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WRITTEN BY SALLY FINDER WEEPIE
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Storybook Ending

ARTFUL TWISTS
WRITE A COMPELLING
ARCHITECTURAL
NARRATIVE IN WHAT,
AT ITS HEART,
IS A SIMPLE
SOUTHERN HOME





A house should tell the story of the people who live there," architect Jeff Dungan says. "I try to tell that story in the most beautiful way I can."

The tale he weaves in this Birmingham, Alabama, home is as delightful and distinctive as the couple who live here: Charlie and Linda Israel.

"I've known Charlie quite a few years. He's kind of a father figure to me," Dungan says. "He's basically a cowboy—a Western-oriented guy. Linda, on the other hand, is elegant, refined. As they say, opposites attract."

When the empty nesters decided to downsize and bought land near Dungan's offices, the architect couldn't wait to start sketching the new house.

"My vision for the house came from them—a beautiful yin and yang thing," he says. "I wanted the exterior to feel warm, welcoming, masculine—like Charlie. Inside, I wanted the feeling to be very sophisticated, feminine—like Linda."

He marries the disparate moods with a singular, simple palette of materials: stone and stained wood. Outside, the rough-

hewn stone and dark wood work with a cottagey yet somewhat Western roofline to give the structure a strong presence. A stone fireplace heartily welcomes visitors to come on up and grab a chair on the front porch. Sit for a while. Relax. "That's Charlie to me," Dungan says.

Open the front door, though, and it's Linda who greets guests. "Inside, it's the same materials, but the experience is much more in alignment with her," Dungan says. Graceful curves and arches frame views of rooms defined by understated elegance.

"I love to play with shapes," Dungan says. "The interiors are very much about plaster and its softness and fluidity of form."

Dungan specified sculptural white walls, light wood ceilings, and pale limestone floors that created a character-rich

Dining area "Paulette" side chairs from Bungalow Classic are covered in a restful sand-hue Perennials fabric. An antique chest layers in age and texture to contrast the contemporary tiered chandelier. **Living room** Captivating shapes and textures reign here. Plaster walls coated in Benjamin Moore "China White" paint play foil to stone and wood. Linen-upholstered swivel chairs provide cozy seating near the fire. Stripes on a Lee Jofa rug echo the linear form of the staircase.



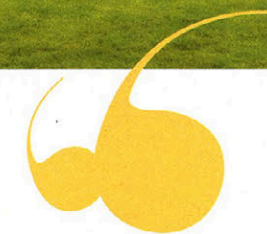
canvas for interior designer Beth Webb. “His spaces have such personality; it makes my job easy,” she says.

She followed both the lead of the architecture and the homeowners, who were ready to trim back their belongings as well as the size of their home.

“Their old house was chockablock full of antiques,” Webb says. “Linda gave the children an early inheritance. She was ready for a new outlook—lighter, cleaner, fresher.”

Webb brought in new furnishings that adhere to an airy palette and emphasize comfort. Two pairs of hospitable armchairs and a sofa cozy up to the stone fireplace in the living room. Statuesque chairs dressed in neatly tailored slipcovers ring a pedestal dining table custom-crafted by a Birmingham furniture maker. Upholstered barstools at the kitchen island give the grandchildren a perfect perch to watch Linda produce her latest culinary creation.

In the master bedroom, tufted roll-arm chairs invite lounging in an arched window nook softened by Roman shades. Their whisper of blue feels like gentle sky against a sea of pecky cypress on walls and ceiling.



OUTDOOR ROOMS ARE SO IMPORTANT TO HOW WE’RE LIVING NOW.”

—designer Beth Webb

Relaxed living continues outside where Webb shaped open-air gathering spots by the pool, on the patio, and on a deck outside the grandchildren’s upper-level bedrooms and play space. “Outdoor rooms are so important to how we’re living now,” the designer says. “It’s very enviable to have plenty of places for the kids to plop down and be able to enjoy that time as a family.”

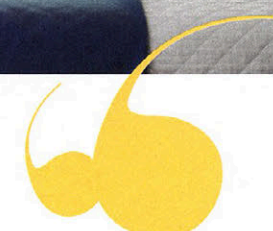
Front exterior Architect Jeff Dungan melded charming cottage style with strong peaked rooflines to shape a welcoming home. Instead of making the front door the focal point, Dungan put a brawny stone fireplace in the spotlight. All-weather “Sag Harbor” rockers from Kingsley Bate through Logan Gardens encourage lingering.

Rear exterior Dungan gave the homeowners lots of options for outdoor living, including three seating areas at the back of the house, which captivates with the crescendo of a wood-and-stone tower. **Covered porch** A bed swing crafted by Birmingham maker Southern Komfort offers a prime seat in this shaded relaxation spot. Woven armchairs are from Janus et Cie.



Kitchen Calacatta Gold marble in a honed finish infuses elegance without disrupting the calm, organic attitude of the kitchen. A lime-washed white oak ceiling ensures an airy feel. Zak + Fox fabric on counter stools energizes with a hit of pattern.





NOW MORE THAN EVER, HOME IS OUR HAVEN.
—designer Beth Webb

Sharing moments with the ones we love and savoring our personal spaces is always important but even more at this moment in time, Webb says. “There’s a lot of emotion around that right now,” she says. “Home is our safe space, maybe the only place we feel like we can breathe. Now more than ever, home is our haven.”

Architect: Jeffrey Dungan Interior designer: Beth Webb
For more information, see sources on page 94

Master suite Embroidered drapery fabric and skirted swivel chairs bring soft, feminine refinement to the bedroom. It’s finished with antique pieces including an Italian chest from vintage purveyor Revival in Chattanooga, Tennessee. A sea of marble—on the tub, shower walls, countertops, and floors—leaves the bath awash in elegance.