

New England Home

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Fourth Anniversary Issue

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A PLEASANT SURPRISE

Classic on the outside, contemporary within, a Cape Cod summer home puts a fresh twist on tradition.

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DUCKHAM • INTERIOR DESIGN: TUI
PRANICH • LANDSCAPE
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LOMBARDI LANDSCAPE DESIGN •
PRODUCED BY STACY KUNSTEL

Weathering shingles, white trim as crisp as a sail, a landscape filled with seaside-friendly plantings and a backyard view of the water across marsh grass and beach roses—everything about the outside of this house says classic Cape Cod. • Looking at the exterior, you can just imagine what it must be like inside: cushiony sofas and

chairs covered in bleached muslin and piled with sun-faded blue toss pillows, rattan occasional pieces, watercolors of the sea and other accoutrements of the comfortable, casual look so characteristic of a summer home on the Cape.

What fun it is, then, to step inside and find an interior that sparkles with Lucite and glass and gleams in a palette that's almost entirely white. How surprising to see sleek, modern furniture and a collection of contemporary art. And how perfect a match it is for this house, with its spacious, open floor plan and its banks of large windows that let the sun stream in from every angle.

The house wasn't always so pulled together outside or in. Built back in the 1970s, it had been renovated and added onto in ways that hid its true nature. "There were no roof edges; the roof just came down to the wall," says Boston- and Cape Cod-based architect Kent Duckham. "There were no gutters, no architectural detail. The screened porch was too low and too narrow." Inside, the rooms were small and the space seemed configured to hide, rather than celebrate, the view. "When you look at old pictures, the house was really nothing special," Duckham says.

Its site, however, was definitely special: a fan-shaped lot of a bit less than two acres, with its wider end stretching along the water. Duckham and his clients knew the house had the potential to be just as exceptional, so they added interior designer Tui Pranich to the team. Pranich, who is based in Florida but works often in New England, had collaborated with the homeowners several times over the years. He



Classic meets contemporary in the living room, with its blending of traditional architectural details and such unexpected furniture choices as the Lucite coffee table and lounge

In the family room, well-placed hints of color enliven the serene, all-white palette. *Facing page:* Tufted leather-upholstered dining chairs and a glass chandelier with a modern twist help meet designer Tui Pranich's goal of casual comfort with a touch of elegance.





also has an architecture degree, so he brought an understanding of the house's structural challenges as well as a deep intimacy with the clients' preferences.

The basic shape of the house, with its two octagonal sections, remains the same, but Duckham and his team rebuilt it, replacing rotting wood, adding missing flashing, creating the roof flairs, enhancing the details, replacing small windows and doors with bigger ones and reshingling the whole exterior. He rebuilt the screened porch and gave the open front and back porches generous new proportions, then constructed a new entry to give the home a grander introduction. Above the entry, he installed an arched window and balcony, and echoed the arch in a dormer on the back of the house.

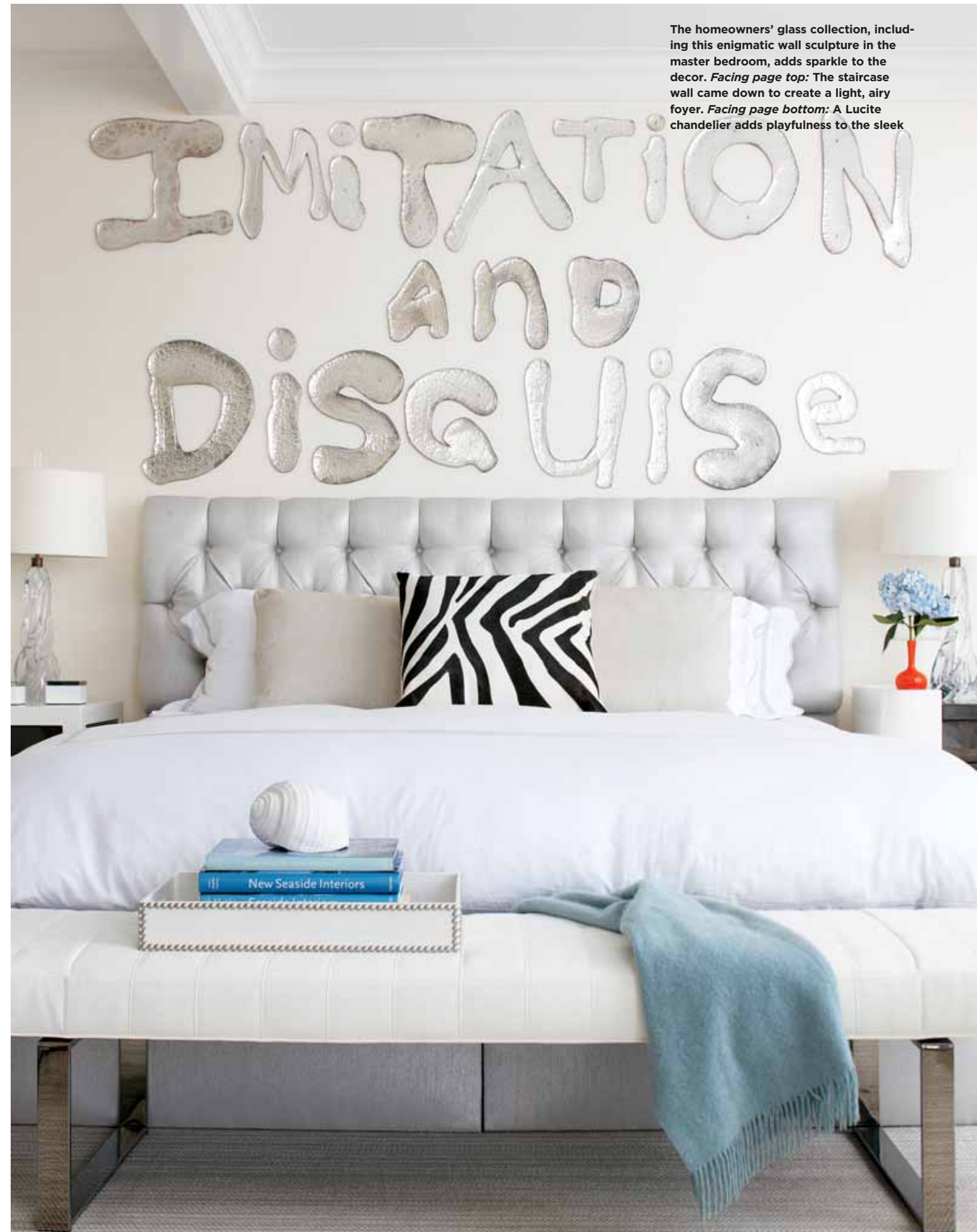
Inside, a previous owner had added a first-floor ceiling, which Duckham removed to bring back the original cathedral space. "The arches carry the light through the house and bring light down to the lower story," he explains.

