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Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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CONTRIBUTORS



## ASHLEY BRADLEY

Interior designer Ashley Bradley collaborated with an old friend to create the relaxed family retreat featured in "Local Flavor" (page 76). "Together," says Bradley, "we relished the opportunity to explore the surrounding area for treasures and sourced almost everything locally." With an emphasis on textural textiles and unique accessories, Bradley complemented the home's soothing neutral palette. Her boutique firm specializes in residential designs that reflect a modern, eclectic style, with projects ranging from full-scale interior remodels, to new-build construction, to design consulting.

## ACHILLE SALVAGNI

Growing up in Rome and studying abroad, architect Achille Salvagni has been exposed to the finest in design and craftsmanship, evident in his multidisciplinary architecture and interior design firm's award-winning residences, super-yachts, furniture and lighting designs. Salvagni is the subject of a recent monograph, *Achille Salvagni*, published by Rizzoli International, excerpted on page 70, "Connected to Craftsmanship." Commenting on his approach to design, Salvagni says, "I find it inspiring that each new project is an opportunity for me to take a fresh approach and write a new novel."



## RENÉE GIROUX

Renée Giroux's mantra is to "think big, start small and evolve." Growing her business, literally, from the ground up, she has her hands full raising farm animals and organic produce. Giroux is the owner and operator of Earth's Palate Farm in Litchfield County and serves as the resident gardener and designer of the kitchen garden at the Artisan Restaurant in West Hartford and the general manager of the Northwest Connecticut Regional Food Hub. This mother of two and modern-day farmer shares her passion for nurturing the land, the community and her family in "Growing Organic" (page 60).

—Mary Fitzgerald





AS SEEN IN  
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# CONNECTED TO CRAFTSMANSHIP

ARCHITECT AND DESIGNER ACHILLE SALVAGNI FINDS INSPIRATION IN WORKS OF STONE, BRONZE AND WOOD | BY PILAR VILADAS

DESIGN AND CRAFTSMANSHIP are inseparable; you can't have one without the other. Achille Salvagni has been exposed to both since childhood, and this exposure had a formative effect on his work. And for Salvagni, Rome, where he attended university, is "the mother of every reference to craftsmanship," he says, referring to the city's seemingly endless examples of peerless work in stone, bronze and wood. His design for an apartment in the city's historic Palazzo Colonna, close to a decade ago, "opened doors" to high-end craftspeople with whom he has worked ever since. He explains that such craftspeople are almost like a secret club and that, for instance, "a lampshade maker will tell you who the best bronze person is." Indeed, Salvagni works with a man "who does the bronzes for the Vatican City," and he accompanies his preferred stone carver to the quarries of Carrara to choose blocks of marble. "I want to go to the origin of the material, and I like to get my hands dirty," he adds. But in one case, the craftspeople are not quite as accessible. The exquisite embroidery in Salvagni's projects is done by cloistered nuns in a convent near Rome. "You can't see them face-to-face," he says, "but you can talk to them through a screen, as if you were in a confessional."

Salvagni's expressions of these materials take many different forms. He uses bronze for the curved feet of his Roma cabinet, as well as for the cabinet's slender, arrow-shaped hinges. But bronze takes on a completely different personal-

ity in the base of the Tango console, where it becomes a kinetic composition of angled legs, inspired by the movements of tango dancers. It can be jewel-like, as in the handles, which are combined with semiprecious stone, of his Palatino and Nerone cabinets, or somewhat disquieting, as in the sharply pointed finial of the Lancea lamp, which contrasts with its sumptuous shade of fabric meticulously stitched around its curved ribs. Wood is bent, employing the same technology used to make violins, into sinuous, silky contours for cabinet doors, or it becomes the faceted geometric forms of Salvagni's Emerald tables.

Onyx becomes the glowing, translucent shades for sconces and chandeliers—like the Darts chandelier, where bronze "darts" seem to pierce the stone shade, which is carved to look almost like draped fabric. In Salvagni's imagination, materials become their most luxurious, and sometimes their most unlikely, selves. And this is what makes his designs so unfailingly seductive.

*Excerpted from Achille Salvagni (Rizzoli, 2019). Reprinted with permission.*



PAOLO PETRIGNANI (TOP LEFT AND RIGHT); PHILIPPE KLUT (BOTTOM); PAOLO PETRIGNANI (OPPOSITE)



Craftsmen (OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT) work on the base of Salvagni's Tango console, which references the legs of dancers as they intertwine and cross over one another. Salvagni works with cloistered nuns (OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT) to create the textiles that line the interiors of many Aldus pieces including the Aldus symbol, the snail and the rabbit, being sewn here. Moon candlesticks (ABOVE) sit atop the marble-topped, cast-bronze Diomedea console table, a vignette inspired by the ancient city of Pompeii. See Resources.



A limited edition Tango console made with a white parchment top contrasts with dark patinated bronze legs. See Resources.

CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM LEFT: JAMES MACDONALD (CONSOLE); ACHILLE SALVAGNI ATELIER (LAMP SHADE); NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, LONDON ("DITCHLEY PORTRAIT"); ACHILLE SALVAGNI ATELIER (ROMA CABINET); ISTITUZIONE CULTURALE, MUSEO CIVICO DI SAN SEPOLCRO (FRESCO)



A fresco by Raffaellino del Colle (ABOVE) representing Saint Leo the Great from Oratorio di San Leo in Sansepolcro inspired the base of Salvagni's Roma cabinet (RIGHT). Each cast bronze leg is shaped like the Pope's tiara. See Resources.



The "Ditchley portrait" of Queen Elizabeth I by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (RIGHT) informed the shape of the handmade and stitched Japanese silk lampshade (ABOVE) that adorns the Lancea lamps and was created by an eighty-five-year-old woman who was formerly the assistant of Renzo Mongiardino. See Resources.





The Darts chandelier (THIS PHOTO) demonstrates the designer's penchant for using exceptional materials such as cool, luminous onyx and patinated bronze in extraordinary ways. Bubble sconces (BOTTOM) are a new spin on Salvagni's original Bubbles table lamp, a bespoke piece inspired by the work of Jeff Koons' playful approach to depicting animated figures. See *Resources*.

ONYX BECOMES THE GLOWING, TRANSLUCENT SHADES FOR SCONCES AND CHANDELIERS—LIKE THE DARTS CHANDELIER, WHERE BRONZE “DARTS” SEEM TO PIERCE THE STONE SHADE, WHICH IS CARVED TO LOOK ALMOST LIKE DRAPED FABRIC



PAOLO PETRIGNANI (THIS PAGE TOP); ACHILLE SALVAGNI ATELIER (THIS PAGE BOTTOM); ACHILLE SALVAGNI ATELIER (OPPOSITE TOP); PAOLO PETRIGNANI (OPPOSITE BOTTOM)



Craftsmen use the same construction techniques (TOP) that they have since the 17th century to make violin bodies to create Salvagni's Silk Gold cabinet (RIGHT), which is finished to gilded perfection with sinuous curves and a handle inlaid with onyx. See *Resources*.