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INA GARTEN'S
PRIVATE
PARADISE

Summer at Ease All-American Style

LAID-BACK, BRIGHT
& BREEZY

DREW
BARRYMORE'S
MUST-HAVES

ELLE DECOR

The living area of a home in Greenwich, Connecticut, which was designed by architect Greg Tankersley of McAlpine, with interiors by Carol Egan. The armchairs are by Studio Van den Akker, the cocktail table is from Holly Hunt, and the sofa is a custom design; the mirror is from Maison Gerard, the rug is by Joseph Carini Carpets, and the walls are covered in hand-troweled plaster. **FACING PAGE:** The rear facade of the house is painted in a mix of Benjamin Moore's Graphite and Gunmetal; the windows are by Marvin, and the roof is covered in cedar shingles. For details, see Resources.





DOUBLE DUTY

For a couple torn between city and country, architect Greg Tankersley and designer Carol Egan conjure a Greenwich retreat that's the perfect blend of pastoral comfort and urban pizzazz

TEXT by KATHLEEN HACKETT · PHOTOGRAPHY by SIMON UPTON
PRODUCED by ROBERT RUFINO

The architect Greg Tankersley has no taste for the type of property he describes as an “ego lot,” the kind of place where a showy house faces the street and loudly puts everything on display. “There’s nothing interesting about a residence that screams, ‘Look at me,’” says Tankersley, a partner in the Manhattan office of the architecture and interiors firm McAlpine. “A good house is like a good person. You should learn about him or her gradually.”

Which is why, as the affable Alabama native drove around Greenwich, Connecticut, with his clients looking for the perfect spot to

build their country house, he suggested a parcel of land that has no street presence and that hugs a natural preserve.

For the couple—he is a film and real estate executive and she is an art dealer—a weekend retreat from their harried Manhattan life was meant to bring them closer to their grandchildren, who live nearby. “He wanted to be out in the country,” says Tankersley, “but she is a true city girl. Greenwich is about as bucolic as she could manage.”

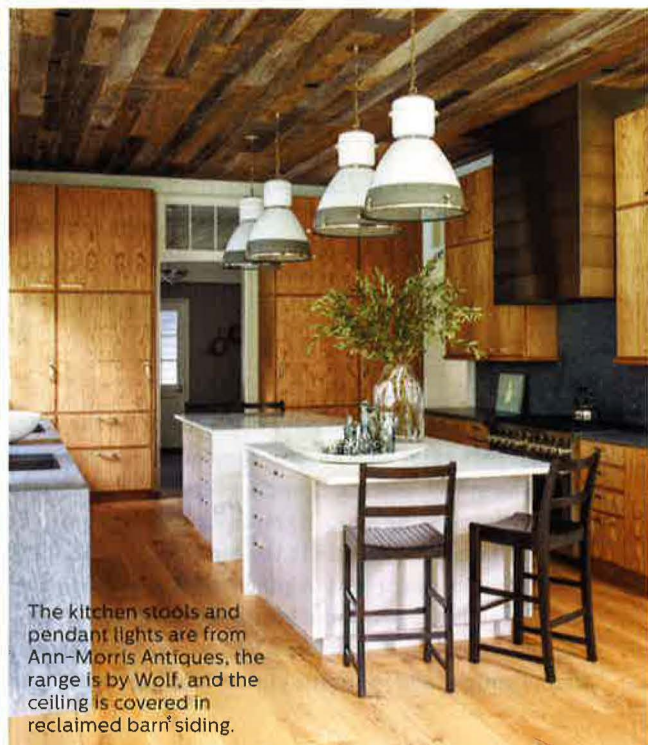
From the outside, the home’s architecture—handsome dormers, perfectly pitched gables, clapboard siding, and cedar roof shakes—



An oak-and-nickel table by KGBL is flanked by a custom sofa in a Holly Hunt leather and 1930s Alvar Aalto chairs; the vintage wall lights are by Stilnovi, the photograph is by Hiroshi Sugimoto, and the walls are painted in Donald Kaufman Color's Collection No. 51.



In the front entrance, the bench is by Lucca & Co., the stool is from Holly Hunt, and the 1979 Italian light fixture is by Studio BBPR.



The kitchen stools and pendant lights are from Ann-Morris Antiques, the range is by Wolf, and the ceiling is covered in reclaimed barn siding.

