

# Master of the Mix

REMEMBERING CHARLES FAUDREE

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A paisley fabric from Charles Faudree's collection for Stroheim was fashioned into a table skirt, draperies, and throw pillows in this sunroom.

Chatting with Charles Faudree was like bumping into a rock star for Nashville interior designer Eric Ross. "I've followed his work in magazines, read all his books, been to his showhouse rooms, and heard him speak," Ross says. "He's always been an inspiration to me." One of Ross's most cherished memories is when he and his wife, Ruthann, ran into Faudree last year at a restaurant in Cashiers, North Carolina, just a few months before the iconic designer passed away.



FAUDREE  
 GIBBS  
 To Debbie  
 May your home  
 be filled with  
 joy & happiness!  
 Charles Faudree

## Design Legend Charles Faudree

Toiles play with plaids, and masculine stripes cavort with lavish English florals in the always gracious and charming rooms designed by Charles Faudree, who passed away November 27, 2013, at the age of 75. The Tulsa-based designer (a Southern gentleman through and through) had a gift for the mix, layering colors and patterns to create rooms that our readers—and editors!—found irresistible. *Traditional Home* has published 13 of his projects since 1990, three of which landed on the cover. Faudree described his style best: “An elegantly eclectic environment that is at once French and English, formal and casual, feminine and masculine.” In addition to his thriving design practice, Faudree owned a store, designed wallcoverings and fabrics, wrote five books on design, and led design tours of his beloved French countryside.



**Sunroom** The acorn-and-oak-leaf sheer window panels and the wallcovering are from Charles Faudree’s collection for Stroheim. A chandelier from Regina Andrew Design hangs at the center of the coffered ceiling. **Autograph** Designer Eric Ross presented Debbie Jacobs with a book signed by Faudree, *inset*. **Pillows** Patterns in Wesley Hall fabrics play together happily. **Rug** A Niba rug with a dianthus flower pattern anchors the room. “I like that it’s both a geometric and a floral,” Ross says. **Console** An antique-looking Hooker Furniture mirror adds whimsy.





That summer, Ross was working with a longtime client and fellow Faudree fan, Debbie Jacobs, on a sunroom addition to her family's home in Brentwood, Tennessee. "Debbie loves Charles Faudree's designs and that Continental, collected look," Ross says.

After Faudree's death in November, Ross remembered a quote credited to the Tulsa-based designer. "He said something like, 'My greatest hope is that when I'm gone, people will remember I created something beautiful.'" Those words resonate with Ross. "That is really what you hope for as a designer—that you create beauty in someone's world," he says.

As the project evolved, it was clear to Ross and Debbie that this could be a joyful tribute to their favorite designer. They had already chosen fabrics from one of Faudree's collections, including a tapes-

try-like blue-and-green paisley and a delicate acorn-and-oak-leaf sheer. Guided by an oft-quoted line from Faudree, "It's about the mix, not the match," Ross artfully layered patterns and textures, using stripes on a cane-frame settee, a trellis pattern on a tufted sofa, a delicate trailing acorn wallcovering, and a funky kiwi tiger stripe on a bobbin chair. "I like mixing patterns, bringing in antiques—a collected look so things appear to have been acquired over time."

In Faudree style, Ross chose two different sofa styles. "I didn't want them to match," he says. And he made sure they were long enough for Debbie's husband, Joey, to lie down to watch TV.

A blue-and-green, dianthus-flower-motif area rug that Ross had purchased earlier (just waiting for the right client) happened to be sitting on his work table as he laid out the Faudree fabric samples.




“It was perfect. It was just like it had been waiting for this project,” he says. The Soumak rug’s flat weave keeps the room casual, too.

He wasn’t rigid about exact color matches either, insisting that slight color variations add depth to a room. “Some clients want to match every thread, but the genius is when you’re off just a bit.”

The 18x28-foot space is large for a sunroom. “We added more depth to get more furniture in,” Ross says with a laugh. (A decision Faudree would have applauded!) With walls of windows and a Pennsylvania stone floor, the room feels like an original old porch that has been enclosed. Topping the room is a coffered ceiling of pecky cypress that Ross designed in a sunburst pattern.

“Debbie really wanted this to be a room where both she and her husband could hang out together. She didn’t want it to be too feminine,” he says. “The natural wood creates a sense of masculinity, but then the ceiling pattern is more floral, so that bridges the two—masculine and feminine.” (Another Faudree design lesson well learned.)

The Jacobses enjoy the room daily, Ross says, but he and Debbie know it is more than a lovely, livable space. This is a tribute to a charming gentleman, an inspiring teacher, and their all-time favorite designer. 

**Interior designer** Eric Ross

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**Desk area** As a nod to Joey Jacobs’s cattle operation, the back of the Wesley Hall desk chair is covered with cowhide. The interior seat is a green leather. **Stag** Debbie Jacobs loves to collect, so Ross incorporated many of her collectibles throughout the room. **Table and chairs** A round table and a pair of upholstered Wesley Hall chairs snuggle into a corner for a sunny breakfast spot. **Back exterior** The sunroom steps out to the backyard. **Portrait** Homeowner Debbie Jacobs and interior designer Eric Ross.