



Keith Irvine: A Life in Decoration

Keith Irvine, Chippy Irvine

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Interior decorator Keith Irvine steamed into New York Harbor in 1957 and immediately embarked on designing the unique, inspired interiors that have ensured him a place at the pinnacle of his field. His designs are characterized by feeling—wit, grandeur, comfort, drama—as well as by exquisite use of color, pattern, lighting, furniture, and accessories. Born in Scotland and trained in his profession in London—notably by the decorating legend John Fowler—Irvine combines old-world wisdom and new-world enthusiasm in his mostly traditional rooms and houses. The first book on his work, *Keith Irvine: A Life in Decoration*—written by Irvine and his wife, noted design writer Chippy Irvine—is at once illustrated autobiography, collection of work, and elucidation of design philosophy.

Irvine is known worldwide as an originator of the English country house look—a look not inherited, the decorator points out, but invented in the twentieth century. His characteristic played-down grandeur includes signature touches such as authoritative use of antiques of all eras, exquisite painted effects, rare scenic wallpaper, faded old carpets (his favorites are those that "look as though they might be in their last week"), spirited English and French chintzes, and loads of busts and books ("one can never have too many!").

Included in the book are more than twenty-five projects—including homes for Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Katherine Graham, Rex and Mercia Harrison, and Joan Kennedy—illustrated with exceptional color photographs drawn from Irvine's own archive. Irvine also presents his most personal projects—those designed for his own family.

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