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Hamptons Cottages and Gardens

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ARTISTS & COLLECTORS

A House To Remember

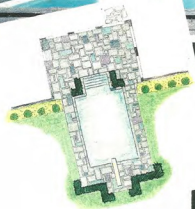
The legendary interiors illustrator Jeremiah Goodman created window displays and advertisements for Lord & Taylor for more than 30 years, not to mention memorable drawings for decorators such as Billy Baldwin and magazines like *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*. Now, at 91, he reflects on one of his proudest achievements, his beloved East Hampton carriage house, originally built for the J. Harper Poor family in 1917 and now part of the Baker House hotel.



Goodman, whose rendering of the carriage house appears on these pages, has always signed his works with just his first name, Jeremiah.

INTERVIEW BY ALEJANDRO SARALEGUI

The property was choked with weeds and brambles when Goodman bought it in the late 1980s. He cleared the land, added French doors in place of the carriage house's stable doors, and later, surprised contributors, installed a swimming pool in front. "I put it smack in the ceiling," he says. "At night it was beautiful."



"Around 1957 I was at a cocktail party in the Hamptons. Even back then there were a lot of Realtors at parties! I hadn't thought about buying a house, but someone mentioned to me that there was a wreck of a house available. In those days there always seemed to be about 20 or 30 deserted farmhouses or beautiful estates that needed massive amounts of work. It was absolutely insane, but I went ahead anyway. I paid \$18,000 for the joint."



Goodman (at right) with playwright Edward Albee and sculptor Louise Nevelson.

"A lot of my favorite theater people were in the Hamptons in those days, especially in Amagansett. People like Edward Albee and Stella Adler. So when I bought the house, I took a really honest approach. It was going to be for me and my friends, not an effort to get someplace else."



Goodman's studio, accessed by an English cast-iron spiral staircase, was located on the second floor, which underwent a complete renovation. A one-time set designer, he filled the space with curiosities from his past.



"When my parents first saw the house, my mother said, 'I didn't raise you to live like this!' I fixed a lot of the problems the 'dumb guy' just patching walls and rolling white paint over everything. The headboard in the bedroom was made of barn siding. I turned the stable doors into my front entry gates. I never really spent a lot on anything."

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"Everyone who was out East hit my place. I was a little embarrassed when I first had Mary Martin over to my little cottage. As she walked in, she called me on my false humility and said, 'You're full of crap with all this phyness!' And I still remember the day Vladimir Horowitz came to visit. One of my friends called him the piano tuner!"



With Mary Martin in front of one of his elaborate floral creations.

"The whole point of the way I landscaped my property was to be able to cut twigs and big branches for the house. Louise Nevelson once said that you could touch and feel everything I collected. I tried to deal with stuff in a casual way, like I had all the money in the world but didn't need to put it out there like a cash register."



Like most people with a decorative bent, Goodman routinely experimented with furniture arrangements, moving pieces about and interchanging them with new ones, and often filled vases with branches cut from trees and bushes on the property.



Goodman often staged the house for advertising campaigns for Lord & Taylor and other clients, such as the spring-like setting in a bath (left). An 18th-century French chandelier ("I came from a storage room at Macy's") hangs in the country-chic dining room (below), for which he designed the tablecloth.



"The house wasn't a lot of trouble, and when it was finally complete, you couldn't imagine it any other way. It was a dream."



Throughout the house, Goodman made good use of screens, whether he was making spaces seem grander, dividing rooms into multiple sections, or creating hidden storage areas. An American blanket chest made of bleached wood sits at the foot of a bed in a guest room (above); the master bedroom (below) included wide herringbone floors and French doors that opened onto a terrace.

