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Hampton Classic

With a graceful touch, designers Delphine and Reed Krakoff breathe new life into a storied but timeworn Arts and Crafts manse on Long Island



Attentive to every detail, Delphine and Reed Krakoff—with assistance from architect Mark Ferguson and landscape architect Perry Guillot—turned Lasata, a down-at-the-heels historic estate in East Hampton, New York, into a stylish retreat for their family. For details see Sources.

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or some, real estate is the ultimate high-stakes sport. And in this competitive arena, few play the game with the savvy and passion of Delphine and Reed Krakoff. It's not just the quality of what they've purchased but also their ability to transform those properties into something more spectacular still. Reed launched his eponymous fashion line several years ago, and Delphine founded her interior design firm, Pamplemousse, in 2000. Given their combined talents, it's hard to imagine them even considering a project where they couldn't make an impact. "I think we enjoy the process of bringing a house back to what it was more than the end product itself," Delphine says.

Nowhere is this dynamic more in evidence than at Lasata, the historic 11-acre estate in East Hampton, New York, that the Manhattan-based pair bought nearly a decade ago as a retreat for themselves and their four children. Though the property's circa-1917 Arts and Crafts residence is famous as the childhood summer home of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and has long been admired as one of the East End's loveliest, it had seen few improvements since the '60s. ("Vintage wallpaper and vintage plumbing," as Delphine puts it.) But that's precisely what made the spread—which also encompasses a guesthouse, a poolhouse, and a small cottage—a perfect fit for the couple. "We've always been interested in unique houses that have a history but require a lot of work," Reed says. Adds Delphine, "We're drawn to places that scare everyone else away."

After bringing the systems up to contemporary standards—all those antiquated pipes!—the Krakoffs turned to the architectural elements, fixtures, and hardware, painstakingly restoring original details and replacing anything deemed inconsistent with the period of the house. "We were very disciplined about getting rid of whatever wasn't house-appropriate and bringing in things that were," Delphine says, noting their decision to use plaster with metal lath for walls in lieu of Sheetrock. In the same spirit, when the existing floorboards were damaged during re-leveling, they chose reclaimed 200-year-old oak to retain "that creaky feeling," she says. Recalls Reed, "One of the best moments was when Martha Stewart walked through the finished house and asked if we'd done anything. That was the highest compliment."

Perhaps the most significant intervention happened in the living room, where at some point the walls had been clad in ornate Louis XVI-style boiserie. It struck the couple as out of place, but it was only when they



Reed and Delphine Krakoff.





In the living room, a Queen Anne highboy and wing chairs, all from Bernard and S. Dean Levy, are grouped with a custom-made sofa, a Louis XVI marquis chair, and a 1940 Samuel Marx smoked-mirror cocktail table from Liz O'Brien.

Opposite, bottom: The entrance hall, sheathed in a custom-made wall covering by Delphine's company, Pamplemousse Design, includes a vintage John Dickinson side table from R. Louis Bofferding, while Queen Anne side chairs surround the table in the library/dining room beyond; antique Tiffany light fixtures from Macklowe Gallery crown both spaces, and a Line Vautrin mirror from Galerie Chastel-Maréchal hangs above the mantel in the background.





The sunroom is filled with pieces the couple has collected over the years, among them a pair of side chairs by Diego Giacometti, a Karl Springer console from Alexandre Biaggi, a Tang-dynasty horse, a sculpture by Harry Bertoia, and a Miguel Cisterna insect-embroidered lampshade from Maison Gerard; the restored tin pelmets are original to the house.

Opposite: Vintage Billy Baldwin love seats from Liz O'Brien and a 1965 cocktail table by Gae Aulenti sit in front of the sunroom's fireplace; the Tiffany turtle-back pendant lamp is from Macklowe Gallery, the black-and-white artwork is by Lorser Feitelson, and the white painted-rope side table is by Christian Astugueville.



From top: The kitchen's new cabinetry and Barber Wilsons & Co. sink fittings suit the era of the house; the vintage holophane pendant lights are from Wyeth. The Krakoffs' daughter Lily.

Opposite: Trelliswork custom made by Accents of France clads the walls and ceiling of the pool-house; a Friedel Dzubas artwork surmounts a vintage Billy Baldwin sofa, and the woven-rush seating is by Audoux Minet.

came across a book on Jacqueline Kennedy featuring a drawing of the room in the early 20th century that they discovered what had been there initially: simple grid-pattern millwork. Intrigued, they cut a hole into the paneling and, to their delight, unearthed the perfectly preserved oak predecessor underneath, which the Krakoffs then brought back into the open. "We would never have thought to look for those panels if we hadn't found that book," Delphine says.

