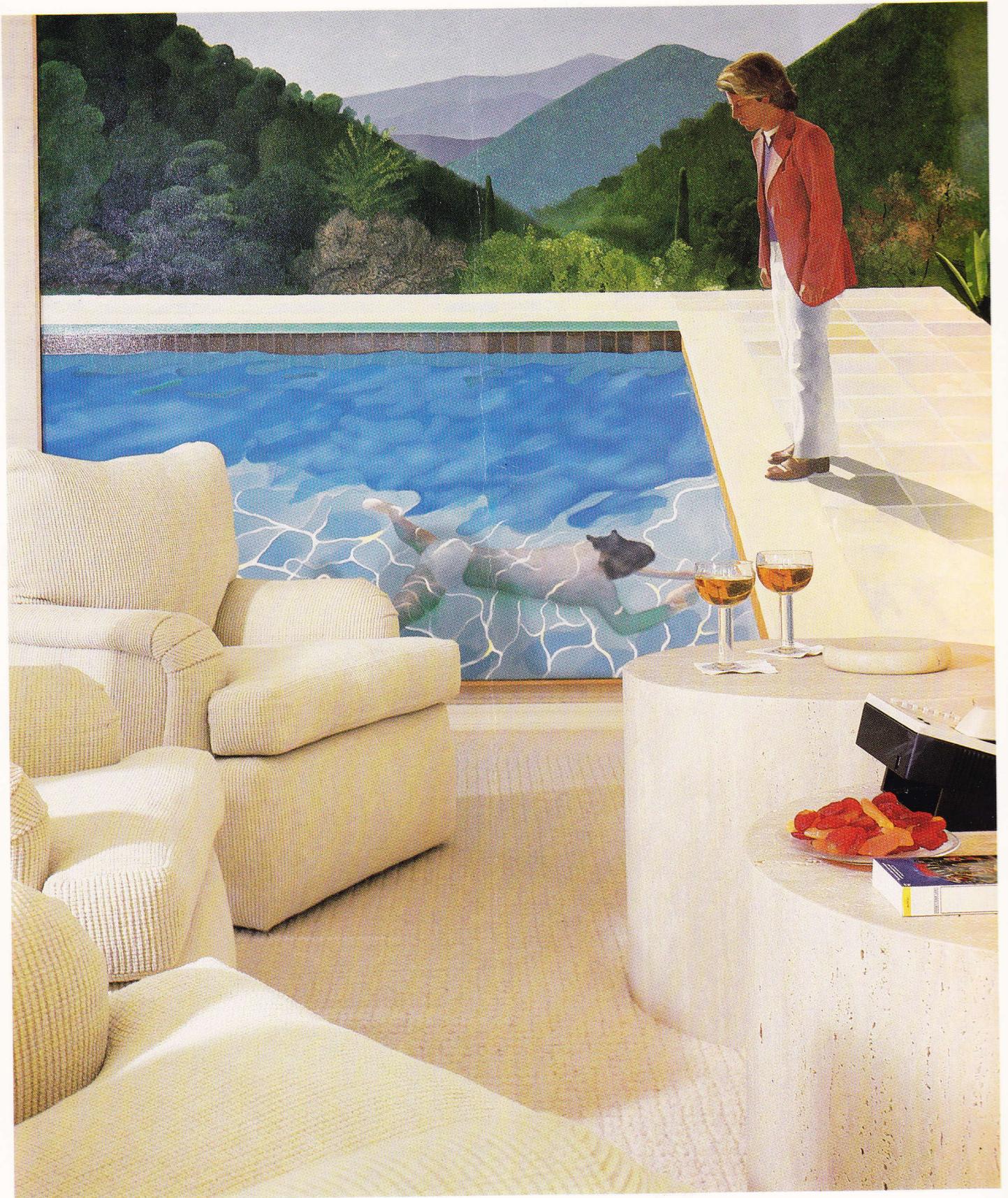


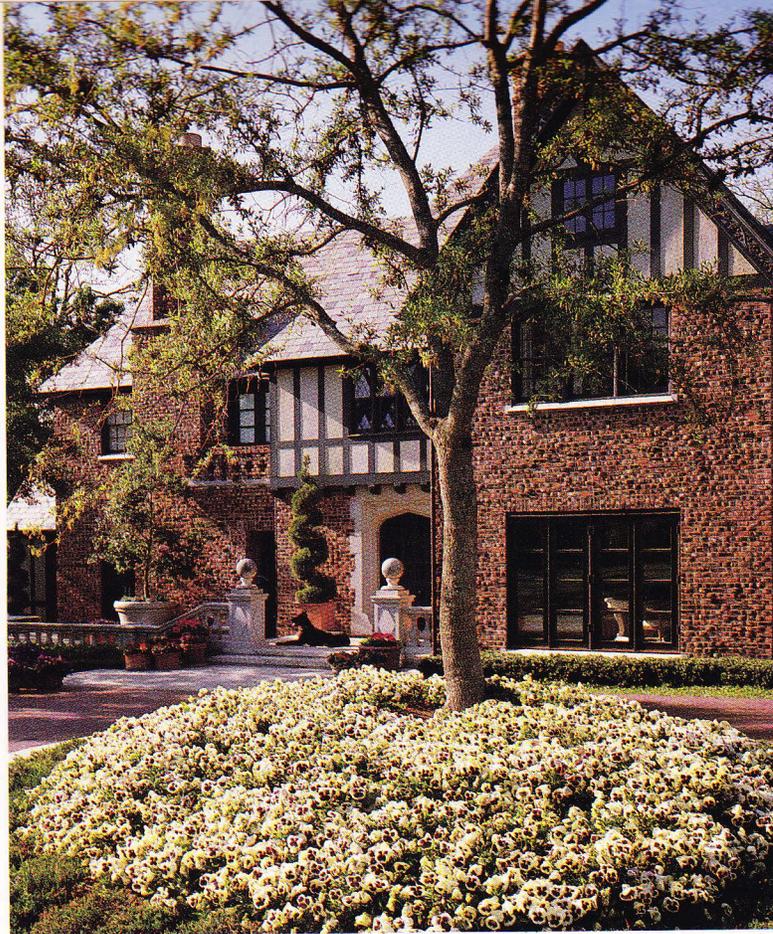
# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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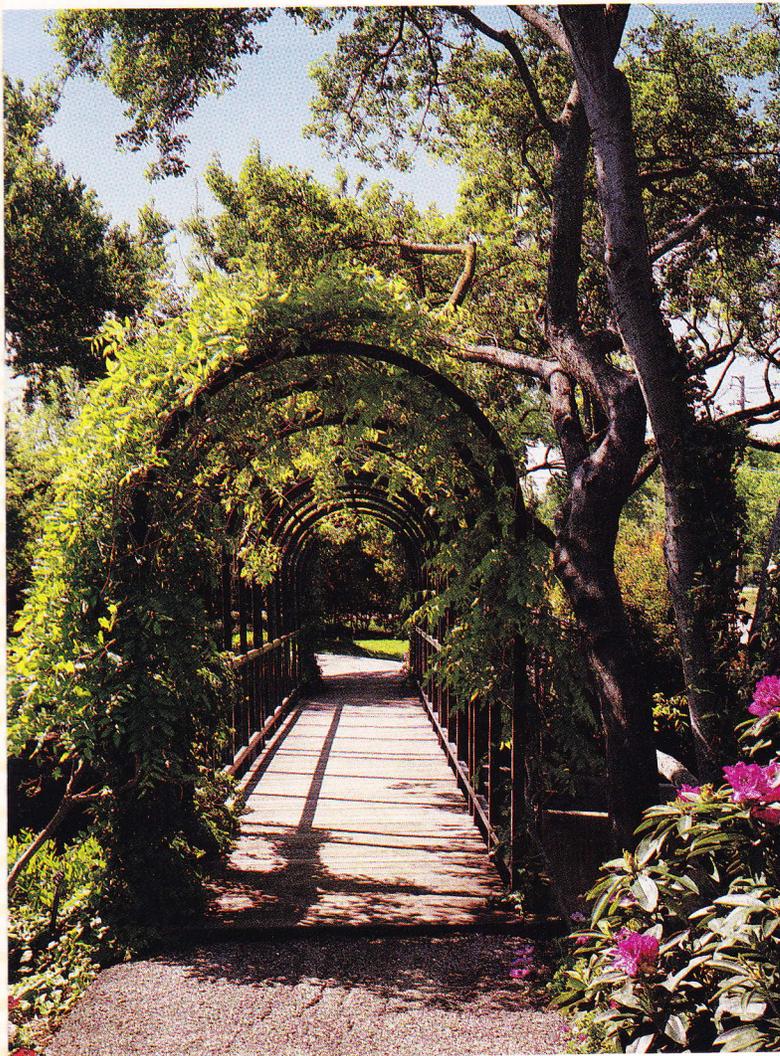
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"We determined that the end result would be without 'time identification'—thoroughly honest, direct, crisp and intelligent," says Charles Paxton Gremillion, Jr., of the Texas house (right) he remodeled with Loyd Ray Taylor. BELOW: A bridge is part of the estate's private jogging path.



"The library, with its glazed book cabinets, is inspired by the late Renaissance," says Paxton. OPPOSITE: A Regency ebonized and gilt sofa is paired with an Italian marble table, and 19th-century fauteuils face a *bureau plat* of the same period, with *pietre dure* top, in foreground.



