

# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL DESIGN AUTHORITY

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## Points of View

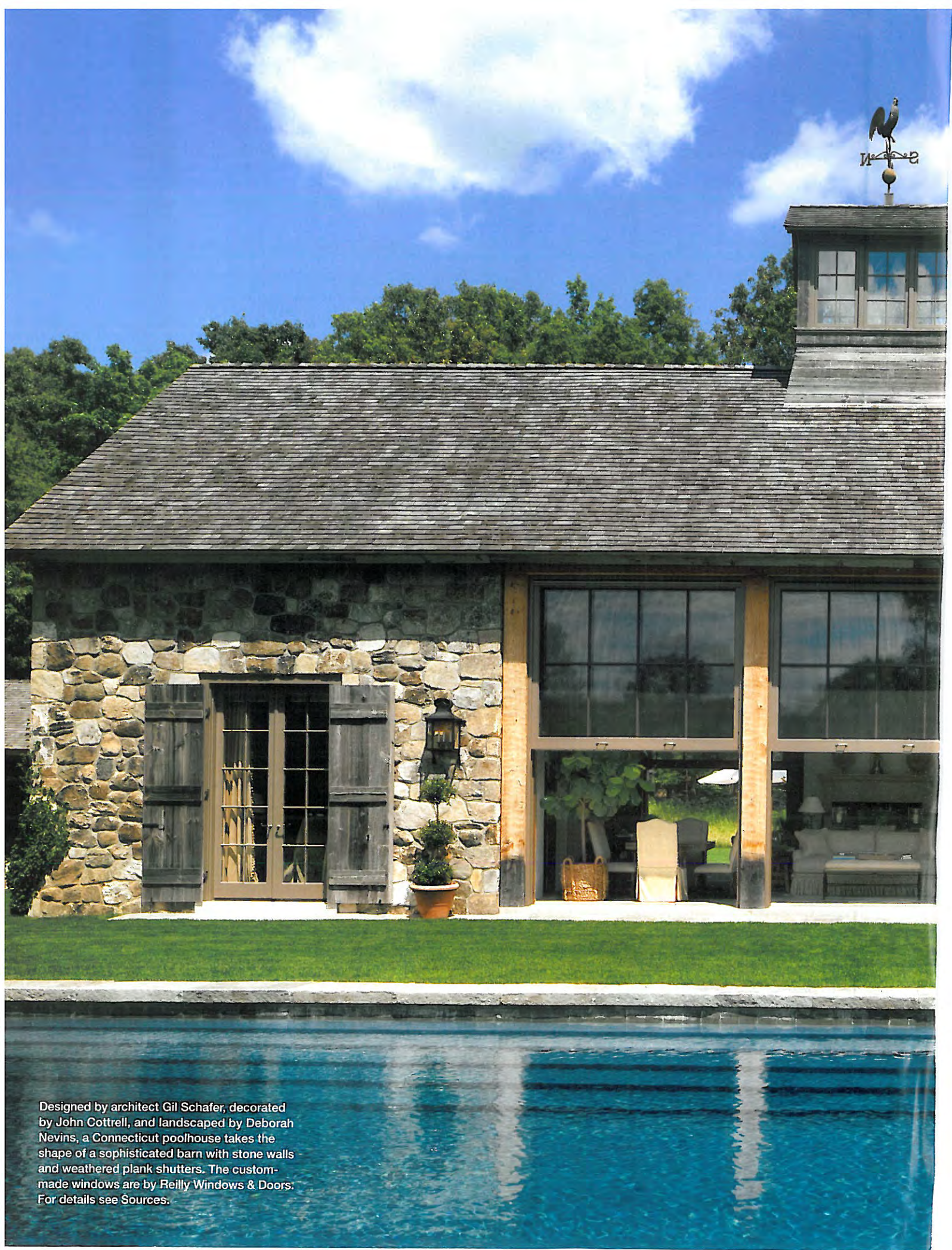
Dazzling Homes + Gardens  
by Design's Top Talents

Blissful Summer  
Getaways

What's Cool  
in Stockholm

Plus:  
AD Visits  
Hank Azaria





Designed by architect Gil Schafer, decorated by John Cottrell, and landscaped by Deborah Nevins, a Connecticut poolhouse takes the shape of a sophisticated barn with stone walls and weathered plank shutters. The custom-made windows are by Reilly Windows & Doors. For details see Sources.





