

HCG

Hamptons Cottages and Gardens

COTTAGESGARDENS.COM | MAY/JUNE 2024

EASY
LIVING



VICTORIA HAGAN

After receiving a BFA from Parsons, Interior Designer Victoria Hagan inquired about getting a start in design. “I had asked someone how you get started in the field, and they said it was so important to have an internship. It was a lucky day in my career when I started interning for Simone Feldman. I learned so much from her. She later became my partner until she passed away in 1991. We have an internship program in our office because I think it’s so important to open students’ eyes to the reality of the business. I’ve had interns who have grown to become senior designers in the office, and it’s very exciting and rewarding to watch their career path.” Hagan says of this issue’s “Uptown Elegance” (page 102): “This project had such a unique architectural challenge, so my favorite part was working on the floor plans and seeing the potential of combining the three apartments together. We were able to understand the transformation of the previously divided units into a beautiful, livable layout that the newly conceived larger spaces would provide.”

SABINA SZATKO

In this issue’s “Fresh Take” (page 110), Designer Sabina Szatko of S.M.S. Interiors ventures into a new design pursuit. “This was my first project coming out of a long ten-year run at Tom Scheerer,” says Szatko. “It was a time for me to spread my wings and understand how it works when you’re the boss and directing the client into making movements, and trusting the process.” When it came to discovering her passion, Szatko says, “I feel like a lot of people have this similar story: I moved around a lot as a kid. My parents are from Europe, we moved to the states, and my parents are big home renovators themselves, so I feel it was something ingrained in me. When we were moving while I was in fourth grade, I was drawing up a floor plan!”



BROOKE ABRAMS

Before establishing her eponymous firm, Brooke Abrams Interiors, Abrams says of her start, “I moved to New York right after college from the Midwest. My first job was working for Portico Interiors.” As for her own home featured in this issue’s “At Ease” (page 124), Abrams was keen to make it reflect her family’s lifestyle in Montauk. “I spend so much time designing houses for others that it was nice to do it for our family home.” —Shannon Assenza

FRESH TAKE

A young family revamps its classic **Dutch Colonial** with a decidedly 21st-century spin

BY **SHANNON ASSENZA**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **KIRSTEN FRANCIS**

What an inviting home! What was the design directive?

Designer Sabina Szatko: Before, it was an older house in the suburbs, dreary with red wood. The clients wanted to brighten it up, and the wife loves a tropical aesthetic, but I felt that wasn't the direction I wanted to take it since we're up North. She loves the Colony Hotel down in Palm Beach, which is a heavy rattan style, so I wanted to merge those two together. In a sense, I didn't think it fully matched the style of the home, so we added rattan pieces that gave it more of an 'up North' direction.

What was your inspiration?

SS: This client is fun—she works on graphics at Estée Lauder, and she does a lot of packaging and collabs. She'll work with wallpaper companies for packaging designs; she is definitely 'with it' when it comes to beautiful things! She's very fun and cool, and would pick up



BEFORE

Bright & Cheery
(LEFT) In the dining room, woven chairs surround a table from Lulu & Georgia. The luminous wall color is Rocco from Portola Paints. See *Resources*.

Color, Pattern & Texture

The living room's textural coffee table complements a custom sofa from Interior Define. A slipper chair (NEAR LEFT) is covered in a Lee Jofa fabric, and the custom braided rug is from The Natural Carpet Company. See Resources.





BEFORE

Soft & Subtle (OPPOSITE) Kitchen cabinetry refinished in Benjamin Moore's White Dove highlights sconces from Cedar & Moss. (ABOVE) A pendant from Lucas McKearn hangs above the kitchen's dining area, with industrial-style chairs from Tolix. See [Resources](#).

on references of things I would suggest. That let us go with a classic, yet modernized mix. She loves to wear funky clothes, and she always likes to bring in a little bit of that edge. There's a little more midcentury in some of the forms, things that are a little more youthful.

