

YES, THE WHOLE ROOM IS TEAL

Walls, ceiling, built-ins—designer Paula Daher didn't do anything halfway in this Back Bay library.

By Jaci Conry

The Challenge

This 19th-century duplex brownstone designed by the legendary firm McKim, Mead & White immediately struck interior designer Paula Daher with its monumental scale. But by the time she was called into the project, "Everything had been ripped out," she recalls. Among the few exceptions was the library's original carved mantel, marble surround, and handpainted tile. Daher—who collaborated with her business partner and son, Clayton Daher—was determined to honor these remnants of the home's grandeur while tailoring the library for modern life.

The Solution

To adapt the library for both daytime work and evening TV watching, Daher and Clayton conceived built-ins that stretch to the ceiling. Not only do the shelves showcase collectibles, they also serve a double purpose, with sliding panels that conceal a TV on one side and a desk on the other. To the designers' delight, the homeowner embraced bold color: A Scalmandré toile wallcovering inspired the room's palette, accented by a floral painting by Jackie Moore Watson and a Blanche Field teal pendant. "The homeowner told us people stop on the sidewalk... just to stare at the light," Daher says—an outside reaction that mirrors what the designers hoped to create inside: a room that draws you in and reveals its layers the longer you look.

BUILDER: BSA CONSTRUCTION; INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE: DAHER INTERIOR DESIGN