# Trading Places

Asked to create a poolhouse in the spirit of an 18th-century barn, designer John Cottrell and architect Gil Schafer deliver a building so sunny and inviting that its owners use it as a second home

TEXT BY DAN SHAW PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILLY CUNNINGHAM





**Gil Schafer has built** an impeccable reputation designing new houses that possess a scrupulous sense of history. Although an unreconstructed traditionalist—he's a former president of the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art—the Yale-trained architect is also a realist: He understands that revering the past has its limitations.

Certainly two of his clients in Litchfield County, Connecticut, know firsthand the drawbacks of living in a painstakingly restored 18th-century house. "It's entirely authentic—the ceilings are only seven feet high, and the windows are tiny," Schafer says. "In the summer months the homeowners get claustrophobic." So the couple asked the architect to design an airy pavilion, with a swimming

pool, in a high meadow on their property, where they could hang out and guests could stay overnight. "They wanted it to be the opposite of the main house in terms of spatial characteristics and the light it gets, but at the same time they wanted it to feel old," he says. After much discussion, all agreed that a hand-hewn, timber-frame barn with a stone exterior would be the logical solution. But what Schafer wrought is unconventional. "It's a hybrid," he says of the building, which seems as much window as it is wall. "The project was about taking historical ideas and adapting them to a contemporary way of living."

Because the clients wanted the barn to be a fluid indoor-outdoor space, Schafer's major challenge was to create window walls in a





**FROM TOP:** A towering stone chimney punctuates the terrace. Landscape studies from Dennis & Leen are displayed above an 18th-century table in the great room; Cottrell commissioned the limestone-top cocktail table, the iron sconces are by Formations, and the upholstery fabrics are by Pindler & Pindler. **OPPOSITE:** Growing out of a stone planter from La Maison Française Antiques, a large ficus tree gives the great room a forestlike air.







traditional idiom. “We came up with the somewhat radical idea of making gigantic double-hung windows that are a twist on windows at Monticello, but with two sashes instead of three,” the architect says. “Each one is ten feet wide by 14 feet high, so when you raise them there is a seven-foot-high opening to walk through.”

Though the design looked perfect on paper—craftsman Michael Reilly promised to produce sashes that would not require a stevedore to open and close, as well as counterbalanced screens to ward off mosquitoes—Schafer was not going to take any chances. He had a contractor mock up a window wall and place it in the meadow. “We wanted to see how the crossbar between the two sashes would affect the views,” he explains. “We also wanted to see how it would feel walking in and out, which is impossible to describe.”

This exercise was also an opportunity to double-check the siting of the poolhouse with landscape designer Deborah Nevins, a frequent Schafer collaborator. As the architect says, “Something I always try to do when dropping a building into a field is to create a sense of place, which Debby and I have in common.” Nevins notes that existing stone walls and some very large trees ultimately dictated the location of the structure. “We graded the land and added new walls, so it became a civilized paradise in the woods,” she says.

The poolhouse stands, modestly, in a gravel courtyard at the end of an old dirt road. “It’s designed to be informal,” says Schafer, pointing out that the pool is hidden from view, further underscoring

the building’s rural character. Ditto the massive outdoor fireplace flanked by two attached sheds made of wood. “I liked the idea of a stone building that looks like it was added onto, as often happens on farms,” the architect says.

