If Walls *Could* Talk

How material, motif and imagination transform the walls around us.

BY **KENSLEY GODBEE**

Landscape Through a Local's Lens

Many of the hand-painted murals found across Sea Island share a common thread: the work of local designers and artists who understand the landscape as well as the architecture.

Among them are Adrian Cate and Bethany Vann of Johnson Vann Interiors, a St. Simons Island-based design firm known for its work throughout the Golden Isles. The firm has contributed to several projects across Sea Island, including spaces within The Cloister, Beach Club, The Lodge, Ocean Forest Golf Club and The Cloister Solarium, where decorative murals and painted finishes help bring the surrounding environment indoors.

Their approach often begins with observation. Palms, marsh grasses and coastal skies become visual references that quietly inform the rooms they design. Rather than overwhelming a space, the murals are meant to complement architecture and views, echoing the natural rhythms of the island.

"Murals work best when they feel as though they've always belonged to the room," Vann noted in discussing the firm's work. That philosophy has guided their projects not only at Sea Island but also in private homes throughout St. Simons Island and the broader coastal region.

As Sara Zigman, Owner of Sarabeth Bespoke, observes, "We spend so much of our lives in our homes. Having a space that accurately represents who you are is paramount. The more a space makes us feel like ourselves, the happier we are."

Designs that once required extensive hand-sketching and guesswork can now be visualized digitally with remarkable detail before a single brushstroke or roll of wallpaper is applied. Patterns can be scaled to match ceiling height, palettes adjusted to respond to natural light throughout the day and across seasons and imagery refined to reference the architecture or landscape surrounding a home with greater intentionality.

Local interior designer Liza Bryan has worked on multiple properties across Sea Island. Looking ahead, she anticipates an exciting return to warmth and authenticity after years of sleek minimalism.

"Technology, craftsmanship and global access mean designers now have so many things available at their fingertips," Bryan says. "Each project can be tailored to individual lifestyles and tastes. No longer does one size fit all."

With this growing consumer accessibility, a heightened desire for distinction is born. Permanence has become the highest achievement in an age of constant digital influence, where inspirational images circulate endlessly across social feeds, and trends seem to rise and fall overnight. When walls

Interior designed by Liza Bryan.