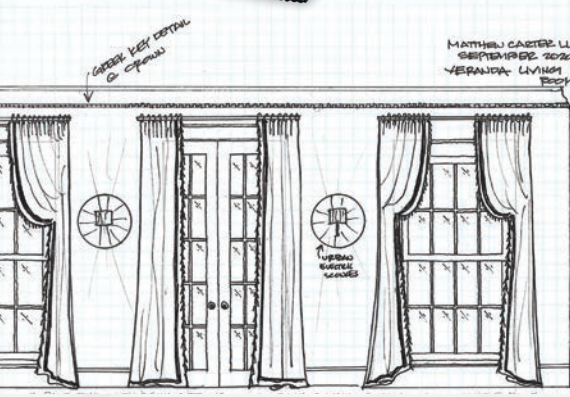
“This chalky white pendant is a classic shape but still feels modern. The kiss of death in a traditional room is when everything is traditional.”



“This subtle **strié** fabric is two-thirds linen, one-third silk, taking the fanciness down a notch. Shiny silk curtains aren't my thing.”



1. **James pendant**, to the trade; stephanantonson.com. 2. **Strié fabric**, \$180 per yard; georgespencer.com. 3. **Espadrille 1-inch striped border**, to the trade; samuelandsons.com. 4. **TF1046 trim**, to the trade; Passementerie Inc., 718-392-0100. 5. **Ming Dynasty-style 1920s Lacquered drum stool**, \$2,850; 1stdibs.com. 6. **Chinoiserie chair**, \$7,500; lizobrien.com. 7. **Red Turban** by Lincoln Seligman, \$23,000; geraldblandinc.com. 8. **Blenko Royal Leerdam Baluster Form hurricane shades**, similar styles available; 1stdibs.com. For additional items shown in the illustration, see *The Sourcebook* (pg. 94).



ILLUSTRATION, MITA CORSINI BLAND; CURTAINS SKETCH, MATTHEW CARTER; FABRIC, BORDER, AND TRIM, BRIAN WOODCOCK.



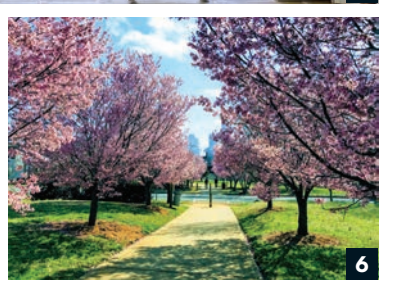
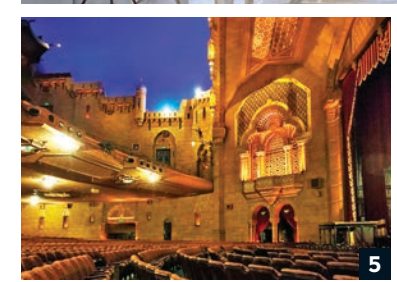
## MATTHEW CARTER

AT ITS BEST, SOUTHERN design is unpretentious and welcoming. It feels personal and real,” says Matthew Carter, whose traditional yet decidedly current interiors stretch far outside the gracious horse farms that surround his Lexington, Kentucky, epicenter. Beneath the abiding polish of his work—in antiques that span centuries and styles, rich upholstery, and immaculate trims—is a warmth that’s instinctual, but that he credits in part to a moment early in his career. “I’ll never forget the first time I visited [the businesswoman] Josephine Abercrombie at her farm, Pin Oak Stud. She was one of my first clients. That house, and the idea of a country house, inspired me architecturally and decoratively. I loved that someone could live so well but appear so beautifully casual at the same time.”



### SILVER RUSH

Southerners are famously house and garden proud, says Carter, “taking particular care with details from hand-clipped boxwoods to beautifully polished silver.” On his favorites list: handmade julep cups and beakers by **Lexington Silver**, known for crafting in the style of Asa Blanchard, a master silversmith in the late 18th century. *Asa Blanchard barrel beakers*, \$119 each; lexingtonsilver.com.



