

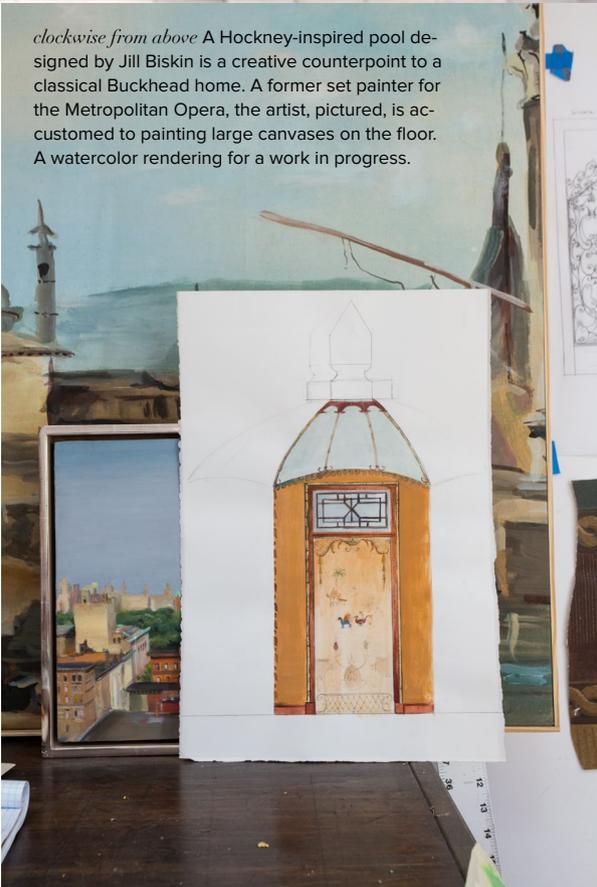


# Jill Biskin

A VERSATILE ARTIST WITH ASTONISHING DEPTH, THIS ATHENS-BASED CREATIVE DEFIES DEFINITION.

WRITTEN BY *Suzanna Cullen Hamilton* STUDIO PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Rinne Allen*

*clockwise from above* A Hockney-inspired pool designed by Jill Biskin is a creative counterpoint to a classical Buckhead home. A former set painter for the Metropolitan Opera, the artist, pictured, is accustomed to painting large canvases on the floor. A watercolor rendering for a work in progress.



FROM SET DESIGNS FOR THE METROPOLITAN OPERA to historically referenced custom commissions, the murals and paintings by Athens, Georgia, artist Jill Biskin range as much in subject and medium as they do in physical size. Biskin's body of work from the past 30 years reveals a strength and versatility rarely achieved by artists who become mired in a single genre.

"I like to change mediums because it frees me to think differently so that I never repeat myself, and that's a challenge that I like," says Biskin. The stark contrast between the artist's contemporary, large-scale graphic installations for Atlanta designer Nancy Braithwaite and her medieval portraits and painted furniture is testimony to this mission.

Classically trained at the Rhode Island School of Design, with further studies in New York, Florence and Rome, Biskin draws on both her education and her travels for inspiration. "I've cataloged both images and technical data from years of living in urban areas that are rooted with rich historical architecture," says Biskin.

In 2011 Biskin earned the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art's Philip Trammell Shutze award for Artistic Craftsmanship for her ceiling murals at Bonar Hall, a 19th-century Georgian-

POOL BY ERICA GEORGE DINES



*clockwise from left* A Philip Trammell Shutze award-winning project required a meticulous mural restoration. A glimpse inside Biskin's Athens studio. Intricate ceilings require Biskin to enact her vision from a ladder. Biskin reveals the detail involved in her sketching.



style house in Madison. Like her restoration work on a Menaboni mural and a Hockney-inspired pool for a Shutze home in Buckhead, the Bonar Hall project required months of working in situ. However, Biskin is accustomed to creating in seemingly unorthodox situations, painting from scaffolding, on the floor or teetering atop a ladder.

When not working on-site, Biskin can be found in her Athens studio. After many years of renting workspace, she finally built her own to accommodate the range of her projects. The two-story structure permits the artist to tack a 28-foot mural to the floor, harnessing the light and space required for such a grand-scale project. Upstairs, a small office provides space where she can organize and prepare for upcoming projects.

With her son attending college in the Northeast, Biskin now has ample time to spend in New York, where she finds inspiration. "I've had paintings warehoused in my mind and ideas percolating for years," she says. For an artist who considers travel a working laboratory, Biskin's next chapter promises exploration and innovation that will continue to inspire Atlanta's design community. [jillbiskin.com](http://jillbiskin.com)

SHUTZE HOME BY ERICA GEORGE DINES