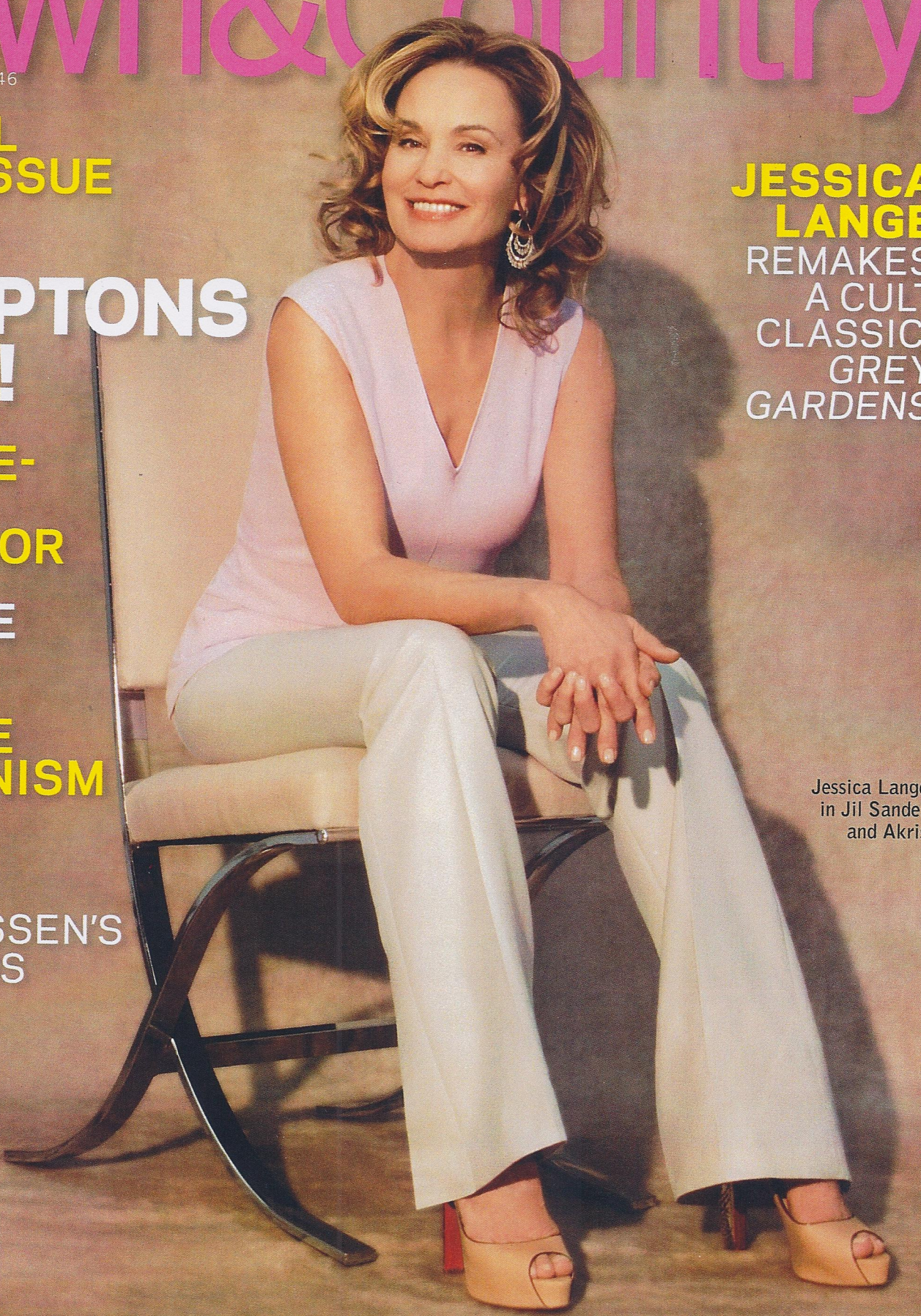


Town & Country

A full-page photograph of actress Jessica Lange. She is sitting on a dark wooden chair with a light-colored upholstered seat. She is wearing a light pink sleeveless top and white wide-leg trousers. She has blonde, wavy hair and is smiling at the camera. She is wearing large, ornate earrings and light-colored open-toe heels. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

ESTABLISHED IN 1846

**SPECIAL
HOME ISSUE**

**THE
HAMPTONS
NOW!**

**SHINGLE-
STYLE
SPLENDOR**

**VILLAGE
CHARM**

**BAYSIDE
MODERNISM**

**PLUS:
PETER
MATTHIESSEN'S
HAMPTONS
ALBUM**

**JESSICA
LANGE**
REMAKES
A CULT
CLASSIC:
GREY
GARDENS

Jessica Lange
in Jil Sander
and Akris

MAY 2009 \$4.50



BRIGHT

IT MAY BE TINY AND TUCKED OUT

In Bridgehampton, the home of art adviser Kim Heirston and her husband, Richard Evans, is a cedar-lined box that glows with light reflected off Mecox Bay. A Charlotte Perriand daybed from dealer Cristina Grajales, in Manhattan, faces the view.

