

# HCG

Hamptons Cottages and Gardens

COTTAGESGARDENS.COM | JULY 1, 2018



## ARTISTS & COLLECTORS

# HC&G

JULY 1, 2018



A close look at someone's cabinet of curiosities reveals the passion behind the person.



# CANVAS

## **Bold Vision**

Made of Cor-Ten steel, Marino di Teana's *Liberté* holds court in the front yard of Deborah Buck's Sagaponack home. The landscaping is by Marders in Bridgehampton. See *Resources*.



# OF LIFE

For artist Deborah Buck, circles and sharp angles beautifully coexist

BY ALEJANDRO SARALEGUI | PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER MURDOCK











W

hen the fabulous but quirky Myron Goldfinger home that appears on these pages was on the market, even die-hard modernists likely turned up their nose at its mash-up of wild curves and rigid linearity. Having looked at many properties while she was renting a house in Water Mill, artist Deborah Buck knew that this one needed

special attention, but she was up for the challenge. "I have a capacity to look at something and see opportunities," she explains, "whereas others only see something that's unacceptable. When I first came to tour the place, it had been a rental for quite some time and hadn't been loved as a family home. I walked in and thought, This will do nicely."

The house's skeleton—walls both flat and curved, soaring expanses of windows and

#### Alluring Entry

An iron pendant hangs above the granite flagstone walkway (opposite); the antique bell is from a Royal Navy ship. The foyer (above) features a John Folis-designed F508 Peanut planter, a French maple bench, and a 1960s Rosenthal vase used to hold walking canes. The curved wall is painted Benjamin Moore's Racing Orange. See Resources.



### Contemporary Spirit

The living room is furnished with an Edward Wormley-designed sectional, a Bernard Mélois bird sculpture perched atop a Danish ceramic and oak coffee table, and a vintage Persian rug. The sinuous chrome, brass, and marble sculpture next to the zinc-clad fireplace is by Curtis Jeré. See *Resources*.







“**F**rom the minute you walk in the door, you should be prepared for the unexpected”

skylights—was essentially fine, but still required more than just a coat of paint. The round skylight above the master tub went into the Dumpster, as did the master bedroom window, which overlooked the living room. “We didn’t reinvent the wheel,” says Buck, “but it’s a big, open clean space with views to die for, and we did the most to amplify its assets.”

During phase one, the walls were painted crisp white and floors refinished in a nondescript walnut. Chrome hardware and sheer pin-pleat curtains were installed throughout. The inspiration, particularly in the entirely reimagined kitchen, was of a ship moored on Sagaponack’s farm fields with views of the nearby ocean. “I refer to the house as a ‘she,’ just as one does with a boat,” Buck says. Other changes included turning a windowless bedroom into a proper laundry room and pouring a concrete floor in the cabana to give it a Japanese teahouse feel.

The next layer involved injecting the rather minimalist structure with the personality of a maximalist. For 11 years, Buck owned Buck House, a beloved shop in Carnegie Hill known for its eclectic mix of antiques and home accessories in daring, bright colors (including practically every possible shade of turquoise). Not surprisingly, her new entry foyer features a curved Hermès orange wall and a custom-made French maple bench hard up against it. “It’s a brute house, and it needs strong statements that respect its original design,” says Buck. “From the minute you walk in the door, you should be prepared for the unexpected.”

The guest suites upstairs have their own





### Gathered Together

(CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT) A pair of Tibetan candlesticks and a 1950s Italian ceramic depicting a birdcage grace a bench in a hallway. In the casual dining area off the kitchen, an antique Chinese farmer's stool and mahogany benches surround a rosewood table. Ink sketches by Sam Seawright line the curved wall in the dining room, which features a suite of Krusin chairs from Knoll. A Roger Capron ceramic artwork overlooks the office (OPPOSITE); the Danish desk is from the 1960s. See *Resources*.





“W

e didn't reinvent the wheel, but it's a big, open clean space with views to die for, and we did the most to amplify its assets”







### Worldly Quarters

In a guest suite nicknamed the "Explorers' Club" (THIS PAGE), framed Egyptian fabric panels flank the bed, which is covered with a 1950s coverlet featuring Egyptian motifs. The Pernilla lounge chair is a Bruno Mathsson design. (OPPOSITE TOP LEFT AND RIGHT) Buck's *Ring of Fire* hangs in the master bedroom, which is furnished with Danish seating pieces and a 19th-century Chinese bedside table. The "Imperial Suite" guest room (OPPOSITE BOTTOM) includes a 1950s gilt bench and circa-1920s painted Chinese end tables. See Resources.

personalities, deep reflections of Buck's passions as a collector. The "Explorers' Club," as she calls one of them, loosely embraces a polyethnic tribalism, whereas the "Imperial Suite" exudes a pan-Asian aesthetic. "Even the hallways leading to these rooms set you up for the suites themselves," she says. "We let our guests choose which one they want to stay in—always an interesting test." Fittingly enough, the master suite's turquoise and white sofa fabric, a Buck design, is modeled on elements found in her paintings.

The loft-like primary living space is further testament to Buck's love of travel and wandering. She purchased the ceramic coffee table at a tag sale in Copenhagen (and had it stored at her hotel until her shipper could pick it up). The dining table, comprising a base by Scarpa and a simple marble surfboard top, echoes the sweeping curve of the dining room wall.

Buck's painting studio, located directly below the dining room, also features a similarly curved wall, a shape that she deems very appropriate in light of her work. At their core, she says, her canvases depict things that are bulbous or seemingly going to explode. "I think arabesques are pleasing to make and also comforting—they're inherently part of my aesthetic coding," she muses. "If you are visually aware, a coding is instilled in you that challenges you to create. In my painting, I recognize that the farther I go, the more I see these markers or codes reappearing over and













### Lounging Around

A Jeff Thomas-designed surfboard is mounted in the cedar-lined pool cabana (OPPOSITE). Country Casual Teak chaise longues take in the sun on the roof deck (THIS IMAGE), which has views of Sagg Pond and the Atlantic Ocean. The pool umbrellas (BELOW) are from Thayer's Hardware & Patio. See Resources.



over, so I just go with them and don't try to stop myself."

While she was getting her ship into shape, Buck knew she also needed to get the landscaping in order, so that she would no longer think of the house as "an albatross on a flat field." She hatched a plan with Charlie Marder of Marders in Bridgehampton, emphasizing a wild landscape that could stand up to the structure's architecture. "When I interviewed Charlie," she recalls, "he instinctively went inside the house and said, 'We're going to pull up a truck of trees and shrubs and place them together, just like you've done with your furniture, until they're balanced and tell a story.' I love the idea of being in a landscape and stumbling upon surprises—things that aren't *ta-da!* moments."

A fitting example is *Liberté*, a Cor-Ten steel sculpture by Marino di Teana that's placed off-center in the front yard, so that it only appears as one approaches the front door from the driveway. "The sculpture is composed of circles and lines and speaks to the house," Buck explains. "It continues the aesthetic conversation indoors and spills over into the lawn. It was crucial that it would be in harmony with the landscape."