## Bold Synthesis for Texas

*Transforming a Tudoresque Estate*

INTERIOR DESIGN BY CHARLES PAXTON GREMILLION, JR.,  
ASID, AND LOYD RAY TAYLOR, ASID  
TEXT BY MICHAEL ENNIS  
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THE HOUSE, ON A ROLLING, wooded lot in an exclusive Dallas suburb, was one of those nice "period" concoctions popular in the 1920s, its solidly crafted Tudoresque character achieved by a combination of half-timbering, antique brickwork, sharply peaked gables and a fine Tudor stone arch over the front door. Asked by a longtime client to completely renovate the house (effectively tripling the ground-floor space) as well as erect an extensive series of pool pavilions on the grounds, designers Charles Paxton Gremillion, Jr., and Loyd Ray Taylor, of the Dallas firm Loyd-Paxton, boldly decided to make a virtue of the existing facade's eclecticism.

"The construction of the house was so fine we couldn't think of tearing it down and starting from scratch," says Paxton. "We're fortunate to have very catholic sensibilities," adds Loyd. "We were comfortable with the idea



of working with a wide range of styles." More than comfortable: Improvising from a few given stylistic notes, Loyd-Paxton have created a fuguelike reconciliation of opposites, a design that is at once classical and romantic, urbane and pastoral, imperial yet intimate.

Putting it all together was an exercise in subtle transitions and clever fusions. The entrance hall has a baronial, almost medieval character consistent with the façade: hand-troweled stucco walls, dark parquet floors, and heavy carved-stone beams and doorway arches. The adjacent drawing room summarizes the ecumenical vitality of the rest of the house; the furnishings include an Italian



"We wanted nothing to appear as an addition or an afterthought," says Paxton. ABOVE: In the entrance hall, a carved Flemish bench complements the stair railings, which were relocated from a 17th-century English country house. RIGHT: The drawing room features a carved limestone fireplace and, as overmantel, hardwood lacework panels from Java. In the center of the room, carved and lacquered sofas flank an Italian Rococo game table. Beyond is a George III chinoiserie screen.

Rococo giltwood game table, a pair of Italian Neoclassical-style terra-cotta urns mounted as lamps on massive columnar pedestals of yellow-sienna marble, and a George III chinoiserie leather screen.

The most startling synthesis is perhaps the least noticeable. The apparently English Gothic lacework tracery above the carved limestone Tudor-style mantel (one of only two vestiges of the old house retained in the interior) is actually a Dutch Indonesian wood panel painted with a *faux*-stone finish. The entirely convincing result is a metaphor for the whole design process: "We wanted to avoid any sense that anything has been added on," says Paxton.







ABOVE: In the game room, an Italian marquetry table is accompanied by chairs ornamented with carved and ebonized dog's heads. A pair of antique Chinese gold-and-lacquer vases are placed opposite an English japanned cabinet-on-stand that holds part of the owners' collection of *objets de vertu*, antique frames and memorabilia. OPPOSITE: Distinguished by a massive skylight, crisp stenciling and painted moldings, "the atrium suggests certain elements of Peter Paul Rubens's house in Antwerp," says Paxton. An Italian gilt armchair counterpoints the black-and-white theme. The Italian ebonized-walnut credenza features a carved panel with ducal crest. Black wicker sectional sofas are from Walters Wicker.

"The eye must accept that all of this has always been here."

The drawing room proceeds, both spatially and stylistically, to the center of the house—a large atrium spanned by a skylight of nine individual coffered bays. Here the palette is limited almost entirely to cream white and charcoal black; the pattern of the black-and-white millwork coffers is reproduced with Albertian rectitude in the bold black and white of the inlaid terrazzo flooring (this mirroring of floor and ceiling patterns is repeated with even more intricacy in the small adjacent library). The classical

stateliness is emphasized by bracket-shaped dentils around the ceiling, a massive ebonized-walnut Renaissance credenza and an equally imposing *bibliothèque*, and a large Roman carved-granite urn.

In a subtly Palladian fashion, the atrium functions not only as a nexus for the more intimate rooms on either side but also offers a powerful procession from the outside in. A wall of glazed doors opens onto a terrace overlooking a creek and the pool pavilions. The kitchen, directly adjacent to the atrium and through two sets of double doors,





is also done in black and white. For informal fair-weather entertaining, the entire kitchen-to-terrace expanse can function as a single, virtually unobstructed space.

Despite the clarity of the plan and the uncluttered placement of the generally massive, definitive furnishings, this is a design given to romantically evocative details achieved through meticulous Old World craftsmanship. A small hallway linking the master bedroom and bath to the atrium has been covered with linen canvas painted in a delicate stipple pattern, then stenciled with a meander in a

color so closely matched that it is visible only as a ghost image. The saffron-hued wallcovering in the master bedroom is seventy-year-old painted Chinese paper.