## POWER OF PLACE

Six memorable scenes of the South bookmarked by our Next Legend designers (Instagram scrolling not required)

- 1 “Lexington’s horse farms bring a beautiful cast of characters,” says Carter. “Rolling hills, green pastures, and dry-laid stone walls have all influenced my work immeasurably.”
- 2 “The George Wythe House in Colonial Williamsburg, which I visited frequently as a child, is the inspiration for my own home,” says Gidiere.
- 3 “Vacations to the Greenbrier in West Virginia painted my memories in vivid color, pattern, and scale,” notes Hillegas.
- 4 “A Nashville home by Bobby McAlpine published right when I moved to Tennessee,” recalls Arnold. “It wasn’t necessarily ‘Southern’ in style, and I realized there was more to Southern design than what I’d seen.”
- 5 “I feel transported when I visit the Fox Theatre in Atlanta,” says Boyd. “It’s representative of the melting pot that our city is today, a mesh of Islamic and Egyptian influences.”
- 6 “The South’s long growing season is so influential to pattern and murals. I think that’s why we have such strength of color,” says Benson.

→  
"I love the scale and the use of negative space on this chintz," which will go on a pair of skirted chairs.



"This is actually a vinyl leather, and it looks amazing when upholstered! Contrast in a room is important."  
←

SOUTHERN REVIVAL

Ageless, Elegant Chintz

"I am really into chintz these days. I love the crispness of the cotton florals and how they add friction to my designs, which can lean more masculine."

- 1. Pyne Hollyhock fabric, to the trade; fschumacher.com. 2. 1941-01C chair, \$1,959; leeindustries.com. 3. Casbah fabric, to the trade; coraggio.com. 4. New Kid leather, to the trade; josephnoble.com. 5. 1442-01 chair, \$2,178; leeindustries.com. 6. Saarinen dining table, \$5,938; knoll.com. 7. Assemblage Lotic wallcovering, to the trade; hollyhunt.com. 8 and 9. Antique chest and abstract canvas, prices upon request; jasonarnoldinteriors.com. 10. Rosewater armchair, \$4,978; roseuniacke.com. 11. Ray Booth Atlas side table, \$1,560; arteriors.com. 12. Loretto linen, \$96 per yard; calvinfabrics.com. 13. Lauriston chandelier, to the trade; jonathanbrowninginc.com. 14. Theo Club sofa, \$11,055; verellen.biz. 15. Ankara fabric, to the trade; yoma.com. 16. Corinthian column side table, \$990; centuryfurniture.com. 17. Bagha fabric, \$188 per yard; virginiakraft.com. 18. Anney chair tassel, to the trade; samuelandsons.com. 19. Antique Etruscan chair, price upon request; jasonarnoldinteriors.com. 20. Thomas O'Brien Antibes side table, \$1,650; centuryfurniture.com. 21. Blake polished cotton fabric, to the trade; fschumacher.com.

JASON ARNOLD

NEITHER MODERNIST nor traditionalist, but a master at restraint: Nashville designer Jason Arnold defies the tropes of Southern maximalism but embraces much of its DNA. Elements like button tufts, brown furniture, and giltwork are used sparingly, more as artful details than en masse. The independence that defines Arnold's work could well be a metaphor for what ties him to his adopted hometown (he grew up in Mississippi). "Nashville is a forward-thinking city," he says. "There is an open mindedness and diversity here, and that's the way I like to think about design: rooted in the past, collected, but evolved over time. It's important to get out of your comfort zone in design, and the same goes for our views of society."



MOOD BOARD: BRIAN WOODCOCK; CHEEKWOOD BOTANICAL GARDEN: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO; HOTEL EXTERIOR COURTESY OF HOTEL PETER & PAUL; Waverly Mansion: JACKIE BOUGHER.

MAR: EMILY FACCINI; ELLY POSTON: CHRISTINA SANTOS; HUNDLEY HILTON: MELISSA GONZALEZ; FORBES + MASTERS: DAVID HILLEGAS; FORBES + MASTERS: MICHAEL PHILLIP SCOTT.



