

Platform



ALUMNUS PROFILE: Richard Drummund Davis [B.S.A.S. '72]

People travel the world in search of classical architecture. They visit Italy and France to appreciate the beauty of Mediterranean villas and provincial manor homes. They fly to England to admire Renaissance estates. And they travel the southern U.S. in hopes of reliving a bygone era when Georgian mansions and colonial plantations dotted the countryside.

But a person needn't travel the world to get an appreciation for romantic and classical historical architecture—one need only to travel to Dallas and tour the works of Richard Drummund Davis to appreciate a glorious unity of art and architecture.

Davis was born and raised in Dallas and received his Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies from The University of Texas at Austin and his Masters in Architecture from Princeton University. After studying under

renowned post-modernist Michael Graves, at Princeton University, Davis worked in New York for the acclaimed architectural firm, Hardy, Holzman, Pheiffer. After a short stint with the firm, Davis decided that he wanted to be able to express his own ideas and subsequently returned to Dallas, where his family and friends reside. He has two sons—Paul, who graduated from Baylor University and works at IBM, and Mark, a junior at Harvard University.

"I prefer the freedom of plan and the form of modern architecture, but find the process of creating buildings using historic forms, motifs, and details just as stimulating and enjoyable," said Davis. "I've designed luxury residences, luxury multi-unit residential projects, and luxury hospitality and resort projects."

Some of Davis' more prominent designs are a Normandy manor residence for Mary Sailor in Dallas; a rambling, romantic Tuscan-style villa for Berry and Jeanne Cox; a reproduction lower Mississippi River Valley green revival plantation for Governor Clements and his wife, Rita; a modern style residence for the noted Dallas general contractor, Cy Barcus; and an award-winning Texas Hill Country modern lodge-style clubhouse for the Dallas National Golf Club.

"Traditional or eclectic architectural design in Dallas is experiencing a trend of influence by the regional warm weather architecture of Texas, Louisiana, and the Spanish influence of Mexico," said Davis. "It's also experiencing a trend of cleaner, simpler, more modern forms, materials, and details."

Although Davis' biggest influence is his own abiding respect for the power and beauty of historical architectural forms, he admires the early work of Hugh Hardy and Malcomb Holzman, their freewheeling experiments with clashing rotated grids, brightly colored, off-the-shelf materials and outrageous, iconoclastic super-mannerism. He's also impressed with Robert Stern's tongue-in-cheek modernized interpretations of the American shingle style home.

Davis believes the key to a good education is getting an undergraduate degree in liberal arts at one institution and then studying for a professional degree in a different part of the country. And, as his business flourishes and he follows his dream, his advice to students pursuing a career is to find a niche in design and build a boutique practice.

—Amy Maverick Crossette



Richard Drummund Davis

Right: a sampling of his residential projects.

