

Introducing
THE LOWER LEVEL DINING ROOM AND KITCHEN

By **Scott Cooke**

At the 2013 DC Design House

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEN WYNER

WASHINGTON, DC (April 24, 2013) — Just over one week in to the month-long run of the annual DC Design House, visitors have been so taken with designer Scott Cooke’s Lower Level Dining Room and Kitchen that several of its pieces have already been sold.

The reason is Cooke’s fresh approach to decorating with antiques, incorporating them with less formal elements such as a hand-painted sisal rug, and infusing energy into the space with contemporary art.

“The room is based in classicism,” Cooke says, pointing to the neoclassical chandelier and sconces, the stone base of the dining table, and the Klismos-inspired dining chairs. At the same time, he points out, “I wanted to keep it fresh and young by incorporating contemporary elements.”



Taking design cues from the circular tray ceiling, he asked Billet Collins Studio to paint a circular sisal rug with interlocking circles in the room's colors. "The way some of the sisal shows through the paint, is similar to faded denim," he says. Along with the stone table base, he adds, "the textures of these items knock a bit of formality off of the room, and work towards a more casual feeling."

Cooke contrasted those rough textures with the highly polished surfaces of the tabletop and the black lacquer-and-gilt side chairs and bench. And while he anchors the library nook with an oversized antique Buddha sculpture, the sideboard directly across the room sits underneath a blaze of metallic square abstract paintings by local artist Craig Cahoon.

"The interplay between the serious and playful, the classical and contemporary elements are all working together in tandem to form a study in contrasts, giving the room an electrical charge," Cooke says.

He achieved a similar effect in the adjacent kitchen, which was a fairly typical style with dark wood cabinets and parchment-colored stone counters. He instantly warmed the space with a rich, russet-toned Oriental rug, and on the walls, he hung vintage abstract works in antique frames from Gold Leaf Studio. Now, he says, this small kitchen “has elements of antiquity and patina in contrast with the freshly installed flooring and cabinetry.”

Cooke drew on local expertise as he developed his design for these spaces. He used pieces from Hollis & Knight Antiques, artwork and framing from Gold Leaf Studio, and contemporary works by DC artist Craig Cahoon. The exquisite alabaster sculpture is by Eve Stockton, who’s known for her glorious original prints. The art throughout both spaces was curated by ArtSpace, the DC consultancy who also directed the art choices in the public spaces of Georgetown’s Ritz-Carlton.



DC DESIGN HOUSE

Through May 12th

2507 Foxhall Road, NW, Washington, DC

Saturdays-Sundays 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Tuesdays-Fridays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information and resources, contact Scott Cooke:

Scott Cooke Design

www.scottcookedesign.com scott@scottcookedesign.com

202.595.1375 - Office