Working together, Duckham and Pranich reconfigured the interior space. "The rooms were in the wrong place," Duckham says. "The kitchen was at the back with a counter along an exterior wall, which obstructed the views to the water." They moved the kitchen to the front of the house and fashioned a spacious living room to fill its former slot.

The new kitchen, designed by Snaidero USA, shines with its cabinets and countertops of white lacquer and stainless-steel appliances. White leather barstools belly up to the island and a contemporary chandelier of Lucite hangs above. Anchoring all that white are the quarter-sawn oak floors stained a pale gray and a paneled section under the island in a shade of deep, almost-brown maroon.

The home's color scheme, says Pranich, is a contemporary version of the classic Cape style. "It's unexpected, but the white is still fresh and clean and beachy, and it complements the exterior of the house," he says.

The public rooms form an L shape that begins with the spacious living room and continues through to a family room and



The homeowners' glass collection, including this enigmatic wall sculpture in the master bedroom, adds sparkle to the decor. Facing page top: The staircase wall came down to create a light, airy foyer. Facing page bottom: A Lucite chandelier adds playfulness to the sleek



dining area, with the kitchen to the right of the dining area. The white theme, grounded by gray-stained oak floors, carries through the living, family and dining areas. Walls are treated with a polished plaster that contains a bit of silicate sand. "It's very shiny, very polished, almost like stone," Duckham says. "It's very pure and minimalistic, and the quality of the material is beautiful." Hints of color come from the homeowners' collection of glass art and the occasional accessory in pale turquoise.

Pranich's goal, he says, was to create an interior that's casual yet has a formal, elegant touch. For the formality and elegance, he brought in contemporary furniture like the Lucite lounge chairs and clean-lined sofa in the living room, the modern white coffee table in the family room and the white pedestal dining table surrounded by white leather-upholstered chairs with nail-head trim. For casualness, he used easy-care cottons, linens and leathers. Unexpected combinations, such as the living room's Lucite coffee table flanked by more traditional armchairs, add charm. "A combination like that makes it a little more young and fresh," Pranich says.

In the rebuilt screened porch, Duckham installed a gray slate floor and Pranich brought in weather-coated furniture covered in Sunbrella fabrics. "It really looks like indoor furniture," he says. "Everything has a real level of elegance."

The second floor holds guest bedrooms and baths, while the master suite sits on the first floor of one of the octagonals. Here, a hint of the lightest gray joins the white palette, and a whimsical sculpture of glass letters hangs above the bed. "We used a more traditional, tufted headboard," Pranich notes, "then added the leather and chrome bench at the foot of the bed for a contemporary twist."

Walking through the classic, columned entry to find an interior so modern may surprise at first. But the feel is so fresh, so summery and so inviting, that before long it's hard to imagine any other way. •

Note For more information about *New England Home*, visit www.nehomemag.com.



The rebuilt screen porch has a slate floor. *Facing page top:* A new arched dormer on the rear of house brings light to the interior. *Facing page bottom:* Like the home's exterior, the landscaping was designed for a classic Cape Cod look.