

house beautiful



HOW TO
MAKE YOUR
ROOMS
FEEL LIKE
SPRINGTIME

NEW
LUSCIOUS
COLORS

PRETTY
PAINTED
FURNITURE

50
FLOWERS
THAT BLOOM
IN THE
SHADE

At play with the past

A passion for history—including his own—gives Thomas Jayne's intimate Greenwich Village apartment a richness of association that has little to do with price





There is hardly an object in designer Thomas Jayne's small apartment that does not speak volumes to him: either about his present interests or the people of his childhood. The foyer's secretary (opposite above left), made for Jayne's great-grandparents, is crowded with

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW GARN
PRODUCED BY DARA CAPONIGRO

family photos under a bust of an ancestor claimed in family tradition, Benjamin Franklin. Above: For comfort, Jayne pulls four club chairs around a central table that doubles for

dining. Jayne designed the table, adapting its sun motif from an ancient map (detail, opposite below right). The chairs recall his years working with designer Kevin McNamara, who created

them for him. Jayne savors the bold wall striping painted by Chuck Hettinger (opposite above right and below left) for more than the decorative dash. The stripes are Roman, the glaze technique is Renaissance, and the necessity was immediate on bumpy old walls.



IT IS EASY, CASTING A QUICK EYE AROUND

Thomas Jayne's very civilized apartment in New York City's Greenwich Village, to dub him a traditionalist. In his living room, there is a convivial sense of order amid complexity—architectural art, volumes piled on footstool and table, the symmetry of paired side chairs—that suggests an Edwardian gentleman's retreat. It is a room that encourages good conversation, an articulate room. And what it happily articulates is Jayne's belief that "one's history, one's family or artistic roots, some given and some chosen," offers a rich treasury of meaning from which to shape a personal space.

A young interior designer with impeccable credentials (a master's degree in decorative-arts history from Winterthur Museum, a stint at Parish-Hadley, several museum fellowships), the tall, soft-spoken Jayne has become a favorite decorator for museum curators and is currently working on the governor's mansion in Richmond, Va. But he takes a broad view of history, insisting that even a young couple on a tight budget can seek out art and furniture that expresses their own connections. "It's not enough to have something that's pretty; it should have nuance, a story," he believes.

The collection of religious prints filling nearly every inch of his bedroom walls sprang partly from his Episcopal upbringing. But he also discovered that the old master prints he craves—Dürer, Tiepolo, Rembrandt—can be had at better prices if the subject is religious. To complement the collection, he found a black-and-white toile. "I'm thinking," he says, glancing around for an available inch of wall space, "of mixing black-and-white photographs with the prints. A room needs a good scheme, but one that is open-ended, able to evolve. You shouldn't acquire everything at once."

When he moved in, Jayne dug under old carpeting to uncover the apartment's original 1929 cork flooring. Rather than replace it, he buffed it to a mellow, leatherlike shine—a texture so satisfying there is no need for a rug. And as Thomas Jayne sees it, the floor has an extra dimension: a history.



Amid the drama of his prints, Thomas Jayne (above right) placed a reserved Pennsylvania chest of drawers (opposite) for its calming effect. On it (detail, above left), flanked by Meissen apostles, a gesso-on-wood Christ Child of Spanish or Portuguese origin extends His orb. At His feet,

around a photo of his grandfather as an infant, Jayne has gathered real shells, one a Regency salt dish. Fabrics take their cues from the works of art. Curtains by Garence Aufaure, N.Y., are antique bed linens with a striped border, a subtle accompaniment to the toile (above).

Religious art from five centuries fills Thomas Jayne's bedroom with noble themes. A budding print collector, he finds bargains in a subject others pass by

