



CARLETON VARNEY

Dorothy Draper & Company
60 East Fifty-sixth Street
New York, NY 10022
(212) 758-2810

How would you describe your interiors?
They are basically color-oriented, filled with the magic of clear, bright colors. Just as Mrs. Draper would do a room in green and light blues with strong accent colors, I look for the unexpected in color relationships.

What elements do you prefer in your designs?
I believe the background—floors, walls, crown moldings, ceilings—is the key to design, not the furnishings. The elements are disposable, the background is forever.

How many projects do you accept per year?
About ten.

Do you personally oversee each project?
Yes.

How large is your staff? Do you employ an architect or a draftsman?
Seventy-five staff members, including an architect and a draftsman.

ABOVE: For his redecoration of Grand Hotel on Michigan's Mackinac Island, Carleton Varney used 18th-century furnishings and bold color to contrast with the air of a gentlemen's club in the Audubon Bar. Audubon prints lining the walls are from Sotheby's. Carleton V fabric covers the chairs and the George I sofa. OPPOSITE: "There are just too many hotel suites decorated in beige," explains Varney of his design for the Waldorf Towers in Manhattan. "I like to use bright, strong colors." A chinoiserie secretary used by the duchess of Windsor when she was a guest occupies one suite. Carleton V club chair fabric.





PETER VITALE

Do you work nationally or internationally?
Internationally.

Is there a minimum size project you will accept?
I'm known for doing big places—big hotels, big houses. But I would do a jewel box of a boutique, for example, if it were interesting enough.

Do you work with a contract?
Yes.

Fees:
Fee for the designer's time plus merchandise at cost, unless client and designer agree to another arrangement in which merchandise is charged at retail and no time charges are accrued.

Background:
Since 1965, Carleton Varney has headed the design firm of Dorothy Draper & Company, which has offices in New York, West Virginia, London, St. Croix and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Projects include the design of hotels such as Dromoland Castle in Ireland, the Brazilian Court in Palm Beach and the Greenbrier in West Virginia; residential projects include Jimmy Carter's Georgia house and Walter Mondale's Minnesota residence. He also designs fabrics and wallcoverings for Carleton V, Ltd.; contemporary and English furniture; and a variety of home furnishings. The author of several books, he founded the Carleton Varney School of Art and Design at the University of Charleston, West Virginia, in 1983.

Warm colors and richly grained antiques enhance the country feeling of the master bedroom in a West Virginia house designed by Carleton Varney. A Pennsylvania dower chest decorated with stencils is set at the foot of the four-poster. Bedcovering, Carleton V. Drapery and bedskirt fabric, Brunschwig & Fils. The Colonial Revival residence, explains Varney, is "a big, wide, strong house, a Woodrow Wilson kind of house. The character is basic."

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