



For Immediate Release...

September 3, 2020

## ADAC REVEALS THE 2020 SOUTHEAST DESIGNERS AND ARCHITECT OF THE YEAR AWARDS FINALISTS

**ATLANTA** – ADAC is thrilled to announce the finalists of the 2020 Southeast Designers and Architect of the Year Awards. The 18 finalists represent the Southeast’s most innovative creators and exemplify the highest level of talent in the categories of residential design, contract design, and architecture. Entries were received from ADAC’s 10-state region, including Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Finalists were selected by a panel of three acclaimed judges including Editor in Chief of VERANDA **Steele Marcoux**, interior designer **Alessandra Branca**, and architect **Andrew Oyen**. Winners will be announced virtually on the evening of **Thursday, Sept. 24**, with full details to come.

“While the Southeast Designers and Architect of the Year Awards look a little different this year and is postponed a bit from its regular time in the spring, it is indicative of one thing: design does not stop. These incredible finalists are proof of that. This year, we are welcoming a wonderful mix of returning talent and first-time finalists, showcasing the best that the design world has to offer,” says Katie Miner, General Manager of ADAC. “Across the board, we are honored to name finalists from eight Southeastern cities – a true representation of ADAC’s reach within the region and a continued opportunity to witness tremendous evolution of design from these respected designers.”

The 2020 Southeast Designers and Architect of the Year Awards coincides with ADAC’s all-virtual fall market, **DISCOVER ADAC**, taking place **Sept. 22-24**.

### 2020 Finalists include:

- **Residential Design Finalists**
  - Angie Hranowsky Studio | *Charleston, SC*
  - Barrie Benson Interior Design | *Charlotte, NC*
  - Caroline Gidiere Design, LLC | *Birmingham, AL*
  - Courtney Giles Interiors | *Atlanta GA*
  - Kathy Smith of Kathy Smith Interiors | *Belmont, NC*
  - Kristin Kong of K Kong Designs | *Atlanta, GA*
  - Mark Williams and Niki Papadopoulos of Mark Williams Design | *Atlanta, GA*
  - Melanie Turner Interiors | *Atlanta, GA*
  - Phoebe and James Michael Howard | *Jacksonville, FL*
  - Robert Brown Interior Design | *Atlanta, GA*
  - Stephanie Sabbe, Sabbe Interior Design | *Nashville, TN*
  - The Design Atelier | *Atlanta, GA*
  
- **Contract Design Finalists**
  - Barrie Benson Interior Design | *Charlotte, NC*
  - Blackberry Farm Design | *Walland, TN*
  
- **Architect Finalists**
  - D. Stanley Dixon Architect, Inc. | *Atlanta, GA*
  - Historical Concepts | *Atlanta, GA*
  - Pursley Dixon Architecture, Inc. | *Charlotte, NC*
  - Spitzmiller & Norris | *Atlanta, GA*
  - Summerour Architects | *Atlanta, GA*

### About the 2020 Judges:

#### **Andrew Oyen**, *Principal of Ferguson & Shamamian Architects*

Before joining Ferguson & Shamamian Architects in 1996, Oyen spent eight years as an architect in the field of interior design learning valuable lessons that he draws on for each of his projects. Oyen’s experience informs everything from the initial meetings with clients to envision how they will live in a house to the actual creation of plans and construction. Oyen received his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Virginia and attended The Bartlett School at the University of London, where he studied

Architecture, Preservation and Conservation. His work, which has received a number of prizes and awards, includes projects in some of New York's most iconic buildings and residences in Los Angeles, Connecticut, Minneapolis and Southampton, among others. He lives in the historic Jackson Heights district of New York City and spends weekends with his husband in their 1905 cottage—originally an accessory building on a former estate—on the Delaware River.

**Alessandra Branca, Interior Designer**

Born and raised in Rome, Branca has called Chicago home for 30+ years. She acquired her love of classical beauty from her Italian upbringing and those roots still speak to her soul today. She believes living well involves comfort, elegance, and a touch of whimsical and she interjects this in her wide spectrum of projects.

With her infectious energy and tireless work ethic, Branca personally oversees each design project from offices in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles. Her designs are anchored by classical details, rich colors, patterns and textures, paired with antique and custom furnishings, modern and European art, and distinctive accessories.

Branca has authored the book, "New Classic Interiors" (Stewart, Tabori, & Chang, 2009) which illuminates her design ideals and is a visual delight for the reader. She is currently working on a second book which will showcase more of her iconic interiors.

Her work has been featured in countless magazines, including Architectural Digest, Town & Country, The New York Times, VERANDA, and Elle Décor. She has been recognized within the industry with awards from House Beautiful Master Class and won designer of the year from the Merchandise Mart in 2016. Inspiration comes from all facets of Branca's life including, design, art, nature, travel, and culture and she continually seeks knowledge and explores new ideals.

**Steele Marcoux, Editor in Chief of VERANDA**

Marcoux's design education started during her childhood in Atlanta, where she spent many afternoons with her artist mother browsing through galleries, antiques stores, and fabric showrooms. After graduating from Williams College, where she studied art history and played on the varsity tennis team, Marcoux worked in Washington, DC as a reporter before returning to the south to pursue a Master of Arts in American history at the University of Alabama. She is a veteran of the shelter publishing industry, having served as editor at Coastal Living, Executive Editor and Style Director, and Design Editor at Southern Living and Coastal Living. Marcoux lives in Birmingham, AL, with her husband, two sons, and dog Sawyer.

**About ADAC**

Built over 50 years ago by renowned architect and developer John Portman in the prestigious Buckhead community of Atlanta, ADAC is a community-focused, nationally-recognized leader in the world of interior design and home fashion, serving as the essential one-stop shopping resource for interior designers, architects, and builders. In November 2018, ADAC was acquired by International Market Centers (IMC), the world's largest operator of premier showroom space for the furnishings, home décor and gift industries. The ADAC campus consists of ADAC and ADAC WEST with more than 550,000 square feet with over 65 showrooms offering 1,200 of the industry's finest product lines including furniture, fabric, rugs, lighting, accessories, floor and wall coverings, antiques, fine art and framing, kitchens, bath, tile and stone, and home theater products. Likewise, ADAC's extensive services include custom designs such as framing, electronic systems, faux-finishing, and draperies. To learn more, visit [www.adacatlanta.com](http://www.adacatlanta.com). Follow along on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

**Media Contacts:** Lindsay Gordon + Katie Cline | 360 Media, Inc. – [lindsay@360media.net](mailto:lindsay@360media.net) or 404-577-8686

###