



Inside Texas: Culture, Identity and Houses, 1878–1920

Cynthia Brandimarte

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“Inside Texas: Culture, Identity and Houses, 1878–1920” is a 464 page book with 296 photos that tests and rejects the notion that Texas homes, like all things Texan, were unique and different. Over the 40 year time span covered by the book, decorating ideas nationally and in Texas went from the era of Victorianism with “all that stuff” to the spare, clean lines of the arts and crafts movement. By 1920, like Americans across the country, many Texans, especially the wealthier, were taking their decorating ideas from the new professionals – architects and designers – and their homes reflected less their own identity than the taste and eye of the decorator.

In seven years of research, Brandimarte traveled the state, collecting photographs of interiors of Texas homes – rare in comparison to exterior views. The images reprinted here are arranged neither in chronological order nor according to decorating style but by identities –occupation, family, ethnicity, social group, region, culture and refinement, class and style. Brief biographical information about the homeowners is incorporated into the text.

“Inside Texas” is about people and houses. It is social history, a significant contribution to scholarship, an invaluable resource for preservationist, docents, architects and designers as well as a book to be treasured by anyone who loves old houses.

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