

APRIL 2013

# VERANDA

## MODERN ROMANCE

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**"I HAVE ALWAYS SAID THAT THOMAS JEFFERSON WAS  
AMERICA'S FIRST INTERIOR DESIGNER," NOTES FRANK  
BABB RANDOLPH. THE GENTLEMANLY GEORGETOWN**

decorator spent his boyhood visiting his father's U.S. Senate office in the neoclassical halls of Congress, and has made pilgrimages to Jefferson's Monticello all his life. He says his own designs are informed by six decades of absorbing the architecture of the region.

A true Washingtonian whose father, Jennings Randolph, served 44 years as a member of Congress for the state of West Virginia, Randolph has a roster of power-player clients and designed the vice-presidential residence for Dick and Lynne Cheney. When it came time to rethink his own place, a three-story Georgetown town house—previously occupied by the Kissingers—Randolph, a charm-

ing mix of Cary Grant and decorator Billy Baldwin, looked to the diaries, drawings, and lifestyle of his hero, "Mr. Jefferson." He also enlisted the assistance of architect Christian Zapatka, another passionate Jeffersonian and Georgetown local.

It's not surprising that the two used Monticello's Palladian approach to solve some of the house's design challenges. Built in 1959—a time, says Zapatka, "when there was a real fervor for Federal architecture in Georgetown"—the structure had 13-foot ceilings and lots of bright windows, but "anemic trim. It lacked gravitas." The solution was to borrow some of Monticello's detailing,



"I grew up with gracious entertaining," says Randolph, whose drawing room is designed for gatherings. Louis XV chairs, Marston Luce Antiques. Console and sconces, Niermann Weeks.

OPPOSITE: Club chair fabric, Elizabeth Benefield. Rug, Stephanie Odegard Collection. Art, Elizabeth Dax. OPENING PAGES

LEFT: Town house facade in Duron whitewash. OPENING PAGES

RIGHT: Chair, Tone on Tone Antiques. Walls in Elephant's Breath by Farrow & Ball.







A pair of 1790s Zuber screens introduces an Old World landscape into the drawing room. Custom sofa in DeLany & Long canvas. Cashmere-and-wool throw, Nantucket Looms. Caryatid console, John Rosselli Antiques.



“I WANT SERENITY, QUIETUDE,” SAYS  
RANDOLPH, “AND I WANT YOUR EYE  
TO GO TO THOSE BIG WINDOWS.”