STYLED BY
HELEN CROWTHER

SPOT

HT, BUT THIS HOUSE HAS HAD AN OUTSIZED EFFECT ON ITS NEW OWNERS.
BY ALASTAIR GORDON



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER BAKER



"THE IRONY IS THAT NEITHER ONE

of us was even supposed to go to that party," says Kim Heirston, international art adviser, explaining to me from a poolside phone at the Hotel Bel-Air how she met her husband. We've been trying for some time now to have an extended conversation, but she's hard to pin down and over the past few weeks has been in Paris, Moscow, New York and Miami, and today it's Los Angeles, though only for a day before she and said husband, Richard Evans, continue on to Australia.

Tall and strikingly self-possessed, Heirston makes an impression on any continent, whether she's attending a museum opening, negotiating a sale in a gallery's back room or bidding at auction on behalf of one of her clients. She speaks in rapid bursts of high-energy lingo, and her enthusiasm is infectious. "Richard was a breath of fresh air," she continues long-distance. "He had this big smile."

They danced all night and lay in a hammock "canoodling,"

according to Heirston, at the 2004 summertime party. When Evans asked her what her astrological sign was and she said Gemini, he said, "Oh, no!" and confessed his was the same. "Two Geminis! Twins!" They laughed so much, they almost fell out of the hammock. A few months later, the two New Yorkers were walking in Central Park when Evans, an entertainment lawyer turned property investor, blurted out, "You want to get married in Italy next week?" (He confesses it was one of his cornier lines, but it worked.) "That would be wonderful," she replied. Evans found a Web site called gettingmarriedinitaly.com, and by the end of October they had done just that, in the Umbrian town of Città della Pieve.

The challenge for Heirston and Evans, both perpetual travelers, was how to be in the same place long enough to forge a lifelong relationship. They thought a new house might provide a promising start. Within a year they had found a modernist escape pod in Bridgehampton, New York, that would become the locus for their shared vision, a spot in which to slow down and grow together.

TOUGH FOR HEIRSTON TO JUST SIT HERE AND GAZE OUT AT THE WATER.

The two-bedroom dwelling is perched, ever so lightly, on a one-acre site overlooking Mecox Bay. Nestled inconspicuously among the native growth of shadberry, beach plum and wild roses, it is hardly visible from the road or even from the water. "It had an incredible location and this island feel about it," explains Evans.

"I thought it was the coolest house I'd ever seen," says Heirston, who imagined herself sitting on the deck, sipping a cocktail, even though it was the middle of winter and the ground was covered in snow. "When I see artwork, something happens, and it's almost physical. I tend to appreciate things in terms of aesthetics and not practicalities." It was the same with their house. "This was a genius place," she recalls. "It had a grandeur and theatricality that belied its size."

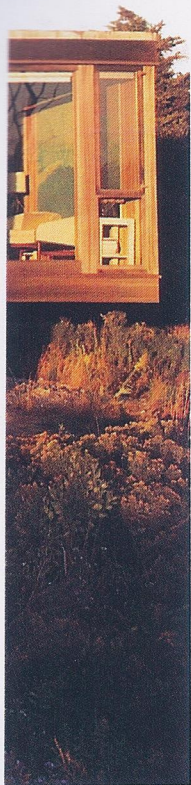
They both fell in love with the property, and they bought it in early 2006. "My immediate impression was that this was a real modernist gem, and I wanted to preserve it as it was," says Evans,

who started to research the house and found that its provenance was as interesting as that of any of his wife's art acquisitions.

Built in 1968 for a New York City scientist, the couple's new home was designed by Horace Gifford, an architect whose work has largely been overlooked but who created more than fifty small and elegantly restrained beach houses throughout the Hamptons and on nearby Fire Island in the sixties and seventies. Gifford's dwellings were all variations on the same geometric theme: basic glass boxes with

roofs that were either flat or sloped, butterfly-style, and arranged in a staggered series, set back from a dune, or in a pin-wheel configuration around a central sun court. While tiny by today's standards—the average size of a Gifford beach pad was only 1,100 square feet—his houses always featured large windows and expansive decks that made them feel much bigger. "The site," wrote Gifford of his process, "usually suggests what the house wants to be as a form in space."