An understated scheme by interior designer John Cottrell keeps the focus on the landscape and the house’s architectural bones: beams, floors, and doors of reclaimed antique wood. The owners “wanted the interior absolutely simple, and except for the gathered skirts on the sofas, it is,” says Cottrell, who has a long history with the clients and experience working with Schafer and Nevins. “All the furniture is upholstered in beige linen, and everything is over-scale, which is one of my hallmarks—big, sloppy, and comfortable.” To emphasize the building’s open-air nature, the decorator planted an enormous ficus tree in a stone water barrel; the branches reach all the way up to the cupola. “It’s so marvelous to sit under a tree indoors,” he observes. Sofas placed back to back in the center of the great room make the space more versatile. “You can enjoy the living area whether facing the fireplace and piano or looking out toward the pool and distant hills,” Cottrell says.

Seduced by the poolhouse’s breezy feeling, the clients quickly realized that using it largely for visitors would be a big mistake. “Now they move into the guests for the warm months and give the main house to their guests,” says Schafer. “So they don’t call it the poolhouse anymore; it’s the summer house.” □





**FROM TOP:** The woven seating on the terrace is by Oscar de la Renta for Century Furniture. Framed herbarium pages from Formations hang in the guest room. **OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT:** A Chelsea Editions fabric curtains a Formations four-poster in the master bedroom. In the master bath stands a custom-made Concept Studio limestone tub; the ceiling fixture and wall sconces are by Paul Ferrante, and the dressing-table lamps are by Formations.



# sources

Items pictured but not listed are from private collections or are not sourceable. Items similar to vintage and antique pieces shown are often available from the dealers listed.

## MASTER CLASS

**PAGES 52-61: Architecture and interior design** by Gwathmey Siegel & Assoc. Architects; gwathmey-siegel.com; and KangModern; khcad.com. **Landscape design** by Peter Walker and Partners Landscape Architecture; pwpla.com. **PAGE 55: Similar chaise longues** available from Gloster; glosterpro.com. **Stools and chairs** by Artek; artel.fi. **Custom-made sofa and chairs** by Jonas, to the trade; jonasworkroom.com; all in **Canvas Weave acrylic fabric** by Perennials, to the trade; perennialsfabrics.com. **PAGE 58: Dining chairs** from Suite New York; suiteny.com. **Custom-made tabletop** by Tucker Robbins; tuckerrobbs.com. **PAGE 57: In living area, custom-made sofa and club chair** by Jonas, to the trade; jonasworkroom.com; both in **Canvas Weave acrylic fabric** by Perennials, to the trade; perennialsfabrics.com. **Armchair** by Pollaro; pollaro.com. **Binoculars** from Nicholas Brawer; nicholasbrawer.com. In kitchen, **cooktop and oven** by Gaggenau; gaggenau-usa.com. **Custom-made stools** by Jonas. **PAGE 59: Hans J. Wegner chairs** from DK Vogue; dkvogue.com. **Minimal ceiling fan** by Boffi; boffi.com. **PAGE 60: Luisa desk chair** by Cassina; cassinausa.com. **Blooming Universe sculpture** by Fujitsuka Shosei from Tai Gallery; textilearts.com. **Three Lines bed linens** by Pratesi; pratesi.com. **Kiran throw** by Christian Liaigre; christian-liaigre.fr. **Tolomeo lamps** by Artemide; artemide.us. **PAGE 61: Sink and shower fittings** by Boffi; boffi.com. **Towels and rotating mirror** by Waterworks; waterworks.com. **RainSky shower** by Dornbracht; dornbracht.com.

