

Front Porch

How To



★ WINNER OF THE GREAT ROOM MAKEOVER CONTEST



Before

RICHARD LEO JOHNSON

From Fussy to Fabulous

In our Great Room Makeover contest, you selected the glowing transformation of a dated living room as the clear winner. **Erika Jo Brown** gets the secret formula.

The riverside property in Savannah's Historic District could easily have been called a "fixer-upper." Originally built in 1826, the home suffered a fire in 2007 that compromised several rooms. The interior that remained was squarely set in an era when Pepto pink walls and floral valances reigned. It took some international ingenuity and cooperation, but the home now has been transformed into a luxe living space.

Erik Puljung, a specialist in historic preservation and residential design at Hansen Architects, led the comprehensive renovation of the three-bedroom, four-bath house. He cites "respect for the history of the house" as a principal design goal, but adds that "the home was purchased with the intention to renovate to the new owner's taste and layout."

His task was to conjure a balance between old and new, striking and subdued—clearly evident in the softly glowing interiors of the winning room.

ADAPTIVE AIMS: Inspired by the Tate Modern gallery and other examples of London's adaptive reuse efforts, the client set the goal of finding new life in a traditional tableau.

TELLING DETAILS: Puljung and his team painstakingly restored the home's historic craftsmanship. "We researched the period of the home and appropriate molding profiles," he recalls, "and had new interior trim milled and installed." The living room floor was repaired with salvaged wood.

FRESH FINISHES: UK-based interior designer Rena Barclay chose golden walls and pale blue drapes for a refreshing re-interpretation of "neutral," which she layered with varying textures and patterns.

TIMELY TOUCHES: To give the home a lived-in feel, Barclay sourced signature pieces that span eras and styles. Placid paintings and rich textiles strike a traditional tone. Midcentury flourishes such as a molded Lucite coffee table and a bubble floor lamp add graphic punch.