



# *past perfect*

GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURE LENDS SIGNIFICANCE AND A SENSE OF HISTORY TO A BRAND-NEW ESTATE HOME IN GREENWICH, CONNECTICUT.

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When a globetrotting couple from Russia decided to put down roots in Greenwich, Connecticut, they wanted the kind of elegant home that would fit in as beautifully in the suburbs as it would in the English countryside. So, they turned to local architect Douglas VanderHorn to craft an impressive Georgian residence that would transcend its location. “They wanted a gracious estate that would make a more formal statement,” says VanderHorn. “We decided to go with a traditional Georgian style because it’s internationally recognized for its handsome, timeless aesthetic.”

The resulting manse is a study in breathtaking symmetry, with a serious brick façade accented with limestone quoins and chimney caps. And though VanderHorn and his team researched the classic 18<sup>th</sup>-century Georgian estates of master architects for inspiration before starting the project, his own interpretation also manages to embrace fresh, modern style—something he accomplished by simply paring down. “In general,

**ARCHITECTURE** Douglas VanderHorn, Douglas VanderHorn Architects  
**INTERIOR DESIGN** Inson Wood, Inson Dubois Wood LLC  
**HOME BUILDER** Matt Matthews and Whit Matthews, Significant Homes, LLC  
**BEDROOMS 7 | BATHROOMS 10 | SQUARE FEET 13,250**



Early 19<sup>th</sup>-century candelabra sconces flank a tall mirror and an antique French mantel clock above a fireplace in the formal living room. The brass mirror echoes the other brass accents incorporated throughout the home. A Murano glass chandelier in the center reception area is reflected in the mirror.

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you don't want too much of a good thing," he says with a laugh. "A Georgian home in the 1700s would have had a lot more detailing, but we didn't want to overdo it. We didn't want the moments of architectural interest to become visual clutter."

Despite demonstrating restraint, however, VanderHorn's mark is felt throughout the interiors—from the expansive Palladian windows and heavy molding to the intricate plaster cornices and arched openings. All of this set a luxe backdrop when it came time for designer Inson Wood to put the finishing touches on the interiors: a job made infinitely easier by the incredible material palette. Tumbled Botticino marble on the floors in the entry foyer and white statuary marble fabricated by



A large piece of modern art, *Mist* by Oleg Vassiliev, mirrors the view from the windows on the opposite side of the formal living room. Surrounding a pair of brass-and-glass cocktail tables are a tufted sofa and a pair of armchairs, both from George Smith, which create a comfortable and slightly more casual conversation area.



In the entry foyer, architect Douglas VanderHorn painstakingly developed every piece of leaded glass in the door surround to get the curves just right. When paired with the dramatic central staircase, this space creates a grand first impression. *Opposite:* Antique chandeliers illuminate a long hallway distinguished by a series of arched doorways with columns.





Commanding a bold presence in the dining room is a painted natural scene superimposed with the Russian word for house by Erik Bulatov. It strikes a contemporary contrast above an antique wood-and-marble counsel table from Atlantic Gallery. The dining table is from Dessin Fournir.



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Chesney's on the surrounds of each of the seven fireplaces contribute to the old-world feel, while cerused white-oak flooring elsewhere offers a contemporary feel. "Every material has a very interesting texture," Wood says. "There are almost no flat or smooth surfaces. I wanted the pieces I selected to feel the same way, so I tried to cultivate a hand-warped and natural feel."

Even the Venetian plaster used on the walls in the center reception area, for example, has been hand-waxed and formulated with gold dust. "It's a shimmer that you can barely see, but it adds warmth to the white walls," Wood explains. "The effect is fancy and elaborate yet also very subtle." Columns distinguish the reception area from the open dining and living areas on either side. In lieu of walls, a pair of glass screens

A pair of screens from John Boone provides separation between the living and dining rooms without blocking light or disrupting the open floor plan. The painting *Tulip* by Yuri Kuper hangs above the fireplace and is flanked by matching mirrors from Lars Bolander. The drapery fabric is from Christopher Hyland.



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provides a sense of separation without sacrificing the flow of light. “The living, sitting and dining rooms are open in this fantastic space, which lends itself very well to cocktail parties where people are wandering about,” Wood says.

In the dining room, modern artwork and simple Swedish furnishings complement the comfortable, contemporary pieces and neutral palette of the adjacent living area. In the more intimate spaces, colorful antique rugs, ornate French and Russian furnishings, and pieces from the owners’ existing collection are combined seamlessly. “Many times we create these

In the kitchen, brass pendants illuminate the island. The Marlborough-tiled backsplash has hand-painted botanical etchings that complement the Kashmir white granite countertops. The Grand Palais range by La Cornue—purchased at Albano Appliance—is handmade from cast iron, steel, solid brass and porcelain enamel.



An intricate glass chandelier creates an elegant feeling in the breakfast area without interfering with the natural light or the views of the exterior. Ceredo-oak flooring complements the Swedish table and chairs.



The formal elegance of VanderHorn's architectural contributions is felt strongly in the home's rear elevation and highlighted further by landscape architecture by Daniel Sherman. The home's grand 4 acres of land, heated swimming pool and tennis court make it the ideal place for large-scale entertaining and intimate gatherings of friends and family.



In the powder room, a floral tone-on-tone wallcovering from Harlequin's Juniper collection, purchased through Zoffany, establishes a warm palette that complements the cream linen draperies from Curtainworks and the upholstery on a late 18<sup>th</sup>-century Swedish Gustavian sleeping bench from Dawn Hill Antiques.



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historical mansions to be period-perfect," Wood says. "In reality, however, people from those times would have included pieces from a number of countries and eras."

Indeed, in the wife's elegant sitting room, inspired by a 17<sup>th</sup>-century French chateau, gilded moldings and crystal chandeliers are joined by an eclectic Buddha head that rests atop an antique Biedermeier desk. On the other end of the spectrum, too, is the husband's office, where African masks and trophies from his many safaris sit peaceably alongside a handsome desk and a Chippendale cabinet. "It was important that they each have their own space," Wood says. "They both have very good taste. They are an international family that has traveled widely and experienced many different cultures, and that is what is represented in the design of their home." **L**

Wall and ceiling moldings have been painted the same color as the walls to create a quiet sophistication in the master bedroom, which also features one of the home's seven wood-burning fireplaces. The large bay window provides space for a pair of antique chairs and frames picturesque views of the well-manicured grounds. The antique Persian rug is from Lillian August.