

BARRY DIXON

A WORLDLY GENTLEMAN



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Barry Dixon knows a thing or two about packing up and moving house. After all, he spent his early childhood as a global nomad, shuttling between countries. In fact, it was exposure to diverse cultures, regions and lifestyles that would make the designer worldly and teach him to appreciate beauty and ultimately shape his personal vision.

Since establishing his Virginia-based interior design firm in 1993, Dixon has become one of the nation's most sought-after designers, known for his refined, international aesthetic. With his discerning eye, he draws inspiration from

history, sourcing classical architecture and traditional forms, mixing it up with unexpected elements of modern design. His elegant, timeless interiors have been featured in numerous publications and designer show houses, while his television appearances include "Good Morning America" and HGTV (Home and Garden Television).

In recent years, Dixon has channeled the same global aesthetic into product design, introducing his own line of furniture, rugs, fabrics, lighting and accessories. "As a designer, the closest thing to going back to school is to design

TOP LEFT: At home in Virginia's Elway Hall, Barry Dixon amidst furnishings he designed for Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth, including Quadrasphere side table, Robertson sofa and Boomerang chair. The latter two upholstered in The Barry Dixon Collection for Vervain, including "Medina" and "Pasha Ombre," respectively. Dixon's quilted pillow for Fortuny with Vervain hemp trim by designer. Dixon's "Gene Stripe" for Vervain enhanced with his leather trim for Vervain. Drapery in Vervain's "Cacao Vine" and Megerian rug "Taromina," both by Dixon. **RIGHT:** Antique bust on Dixon's mesh pedestal for Avrett. Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth's Martini table and Roseann, Dixon's signature Trefoil bench.

a product line because it re-hones your skills and refocuses your eye. With every collection, I feel re-energized."

Collaborating with master craftsmen and weavers, the designer recalls imagery from his youth of local artisans he encountered and admired during his travels. His father worked as a metallurgist for an international company, moving the family from Dixon's Memphis birthplace to Korea, Pakistan, India, New Caledonia and South Africa—all by the time he had graduated from high school.

A graduate of the University of Mississippi, he worked briefly in Jackson, Mississippi, before moving to Washington. In the D.C. area, he worked for two design firms before starting his own company. Today, Dixon operates his



100: Fabrics from The Barry Dixon Collection for Vervain in Simone cabinet from Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth by Dixon. Wallcovering by Schumacher. 102VE-102T: Gothic screens from Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth flank Avrett's Mesh Screen and Cylinder Bedside Cabinet with antique globe and Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth's Patricia chair in "Grenada" by Vervain, all designed by Dixon. Niemann Weeks urn on antique pedestal. 102AV: Designs by Dixon include Fortuny pillows with Vervain trims on Lycee sofa by Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth; Raj ottoman and Albemarle chair from Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth; Diamante mirror for Avery Fine Art and "Glen Keith" rug for Megarian.



design business out of Elway Hall, his 300-acre estate in Warrenton, Virginia. He bought the estate ten years ago after literally sitting on a real estate brochure describing the property. It had been left on an airplane seat.

Despite all his travels, Dixon has remained the quintessential Southern gentleman. True to his roots, Dixon's rooms exude warmth and hospitality, achieving a delicate balance between old and new, antique and modern, formal and informal, masculine and feminine. The designer's skillful ability to merge disparate design elements has become a signature ingredient in his interiors and has led to his growing success in the arena of product design. In 2006, he introduced his first furniture collection for Tomlinson/



TOP: Trivet table by Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth with stacks of Vervain trims by Dixon. ABOVE LEFT: Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth's Warrenton tea table and Otlands dining chair by Dixon in front of vintage screen. RIGHT: In windows, "Eternity" sheer, "Papillon" linen and trims, all from designer's collection for Vervain. Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth's Stephana table in front of its Alan sofa, upholstered in "Stonewaves" fabric from Vervain, all by designer. Vervain's "Ishtar" and "Ankasa" on pillows with trims, all from The Barry Dixon Collection. Private collection lamp on Dixon's Column Table from Tomlinson/Erwin-Lambeth beside his Germaine chair in "Ishtar" fabric. Megerian's "Ankasa" rug by Dixon.



Dixon's trim coordinates with fabrics for Vervain, "Talembor" and "Warrenton Toile," inspired by this 19th-c. transferware.

Erwin-Lambeth, which includes more than seventy pieces inspired by historical shapes and forms. His Albemarle chair casts the familiar shadow of a Georgian antique, while the Robertson sofa with its onion-shaped Anglo-Raj foot represents a bridge between English antiques and a tropical Indian sensibility.

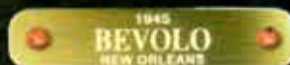
"Design is completely kinetic, so it's always morphing into something inspired by the past. It becomes part of

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an aesthetic relay race through time and continuum, as we pick up batons from others."