STRIKING STUDY HALLS

Arnold's formative lessons on the beauty of balance

- 1 "The art exhibits at Cheekwood Gardens in Nashville are stunning, but put against a garden setting outside, they take on a new life." 2 "I am a sucker for a great hotel. New Orleans's Hotel Peter & Paul is pure decadence—but well edited." 3 "Field trips to Waverly Mansion in Mississippi marked the beginning of my understanding of scale in design and how important it is."

The Commonwealth of Chic

Virginia's curious cultivation of creative visionaries and their indelible marks on American design

- 1. After moving from Chesterfield County to Winchester as a teenager, Bill Brockschmidt spent time cataloging antiques at Millwood's Carter Hall mansion, where Rachel "Bunny" Mellon grew up.
- 2. Oak Spring, the estate Mellon shared with her husband, Paul, was equal parts residence and botanical laboratory for the 20th-century garden visionary, whose designs include the original White House Rose Garden.
- 3. Architect Eero Saarinen's graceful, fluid scheme for Dulles International Airport (1958-1962) revolutionized airport design.
- 4. University of Virginia School of Architecture grad Steven Gambrel grew up in Oakton.
- 5. The only known surviving elevation sketch of George Washington's Mount Vernon was executed in his own hand, reportedly created by consulting English pattern books and following neoclassical principles.
- 6. Parish-Hadley alum Thomas Hamel hails from Norfolk.
- 7. The pivotal 1920s restoration of the buildings of Colonial Williamsburg preserved a key portal into American residential design.
- 8. Charlotte Moss grew up in Richmond, where her interests in history and gardening "are rooted in gracious, hospitable, and authentic soil."
- 9. Through his work in restoration and Colonial Revival properties, 20th-century landscape architect Charles Gillette established the regional style known as the Virginia Garden.
- 10. The descendant of two Virginia-born presidents and former dean of UVA School of Architecture, Jaquelin Taylor Robertson was an early conceptualist of New Urbanism, pioneering Battery Park City and Celebration, Florida.

- 11. Architect William Henry Moses Jr.'s pavilion for the 1939 World's Fair won the design award for Virginia; the prize was retracted once it was learned that he was Black. He founded the architecture program at Hampton University, which still thrives today.
- 12. Black modernist Amaza Lee Meredith's concrete-block residence Azurest South in Lynchburg defied all Colonial design tropes. She went on to develop an African American vacation community in Sag Harbor.
- 13. Nancy Lancaster, founder of Colefax and Fowler, was born at Mirador, the 19th-century

Federal-style estate of her grandfather.

14. In Charlottesville, Bunny Williams grew up going to furniture auctions with her mother.

15. Adjacent to his boyhood home in Shadwell, architect Thomas Jefferson tested the orderly principles of Andrea Palladio in his design of Monticello, creating a new template for American architecture. His vision for the buildings of the University of Virginia

influenced campuses around the country.

16. When Hollywood actor and Staunton native William Haines was denied parts because he was gay, he started an interior design business and went on to decorate for Joan Crawford and Ronald and Nancy Reagan at Sunnylands.

17. California designer Ken Fulk grew up admiring Monticello from Harrisonburg. "I thought I should live there."



ON THE RISE

Keep an eye out: Our six design stars weigh in on next-gen powerhouses blazing new paths through the South.



**ELLY POSTON**  
"She learned from greats like Meg Braff and Ashley Whittaker. Look for cheerful patterns, a modern sensibility."  
—Heather Chadduck Hillegas

**HUNDLEY HILTON**  
"These Birmingham ladies are so chic. I love their playful use of color and beautiful eclecticism."  
—Caroline Gidire

**JAMES B. LAUGHLIN**  
"A young, innovative architect whose style is classic and detailed with a freshness I love."  
—Jason Arnold

**FORBES+MASTERS**  
"This Atlanta duo is making a big impact. Their signature whimsy is a new direction for Southern interiors."  
—Michel Smith Boyd