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A Capital Respect FOR THE PAST

ART, ANTIQUITIES AND BOOKS GUIDE THE
RENEWAL OF A 1932 WASHINGTON, D.C., HOUSE

Interior Architecture by Richard Williams Architects

Interior Design by Solís Betancourt

Text by Michael Frank/Photography by Gordon Beall



José Solís Betancourt was commissioned to renovate the interiors of a 1932 Tudor Revival house in Washington, D.C. Richard Williams Architects collaborated on the project. **LEFT:** The living room. Sofa damask, Schumacher. Fabric on settee, left, Bergamo. Footstool, Kentshire. Drapery damask and sheer, Scalmandré; heading fabric, Osborne & Little. Aubusson, FJ Hakimian. **ABOVE:** Nearly enveloped in mature vines, the house's façade is clinker brick.

Tucked away in Washington, D.C., is a house that stands in a cocoon of beautifully modulated greenery and conveys an atmosphere of such refinement and tranquility that it might easily belong to a piece of remote countryside instead of being minutes from Embassy Row. Houses like this don't come about by accident. They usually have some history behind them—a discerning owner who engages a skilled architect, a clever interior designer and sometimes a sensitive landscape archi-

tect as well. But even when—as here—all these pieces are put into place, occasionally it's another, more mysterious element that makes the finished whole seem more resonant than its individual parts.

For José Solís Betancourt, the interior designer who renovated this D.C. retreat, the resonance is located in his clients' love of art, antiquities and books. "In my line of work, you often come across people who like nice things and buy nice things and decorate with them," he says, "but it's very rare to find people who are deeply