

ELLE DECOR

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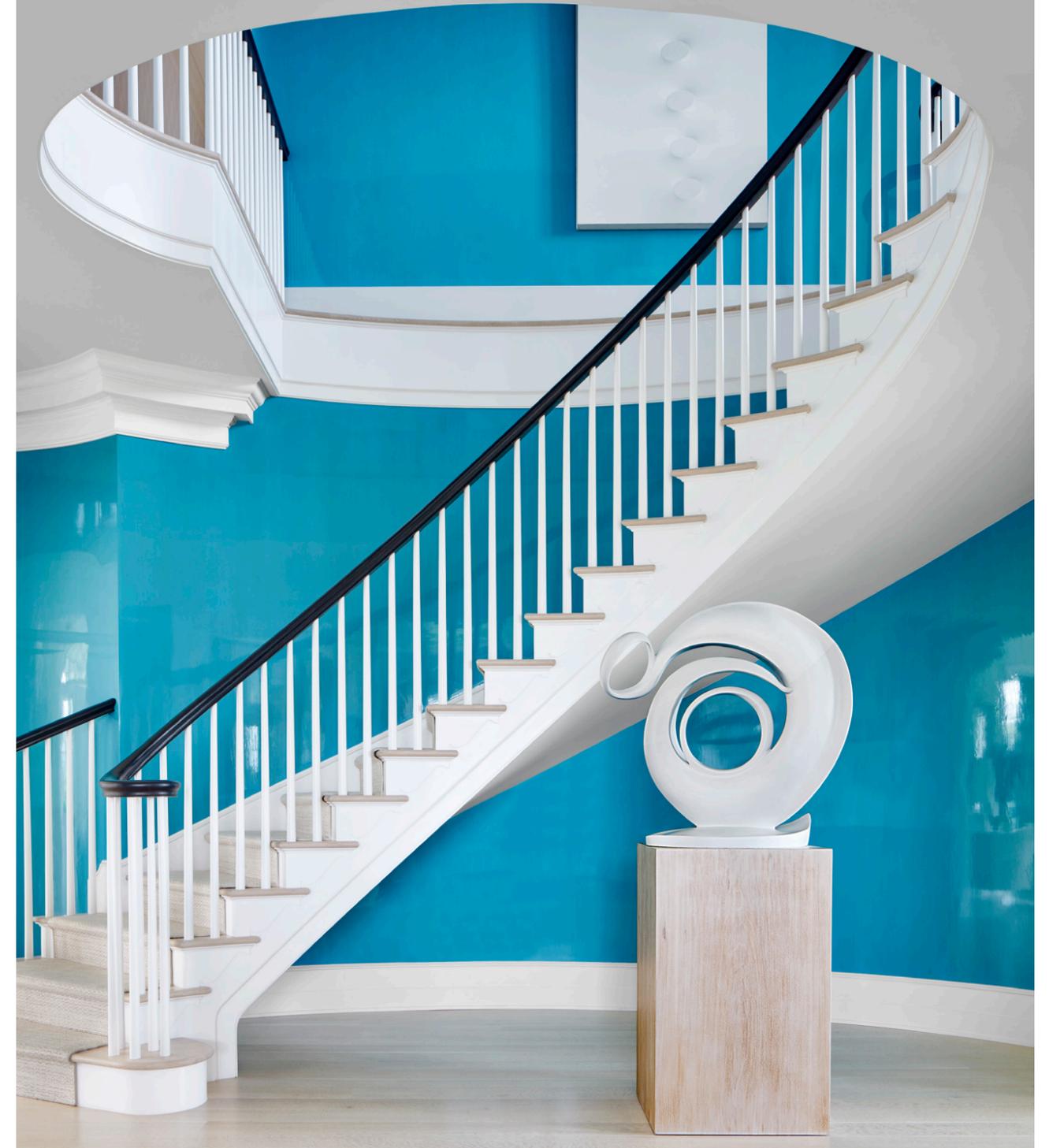
In the entry hall of a house in Southampton, New York, designed by Brian J. McCarthy and architect Randy M. Correll, a custom console by Louis Cane holds a Hubert Le Gall lamp. The pendant and floor lamp are by Patrice Dangel, and the mirror is by W.P. Sullivan. **OPPOSITE:** A Georgia O'Keeffe sculpture is positioned under an elliptical stair in the stair hall. The walls are in a custom blue lacquer, and the white-oak flooring is from the Hudson Company.



CURVES AHEAD

FROM A SPIRAL STAIR WITH A COORDINATING GEORGIA O'KEEFFE SCULPTURE TO ROOMS FILLED WITH VIBRANT SKY BLUES, THIS **BRIAN J. MCCARTHY**-DESIGNED HAMPTONS HOME IS FILLED WITH THE UNEXPECTED.

BY NANCY HASS PRODUCED BY CAROLYN ENGLEFIELD PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS LOOF



LIKE LUXURY, INFORMALITY IS RELATIVE. FOR THIS couple, who asked New York-based *ED A-List* designer Brian J. McCarthy to create a casual, beachy home for summer weekends in Southampton, New York, informality meant a grand East End-style shingled mansion loosened up with airy surfaces, sophisticated geometrics, and a sunny soupçon of color. “They wanted it to be fun,” says McCarthy, who collaborated with Randy M. Correll of Robert A.M. Stern Architects.

