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Flex Time

UNDEFINED SPACES UNFOLD INTO A LOFT-LIKE INTERIOR
IN A MAJOR REMODEL OF A LONG-ABANDONED CARRIAGE BARN

BY **EVA HAGBERG FISHER** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **NICK JOHNSON**

Old Meets New (ABOVE and RIGHT) A streamlined garage nestles up against a 90-year-old carriage house that makes up the main residential structure. The owner's love of cars guided the garage design, turning this often-overlooked programmatic element into a glass-enclosed stage for his beloved vehicles. *See Resources.*





STORIES LIKE THIS one tend to start with a specific program. There is a certain rhythm and flow to the way residential architecture is most often produced; and hence, a certain rhythm and flow to its narratives. This house is not like that; nor is this story. There are no defined rooms; no clear sense of what's a living room and what's a TV room. The client wasn't even involved during the initial consult.

"I received a phone call from a woman who couldn't disclose who her boss was, but who had identified a house we'd done, and asked could I send more information on that house, and they'd digest it and get back to me," recalls Norwalk-based architect Christopher Pagliaro of Pagliaro Bartels Sajda Architects. He had no idea the client would be a single gentleman with three children or that they would end up renovating an abandoned carriage house into something fun, personal and that, as Pagliaro says, "resembled New York loft living."

It's one thing to get loft living—open plan, exposed brick or stone, floor-to-ceiling glass—in an existing shell of an apartment building or even a long, low structure out in the country. It's another to get it in a 90-year-old rambling structure that has a 22-inch-thick stone wall, the back of which was never intended to be seen but that Pagliaro became convinced was "a work of art" that needed to be, even more than saved, highlighted.

The architect made three presentations to the client. The trick? They were all basically the same design, just different sizes. Unusual for the area,

the client picked the smallest. The magic, after all, was in the fun he told Pagliaro to have, and the dedication with which Pagliaro approached that singular directive. A glass fishbowl addition that makes up the southern end might be the most fun part, or it might be the challenge of fitting electric, cable, lights into a fishbowl when you're also dealing with a nearly two-foot-thick stone wall. Or, the most fun part might be how—it's still unclear what the program ever was. "I'm in this glass bowl," Pagliaro says, reminiscing about his evenings testing the waters. "Is this a sitting room, a reading room, a viewing room? Is it the family room when the game's on?"

He collaborated with interior designers Heather Moore and Arthur Dunnam, who worked together on the project when they were both at Jed Johnson Associates and have since created their own firms, to create eminently flexible spaces—and to hide the TVs. "The most amazing aspect was to witness the transformation of a traditional Connecticut horse farm into a completely modern, 21st-century living space that has a uniquely industrial feel," Moore says. She kept her contributions deliberately neutral throughout, enlivening the space with what she calls "a brilliant burst of accent colors" in paintings, lamps or furniture like the Axel Vervoordt coffee table, made from a freeform piece of slate.

Overall, it was about establishing a language—one that Pagliaro describes as masculine, industrial, car-inspired (the kitchen is detailed with actual car paint) and consistent. "We put that flat roof Miesian modernism on top of the predictable carriage house," he says. It's all surprises here. ✨



Grand Entrance (TOP LEFT) The entrance-hall/art gallery (in keeping with the house's lack of clearly-defined programmatic zones) is furnished with a Tucker Robbins natural-edge table. See *Resources*.

Open Table (ABOVE) A Lindsey Adelman chandelier illuminates Studio Van den Akker dining chairs and a dining table featuring a blackened steel base and a straight-edge Kumbuk top designed by Tucker Robbins. Fuse Lighting pendants from Dennis Miller Associates light the kitchen island. Heavy steel beams are a nod to the industrial aesthetic introduced throughout the home. See *Resources*.



Rock Solid (OPPOSITE PAGE) The “back” of the compelling 22-inch-thick stone structure makes up the interior walls of this bar-like area furnished with Studio Van den Akker club chairs featuring Joseph Nobel fabric; Kevin Reilly pendants from Holly Hunt; and an area rug through Patterson Flynn Martin. Roman shades in a Larsen fabric from Cowtan & Tout filter the sunlight. **Room For Living** (ABOVE) In another living space, vintage club chairs from 1stdibs in a Lee Jofa fabric flank a contemporary two-tier John Boone coffee table. The Cumulus lighting fixture is by Ted Abramczyk for Ralph Pucci. The area rug is from Orley Shabahang. **Work Out** (BELOW) The home gym combines crisp Miesian modernism visible in the Cartesian grid of the glass addition with the remnants of the original stone wall, while a curved ceiling offers a feeling of coziness. See *Resources*.





Master Class (LEFT) In the master bedroom, Dedar's Sottosopra velvet bed fabric delivers textural luxury to this heavily furnished space. A hand-knotted wool and silk rug by Doris Leslie Blau delivers plushness underfoot, while a custom club chair nestles next to a Holly Hunt ottoman, both covered in James Dunlop Textiles' Mokum fabric. A vintage bench wears a Cortina leather through Holland & Sherry. See *Resources*.



Spa Style (RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM) The master bathroom is a study in clean lines and long semi-transparencies. Feature wall tile is Ann Sacks; porcelain wall tile is through Artistic Tile. Floor tile and countertop are through Dushi Marble. Robern vanity is from Klaffs. The Crisscross pendants lights are through Boyd Lighting. Faucets are Dornbracht. See *Resources*.

BATHROOM PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEIL LANDINO JR.



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Outside Story (ABOVE) A geometric pool installed by Signature Pools leads the eye to the “fishbowl,” a glass-walled addition that operates as whatever its inhabitants want it to be: TV room, game room, card room, etc. The subtle low-slung forms of the house emerge. **In The Fishbowl** (LEFT) Custom coffee tables by Jed Johnson Associates anchor a comfortable seating arrangement detailed with custom sofas, game chairs and an Axel Vervoordt slate coffee table. **Rooftop View** (OPPOSITE PAGE) Overlooking the pool area and rolling fields beyond, the rooftop deck features outdoor furniture from Henrik Pedersen for Gloster. See *Resources*.

