

## MEET THE ARCHITECT

ANNIE CARRUTHERS  
IN-SITE DESIGN GROUP

**S**OUTH FLORIDA ARCHITECT Annie Carruthers brings timeless elegance and sophisticated style to every one of her equestrian estates. With over 25 years of construction experience and a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Miami, Carruthers is a master at her craft. A multi-talented artist, she combines skills as a general contractor, interior designer, real estate broker, and licensed registered architect to create bespoke structures in New York, Florida, and North Carolina. She founded the In-Site Design Group two decades ago.

**Clockwise from upper left:** *TerraNova* (See more photos on page 52), *Annie Carruthers*. *TerraNova's* saddle room. *BlackWatch* polo. See other credits on page 59.

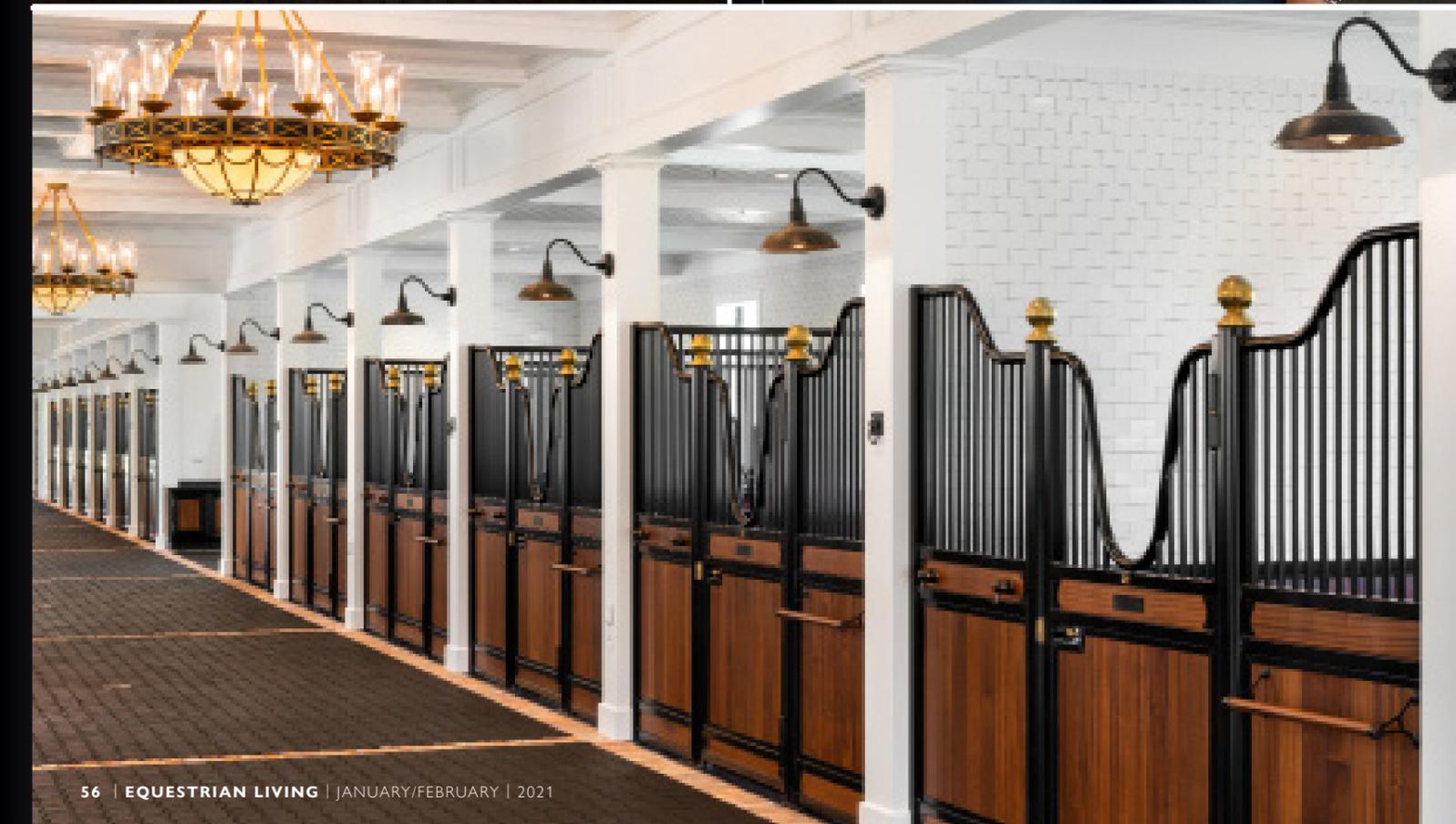
Most notably, Carruthers lends her diversified talents to the Wellington equestrian community. Fluency in Spanish, French, and Italian allows her to work with international clients, and she travels to Europe often to find inspiration. Her approach to design suggests a nod to traditional elements and responds to the tropical environment and a sense of luxury. Carruthers emphasizes elements of peace and provides spaces for reflection throughout her visionary work.

