



For Immediate Release...

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ADAC ANNOUNCES...

2026 SOUTHEAST DESIGNERS AND ARCHITECT OF THE YEAR AWARDS FINALISTS

Three Categories, Five States, and 17 Finalists Recognized | Winners to Be Revealed April 23

ATLANTA: The Atlanta Decorative Arts Center (ADAC) continues to serve as a hub for the Southeast's design community, bringing together leading designers and architects through its signature programming, including the highly anticipated Southeast Designers and Architect of the Year Awards, co-sponsored by VERANDA. The annual awards recognize designers and architects whose work is shaping the future of design across the region and beyond.

ADAC is proud to announce the **17 finalists representing 16 firms from five states** across **three categories**: residential interior design, contract interior design, and architecture. 127 entries poured in from nine states, including Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, showcasing the awards' reach across the entire region. From these entries, finalists were meticulously selected by a respected panel of industry experts, including VERANDA Editor-in-Chief **Steele Marcoux** and VERANDA Executive Editor **Ellen McGauley**, Peter Dunham & Associates Founder, **Peter Dunham**, and Kligerman Architecture & Design Founder, **Tom Kligerman**.

As the Southeast Designers and Architect of the Year Awards continue to evolve, so does the caliber of work submitted. This year, judges noted an especially strong pool of entries, particularly within the residential category, resulting in a distinguished group of finalists. This increased rigor reflects both the volume of submissions and the rising level of design excellence across the Southeast, where firms are pushing creative boundaries and delivering thoughtful, high-impact work.

"The Southeast Designers and Architect of the Year Awards continue to reflect the strength and evolution of design across our region," said Katie Miner, General Manager of ADAC. "Each year, the work reaches new heights, making the selection process increasingly thoughtful and competitive. This year's finalists embody a remarkable range of perspectives and expertise, reinforcing that design in the Southeast is not only thriving, it's raising the bar."

The 2026 finalists represent a dynamic cross-section of the region's design community, from established leaders to emerging voices, including five firms being recognized as finalists for the first time. Together, they underscore the breadth of talent shaping today's design environment and the continued momentum of a program that draws both new perspectives and returning innovators.

The 2026 Finalists for Residential, Contract and Architecture include:

Residential Design Finalists

- Moe Draz of Architrave Interior Design | *Charleston, SC*
- Stephanie Andrews of Balance Design | *Atlanta, GA*
- Kim Mauney of Kim Mauney Interiors | *Charlotte, NC*
- Laura W. Jenkins Interiors | *Atlanta, GA*
- Melanie Turner Interiors | *Atlanta, GA*
- Teri Thomas of Teri Thomas Interiors | *Charlotte, NC*
- Yancey Seibert Shearouse of Yancey Seibert Interior Design | *Augusta, GA*

Contract Design Finalists

- ai3 | *Atlanta, GA*
- Sharon Cleland of J. Banks Design | *Hilton Head Island, SC*
- Tate Casper & Jordan Winston of Oxford Design Interiors | *Tampa, FL*
- Pfeffer Torode Architecture | *Nashville, TN*
- Jillian Rooker & Amanda Dashwood of Rook and Dash | *Atlanta, GA*
- The Design Atelier | *Atlanta, GA*

Architecture Finalists

- D. Stanley Dixon Architect | *Atlanta, GA*
- Pfeffer Torode Architecture | *Nashville, TN*
- John Plaster of Plaster Architecture | *Atlanta, GA*
- Summerour Architects | *Atlanta, GA*

- UrbanARCH Associates | *Memphis, TN*

Being named a finalist is an achievement in itself. Beyond peer recognition, finalists receive year-round visibility through ADAC's platforms and are celebrated at signature events. The Finalists Celebration will take place on April 22 at Made Goods in Suite 403 as part of the DESIGN ADAC annual spring market, bringing the design community together in Atlanta to celebrate, connect, and honor these outstanding achievements. Winners will be announced the following evening, April 23, at an exclusive, invitation-only Awards Gala. Media interested in attending the Finalists Celebration can RSVP to rsvp@360media.net.