In the dining room, opposite the drawing room at the front of the house, the walls have been done in a style inspired by *verre églomisé*: Painted flowers cut from Chinese watercolors were decouped underneath clear glass, the whole then backed with white-gold leaf. The illusion created by the subtly mirrored surfaces is as sumptuous and ethereal as a Fragonard painting.



This is a design given to romantically evocative details.

LEFT: "We wanted to ensure a certain visual triumph over the more mechanical elements essential to a kitchen," says Paxton. The designers reproduced a collection of 17th-century German botanical engravings on the cabinets and complemented them with stencils on the ceiling beams.

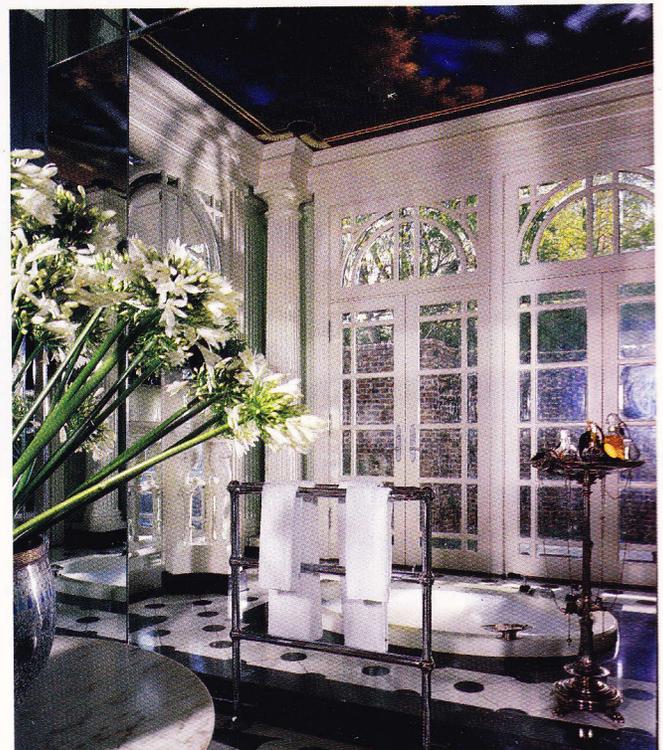


ABOVE: *Verre églomisé*-inspired floral panels characterize the dining room, which also features a 19th-century French carved-wood mantel. Atop the table is part of a collection of late-19th-century Chinese pieces fashioned from pierced-work silver and accented with Peking enamel and inlays of semiprecious stones. The late-18th-century fruitwood armchairs are Austrian.



ABOVE: Dominated by a Loyd-Paxton draped bed and handpainted Chinese wallpaper, the master bedroom features a Carrara marble mantel accented with Qing celadon porcelain jardinières. The carved-fruitwood and cane-backed bench is 19th-century French. RIGHT: The master bath has "a subliminal suggestion of classicism," says Paxton. At right is a neo-Pompeian silvered-bronze gueridon signed *Picault*.

While the designers have freely mined the past, they have done so interpretively, not slavishly. "We wanted to convey no sense of stylistic or period antecedents," says Paxton. "Nothing in this house is copied from anything else." Nowhere is this more apparent than in the pool area, designed entirely by Loyd-Paxton. The creek separating the house from the site was dammed and walled to create a small lagoon, and the pool juts out into the water on a raised, almost battlement-like terrace of Indiana limestone. The landward end of the pool is rimmed by three peak-roofed, octagonal pavilions joined by two glassed arcades; a single identical pavilion (called the summerhouse) is set





"Set beside a placid creek, the pool area is designed for leisure and entertaining, both intimately and on a grand scale," says Paxton. "It's Camelot." Constructed of California redwood, the three pavilions are linked by glassed-in arcades housing dressing rooms and a full kitchen.

on pilings at the far end of the pool and seems to float above the water. The arch used as the structural module for the entire complex is the same broad, slightly pointed Tudor arch found at the front door of the house, rendered in a naturally finished California redwood with a stone-like, pale slate coloration.

Viewed from the main house, the massing of copper-sheathed roofs—conceived with their eventual green patination in mind—suggests a cluster of medieval jousting pavilions. From the summerhouse the substantial, lucidly ordered arcades recall a Romanesque cloister. The pool pavilions also have the twentieth-century necessi-

ties—kitchen, wet bar, showers and dressing rooms—and the entertainment options range from indoor-outdoor supper dances to a contemplative reverie.

Despite their stand-alone magnificence, the pool pavilions have an emotional as well as stylistic relationship to the main house. Extensive glazing and a total absence of draperies ("I won't have them," says Paxton; for bedroom privacy, concealed sliding wooden doors can be pulled across the glass doors) afford all the major rooms a view of the pavilions—sun-dazzled by day, softly lit at night—an enchanted pastorate that underscores the very civilized fantasy of the entire work. □