



THE ART OF CLASSICAL DETAILS

THEORY, DESIGN, AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

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Foreword by DAVID EASTON



A Greek Revival Country House

HUDSON VALLEY, NEW YORK

G. P. Schafer Architect

GIL SCHAFER'S DESIGN for this 6,000-square-foot new residence, in rural countryside just two hours' north of New York City was developed as a response to the clients' love of Thomas Jefferson's Palladian houses in Virginia. Sited in the middle of a large farm field overlooking the Hudson River Valley and the Catskill Mountains to the West, the house is designed to take advantage of the property's commanding views through broad openings placed along its western façade.

Wanting to ground the design in a regional aesthetic more appropriate to its site, Gil Schafer detailed the house as a hybrid of both Jeffersonian and Greek Revival precedent. The house has a five-part plan with a central block and wings separated by hyphens typical of late 18th- and early 19th-century Virginia houses, but it is detailed with the bold proportions and molding profiles of the Grecian-influenced houses built throughout the Hudson Valley in the 1830s and 1840s. Moldings throughout the interior are based on Greek Revival precedent.

The house's interior, designed in collaboration with New York interior decorator Miles Redd, is anchored at its core by a central entry hall with a sweeping curved stair and a large living room with double fireplaces made from black scagliola. A pine-paneled library and the master suite, featuring his and hers bath and dressing rooms, sit to one side of the central core of the house, and are balanced by an informal wing containing the family room, kitchen, and mudroom on the other side. Two guest suites are located on the house's second floor.

Developed by Warren Byrd of Charlottesville, Virginia, the landscape surrounding the house includes several terraces, hedged gardens, and an elegantly-proportioned swimming pool set between the family room wing of the main house and its carriage house.

A further image from this project can be found on page 33.



MAN-MADE MATERIAL: SCAGLIOLA

Developed as an affordable alternative to marble and other semi-precious stones, scagliola has its origins in antiquity, but it was not until the 18th and 19th centuries that it was employed on a grand scale in columns and fireplaces in some of the most important private homes of the time. Made from pigmented cast plaster, strands of raw silk can be pulled through the plaster mix to resemble veining, before being buffed with oiled felt or beeswax to create a marble-like surface. Architect Gil Schafer often uses this technique in his designs, as shown here by the pair of scagliola fireplaces at each end of the living room.





"The classical language of architecture has endured for thousands of years precisely because it can be reinterpreted and reinvented in every age, but it still retains fundamental principles of proportion and detail within each transformation."

Gil Schafer