Heirston and Evans's quintessential beach getaway keeps very good company on the East End. Within a stone's throw are several other important examples of postwar modernism by Peter Blake, Julian and Barbara Neski, Ulrich Franzen, Philip Johnson, Andrew Geller, Charles Gwathmey and Norman Jaffe, all proof that the area was a laboratory for architectural experimentation at the time. These modest houses shared a lyricism



Heirston and Evans (right) relax on the deck of their diminutive new house, one of a number in the Hamptons designed by architect Horace Gifford. The wood-and-glass pavilion (above) is suspended between two concrete-block piers, which conceal bathrooms and a walk-in closet.



"For someone like me, always going to sexy places—Paris, Dubai, Moscow, Miami—our little house seems like the sexiest place of all," says Heirston (opposite), in the living area with a mirrored wall piece by Gary Webb. She's carried the mood into the master bedroom (this page) with a fur throw from Adrienne Landau, a Tommi Parzinger mirror and an Arne Jacobsen Egg chair and stool.





determined in large part by their carefree pre-McMansion agenda—think cookouts, bodysurfing and bunk beds, not the hypersocial networking that can make a modern-day Hamptons weekend as calming as a Manhattan traffic jam. (Summer living in 1968 was much simpler than it is now.) And while Heirston and Evans do not exactly don overalls or hand in their cell phones when they arrive for an extended summer weekend, they are able to relax and shed some of the angst that characterizes their hectic lives. The dwelling's size and proximity to nature force the two, in a sense, to abandon the city and return to basic pleasures: reading, chatting, lying in the sun and swimming. (They both grew up near the ocean—Heirston on Long Island; Evans in Perth, Australia—and both love to swim.)

The house is understated in the most subtle of ways: it's a wood-framed box, stretched and cantilevered over its foundation at either end with glassed-in overhangs that rest on steel I beams. "When you jump at one end, the other end bounces," says Evans. But this is also what gives the place its sense of untethered lightness, akin to a boat drifting on the bay. The entry, tucked inside a small courtyard, is shaded by a screen of vertical cedar slats that creates a dark teahouse effect. (The courtyard, which has symmetrical concrete walls and Japanese pines, was designed by Ward Bennett and added in the early 1970s.) But as soon as you walk into the >118

HEIRSTON'S HOT SPOTS

Art adviser Kim Heirston heads to these boutiques for their well-curated offerings.

IN SOUTHAMPTON: Heirston stops by **Homenature** for "serving dishes by Mud Australia, a company that makes a fabulous line of porcelain," she says. "They're great for olives, pâté, etc. Each piece strikes the ideal balance between the minimal aesthetic I adore and an organic handmade finish." *Serving pieces (above right), \$32–\$99. 6 Main Street; 631-287-6277.*

When she needs something to wear and doesn't want to spend an absolute fortune,



Heirston favors **Intermix**. "I'm certain to find something cool, chic and unique for a ladies' luncheon or a summer evening on the beach." *64 Main Street; 631-283-8510.*

IN EAST HAMPTON: Accessories are the draw at the French-flavored **Calypso Home**, where Heirston finds John Robshaw pillows along with Calypso's own Pom Pom cotton throws and scented candles (*above; \$38 each*) in eleven fragrances. *17 Newtown Lane; 631-324-8146.*

"For a thoughtful present on birthdays or holidays, or



when I need just the right house gift," Heirston says, "I turn to the **Monogram Shop**. My favorites are beach and hand towels monogrammed with the name of my host's home. I once had a picnic tote customized with the name of a client's boat." *Tote (\$115) and towels (from \$65), below. 7 Newtown Lane; 631-329-3379.*

IN SAG HARBOR: Mona Nerenberg's **Bloom** (*43 Madison Street; 631-725-5940*) offers new tableware, including local artist Mae Mongin's M.A.E. label, alongside vintage accessories and furniture, all in a refined palette of whites and neutrals. At **Neo-Studio** (*25 Madison Street; 631-725-6478*), Heirston finds both unexpected and just-what-you've-been-looking-for lighting. She also stops in next door at **Reuben Home on Consignment** (*25 Madison Street; 631-725-6160*) to check out 20th-century pieces with big personalities.



PHOTOGRAPHS: LARA ROBBY/STUDIO D (SERVING PIECES, CANDLES, TOTE), OPPOSITE: GLASS HURRICANE LAMP (\$150) AND WHITE TRAY (\$400), FROM THE GENERAL HOME STORE, EAST HAMPTON, 631-324-9400



The couple often have guests for cocktails on the deck before moving indoors for dinner around a commanding Karl Springer dining table (opposite). Ant chairs by Arne Jacobsen and Steuben crystal candlesticks lighten the look.

