

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2013

VERANDA

*The Warmth
Of Winter*





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With roots as a sculptor, trailblazing flower designer Emily Thompson uses unexpected materials to reimagine holiday arrangements that have a poetic grace.

ALL IMAGES: MAX KIM-BEE



LIGHT TOUCH

SOOTHING HUES AND
SPARKLING DETAILS
BRING EASYGOING
GLAMOUR TO A
SEASIDE RETREAT.





IN MATTERS OF LOVE AND HOUSING, IT'S BEST TO BE ALL IN—TO FEEL SO DECISIVE ABOUT THE OBJECT OF YOUR DESIRE THAT NOBODY CAN TALK YOU OUT OF IT. BUT EVERY SO OFTEN, THE ABILITY TO SCRAP

one plan and boldly dive into another can be liberating. So it went for a couple holding blueprints for a majestic house to be built in upstate New York.

The turning point came when they rented a house in Water Mill, New York, and realized it wouldn't be just the monthlong fling they'd signed up for. They fell in love with the beachy hamlet once billed as the quiet Hampton. They wanted to stay.

So they found this 10-year-old Shingle Style house tucked between pristine farmland and Mecox Bay. Then they called on Brian J. McCarthy, the Manhattan-based interior designer, who was game to come on board. A Parish-Hadley alum known for traditional, high-style decorating with a 21st-century spin, McCarthy has a new book, *Luminous Interiors* (Abrams), chronicling his latest designs around the world. Its title aptly describes what he did with these very rooms. "I stripped everything back and kept a light hand," says McCarthy. "We wanted the mood to be young and fresh. It's a beach house, so it's not about the seriousness of the objects." But it is about the pleasures of ethereal spaces, some of them rendered in cloudy white to ward off heaviness. The foyer's shell-encrusted mirror

Fanciful furnishings animate the entry. Antique Burmese chairs, Linda Horn. Custom mirror, Tess Morley. OPPOSITE: Custom two-sided slipper chair in Fadini Borghi fabric. Armchairs, Jonas, in a Quadrille linen. Coffee table, Vosges. Chandelier, Newel Antiques. Art, Sophie von Hellermann. OPENING PAGES: Custom table. Custom chairs in GP & J Baker and Raoul Textiles fabrics. Rug, Beauvais. Chandelier, Anne Jaudel. Baguès sconces, Carlos de la Puente.



“I STRIPPED EVERYTHING
BACK AND KEPT A LIGHT
HAND. WE WANTED THE MOOD TO BE
YOUNG AND FRESH.”

Pale-turquoise walls evoke the
nearby seashore. Custom
headboard, A. Schneller Sons.
Bed linens, Matouk. Bench,
Mecox Gardens. Custom
armchair in Quadrille linen. Floor
lamps, Thomas Gallery.
Chandelier, Marvin Alexander.
Custom carpet, Beauvais.



Subtle stripes painted in a bold scale give the study a chic polish. Custom sofa in a Telifina cotton. Pillows, Bergdorf Goodman. Vintage coffee table, Mecox Gardens. Art, Bob Tabor. **OPPOSITE:** Curtains in a Schumacher sheer. Antique Persian rug, Beauvais. Chandelier, Vaughan.



suspended over an ornately carved Regency-style console makes this clear from the start—it's an exuberant greeting and a signal of what's within.

Like his mentor, the late Albert Hadley, McCarthy relishes collaborating with artisans. Throughout the house, he orchestrated highly embellished walls and other beguiling surfaces to play up the mood. For the dining room, he commissioned a mural on canvas with the shimmering depths of Monet's "Water Lilies" paintings and installed it like wallpaper. Romantic and serene, it envelops the space in eddies of lilac, blue, and swirling white that grow more magical by candlelight.

He designed the living room's walls as 3-D matte-white plaster waves, done wet on site. "You use these wood combs, so you

control the movement, the ebb and flow of it," says McCarthy. The Cubist-like cocktail table is a copy of one by the 20th-century French designer Marcel Coard, its surface water-gilded in palladium silver leaf for the softest kind of glamour.

The bedrooms were given the same rarefied treatment. From the celestial walls and silky carpet in the master bedroom to the looping crystal chandelier in the bath, everything's caught up in the same spirit of ethereal luxury.

"I've heard a lot of wows," says the husband. "You know what the biggest problem is? Sometimes I'll stay in the house for three days until I have to say to myself, Get off the property! We never want to leave. It's a good problem." □

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FROM THE CELESTIAL

WALLS TO THE CRYSTAL
CHANDELIERS, EVERYTHING'S
CAUGHT UP IN THE SAME
SPIRIT OF ETHEREAL LUXURY.

