



# FENIMORE LANE

## Talk Shop: Gray Walker // Gray Walker Interiors

By Ariel Okin – *Published: June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022*



### **ABOUT GRAY**

Charlotte-based designer Gray Walker has been in the industry for over 20 years, and is known for her feminine design that bridges the gap between cool modern and collected heritage. Her firm, Gray Walker Interiors, has been featured in publications like House Beautiful, Southern Living, and Traditional Home. Her work, “exudes a confident femininity, with a sophisticated Southern grace that is never stuffy,” she says. Walker enjoys weaving the stories and memories of her clients into their home to create a personal experience and a one-of-a-kind home layered with global influences and updated glamour. Enjoy our latest installment of our Talk Shop series with Gray!



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**Describe your style in three words or less:**

Sophisticated, Adventurous, Timeless

**What have been the three biggest influences on your aesthetic in your life:**

My mother, design school, and traveling.

**How did you start your company, and/or what is your favorite thing about what you do:**

In 1998, after working for other designers I decided it was time to express my own creativity so I started my own design studio!

**Do you have a mentor in your career, and if so, how have they helped to shape your trajectory:**

My father, who always told me that if you aren't loving your work you aren't doing the right thing. I watched him enjoy a long career that he loved until his death... just like my grandfather. My grandfather was quoted in an article written on him after his death at 92 saying " why would I retire when I feel I am the best I have ever been at this." I guess work is part of my DNA!

**What does your home say about you:**

That I am a homebody that loves comfort and style. I believe that your interior elevates your mood and brings a sense of security... visual happiness.

**Where do you find inspiration:**

Everywhere: Art, nature, travel, product research, working with great architects... I love learning from all of the craftsmen in my field.

**Who are your style icons:**

Rose Cumming, Brigitte Bardot, Grace Kelly, Jane Birkin

**What are your key ingredients for entertaining:**

Great flowers, mood lighting (candles & dim lights), and a specialty cocktail.

**Do you collect anything:**

Art, jewelry, and handbags



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**Favorite Instagram accounts to follow for inspiration:**

@willowcrossleycreates, @jeffreybilhuber, @quadrillefabrics

**What design “rule” do you always follow, and which is made to be broken:**

My rule is... I don't follow rules! Any time I try and follow the rules I end up breaking them. The art of interior design stems from the elements that are so wrong they are right.

**What are you working on right now:**

Multiple residential design projects. Including a 17,000 sqft house with an interior glass bridge, multiple indoor gardens, an expansive live moss wall, and a 12-car subterranean garage.



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### **Wardrobe staples:**

Classic staples paired with my favorite jewelry pieces, handbags, and shoes. My clothing moods are always changing one day I might feel preppy and the next I might be feeling a little downtown rock and roll.

### **Favorite fabric/wallpaper:**

I love Sandra Jordan, Pierre Frey, Rosemary Hallgarten, and Sabina Fay Braxton fabrics & wallcoverings.

### **Best interior advice you ever received:**

I learned from my second job how magical a mirrored wall could be, and now mirrors are a favorite element of my designs.

### **Best career advice you ever received:**

Stay the course, and don't worry about the opinions or actions of others. Be confident in your decisions that navigate your personal journey.



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**Types of home purchases you invest in, and save on:**

I invest a lot into meaningful artwork and accessories. If you see something you love, BUY IT. Balance high-end items with lower-priced items. It's not always about how expensive this is, just how you style & incorporate it to work with each other.

**Your greatest extravagance:**

Dry cleaning my sheets.

**Favorite places to shop for home:**

Niermann Weeks, Tommy Mitchell, John-Richard, and Regina Andrew.

**Most prized possession and why:**

My family because they make me feel grounded and real. No matter what they will always be there for me.

**Your interiors motto:**

I know all the rules - and I know how to break them.

**Your life motto:**

Always be kind & take time to smell the flowers.

**Advice for someone looking to define their own interior style:**

Gather inspiration pictures of spaces you enjoy, pieces you like, and after a while, you will see a recurring theme in your choices. Make notes on things you like and things you don't but most importantly make choices that you LOVE.



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### ***Take Ten: My Favorite...***

**Food:** Italian food! I love any kind of pasta. Best served on the Amalfi Coast.

**Drink:** Paloma

**Film:** “Life is Beautiful”

**Hotel:** Hotel Santa Caterina

**City:** Rome

**Bedding:** Leontine Linens

**Tea or Coffee:** Coffee Latte with Oatmilk

**Playlist:** Bee Gee’s on Pandora

**Weekend Activity:** Getting dressed up and going on a dinner date with my husband after a day in my gardens.