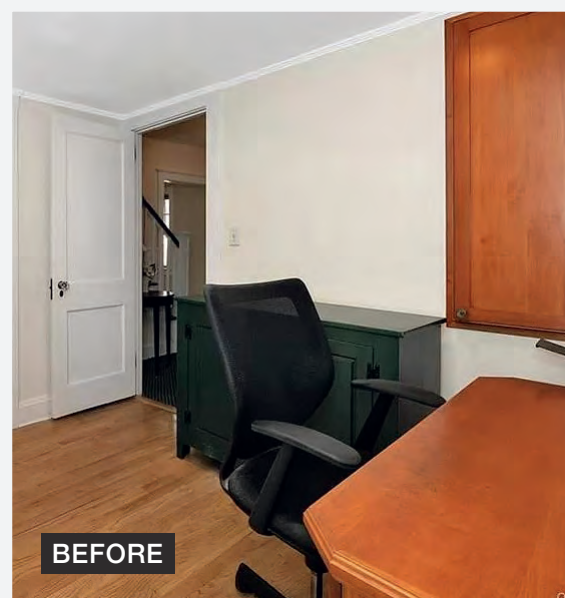
Was there a design style you had in mind when designing the dining room?

SS: She really loves Florida, that tropical kind of environment, so it was about bringing in more woven-style textures, and that's how we ended up going with the woven chairs. For the art on the walls, we didn't want it to feel too dark. The room gets beautiful light, but it can go dark quickly. We thought a two-tone, white-and-blue palette would be

cheerful. The Martha Stewart plates have a faux bois texture, which is like a fake wood, and is actually my favorite texture!

Tell me about the living room floorplan.

SS: The living room is extremely large, and it can accommodate *a lot* of furniture. The space actually includes three sofas. The rug we have is huge, but it has a beautiful coastal energy that the client really likes, so it unifies all of the pieces together. The previous homeowner had a rug that was shimmied more toward the window, so it felt like we expanded everything and pushed pieces against the walls a little closer. We worked on a furniture plan, which was complicated because it's such a large room, and we wanted traffic to flow smoothly.



BEFORE

Divine Details (ABOVE) A simple bench in the mudroom is upholstered in a fabric by Kathryn M. Ireland. (OPPOSITE) In the powder room, a vintage mirror hangs above a vanity from James Martin Vanities. The wallcovering is Braquenié's La Pannonie from Pierre Frey. See [Resources](#).

Designer **Sabina Szatko** imbued unexpected flair and finesse into a classic Westchester Dutch Colonial.

I love the wall covering in the powder room. How did you choose it?

SS: It's a Braquenié wallpaper from the Pierre Frey archives, but at the same time it has a modern element to it with the blues and zig-zag lines. In this room, we originally picked this wallpaper because we had black tiles in the bathroom that they weren't planning on replacing, but something happened and we had to take out the tiles and gut the whole bathroom. Thankfully, the wallpaper was already up. We also chose it because there was a bit of black in it, although it's not a color I'm typically drawn to. I worked for designer Tom Scheerer for a decade, and he was a big mentor for me and inspired my color theory. The blues and turquoises, a lot of that comes from how comfortable I've gotten with those colors at Tom's office. The client really enjoys pink. It's funny—she has two boys and a husband, and she was like, 'How can we do pink everywhere?' I said that we can definitely do pink, but we have to do it in special and subtle moments.

There is a mix of neutrals and pops of color and patterns. How does a designer strike the right balance?

SS: I love getting inspiration from textiles first. Even in the mudroom, when I saw the bench with the striped cushion, I was like 'This is perfect!' The reason is because the fabrics lead the story—as long as you don't go over the top—and also incorporate something more contemporary. The wallpaper in the bathroom is another great example, not to say it can't veer sometimes. I've seen this pattern used in a more traditional space; it's about what you have around it and not going too far with it. ✨

