

# TRUE TO FORM

JULIE AND BILLY MACKLOWE BUILT THEIR SAGAPONACK HOME—AND THE MODERN ART COLLECTION WITHIN—FROM THE GROUND UP.

BY SUE HOSTETLER PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIC STRIFFLER

IN his autobiography, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, the artist opens with a now infamous passage: “At the age of six I wanted to be a cook. At seven I wanted to be Napoleon. And my ambition has been growing steadily ever since.” Although published some 70 years ago, the quote seems to aptly describe one of today’s most modern and driven businesswomen, Julie Macklowe. She is well known for her iconoclastic fashion style and marriage to handsome real estate scion Billy Macklowe, but the increasingly more interesting story about this powerhouse is her juggernaut high-finance career (leveraged buyouts at JP Morgan, money-management for heavy hitters Steve Cohen and Israel Englander) and ability to seamlessly transition from hedge-fund mogul to beauty/cosmetics entrepreneur.

In 2010, with the same business savvy she utilized researching retail and consumer stocks, Macklowe founded skincare line Vbeauté, sold in the

Hamptons at White’s Pharmacy. The secret ingredients? Swiss botanical stem cells extracted from the alpine rose plant, and antiaging tripeptides.

Developed by molecular biologists at the Centre de Recherches Biocosmétiques in Geneva, the line includes traditional products such as a cleanser, exfoliator, and moisturizer, but most impressive is the nifty It Kit—a travel-size skincare regimen beautifully packaged and TSA friendly. “I always wanted to operate my own company,” says Julie, who spent two years raising money and meeting with beauty industry insiders like Janet Gurwitsch and Georgette Mosbacher, gathering information and advice. “Georgette said, ‘I want you to understand that what you’re doing is crazy.... Starting a skincare line is a mildly psychotic endeavor,’” Macklowe says with a laugh as she describes Mosbacher’s—a cosmetics veteran, having run both La Prairie and Borghese—friendly warnings about said venture.



Known for her work designing spaces for prominent gallerists, architect Annabelle Selldorf designed the Macklowes' modern home to be a showplace for their expansive art collection.

Yet it should come as no surprise that Macklowe was undaunted; her deliciously inimitable Renaissance spirit is legend at this point (for example, hosting a business launch party at burlesque club The Box, or her pink highlighted hair at the Met Costume Institute Gala). “Is it super challenging? Yes,” she says. “I don’t sleep at night, but I’m learning so much.”

As if a start-up wasn’t overwhelming enough, in 2006 the couple, along with now four-year-old daughter Zoe, also embarked on building a weekend home in Sagaponack.

“SAGAPONACK IS ALL ABOUT THE OPEN VISTAS AND ENDLESS LIGHT—IT BREATHES RELAXATION.”

—JULIE MACKLOWE

“When we saw the [piece of] land, we knew it was for us,” Julie says. “For Billy and me, Sagaponack is all about the open vistas and endless light—it breathes relaxation.”

Given Billy’s background in real estate, the couple surely had their pick of world-famous architects with whom to work, but they ultimately turned to the internationally celebrated, New York-based Annabelle Selldorf, best known for understated, elegant post-modernist designs (and the go-to architect for top contemporary gallerists like Zwirner, Hauser & Wirth, Gladstone, and Acquavella). When asked if his real estate acumen made him an easier or more difficult client for Selldorf, Billy jokes, “I think it makes me both—I am sure she would agree and laugh!”

Selldorf immediately came up with a glass and concrete structure, framed in steel and built around a courtyard. Set on six acres, the home’s clean lines and

in Sagaponack.

Given Billy’s background in real estate, the couple surely had their pick of world-famous architects with whom to work, but they ultimately turned to the internationally celebrated, New York-based Annabelle Selldorf, best known for understated, elegant post-modernist designs (and the go-to architect for top contemporary gallerists like Zwirner, Hauser & Wirth, Gladstone, and Acquavella). When asked if his real estate acumen made him an easier or more difficult client for Selldorf, Billy jokes, “I think it makes me both—I am sure she would agree and laugh!”

Selldorf immediately came up with a glass and concrete structure, framed in steel and built around a courtyard. Set on six acres, the home’s clean lines and



2



1



3

1. With clean lines and contemporary building materials, the home is both structured and serene. 2. A work by Ralph Humphrey. 3. The Taraxacum 88, designed by Achille Castiglioni for Flos. 4. Julie and Billy Macklowe give daughter Zoe a lift. The large work by Donald Judd complements Julie’s Chris Benz dress, Christian Louboutin shoes, and Solange Azagury-Partridge jewelry.



4



purity of design makes the structure feel more discreet than its whopping square-footage. Although when the concrete retaining wall—which runs an entire city block—initially went up, Julie says a few neighbors “thought we were building a Walmart.” Even with such an immense footprint, Selldorf was able to create a residence that somehow strikes the perfect balance of serenity and sophistication.

