

study in style

MELANIE ELSTON: PAST IS PERFECT

Envisioning a small room that would reflect a lady's lively intelligence while inviting her to read, write, or indulge in reverie, this decorator looked to Rose Cumming, Dorothy Draper, and Tony Duquette. Balancing their whimsy with clean-lined Art Deco designs, Elston developed a harmonious scheme in which palette, as well as form, contributes to the equilibrium. She chose green, a soothing color, as the dominant accent: in mossy velvet on the tufted settee, Fortuny fabric for the back wall of a curio cabinet, and floral cushions. Black-and-white stripes and golden leaves add pizzazz (melanieelston.com).



Conversation piece: "Organic Baroque Chair" in verdigris paint from The Selected Works of Tony Duquette at Baker (bakerfurniture.com). Elston would cover the cushion with "Vincennes" horsehair fabric in Forêt from Le Crin at Jerry Pair (212/546-9001), trade.

Go for the grain: "Wilshire Cocktail Table" in Lemonwood, from the archives of Lucien Rollin, a master of Art Deco style, available through William Switzer and Associates (williamswitzer.com), trade.

A golden glimmer to echo the wallpaper: "Poillerat Oval Floor Lamp" by Mattaliano at Holly Hunt Ltd. (hollyhunt.com), trade. Based on pieces by Gilbert Poillerat, a 20th-century French designer known for graceful metalwork.

For dramatic curtains: "Mechiche" silk fabric.
On the walls: "Banana Leaves," in gold, a large-scale design. Both by Rose Cumming for Dessin Fournir (785/434-2725), trade.



Big statements: Use "Sevigne" fabric, an antique design from Fortuny (212/753-7153, trade) to back the "Dorothy Draper Console and Curio," created for the Greenbrier Hotel in the 1940s, available through Kindel (kindel furniture.com).



Soft spot: Verel de Belval's "Prince Igor" silk velvet in Tilleul, from Brunschwig & Fils (800/538-1880), trade, would suit the 1920s "Fumoir" sofa from Poltrona Frau (212/777-7592).



Pillow fabrics: "Ames Houndstooth"; China Seas through Quadrille (quadrille fabrics.com). "St. Petersburg" in Ivys on Bisque, from an 18th-century wall covering in the Catherine Palace; Scalamandre (800/932-4361). Both trade.