McCarthy knew well the couple’s tastes, as he has done two other homes for them: a vast, Art Deco-inflected apartment in a refined 1920s building on the Upper East Side of Manhattan (which was featured in *ELLE DECOR* in December 2007), and the country home they escape to most spring and fall weekends, in Locust Valley on Long Island’s tony North Shore—the heart of *Great Gatsby* country—about an hour from Manhattan. “I knew they liked things to be strong and unfussy,” says McCarthy, who is known for his modern twists on traditional idioms and was a partner in the legendary firm of Parish-Hadley before going out on his own in 1992. “Working with them is always a spirited dialogue.”

Even before the house was conceived, it was fated to be born on third base: a two-acre plot on one of the most glamorous lanes in town, overlooking Agawam Lake and not far from the ocean. (The famed Bathing Corporation, a deceptively modest beach club with strenuously rigorous membership requirements, is also nearby.) The couple, who work in finance, wanted a place to come during July and August, where their two teenage boys could have plenty of freedom and access to activities. They intended to bring some art from their large modern and contemporary collection but didn’t want it to be the focal point.

The entryway sets the vivid and uninhibited tone: The white front door opens to reveal a spare console by Louis Cane with bronze gilding along with a playful snow-colored Mongolian lambskin rug, but the eye is instantly drawn beyond, to the spectacular curved staircase. The rounded walls of the stairwell stand in stark contrast to all that white; they are custom lacquered in a brilliant lagoon blue. In the center is a white-oak pedestal topped by an edition of a hypnotic, spiraling Georgia O’Keeffe sculpture.

One advantage that a new house has over an old one is a more modern layout, a blueprint that acknowledges how



In the family room, the custom sectional is in a Fabricut fabric, the walls are sheathed in a Venetian plaster, the rug is by Stark, and the curtains are of a de Le Cuona fabric. The artworks are by Josef Albers.



The library’s custom sofa is in a Glant fabric, and the cocktail and side tables are by Nicholas Mongiardo. The custom chandelier is by Paul Ferrante, the curtains are of a tie-dyed fabric by Maki Yamamoto, and the rug is by Beauvais Carpets.



families live today. Instead of the closed-off formal rooms common in Southampton estates built in the early part of the 20th century, with the kitchen hidden far away, the downstairs has large spaces that flow into one another, allowing just enough privacy to enable intimacy.

While the backdrop of most rooms is neutral—gentle whites and creams—McCarthy creates drama and intrigue with surfaces that are more complex than they seem from a distance. In the living room, for example, the walls are custom finished in a pale Venetian plaster with raised horizontal bands of gilding.

The couple wanted to punctuate the calm with just the right amount of energizing, strong color. The family room has custom-painted walls in a deep sea-blue kuba-cloth pattern hung with a series of four Josef Albers prints in primary hues; the sofas are in the same rich blue. In the library, tie-dyed off white-and-blue curtains in handkerchief linen

by Maki Yamamoto flutter in the summer breeze. In the kitchen, four rounded stainless steel stools sport alternating upholstery of citron and aqua leathers; the living room curtains are a warm but forceful orange. A bunk room for the boys has walls painted a warm black. “The homeowners were at first a little freaked out by that, but now they love it,” McCarthy says.

Instead of florals, the couple made certain that McCarthy included plenty of geometric patterns, often in soft hues that make them feel approachable but uncompromising. The custom rugs, especially, with motifs that range from plus signs to sisal diamonds, convey structure without reading too harsh. But, as always in McCarthy’s work, there is room for dreams: In the master bedroom, dominated by a huge bone four-poster bed and views of the water, the carpet is a free-form mass of gentle blues and celestial ivories, inspired by a René Magritte sky. ■

ABOVE: The pair of beds in the boys’ room are by Charles H. Beckley, the nightstand is by Julian Chichester, the desk is by Bungalow 5, and the Jean Prouvé desk chair is from Hive. The John Robshaw wallpaper is from John Rosselli & Associates, the custom rug is by Madeline Weinrib, and the floor lamp is by Circa Lighting. **ABOVE RIGHT:** In the master bedroom, the bed is custom, the Marie Christophe chandelier is from the Lisa Fontanarosa Collection, and the artwork is by Ellsworth Kelly. **RIGHT:** In the wife’s master bath, the Kohler tub features Waterworks fittings, the pendant is by the Urban Electric Co., and the walls are painted in Farrow & Ball’s All White.





Hive barstools with seats in Dualoy and Arnitex leathers pull up to a kitchen island topped with Statuario marble. The range is by Wolf, the custom hood is by RangeCraft, and the 1930s English pendant is from Balsamo. **OPPOSITE:** The living room's sofa is in a Savel fabric. The armchairs, in a Pollack jacquard, and cocktail table (*background*) by Vosges are custom. The acrylic Fredrikson Stallard cocktail table (*foreground*) is from David Gill Gallery, and the pendant is by Charles Edwards. For details, see Resources.