



THE FOURTH ANNUAL NEW ENGLAND
DESIGN HALL OF FAME



2010
INTERIOR DESIGN

Eugene D. Lawrence

Eugene Lawrence and Company, Inc.

Like the designer himself, each of Gene Lawrence's projects possesses a certain charisma, whether it's a traditional townhouse on Beacon Hill, an ultra-modern home on the Cape or a 63,000-square-foot palace in Saudi Arabia. But though they are all fashioned by the same designer, they don't all have the same design. "I don't really have a 'look,'" says Lawrence.

Renowned for his ability to create designs based on his clients' taste (rather than his own), Lawrence's philosophy is that "a scheme shouldn't overwhelm a client, it should look like it belongs to them." So if he's working with a subdued city couple who want to live in an Old World-style brownstone, he starts hunting for the perfect period antiques. And when a fun, flamboyant homeowner hires him to work on a new house in the suburbs, Lawrence gets busy on an equally colorful design concept. "Appropriateness, appropriateness, appropriateness!" is one of his favorite expressions.

Lawrence turns to nature for much of his inspiration, and he loves antiques "with a vengeance," believing the right piece can elevate a room to a whole new level. Travel both here and abroad, visits to museums and art galleries and trips to European churches and cathedrals can all act as sparks for his imagination. All of his rooms are imbued with warmth, depth and character.

Lawrence first became interested in design around the age of six, when his mother enrolled him at the Cincinnati Art Academy. ("I think she realized then I wasn't going to be a star athlete," he quips.) He's been a part of the local design community since 1971, when he arrived in Boston to

work for the inimitable Ben Cook at Trade Winds. "Ben Cook epitomized the best of traditional and classic design—he was a master," recalls Lawrence.

Interior designer Lee Bierly, who worked side-by-side with Lawrence at Trade Winds, describes his style as "tailored and well-edited." "He has a keen eye and exemplary taste," adds Bierly.

"You might not like everything I do," says Lawrence, "I don't like everything I do—but my clients like what I do."

Like his clients, the judges for the 2010 New England Design Hall of Fame like what they see, too.

