

FALL 2020

DEPARTURES

**HOME +
DESIGN**





In the Great Room, the custom skirted sofa is upholstered in Castel's Sabine fabric; the Fiorenza lounge chair by Franco Albini is from 1stDibs; the Waterfall coffee table was made by Gal Shevach in New York; the Danford jute rug in Tusk is from Stark. For details, see page 114.

NEUTRAL

TERRITORY

Workshop/APD's starkly minimal design for a Hamptons home leaves nothing on the table but a perfect synthesis of style and function.

by **STEPHEN WALLIS**
Photographs by **READ MCKENDREE**



In the primary bedroom, a Fontana Arte pendant from LoftModern hangs above a custom bed in Kravet Ultimate Suede; the Pacha lounge chairs are by Design Public Group.

BEHIND THE TRADITIONALLY STYLED

shingle façades that are ubiquitous across Long Island's East End, it's not uncommon to find modern interiors with lots of pastel tones and soft, by-the-beach vibes. But the vision Kay Olivia Keren and Ryan Jackson had for their weekend home in the Hamptons enclave of Sagaponack was something much more austere and unexpected.

Keren, a former fashion stylist, and Jackson, a principal at the real estate firm Stellar Management, acquired the 9,000-square-foot residence—set on three-plus acres of former farm fields a short bike ride from the ocean—in early 2019. Since meeting a decade earlier, the couple had regularly spent weekends together in the Hamptons, and with one toddler son and another on the way, they were looking for a place to put down roots in the area. “When we first pulled up to this house, we fell in love with the

property, the open space,” says Keren. “You step out of the car and you can hear the waves.”

Built in 2003, the post-and-beam dwelling—with its gabled roof, cedar-shingle cladding, and stacked-stone chimneys—was everything the couple wanted on the outside. But inside the rooms felt “quarantined off,” says Jackson, lacking coherence and flow, not to mention the openness they sought for casual gatherings with extended family as well as for keeping tabs on roaming youngsters.

“None of it made much sense, and it had no aesthetic, no personality,” says Andrew Kotchen, a founding principal of Workshop/APD, the firm Keren and Jackson hired to do both the architectural renovations and the interior design. “The goal was really to open up and unify the inside.”

Workshop/APD's diverse portfolio includes a number of Hamptons homes, as well as city townhouses and apartments, condo buildings and housing developments, hotel interiors, restaurants, and an extensive collection of furnishings. Not identified with any specific style, the firm is known for a holistic, always inventive, refined approach.

On this project, the team started by removing a section of the floor above the central living area to create a dramatic 28-foot-high space that exposes the post-and-beam structure. Walls enclosing staircases on either side of the



Above: In the kitchen, the counter stools are by Inmod; the refrigerator, under-counter refrigerator, wine refrigerator, and ice maker are all by

Sub-Zero; the wall oven is by Wolf. Below: The Adelaide dining room chairs are by Livoni from Artemest and the brass T2 chandelier is by Allied Maker.



Above: The Ocean Master Classic umbrellas are by Tuuci from Casa Design Group and the Maldives chaises are from Restoration

Hardware. Right: In the primary bathroom, the Meisterstück Centro Duo tub is from Kaldewei and the Wirth chair is from Jayson Home.



room were replaced with screenlike vertical slats to open up sight lines. And a hulking masonry fireplace was rebuilt in plaster as a soaring sculptural element that tapers and twists as it rises to the vaulted ceiling. “The idea was to create a focal point that really captured the double-height space,” says Kotchen.

When it came to the decorative scheme, Keren and Jackson had a very particular look in mind. Dyed-in-the-wool minimalists, they envisioned a boldly contemporary, uncompromisingly spare take on Hamptons beach living, with everything adhering to a strict monochrome palette. “The client told me at one point that she wanted exactly four pieces of furniture in the living room,” says Workshop/APD director of interiors Michael Ellison, who says the project forced him to suppress his own maximalist tendencies. “I adopted this language of 50 shades of white, while integrating a weave of textures, forms, materiality.”

Emphasizing comfort as well as coherence, the mix of furnishings assembled by Ellison favors European pieces, from iconic V-leg armchairs by Pierre Jeanneret and low stools by Charlotte Perriand to a sumptuous Jean Royère-style curved sofa and a Jindřich Halabala armchair upholstered in shaggy lambswool. Throughout, walls are the same white,

floors are the same pale-washed oak, and carpets are the same ivory-hued jute. With the exception of a few furnishings featuring natural or dark-stained wood, everything is a subtle variation on the white-on-white theme. “I describe it as kind of like a handful of sand,” says Ellison. “Each particle has a different color, but it ultimately looks like one color.”

Even the art, acquired in consultation with advisor Barbara Cartategui, hews to the muted palette. In addition to black-and-white Hiroshi Sugimoto seascape photographs and Jean-Michel Othoniel ink prints, there are all-white works by Thilo Heinzmann and Harmony Korine, the latter from the artist’s series of VHS cassette paintings.

As with the rest of the house, the couple’s bedroom and bath are about “no excess, absolute simplicity,” says Kotchen, singling out Keren’s dressing closet: “It’s just a rod for hanging clothes, a shelf for shoes.”

This is the way Keren and Jackson prefer to live, but make no mistake: Minimalist doesn’t mean monastic, especially with two young boys and regular visits from various family members. In the warmer months, days are filled with playing on the lawn and splashing around in the pool, with breaks for lunch, usually in the pool house, a casual space updated by Workshop/APD with what Keren describes as “a loungy, 1960s pool-party vibe.” As to whether the couple has any concerns about entertaining guests and raising two boys in such a pristine environment, they say they wouldn’t have it any other way.

In the end, Kotchen notes, the project was something of a revelation. “While our firm’s work isn’t bound by a single aesthetic,” he says, “this was certainly a look we’d never done before.”