The family room's custom sofa is upholstered in a Rogers & Goffigon linen; the cocktail table is by Charlotte Perriand, the armchair is by Pierre Jeanneret, and the stool is by Christian Astuguevieille; the rug is from FJ Hakimian, and the artwork is by Sam Taylor-Johnson. For details, see Resources.







fits seamlessly into its tony suburban setting. “It knows what dinner party it is invited to, and what to wear,” Tankersley jokes. But on the inside, the house takes more chances. Here, museum-perfect white walls displaying contemporary art contrast with soaring ceilings clad in ravaged barn siding and floors laid with wide-plank oak.

The home’s design is a marriage of opposites, not unlike the couple’s own union. When decorator Carol Egan began to work on the interior, she kept the words of the wife in mind: “He’s a little bit country, I’m a little bit rock and roll.” The designer, who has worked with the couple on three other homes, knew exactly how to bridge the gap.

She set out to create rooms that are at once dramatic and relaxed, with just the right amount of tension between the classic architecture and the minimalist furnishings.

Even more important was that every room be useful; there are no velvet ropes here. “They didn’t want a formal dining room because they don’t entertain that way,” says Egan. Instead, an antique wooden table stretches along one end of the great room, where it is used not just for meals but also for reading and sending e-mails.

The push and pull of traditional and modern shows up throughout the house. All is restrained in the living area until you notice the assertively graphic rug. Gregarious lighting is everywhere—swinging, swaying, and angling its way into even the most subdued spaces. There are time-honored materials in the kitchen, which is outfitted with soapstone countertops and backsplash, stainless steel appliances, and twin islands sheathed in statuary marble. But old-fashioned painted cabinets were never in the plan. Instead, the

LEFT: The 1822 French money table and the armchairs by Helge Vestergaard Jensen at either end, which are covered in a Rogers & Goffigon leather, are all from Wyeth; the sofa is a custom design, the circa-1950 oak side chairs are by Marolles, the light fixture is by Achille Salvagni, and the photograph is by Robert Mapplethorpe. **ABOVE:** In the husband’s study, a 1950 Danish chair by Nanna Ditzel is covered in a Holland & Sherry fabric; the console is a custom design, the wall lamp is by Flos, and the side table is from Espasso; the photograph by William Eggleston is from Cheim & Read gallery, and the wool carpet is by Sam Kasten. For details, see Resources.



kitchen's cupboards are clad in a wormy chestnut that has been brushed with a faint white wash and embellished with handsome burnished-nickel pulls.

Even if husband and wife arrived at the project with differing points of view, both were equally enthusiastic. In many ways, their approach was to divide and conquer. Egan recalls being impressed when the husband toted full sets of hand-drawn plans to design meetings. And while he was largely happy to cede decorating decisions to his wife and Egan, he says, "I was pleased to give my two cents on the rare occasion that I was asked."

His wife puts a finer point on the division of labor. "We both know what we are good at," she says. "He is great at reading plans and working from the ground up, and I am much happier to pay attention when the space needs filling up." His wish for a sofa in his study—"I wanted to be able to read and nap there," he says—was more than met when he was allowed to test and tweak it at the upholsterer.

The easygoing executive was also quite clear that he wanted the exterior to be painted white. Though his wife allowed him to believe that it would be, it turned out that she and the decorator had other plans all along. "Carol and I knew that was never going to happen. We pushed it from light to medium to dark gray over time, and of course, now he adores it," she says.

Almost, that is, as much as he clearly cherishes his wife. "We've done three houses in five years, and we've only been married for five," he says. "We're going to keep the marriage part up, but we're done with the house-building part. I can't stress that enough." ■



The master bath's tub by Kohler has fittings by Waterworks; the Hans J. Wegner stool is from Wyeth, and the 1970s Luigi Caccia pendant light is from Bernd Goeckler; the walls are sheathed in Venetian plaster, and the Thassos floor tile is from Fordham Marble. **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP:** The master bedroom's headboard is by Roman Thomas, the bed linens are by Matouk, the console is by BDDW, and the armchair is from Galerie Blanchetti; the 1960 floor lamp is by Carl Fagerlund for Orrefors, the 1970 ceiling light is by Angelo Brotto for Esperia, the rug is by Mitchell Denburg, and the walls are painted in Pavilion Gray by Farrow & Ball. The pool terrace chairs by Richard Schultz are from Knoll. For details, see Resources.