Last year, Dixon collaborated with Megerian Rugs to create a more modern counterpart to the company's existing collection, made with vegetable dyes. He also designed several contemporary pieces of metal mesh furniture and lighting for Avrett, as well as mirrors for Avery Fine Art, adding a sleek, architectural element to his repertoire. The Barry Dixon Collection for Vervain launched this spring, crossing the same cultural and stylistic boundaries with fabrics and trimmings that pay homage to influences including a nineteenth-century Tunisian wedding

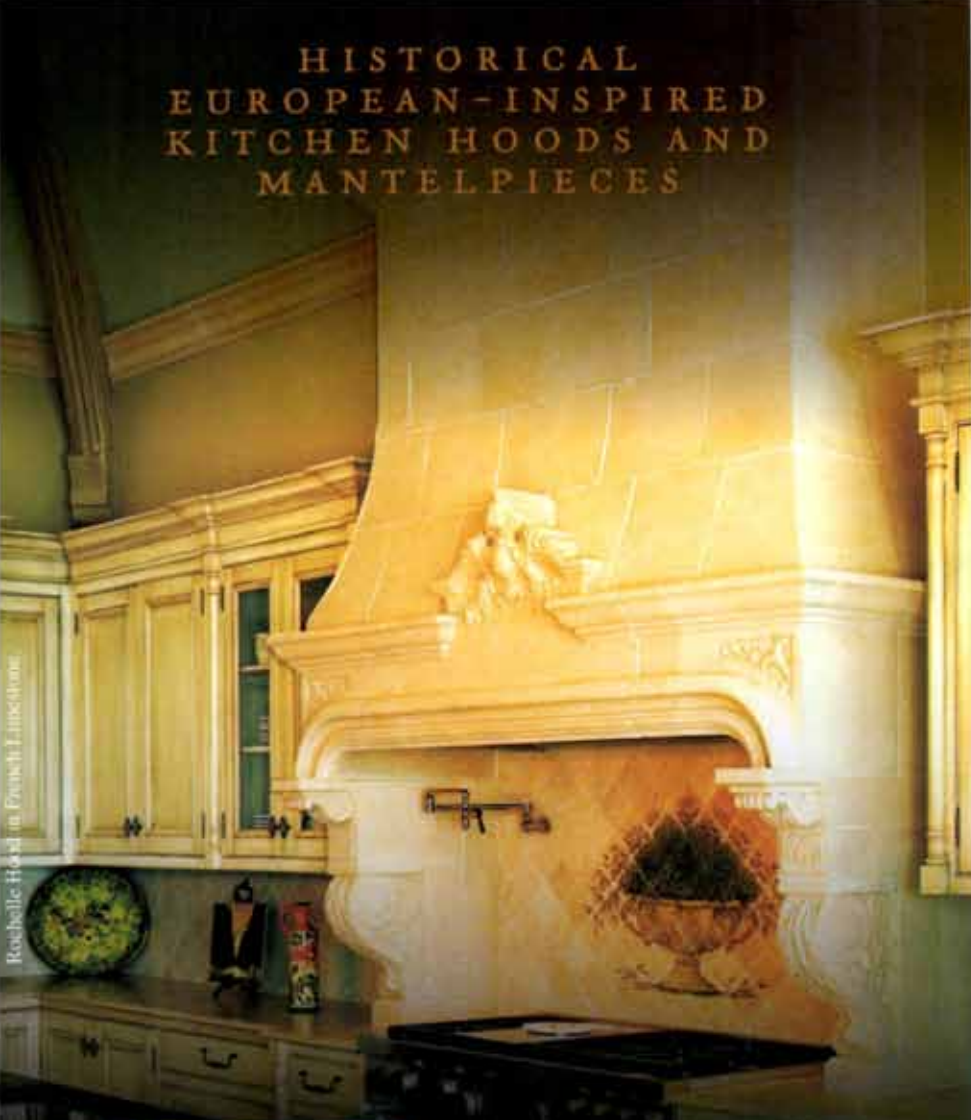
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The Virginia designer's pendant light for Avrett hangs from his living room ceiling.

garment with embroidered Bedouin silver, a 1930s Austrian sheer, a block print found in a Turkish bazaar, hand-painted transferware, the rubbing of a cantaloupe from his garden and a vintage cocoa tin. The color palette, aptly named Fire & Earth, Sky & Water, reflects elements of nature borrowed from N.C. Wyeth and Arthur Rackham children's book illustrations.

His latest project for legendary fabric house Fortuny involves a collection of

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pillows and accessories based on archival Mariano Fortuny designs. In addition, he has the distinction of being chosen to redesign all of Fortuny's showrooms—nationwide and abroad.

Barry Dixon Interiors, his first book, is now in its third printing since September 2008. A second book is scheduled to be published spring 2011.

As Dixon expands his diverse portfolio of design projects and licensees, his love of travel and global influences remains integral to his work. "The more I learn, the more I celebrate the eclectic mix of periods and cultures. The fusion of all of those elements is what becomes modern and timeless for the twenty-first century." □

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