

# AMERICA'S TOP YOUNG DESIGNERS

Writers: Michael Boodro, Elaine Greene, William Irvine, Mario López-Cordero, and Christine Pittel

They're young, smart, and not afraid to break the rules. Most of them you've never heard of, but you will, and probably soon. They've learned from the very best, and they count masters like David Hicks, John Saladino, Albert Hadley, Billy Baldwin, and Mark Hampton among their idols. But they've developed their own, new styles that have already set them apart from their peers. Here then is *House Beautiful's* second annual list of America's top young designers, culled from an extensive field of candidates across the nation. Last year we chose 15 up-and-comers, but this year we've expanded the roster to 25. Meet them, check them out, learn from them. One thing is certain—you won't forget them. We guarantee it.



## DIXIE STARK Seattle, WA

She's lost none of the Southern accent, exuberant personality, or respect for old objects that she developed when growing up in Arkansas. But after working in Dallas and now Seattle,



Dixie Stark has seen enough to know that the best design is site-specific, and that what is appropriate in one location may not be in another. "In the Northwest, what really works is color. I like to use blues and yellows. I love greens with golds, oranges and reds. If you use gray or taupe here, it can turn dull and muddy."

Even her use of antiques is "architecture specific," she explains. "If I'm doing a 1920s or 30s house I would gravitate to French style, wood finishes with mirror and glass, and softer, graceful lines. And you can find fabulous Asian antiques here, so I've started

using them a lot since I arrived here four years ago."

What remains consistent for Stark, who founded her firm, Digs, a year and a half ago, is her approach: "I like to start with what a client loves, and wants to keep. Sometimes the color scheme will even be inspired by what they're wearing." Her aim is to merge "traditional lines with modern, chic flair." She is inspired by John Saladino and Barbara Barry, but also is an inveterate hunter-gatherer. "I hit a lot of thrift shops and flea markets. I love that you can transform objects, have something reupholstered." Her favorite piece of furniture? "The old Adirondack chair, circa 1911, that sits on the porch of my Craftsman house." M.B.

THE NEXT WAVE: OUR EXCLUSIVE LIST OF TOP YOUNG DESIGNERS

# House Beautiful

SEPTEMBER 2003

## LIVING IN STYLE

THE BEST DECORATING:  
FROM COOL TO CLASSIC

HOW TO UPDATE  
YOUR ROOMS

**MAKEOVER  
MAGIC:**  
DRAMATIC  
BEFORES  
AND AFTERS

**FEATURING DIXIE STARK**  
**DIGS** | home couture  
& consultation

