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OCTOBER 2004 \$5.50

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The Manor

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Top Toronto designers rework York University's 1925 Italianate mansion **Glendon Hall.**

BY KELVIN BROWNE AND
JENNIFER DAVID

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TED YARWOOD

Every four years, a spectacular design event takes place in Toronto. It draws together cream-of-the-crop designers. It attracts throngs of decorating fans in search of divine inspiration. It takes a village of dedicated volunteers to mount. And it unfolds in one of the city's gracious historic homes. It's the Junior League of Toronto Showhouse — a feast for the eyes, and a fundraiser whose proceeds this year were earmarked for The Pathways to Education program, which assists economically disadvantaged children through academic, social and financial support.

This year's event was held at York University's Glendon Hall, originally built in 1925 as a private retirement property for Edward Rogers Wood, founder of Dominion Securities, and his wife, Agnes. Designed by architectural firm Molesworth, West & Secord, the Italian-style villa was set on 125 acres that encompassed tennis courts, a little golf course, bowling greens and a swath of the Don River. Last spring, dozens of local designers reworked the home's historic rooms with creativity and thoughtfulness.

Welcome to the Junior League of Toronto Showhouse 2004, a dazzling display of talent and ingenuity and a simply great source of decorating ideas.

Reborn



The dark tone of the French vanity is a pleasing counterpoint to the room's muted shades. To balance its visual weight, Johnston topped it with white marble. Subtle lighting is layered throughout the room, even in the pretty recessed shelves flanking the tub. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Ribbed glass in the cabinets allows a glimpse of the contents. The marble floor has dark limestone edging.

North Guest Bathroom

Ann Johnston Design Consultants and
Murakami Design Build

It's hard to imagine it, but this sublimely elegant bathroom, created by interior designers Ann Johnston and Ray Murakami was — at the start of the project — a tired little kitchenette and adjoining bathroom. There were exposed pipes everywhere, including one that supplied water to the entire university campus.

After Murakami (pictured, far right, with Johnston) oversaw weeks of reconstructive surgery, which included dividing the space into three distinct areas and introducing traditional detailing like mouldings, pilasters, wainscoting and classic built-in cabinetry,

Johnston got down to the finer strokes.

The room's atmosphere was inspired by a luxurious hand-painted silk, which she used for the soft curtain on the window. To coordinate with that, Johnston chose taupe tones for the subtly glazed and striéed walls, the rare striped marble flooring (laid in alternating squares to accentuate its pattern) and the rich walnut and soft sepia accents that balance the crisp white and chrome fixtures. It's worth noting these details here because, as is true for any well-designed room, it's the big picture that really seduces the senses. — J.D.

