



SEA CHANGE

In this Egyptian Revival house on Long Island, the designer David Kleinberg has put his own twist on the coastal vernacular to create restful, generously proportioned interiors for its English owners

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EXTERIOR (*opposite*) The new wing of the 1840s sea captain's house was designed to blend with the scale and style of the original building. Traditional white-painted wooden clapboard cladding with grey accents helps unify the look. KITCHEN (*this page*) Collections of rustic French pottery and cookbooks bring texture and warmth to a monochrome scheme of white 'scullery' wall tiles and black limestone flooring





Ramshackle was the best way to describe it,' says New York interior designer David Kleinberg of the house his longtime client Shaun Woodward bought in the Long Island hamlet of Sag Harbor. But, for Shaun (the former English politician and father of 'Deliciously Ella' Woodward), the acquisition of a sea captain's home, built in the 1840s in the Egyptian Revival style, was nothing short of providential. The house had belonged to the late Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Lanford Wilson. 'It felt like a moment of destiny,' says Shaun, who had knocked on the door and met the playwright's friend who was the executor of his estate. The pair bonded over literature and he promptly made an offer, which was just as readily accepted.

While the Hamptons are known for their ostentatious residents, neighbouring Sag Harbor attracts a quieter crowd with an affinity for the historical. The village is rife with splendid neoclassical houses that are testament to its former maritime vigour during the nineteenth century – part of the draw for Shaun. 'Sag Harbor had great appeal because of its history of whaling, scrimshaw, Melville – it's romantic, with fewer mansions, and more beautiful and historic elements,' he says. Although their primary home is in the UK, since 2015 Shaun and his partner Luke Redgrave have spent as much time as possible holidaying in Sag Harbor. 'It's a great place for hosting family and big groups of friends,' Shaun says.

David's task was to modernise the house while maintaining its architectural integrity. He brought in the architect Martin Sosa of Arcologica Architecture, known for his careful and fresh renovations and constructions. While David and Martin retained the proportions of many of the original rooms, they tore down a Sixties addition. 'It was as if someone had hooked up a mobile home to the house – it looked terrible,' says David. In its place, they devised a new wing, including a kitchen with soaring windows, above which they sited the main bedroom and bathroom.

'Shaun wanted an enormous volume of space in the kitchen, although Martin and I thought it might feel out of proportion against the nineteenth-century rooms in the rest of the house. But he was insistent,' says David, who was ultimately thrilled with the result. The designer used a black limestone for the floor, which had a graphic, calming effect, complemented by tiled walls for 'a typical English scullery look'. The black floor works beautifully and grounds the space, 'so you feel the volume, but not an irrational vastness', he adds. The cabinets are made from scrubbed oak with iron trims that hold everything in place. Open cantilevered shelving offers an ideal showcase for Shaun to display his collection of French pottery and cookbooks, while a zinc and iron table, English chairs and a sofa based on a Danish design invite one to linger.

The main bedroom and bathroom feel similarly easy, comfortable and generously proportioned. David chose the wide

KITCHEN (*top left*) Generous windows allow plenty of light into this airy space, where scrubbed oak cabinets with marble worktops contrast with a brushed copper cooking hood and vintage black limestone floor tiles from a New York salvage yard. **HALL** (*left*)

Walls in Farrow & Ball's 'Cornforth White' provide a neutral background for a painting by Patrick Procktor and 'Convex Globe' lanterns by Jamb. **PARLOUR ROOM** (*opposite top*) A painting by American artist Sally Michel Avery hangs above a bespoke Jamb chimneypiece. **LIBRARY** (*opposite bottom*) Bookshelves and cornicing in a restful green by Farrow & Ball frame walls lined with hemp. The painting above the sofa is by Alan Macdonald





tongue-and-groove panelling in homage to classic East End Long Island architecture, but enlarged the scale to give it a 'modern, fresh spin'. A simple upholstered headboard, Holly Hunt side tables, Victorian-era lamps and a leather bench play off the decorative cushions made from graphic African textiles. The toning taupe en-suite bathroom, with its simple yet elegant freestanding bath and walk-in shower, has a soothing effect. Limestone mosaic flooring adds interest to the space.

Elsewhere, the rooms have maintained their historic patina, becoming the canvas for art and furniture collected over decades, which Shaun says 'suddenly felt like it was all supposed to be in this house'. David adds, 'We already had an interesting mix – from English Georgian and Arts and Crafts to Christian Liaigre furniture and photographs by Wolfgang Tillmans. It was fun to figure out how to redeploy these things.' The parlour room is a case in point. 'The furniture goes from pseudo klismos to bobbin-turned pieces to contemporary upholstery,' explains David. A thinned-out version of the serene grey-inflected blue paint that appears elsewhere in the house covers the walls.

Elsewhere, the palette tends towards neutrals with slate-blue accents. 'The house has colour – but on the doors, frames, skirting and cornicing rather than the walls,' he says. A spare room on the first floor benefits from an unexpected red grid. Shaun purchased a collection of maps that Rudolf Nureyev

had in his Paris flat and David framed them in a red-stained wood. 'We used them almost like a wallpaper,' he says.

The house has a large garden – a rarity in Sag Harbor – made larger still by Shaun's acquisition of some neighbouring land on which he constructed a new guest house, in Federal Revivalist style. Deceptively spacious, this 'eyebrow colonial' house is 'very misleading from the outside – you expect tiny bedrooms upstairs', says David, referring

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to the line of small eyebrow windows on what would be the first floor. Similar architectural devices and the colour palette link the two houses: 'The elements were consistent – they don't have to be seen as a pair, but they work beautifully together.'

As the first home Shaun and Luke have created together, it is a reflection of them. 'It was done from a classic English point of view, without the American need for everything to look shiny and perfect,' says David. Shaun agrees, 'It's filled with books, art and things that mean a lot to me or Luke; at a frenetic time in global politics, this house is a real haven of peace' □

David Kleinberg Design Associates: dkda.com
Arcologica Architecture: arcologica.com

CAPTAIN'S ROOM (top left) A built-in bed with storage drawers, painted in a deep blue by Farrow & Ball, makes the most of the awkward space under the eaves. Striped furnishings and nautical accessories add to the coastal feel. **EN-SUITE BATHROOM (left)** An antique marble bath, a towel rail by Restoration Hardware and a sink unit from Waterworks are set off by a limestone floor mosaic designed by David. **MAIN BEDROOM (opposite both pictures)** An oak desk designed by Shaun and made in a British shipyard creates a striking focal point by the windows that overlook the roof deck in this new wing of the house. Blinds in Pindler's 'Bastogne' Belgian linen blend with the panelling to create a pale backdrop for a bed by Savoir Beds