Undeniably chic materials and handmade elements help differentiate the home’s interiors. A purple resin bar, walls of teak wood in the dining room, a library made of rosewood, and a kitchen fashioned from restaurant-grade stainless steel are noteworthy. The master bath, however, with its exquisite bianco ondulaire marble tile, is the pièce de résistance. Eric Alch, who also decorated the couple’s Manhattan apartment, outfitted the interior with classic furnishings, featuring pieces by Le Corbusier, Rody Graumans, and Droog, among others. “Eric is a very talented designer,” says Julie. “We have an easy dialogue with him. My husband and I discussed with Eric that we wanted minimal but comfortable, elements of color, and above all it had to endure—nothing trendy.”

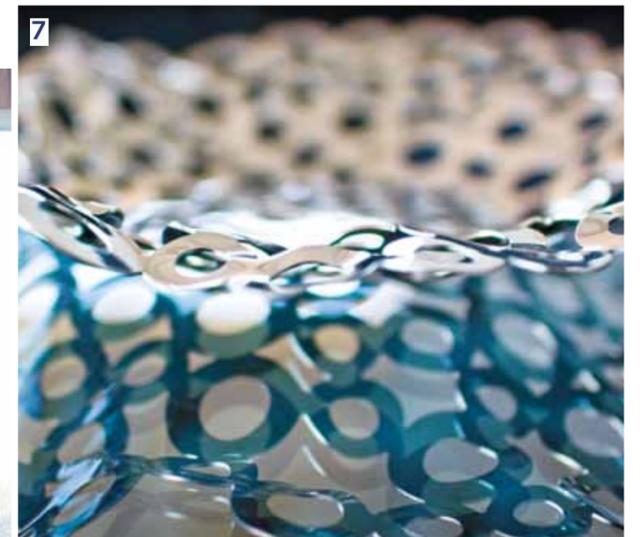
Softer fabrics and custom fabricated rugs soften the sleek and modern home and provide the perfect backdrop for the world-class contemporary art collection, including a series of zippy cream and red paintings by the king of minimalism, Donald Judd, and dreamy oversize photographs by Florian Maier-Aichen.

Beach life for the high-octane couple, who spend time in Sagaponack year-round, is about relaxation. “We’re mellow, super calm, and casual out here,” says Julie. “The opposite of the city, where every minute of every day is scheduled for me.”

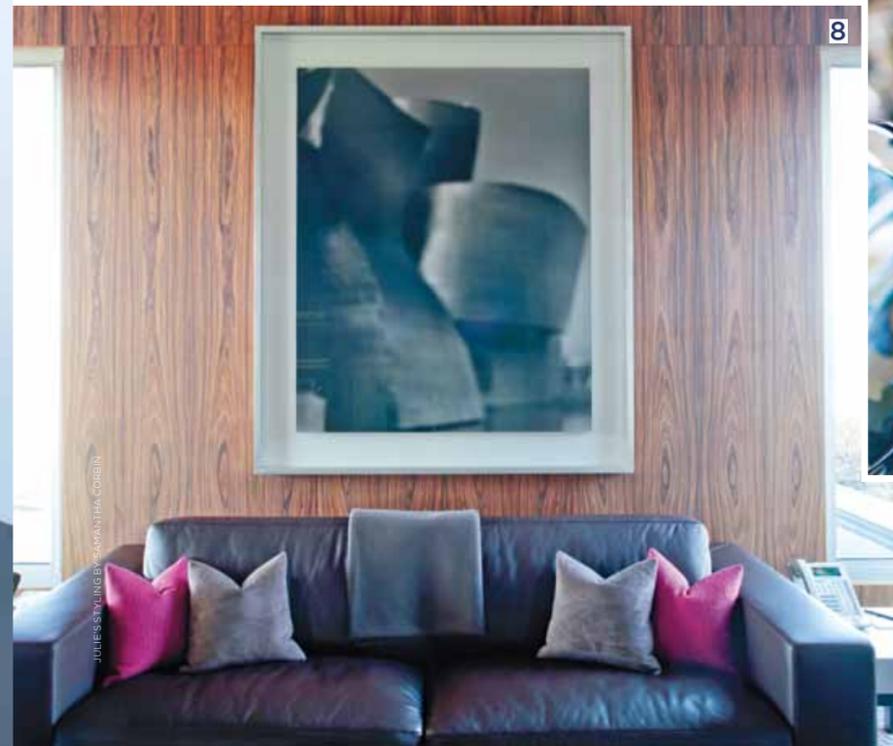
In the Hamptons, the family tends to favor long runs, surfing in Montauk, cooking for houseguests, and, according to Julie, “making sand castles, collecting shells, and trying to coax our reticent daughter into the water.” Adds Billy, “Being together as a family... it’s a very happy house.” **H**



6



7



8

5. A Florian Maier-Aichen photograph hangs behind a new Steinway & Sons piano, a gift from Julie to Billy for his 40th birthday. 6. Designer Eric Alch chose classic furnishings—“nothing trendy”—a contrast to Julie’s of-the-moment fashions from Zang Toi and Tom Ford. 7. A sculptural silver bowl from Alessi. 8. A Hiroshi Sugimoto photo hangs in the rosewood library.