

Cullum, 29, is an admirer of the 13th century Florentine-inspired architecture at the Campbell in New York City's Grand Central Terminal.

Next Wave

On the Rise: William Cullum

I “I love it when you can't really tell what something is, when it's a bit mysterious,” says William Cullum. He recently festooned the pale-gold walls of a prewar Manhattan apartment with hand-painted metallic spiderwebs—inspired by a Victorian-era book cover—that seem to appear and vanish as one moves around the space.

It was the Columbia, South Carolina, native's affinity for the enigmatic—and an unrelenting passion for the past (he double-majored in art history and historic preservation)—that instantly impressed his boss, New York designer Thomas Jayne, who hired Cullum seven years ago. “He has a special design genius that combines intellect, intuition, and >



In a client's 1930s home, Cullum used a reproduction of a 1920s French wallpaper as a backdrop to an 18th-century Venetian console and 1950s chairs from Brazil.

imagination," says Jayne, himself a member of *House Beautiful's* inaugural 1998 Next Wave class. For Cullum, now the firm's lead decorator, the past remains an undying muse for his present work. "There's magic in the layers and textures that can be acquired only by the passage of time."
—Hillary Brown

HIS FAVORITE THINGS

- 1. WISTERIA** "Nothing is more romantic. When this plant blooms in the South, everything becomes a sea of purple."
- 2. AIKEN-RHETT HOUSE, CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA** "This mansion, the subject of my college thesis, has been preserved instead of restored. You can see layers of wallpaper and peeling paint that date from 1830 to 1900—utterly enchanting."

- 3. BISON CLOUD GLAZED TERRA-COTTA DISH** "A 19th century-inspired pattern enlarged to the point of abstraction." \$136. johnderian.com
- 4. LES CHIMERES SILK IN NOIR BY TASSINARI & CHATEL** "An archival design with a sense of humor." scalamandre.com

- 5. 19TH-CENTURY INDIAN SANDALWOOD-AND-BONE-INLAY OCTAGONAL TABLE** "Its small footprint makes the piece practical, but the mélange of materials makes it fantastical." \$8,900. yewtreehouseantiques.com

- 6. THAI SILK IN CALYPSO PINK AND MISTY VIOLET** "Purple is my favorite color. It shifts with the light, so it can be blue or gray or pink." jimthompsonfabrics.com

- 7. GOLD MILITARY METALLIC WIRE TRIM** "I insist on gold in every room: It's warm, it's magical, and it adds energy, changing as you move." \$8 per yard. tinseltrading.com

- 8. COFFERED ROSETTE WALLPAPER** "The pattern mimics Roman temple ceilings—totally witty. And the historic colorway is unusual." adelphipaperhangings.com



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"WORKS WITH ANTIQUES OR MODERN PIECES!"



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