

CLOSE QUARTER

Bill Harrison reflects on his 25 years in architecture in his new tome, *Harrison Design 25*.

By Lauren Finney

The name Bill Harrison is synonymous with architecture here in Atlanta, but for the last 25 years, his reach has stretched from his home state of Georgia to the West Coast and all the way to Shanghai. *Harrison Design 25* (\$65, Harrison Design), out now, outlines his impressive history, complete with over 400 photographs of projects, interwoven with the personal histories of the firm's leadership.

Harrison's approach has always been slightly different—he got his start renovating houses in now-trendy in-town neighborhoods like Inman Park and Cabbagetown, which got both the industry's and prospective clients' attention. His unique sense of design, as well as the highest level of workmanship, took him to the rolling hills of Buckhead, where a renovation on a large Italianate house on Valley Road helped clinch his title as Atlanta's most pioneering architect.

"Initially, we were a three-person firm... but by the mid-'90s, demand grew," he shares. Those three employees have multiplied into more than 60 architects, designers and landscapers in offices in Santa Barbara, Calif.; Los Angeles; New York City; St. Simons Island; Washington, D.C., and here at home in Atlanta. "By [the mid-'90s] we were fairly established in the Atlanta market, but my involvement with

the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art helped expand and diversify the firm."

Through ICAA Harrison and the team discovered a passion for education. "I believe that good design is learned," he says. "Every day is a unique challenge; every day I look for the 'aha!' moment that will allow me to keep going and keep me fresh. Those moments come from everywhere."

As for how his esteemed clientele has evolved, Harrison says that "90 percent of our original clients were traditional clients; over half are now pushing the envelope. Their roots are still classical, but the details and composition of space in their homes are much more modern. ... More people are willing to experiment. They have increased their palette of available ideas, and their architectural vocabulary has expanded."

It's a safe bet to expect a lot over the next 25 years of Harrison Design, as Harrison's life philosophy exudes exploration: "I have always been curious. Being curious created a lifelong journey in bringing wisdom to the table, for bringing solutions in architecture. That is the joy and the challenge, and it makes it fun to wake up every day." 3198 Cains Hill Place NW, 404.365.7760, harrisondesign.com

Harrison's HOTS

Lots of natural light, indoor and outdoor living, understanding that architecture is both an art and a science

Harrison's NOTS

Poor attention to detail, megalomaniacs, fireplaces without good wine