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to the trade; sutherlandfurniture.com. **PAGE 66: Television** by Samsung; samsung.com. **Vintage bench** from Maison au Naturel; maison819.net. **Pillows of Mirabelle Original linen and Pampas linen** by Claremont, and **Tulcan linen** by Penny Morrison Interiors, all from Claremont, to the trade; claremontfurnishing.com. **Antique Beni Ouarain carpet** from Jamal's Rug Collection; 310-289-9777. **PAGE 67: In kitchen, bar stools** by Hollywood at Home; hollywoodathome.com. **Custom-made pot rack** by Ann-Morris Antiques; 212-755-3308. **Range and hood** by Viking; vikingrange.com. **Refrigerators** by Sub-Zero; subzero-wolf.com. In living room, **sofas in Houghton velvet** by Zimmer + Rohde, to the trade; zimmer-rohde.com. **Tinted Lens side table** by Holly Hunt, to the trade; hollyhunt.com. **Floor lamp** by Waldo's Designs; waldosdesigns.com. **Kilim ottomans** by Horchow; horchow.com. **PAGE 68: Eames chairs** by Herman Miller; hermanmiller.com. **Duranc cabinet** by Bourgeois Bohème Atelier; bobo-antiques.com. **Curtains of Prime Alpaca fabric** by Sandra Jordan, to the trade; sandrajordan.com. **PAGE 69: In breakfast area, chairs** by Hollywood at Home; hollywoodathome.com; with **cushions of Mali Stripe fabric** by Jasper, to the trade; michaelsmithinc.com. **Dining table** by Paul Ferrante, to the trade; paulferrante.com. In barn, **La Mela print** by Enzo Mari; shop.daneseilano.com. In living room, **Beaubourg armchair** by Jean de Merry; jeandemerry.com. **Bookcase** from Mecox; mecoxgardens.com. **PAGE 70: Bed upholstered in Persuaded leather** by Holly Hunt, to the trade; hollyhunt.com. **Scissor sconces** from Bourgeois Bohème; bobo-antiques.com. **Desk and antique commode** from Lucca Antiques; luccaantiques.com. **PAGE 71: In bath, Patmos Stripe Reverse wall covering** by Carolina Irving, to the trade; carolinairvingtextiles.com. **Custom-made armchairs** by George Smith; georgesmith.com. **Coral** from J. F. Chen; jfchen.com. In dressing room, **vintage chair** from Paul Marra Design; paulmarradesign.com. **Vintage lockers** from Bourgeois Bohème; bobo-antiques.com. **Rug** from Lawrence of La Brea; lawrenceoflabrea.com. In guest room, **Hamilton Leaf wall covering** by Phillip Jeffries, to the trade; phillipjeffries.com. **Bolster of Safi Suzani linen** by Kathryn M. Ireland; kathrynireland.com. **Throw** by Hermès; hermes.com.

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thadhayes.com. **Art consultation** by Worth Art Advisory; worthartadvisory.com. **PAGES 76-77: Custom-made cocktail table, club chairs, and sofas** by Thad Hayes Inc.; thadhayes.com; **on chairs, Couture Library Cloth N.4** by Glant, to the trade; glant.com; and **on sofas, Slub cotton** by Florence Broadhurst; signatureprints.com.au. **Custom-made carpet** by Hechizoo; cristinagrajalesinc.com. **PAGE 78: Eames table** by Herman Miller; hermanmiller.com. **Scandia Junior dining chairs** from Just Scandinavian; justscandinavian.com. **Custom-made pendant lights** by Deborah Czeresko for Site Specific Art Management Inc.; sitespecificart.com. **Upper cabinets** fabricated by MADE LLC; made-nyc.com. **Lower cabinets and island** by Bulthaup; bulthaup.com. **Counters** by Caeserstone; caesarstone-us.com. **Elio sink fittings** by Dornbracht; dornbracht.com. **PAGE 79: Custom-made dining table** by Thad Hayes Inc.; thadhayes.com. **PAGE 80: Curtains of Scherzo polyester fabric** by Création Baumann; carnegiefabrics.com. **Custom-made bed** by Thad Hayes Inc.; thadhayes.com. **On headboard, Greylock Stripe linen** by Twill Textiles, to the trade; twilltextiles.com. **On armchair, Against the Ropes Sugar Ray fabric** by Holly Hunt, to the trade; hollyhunt.com. **PAGE 81: Duet bunk beds** by Nurseryworks; nurseryworks.net. **Carpet** by Beauvais, to the trade; beauvaiscarpets.com. **Custom-made sink** fabricated by MADE LLC; made-nyc.com; **in Corian** by DuPont; dupont.com. **Tara sink fittings** by Dornbracht; dornbracht.com. **Corice tile** from Ann Sacks; annsacks.com.

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