

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

\$3.95 US/\$4.95 Canada/Foreign

09



0 74820 08458 8

the next wave **only** in *House Beautiful*

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.



ERNEST DE LA TORRE New York, NY

Ernest de la Torre should have known what his future held: by the time he was eight, he was doing the Christmas decorating at his house in Lake Forest,

Illinois, begging for a tree in every room. But de la Torre, the youngest of four, dutifully tried to follow his father into medicine. When he found out he hated college science, he switched to economics, ending up at IBM. His earnings went into buying houses to renovate and sell in the Chicago area: seven in five years. Finally, the light bulb

came on. De la Torre moved to New York and got a management job with architect Peter Marino.

"I decided I had to *understand* the antiques and textiles and other fine things I was seeing," he says, "so I went for a

master's degree in fine and decorative art at Sotheby's Institute in London." De la Torre's Ph.D equivalent was "a dream job" at Ralph Lauren Home.

Ready at last, he founded the De la Torre Design Studio in 2001 and now has a staff of four and a collaborating architect. Current projects include a rambling apartment on Central Park West and an Art Deco house in Palm Beach. Although de la Torre's own palette is neutral and muted, he goes where the client leads and is having fun with hot pinks and yellows in a Colonial.

"I love traditional that doesn't look like a period museum—so I guess it's natural that my idols are Billy Baldwin, Albert Hadley, and John Saladino," he says. *E.G.*