"During my early childhood, I lived in the suburbs of Miami when the urban sprawl began," Carruthers says. "Many of the farms were being subdivided and developed. I happened to live near a barn, and it was then that my passion for horses began. When I was in my teens, I used my first big paycheck to purchase a horse, and I began riding

and working with a trainer. A few years into my training, I suffered an accident, which coincided with my decision to begin architecture school. Now, I am fortunate to have opportunities that combine my love for horses and architecture that focus on horses' care and well-being."

Explaining her introduction to the equestrian architecture field, Carruthers says, "Thirteen years ago, a friend of about 30 years purchased a lot in Wellington, Florida, and hired me to create a new barn and a house design. After the project was completed, we were approached by other clients, and our equestrian work grew. With each project, I focused on learning all I could about the care and requirements for each rider and client."

At TerraNova, Carruthers worked with B&D builders. (See page 52.) "It was a wonderful



collaboration," she says, "and much of the finishes and systems were meticulously hand-crafted by B&D. We were working with an amazing client who desired a barn that would expand into an equestrian center. The show grounds will be developed in phases and be part of a full-service equestrian community."

When asked about her inspirations in designing barns and stables, she replies, "My inspiration is developed by the client. I try not to begin a design with preconceived ideas. I try to listen to all their needs and the design goals in order to translate their dreams. There have been a few times that the client has given us complete design liberty. With BlackWatch Stables, for instance, the client required that the style of the barn complement the main residence, which is a distinguished example of Greek Revival Plantation style, and maintain its integrity. I focused on the land, which had existing 20-year-old banyan trees, and we developed the barn's views to align between the canopies of the landscape. The internal finish details were a critical factor, as well. The antique chandeliers were the owner's elegant finishing touch."

Carruthers believes climate plays a vital role in designing a healthy barn. Ventilation, sun exposure, and humidity are paramount with any design, but especially critical in Florida. More importantly, she says, "We must design for hurricanes as well. Stables must stay safe during hurricane season. As

a Florida architect, I have to work with hurricane codes daily. A few years ago, I designed a barn near Tryon, North Carolina. We hurricane-proofed the structure and not long after the completion, a hurricane struck North Carolina.

"We work with various 3D software programs and are able to work remotely," Carruthers adds. "My latest design for Studds Show Stables is a tropical/modern style that is utilitarian, defined only by horizontal planes and intersecting stone walls. With our technology, we were able to walk owners through the design in the early development phase. The contemporary style is clean and simple. The materials we are exploring are more raw and organic. We are utilizing metal and concrete as a finished material along with natural wood and stone. Although I like to create different styles with a strong architectural identity, the movement now is to go modern, open, and clean. Horse-healthy can and should be achieved with any style, and the trend should be towards reuse and selecting recycled materials wherever possible."

Annie Carruthers is extremely passionate about architecture and approaches her work with great enthusiasm. "My goal is to make my client's farm their haven and enhance their lifestyle. I want to make their riding and living experience as worry-free and as visually beautiful as possible."

**Clockwise from upper left:** Studds Show Stables. Mallet Hill. Round Hill Polo Development.

#### Credits:

*BlackWatch Farm*  
Builder: Alonso and Associates  
Photographer: Ginger Photography

*Mallet Hill*  
Builder: Stock Custom Homes, LLC  
Interior Designer: Marc-Michaels Interior Design

*Studds Show Stables*  
Builder: W Development Group

*TerraNova Equestrian Center*  
Builder: B & D Builders, LLC  
Photographer: Jana Bannan Photography  
Interior Designer: The Decorators Unlimited

*Roundhill Polo Development*  
Builder: JS Construction  
Interior Designer: Paula Bickford  
Photographer: Ginger Photography