For all the effort aimed at bringing the house closer to its original state, when it came to outfitting the rooms the last thing the couple wanted was a period look. "What's interesting to us is the mix," Delphine explains. "We wanted the house to seem as if it had been furnished over time."

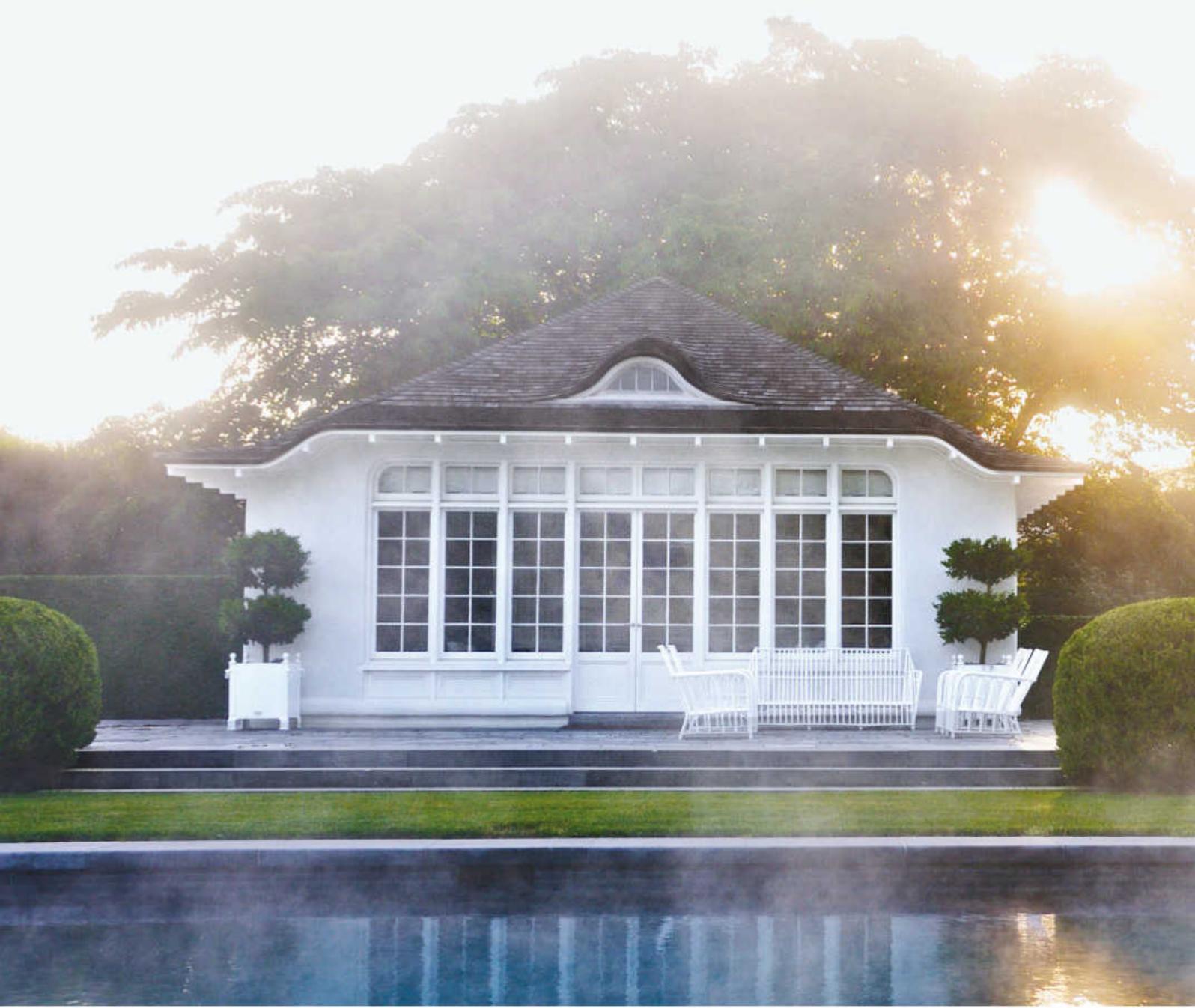
In the living room, for instance, a rare 1970s John Dickinson mirror presides over a seating area that includes an 18th-century Jacob Frères marquise chair and Queen Anne wing chairs (the latter a style the Krakoffs deployed throughout the house "to counter all the modern things," Reed says). And in the dining room a midcentury Samuel Marx table with Lucite legs is a winsome foil for a pair of 1910 Tiffany pendant lamps. In fact, all of the first floor's decorative lighting is vintage Tiffany, a choice made for the cohesiveness it brought to a residence in which multiple rooms are visible from any vantage point. "We had to pick a lane," Delphine says, "or risk looking like a chandelier showroom."

