

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF DESIGN

JANUARY 2010

THE WORLD'S **20** GREATEST DESIGNERS OF ALL TIME PLUS: THE NEW AD 100



U.S. \$5.99/FOREIGN \$6.99



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Marc Appleton

In addition to the many residences he designs in a range of styles (Greek, cabin, hacienda) and his commercial portfolio (museums and hotels), Santa Monica-based architect Marc Appleton has worked with a variety of nonprofit organizations—he's currently involved with projects for the Ganna Walska Lotusland Foundation in Montecito, California, and the Catalina Island Conservancy. Even to these he brings his signature style. "Our work often draws upon historical precedents and time-honored traditions of vernacular architecture, subtly reinterpreting them to evoke a presence of the past," says Appleton, who counts architects David Adler, Julia Morgan and William Wurster among his influences. But he also looks to the future. "We have recently adapted a solar electric system for our own office and frequently apply geothermal mechanical systems in our projects," he notes.

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Howard J. Backen

The barn and the farmhouse are at once elevated and celebrated in the hands of Howard J. Backen. In residences, wineries, hotels and restaurants in California and beyond, the architect has borrowed the clean lines of these straightforward rural structures to create functional, light-filled spaces whose soaring volumes are nonetheless grounded in simple materials like wood and concrete. His work is so much in demand, in fact, that his firm has designed close to 40 wineries since the mid-1990s, when he and Jim Gillam established Backen Gillam Architects in California's Napa Valley. "Each winery is unique," explains Backen, who currently has six other such projects on the drawing board (for three of them he's also designing residences). "And the clients are always very interesting." So is the design process. "It's combining wine-making with pure livability," he says. "I don't know what else is quite that exciting."

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Penny Drue Baird

People don't always want the things or look they think they want," says Penny Drue Baird, who understands that part of a designer's job is to help clients discover what they *do* want. "My doctorate helps!" says Baird, who began her PhD in psychology but discovered her professional calling and enrolled in the New York School of Interior Design (she carved out the time to get her doctorate). "I find in almost all cases that the process becomes a learning experience for the client; their view is broadened as they are shown new and different solutions from those they are used to. Usually they experience an 'aha' moment, for better or for worse." After starting her own company, Dessins, in New York, she expanded to Paris, further developing her signature classic look. "Trendy always changes and always looks dated," she declares. "Even within the realm of modern, people can make choices that remain timeless."

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continued on page 44