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MASTER CLASS

BUNNY WILLIAMS

She's often referred to as one of the great decorators in the classical tradition, for good reason: nobody does it better.

Interview by SHAX RIEGLER

HOW DO YOU WANT TO live in a house? That's the most important thing to know before you buy or build. Do you cook? Entertain? Are you going to maintain it yourself?



ROUND TABLES ARE SO versatile. The Harvest Table in my BeeLine collection can be a small dining table, or used in a front hall or next to a sofa.

NATURE'S MIRACLE is amazing, particularly if you have pets. It takes odors and stains out of any kind of mess.



I STORE TABLEWARE IN groups. Like things go together, so it's easy to set the table. My tablecloths are on big, open-ended coat hangers—helps keep them from getting too wrinkled.



ABOVE: To tame the grandly scaled living room of a house in Hobe Sound, Florida, Williams created several intimate seating groups. "That helps make a large room comfortable for two people or 20," she says. "A large room also needs furnishings and accessories that have scale and presence, as well as a mix of unusual silhouettes and finishes to delight the eye." She included overscale plaster roundels and Chinese export

porcelain temple jars, and a fanciful papier-mâché "seaweed grotto" mirror over the fireplace. When Williams decorated the room, she kept in mind that it overlooked the ocean: "A house by the sea needs to reflect its surroundings, but in a subtle way—with natural materials like the stone floor, airy fabrics like the linen curtains, and a melding of relaxed and sophisticated furnishings."

THERE ARE TWO WAYS to use a sofa—for lounging or conversation. Most are only good for one or the other. The Whitney by A. Schneller Sons is great for both. It's deep enough that two people can stretch out together.



"A chair should look as good from the back as it does from the front."

IN MOST HOMES, the dining room goes to waste. My dining table doubles as my desk. I keep my supplies in beautiful boxes and trays, so I can whisk it all away in five minutes.



OLD TEXTILES WITH CHARACTER, like this embroidered Turkish towel, are a great way to add pattern and warmth to a room. I use them for cushions, to cover a chair, or just tossed over the back of the sofa.



ART DOESN'T HAVE TO BE expensive—even simple framed prints can be interesting. Édouard Vuillard's *Au Lit* is one of my favorite paintings, and years ago I visited a company that made copies of art for movie sets. This was hanging there! Now it hangs in my dining room. I love the colors, and it's so evocative and mysterious.

FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS should look easy and natural. I like to assemble a small bouquet in my hand, then tie the stems to hold it together before putting it in a container. ●