That sensitivity to visual order is apparent in the bedrooms as well. Though each has its own dominant color palette, they have similar furnishings (four-posters, geometric-patterned rugs). "We wanted to keep the idea of a theme because that's how the rooms were done when we bought the house," Delphine says. "So we have the yellow room, the blue room, and the orange room."

As for the extensive grounds, the couple worked with their longtime friend and frequent collaborator Perry Guillot, a Southampton-based landscape architect. In the formal gardens he streamlined the plantings and opened up the far side to create an entry to the lawn beyond. "Perry did an incredible job of distilling the original design into something appropriate for today," Delphine says. "It still feels like what was there, but much less Victorian."

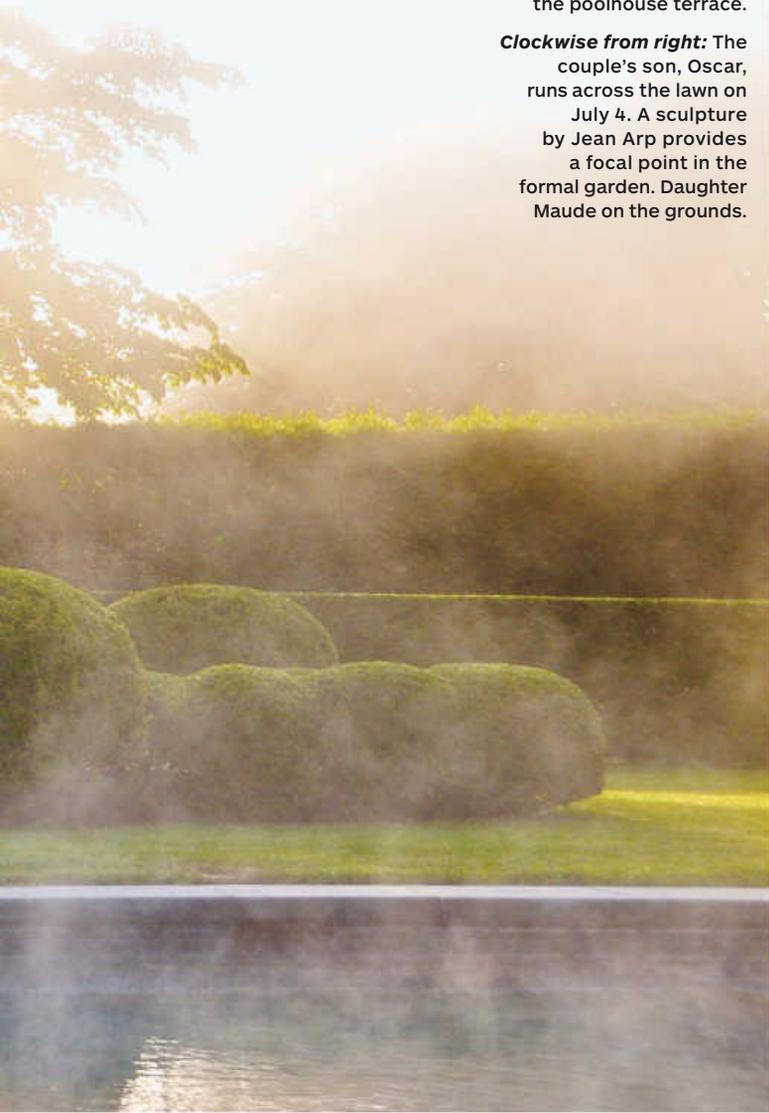
In the woods around the periphery, meanwhile, long-neglected plantings were simply filled in with more of what was already there—namely cedar, linden, and rhododendron. "The trick," notes Reed, echoing their overall approach to the house, "was to make it look like we did nothing at all." □





Cast-iron planters from Authentic Provence and vintage lacquered-reed furniture share the poolhouse terrace.

Clockwise from right: The couple's son, Oscar, runs across the lawn on July 4. A sculpture by Jean Arp provides a focal point in the formal garden. Daughter Maude on the grounds.





In the master bath, a circa-1900 Adolf Loos light fixture from Yves Macaux hangs over a vintage tub from Demolition Depot/ Irreplaceable Artifacts with fittings by Barber Wilsons & Co.; the zebra-upholstered oak chair is a Jacques Adnet design.

Opposite, clockwise from top: The master bedroom's Christian Astuguevieille bed is flanked by John Saladino table lamps; the wing chair is Chippendale, the Samuel Marx smoked-glass mirror and craquelure desk are from Liz O'Brien, the Jean-Michel Frank desk chair is from Tajan, and the rug is by La Manufacture Cogolin. The bespoke rug in Maude's room is by David Hicks. A 1930s Baguès chandelier presides over the dressing room.

