

MAXIMUM



IMPACT





DESIGNER SANDRA CANNON PAIRS SCALE AND INTENTION AT THE HOME OF ANN AND STEWART JOHNSON

by **Stephanie Burnette** photography by **Forrest Clonts**

Just over a year ago, designer Sandra Cannon received a surprising request: would she apply for ADAC's Southeastern Design of the Year? Shortly afterward, Sandra Cannon Interiors was named a finalist. Submitted work included the commercial concepts The Honey Hive and Underpin, and the home featured here, recently completed on Montgomery Circle in Spartanburg.

"I thought about my portfolio and how I could show its diversity, projects that have an edge where I visually explored creative hard work," Cannon says.

Though best known for her finesse in the F&B industry—if you've eaten at one of the four Willy Tacos, then you've witnessed her play on industry chic—Cannon, selectively, will do residential. She considers what she calls long-range residential: in-depth team projects consisting of two-plus years of new construction or ninety percent renovation. "Residential is so personal that the idea of bringing on a full team from architect to builder to custom craftspeople means it needs to be a project with a ton of creative processing," she says, "and that's where I do my best work."

Ann and Stewart Johnson called on Cannon eight years ago and implemented initial ideas. They stayed connected, waiting for the right time to overhaul the home and add significant outdoor elements that the traditional Georgian was lacking.

They started mid-pandemic with a request for architects. Teague Studio won out and detailed renderings were created to reconfigure seventy-five percent of the first floor. Walls would be moved to overhaul the kitchen, living room, and primary suite to create a keeping room, private wet bar/lounge, and new his-and-her bath; Dunbar Construction was tapped to bring the vision to life.

Three bedrooms upstairs for tween/teen children, and a guest room, would get a facelift. Lastly, a significant veranda and porch would be added seamlessly, no small feat for a fifty-year-old brick home. "Ann and Stewart wanted to maximalize their lifestyle and they wanted to do it the right way, all at once," says Cannon.

"Sandra truly represents her clients individually and she is always positive and calm under pressure," says Ann. "She was the force we needed with such an in-depth project."

ART-CENTERED

The Johnsons wanted several pieces from their cousin, artist Aimee Wise, to hang in their home and Cannon planned to use art to inject moments of contemporary styling. She was given access to Wise's available portfolio, selected several, and identified additional pieces by local artist Lucy Boland.

One sits over an antique Italian altar acting as a console in the formal living room. The work by Boland is five feet by five feet. Cannon says she envisioned the piece as a wall covering. "I like big dramatic pieces of art."

ENTRY WITH IMPACT

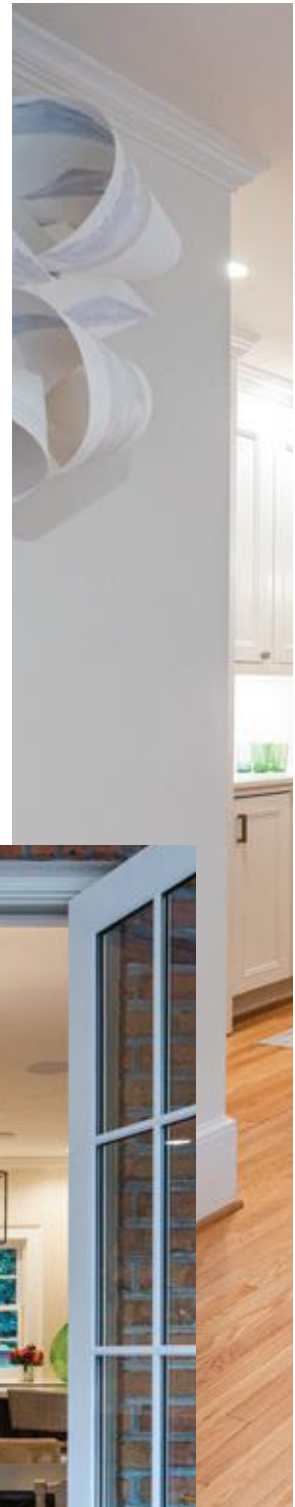
A settee, covered in velvet by an English company, Designers Guild, is hand-dyed to look like marble. Cannon says the velvet spoke to the design team and made a dramatic contrast to the beautiful rosy color the two-story entry was painted, replete with lots of millwork and stairwell details. "I wanted a lot of impact when you walked in."

Cannon calls the Johnsons' entry one of the most traditional foyers she's ever worked in. For the light fixture, she went with aged brass but identified a chandelier that felt airy and with significant diameter. The chest is antique. A work by Wise hangs above it, detailed with snakes and a coral background that is near match with the wall.

KITCHEN AND KEEPING

A new kitchen was configured to sit astride a keeping room, and a dimensional paper sculpture by Wise plays a functional role. "It's a unique moment in design for the house," says Cannon. "The keeping room is an artery of travel on the main level; in a sense it's a hallway."

Instead of furniture, the sculpture offers depth off the wall, encouraging guests to get into the room with its comfortable furnishings and spectacular watercolor-encased coffee table. Cannon calls it intentional design. The keeping room is meant to be a part of the action in the kitchen as well as a place to relax if the kitchen is closed. "It feels a whole lot larger than it is, but by nature a keeping room is supposed to be just a little space, not a whole other living room." **ah**



▲ The keeping room is intentionally light and open. One of Cannon's favorite details is the window design, which offers as large an expanse of glass—both vertically and horizontally—as possible and creates transparency to the outdoors.

The coffee table is fifty-four inches wide by twenty-four inches deep. When the light from the window hits it, it has a reflective quality, but because of its solid core you can sit on it, put your feet on it, or park a plate of food. "It's not a delicate piece," says Cannon. "In a keeping room, keeping function in mind is pretty darn important."





The cabinets and hardware in the kitchen are very traditional, including Grade A black walnut. “The finishes for the kitchen are super sleek,” says Cannon, “and we lightened it in color to feel a little more transitional but not modern.”

Appliances were all sourced through Jeff Lynch. A really large island was important because Ann and Stewart wanted to have a seat for everybody. There’s a unique sink here too, installed with two faucets. “It’s the biggest sink we could find,” says Cannon. “It’s custom and made to order by The Galley, purchased through Bird Hardware.”



“We lived here for thirteen years before we started the renovation. It really gave us the time to think about how we wanted to use space in our home.”

—Ann Johnson



◀ Ann and Stewart love to entertain, and they envisioned an outdoor room that circulated through the kitchen and wet bar area. They wanted it to have a big fireplace, wood burning with a gas starter, and a big gathering hearth. It's furnished with four swivel club chairs and a daybed. A ninety-six-inch fan moves air throughout the entire space.

Much research from Ann went into the details for the veranda. "Those arches were a consistent element that came out of her homework," says Cannon. The metal fretwork above followed the existing metal pattern in the garden gazebo to create a repetition of form, also seen in the daybed. ▼





◀ The bath includes its own his-and-her spaces. "We approached it with a 'dream it up and build it' creative vision," says Cannon. The shower has doors on two sides leading to separate vanities, toilets, and closets. The chandelier over Ann's tub was designed to feel like sitting under an arbor of wisteria. ▶



▲ The couple's bedroom got a wall of drapery on one linear bar and a light rainwater color was pulled from the Schumacher fabric for the walls; the oval light fixture is made of strung coco beads. "This light fixture is one of my favorite things in the house. Its layers are made of millions of microbeads. It's like chainmail the way it's layered; I was very inspired by it," says Cannon.

