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VISION QUEST



HARIRI + HARIRI EXPAND ON
THEIR ORIGINAL HOUSE DESIGN
BY ADDING AN ARTIST STUDIO
FOR A PASSIONATE PAINTER
AND HIS WIFE

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL WARCHOL



Adding Game | An addition to their residence in the architecturally-oriented subdivision of The Houses at Sagaponac, Howard Lazar and Heidi Banks's artist studio (PREVIOUS SPREAD LEFT) was designed by the home's architects, sisters Gisue and Mojgan Hariri of Hariri + Hariri. **One Man Show** | Lazar, a painter of largely figurative works (PREVIOUS SPREAD RIGHT), wanted a space to retreat and focus on his work in solitude. **Match Point** | An opening through the studio's terrace (TOP LEFT) frames the tennis court. Built into the wall, a bench (LEFT) provides seating to watch games below. **Light Bright** | The architects chose large plate glass windows and a long rectangular skylight to flood the space with the sun's rays during the day. At night the space appears to glow from within (ABOVE). See Resources.



It is an odd proposition for a top architect to design a spec house and then create a highly-customized addition to the same site. Yet that is exactly the story of this artist's Sagaponack studio designed by sisters Gisue and Mojgan Hariri of Hariri + Hariri. Initially, they had been commissioned by the late developer Coco Brown to design one of his first Houses at Sagaponac. As Brown put it to the sisters, he wanted the modernist subdivision to be a museum of architecture. Helping him in the development was architect Richard Meier, who consulted on the project and helped select the architects. Howard Lazar and Heidi Banks bought the Hariri + Hariri house and had immediate plans for change to the property, or as they saw it, improvement. Lazar, a painter with a burgeoning career, needed a studio that would allow him

to concentrate on his work. "From the start we knew we wanted to work with Gisue and Mojgan," recalls Banks. "They're one of the few architecture firms that can make modernism livable. We knew they would respect the property as they had in the main building."

The main house is elevated from the ground as though it were a sculptural object floating in space. "We had been asked to create a work of art. But where to begin if we had no client guiding us?" explains Gisue Hariri. Studying the work of various artists, they came upon the sculptures of Diego Giacometti as a starting point; they admired his minimal use of detailing to get at the essence of human beings. "Applying that same logic to the house meant that we could create a luxurious space with just the bare necessities so that anybody could move in. This house, which was



the first one built on the site, has the relatively simple qualities of modern sculpture," continues Gisue. Interestingly, Lazar's paintings have a bit of Giacometti's stripped-down feeling that resonates with an emotional impact.

The second part of the project became easier for the Hariri sisters, as they now had clients to set the program and direct the design. "The studio works quite differently," says Gisue. "The main facade can be read as a three-dimensional painting that reuses materials from the main house and introduces new ones that are particular to the studio." On the exterior, each side of the studio fulfills a specific demand. The main facade is double layered and the partition creates a semi-enclosed outdoor shower. On the tennis court side there is a bench built into the wall for watching a match. The rear wall is essentially a private loggia used by Lazar when he needs a break from painting but wants to stay away from

the fray. The remaining side facing the woods is designed for storage.

For Lazar, the space is there simply to paint in solitude as he prepares for his first exhibition this fall at the Walk Tall Gallery in East Hampton, September 4-18. Lazar, who turned to painting after a 30-year career in real estate development and construction, delves deep within himself to express parts of his own buried psyche and general human behavior. In this solitary environment, Lazar paints his figurative works—some more recognizable than others—but all deeply emotional. The studio succeeds admirably with its large plate glass windows and industrial sawtooth skylights that flood the space with an even glow. In the evening carefully designed lighting allows Lazar to continue painting. "Although the studio actually addresses several of our needs," comments Banks, "The overriding concern was honoring the concept of the artist and protecting his working environment." 🌟



Look Ma, No Legs! | The main residence (ABOVE), which appears to float, is meant to resemble a modern sculpture, particularly one by artist Diego Giacometti. **Reflection Connection** | Many of the materials used in the home are mirrored in the design of the art studio. Rich Turkish Travertine forms the pool surround (ABOVE LEFT), which is topped with chaise longues from Henry Hall. **Outer Limits** | Jason Lamberth's chaise longue (TOP) rests in the yard behind the studio. See [Resources](#).