With an exceptionally strong pool of submissions this year, the judges' insight was critical in evaluating entries and identifying the standout finalists.

About the 2026 Judges Panel:

Steele Marcoux, *Veranda*, *Editor-in-Chief*

Marcoux is a veteran of the design publishing industry, having served in senior editorial roles at County Living, Coastal Living, and Southern Living prior to being named Veranda editor-in-chief in 2018. She graduated cum laude from Williams College with B.A. in art history and summa cum laude from the University of Alabama graduate school with an M.A. in American History. Steele serves on the board of directors for the Alabama School of Fine Arts in Birmingham, where she lives with her husband, two sons, and dog Sawyer.

Ellen McGauley, *Veranda*, *Executive Editor*

Ellen McGauley is the executive editor of VERANDA with 20 years of experience writing, scouting, and producing design, decorative arts, travel, and garden stories. She began her career in New York, working at Time Inc. and Doubleday, before moving south to Charleston, South Carolina, where she helped launch Charleston Home magazine and served as its editor. In her roles at national titles in Birmingham, Alabama, she leads discussions on topics from antiques to classical gardens and develops stories that shine a light on the soul of a home. Follow her on Instagram at @ellenmcgauley.

Peter Dunham, *Peter Dunham & Associates*, *Founder*

Peter Dunham is an award-winning interior, textile, and furnishings designer based in Los Angeles and New York. His signature style blends eclectic European and tribal influences with relaxed California living and embraces color and pattern. Dunham counts Oscar- and Emmy-winning actors and directors, media executives, writers, and fashion designers among his design clients – his process and style tend to attract a creative set. Dunham is also the founder of Hollywood at Home (Los Angeles) and Peter Dunham Home & Garden (New York), offering custom furniture and vintage pieces, as well as his own textile and wallcovering line, Peter Dunham Textiles & Wallpaper. His first book, "The World of Peter Dunham," published by Vendome Press, debuted in April 2025 at No. 1 on Amazon.

Tom Kligerman, *Kligerman Architect & Design*, *Founder*

Kligerman was raised in Connecticut and New Mexico and spent years in France and England as a student. These experiences sparked his interest in the rich history of domestic architecture, interior design, and landscapes. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Columbia University and his Master of Architecture from Yale School of Architecture. Before founding his own practice, he started his design career at Robert A. M. Stern Architects. His work is based on a modern interpretation of architectural history, tradition, and culture. From oceans and lakes to mountains and the countryside, designs take clues from the landscape and, in combination with the owner's wishes, result in unique architectural expressions. Kligerman's latest book, "Summer by the Sea: Cottages from Watch Hill to Little Compton," the story of the Rhode Island coast, was released on March 4 of this year. Kligerman travels extensively, watercolors, and serves on the boards of a number of charitable and educational institutions.

For a full schedule of DESIGN ADAC events, as well as information about the Finalists Celebration, visit www.adacatlanta.com/design-adac.

Images and interviews with the ADAC team, finalists, and judges are available upon request.

ABOUT ADAC: Built 65 years ago by renowned architect and developer John Portman in the prestigious Buckhead community of Atlanta, ADAC (Atlanta Decorative Arts Center) 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 ANDMORESM and parent company Blackstone, the world's largest operator of premier showroom space for the furnishings, home décor, and gift industries. The 550,000-square-foot ADAC campus consists of ADAC and ADAC WEST and features over 40 design studios and more than 65 showrooms offering over 1,400 of the industry's finest product lines, including

furniture, fabric, rugs, lighting, accessories, floor and wallcoverings, antiques, fine art and framing, kitchens, bath, tile, and stone, and home theater products as well as three restaurants, The Hungry Peach, KR Steakbar, Krog Bar Coal Fired Pizza. Likewise, ADAC's extensive services include custom designs such as electronic systems and kitchen cabinetry. To learn more about ADAC + ADAC West, visit: www.adacatlanta.com or join on social @adacatlanta.

Media Contacts: Tara Murphy + Rehgan Smith | 360 Media, Inc. | 404-577-8686 or tara@360media.net

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