Cozying Up in a Classic

continued from page 82

down the formality. The room became a big teddy bear." She arranged four separate seating areas to divide the space into conversation zones, the most popular being a window seat bracketed by a pair of slipper chairs. "When they were younger, the twins would curl up here and I would read to them," de Guardiola recalls. "That's where I read them all the Harry Potter books, which they adored. They even named our Yorkie Harry Potter. Guests love the window seat too." She adds, archly, "Sometimes it's hard to get them to move."

And who could blame them? In this house, as in the social sphere that de Guardiola and her family inhabit, the emphasis is on bonhomie and comfort. And there is a place to suit any mood or atmosphere. In the autumn, a season of "lit fireplaces, jeans and pullovers," as the designer says, or on rainy days, friends can hole up in the library, with its collection of intriguing ethnographic objects from China, Africa and elsewhere around the world. Above the master bedroom, de Guardiola created another level that consists of a small sitting room with a balcony, where her Cuban-born husband can enjoy an occasional cigar.

Such thoughtfulness may be the key-stone of de Guardiola's character, both as a designer and as the avid and enthusiastic hostess that she is. There is little, it seems, that she won't do for the sake of the pleasure of her friends, who include a broad swath of New York's intellectual, cultural and political leaders, among them New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg, architect Richard Meier, philanthropist Hilary Geary Ross, writer Jamee Gregory, journalist and author Carl Bernstein, beauty-products magnate and GOP activist Georgette Mosbacher and fellow interior designer Charlotte Moss. Case in point: rather than omit folks from her dinner-party lists for lack of space, de Guardiola had an old double-height stable on a far corner of the property raised on jacks and moved several

hundred yards to a spot adjacent to the pool, where the spruced-up structure can now hold dinners for upwards of seventy-five guests.

One afternoon last year, the designer hung huge paper lanterns from the stable's rafters on long wires so that they would dangle a couple of feet above the long tables she'd set up. She chose tablecloths of white burlap, on which she arranged rows of white candles in different sizes and little vases of white flowers.

A very special occasion? An anniversary? A birthday? No. Just a typical summertime party at the de Guardiola place in Southampton. ❖

Bright Spot

continued from page 98

main living space, the view opens up and "you feel as though you've gone from outside to outside," Evans says.

Between the living area, with its cedar-clad walls, and the water is an expanse of floor-to-ceiling glass. The view spills out beyond a sundeck to Mecox Bay. Clere-story windows span the perimeter of the room and fill the space with sea-flecked light. On one side is an open kitchen with a concrete-slab counter and a passage to a study-guest room; on the other is a dining area and, beyond it, the master bedroom and bath.

Heirston and Evans chose furniture and art carefully to complement the clean lines and breezy optimism of the house. They started off in a 1950s Scandinavian direction but then consulted with designer Joe D'Urso, who advised them to consider not just wood but also stone and other materials that would create more of a contrast with the cedar-lined interior. A low-lying Charlotte Perriand daybed from 1950, purchased from Cristina Grajales, a Manhattan dealer who specializes in 20th-century furniture, looks as if it had been designed specifically for its sunset position in front of the big window in the main room. Nearby are a fuzzy

goatskin rug and two Mies van der Rohe chairs, a stone coffee table and two custom-made chaises flanking a fireplace, above which hangs a large-scale photograph by Louise Lawler. The dining table, a 1960s Karl Springer design made from a hefty slab of off-white marble, sits beneath Gary Webb's *New York Split* (2006), a mirrored wall piece that bounces fractured reflections around the room.

For the bedroom, the couple chose an Arne Jacobsen Egg chair and stool, a Tommi Parzinger sunburst mirror that hangs over the bed, and a seductively comfortable chaise longue (called *Listen to Me*) by Edward Wormley. This is where Heirston likes to sit on quiet weekends and read her art books.

"My idea of kicking back is plowing through an artist's monograph," Heirston says. "I get such a high when I take in knowledge because so much of the time I'm holding forth." But sometimes it's enough for her to just sit here and gaze out at the water. Nothing else. There are fewer expectations here, fewer nagging doubts. "We get up in the morning and watch the swans glide up to our deck. It's the ultimate chill pad. We go to detox. It's my dose of sunshine: happy, open and nature driven."

While Manhattan continues to be their year-round base, the house has become soul renewing during the months of July and August, as well as weekends in the fall. For the immediate future, the couple plans to make only basic improvements: replace some windows, repair cedar paneling and decking. Meanwhile, their friend the landscape designer Edwina von Gal has begun to clear the property and restore the natural vegetation around it.

"We might expand the house one day, but if we do, we'll make an effort to do something in the spirit of Gifford's original design philosophy," says Evans. "This is all anyone really needs," he concludes. "It's this sexy little Miesian pavilion right on the water. The proportions are perfect." ❖