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LISA LAMPANELLI
RAW TO REAL, interview by **JANE G**

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DESIGN
ISSUE
HOME, GARDEN
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MARCH/APRIL 2016

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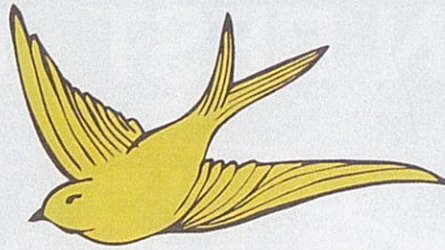


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SPRING FASHION
Up close with **Lela Rose**,
Naeem Khan & **Katie Ermilio**

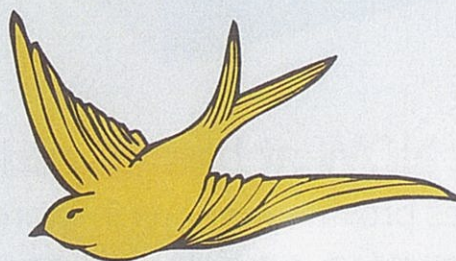
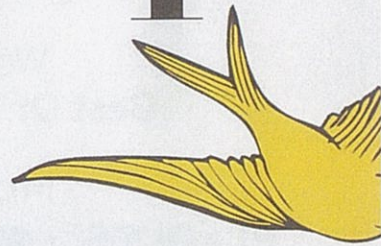




Lighten Up

PRECISE DESIGN DECISIONS
BY **MICHELLE HOGUE** CREATE
A **SERENE** AND WONDERFULLY
CREATIVE FAMILY HOME

BY **DIANE SEMBROT**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **HULYA KOLABAS**



Lots of white and glass panels along the second-floor hallway give a big boost of airiness. Horizontal lines add interest.





Up the large stone steps and through the enormous front door to this newly built, white Colonial in Westport and you are greeted by Michelle Hogue. She sweeps you into the entryway, an expansive space with offshoots to her home office, the stairs to the second floor, the hallway/mudroom, the kitchen, or, a shot across the dining room table, to the large glass doors that open to the back of the property. Lots of options, no confinement. The airiness is possibly due to the height of the ceiling, which rises two floors, or it might be the gorgeous lighting fixture. Of course, natural light from the back breathes tremendous life into the home. Good design, she'll tell you, is about thoughtful layout and focus on details, and this designer proves it within steps of the front door and again throughout the house. Choices are

made not to be clever or trendy, but, rather, to create livable spaces. This is, after all, a family home: mom, dad, kids and Coco, the dog. Plus, the designer knows the family well: She's also wife, mom and homeowner.

NORTH BY SOUTH

"Hailing from Virginia, I wanted to pay tribute to the farmhouses of the South, throw in some coastal elements because of the proximity to the water, modernize the overall feeling of the home and still blend in with the eclectic architecture found on South Compo," begins Michelle. "It was important that the home have a presence, but not be pretentious."

To turn that clear vision into reality, Michelle collaborated with Bluewater Home Builders in Westport. She embraced a simplified color palette, to keep the look clean and fresh without sacrificing interest; she mixed elements such as galvalume, white cedar, horizontal and vertical siding, and stucco. The home, built last year, looks as if it has belonged to generations of Westporters but with updates that appeal to



ABOVE: A back room serves as a quiet retreat, just steps from the pool. The graphic floor pattern and flowing light fixture add personality to the space. **RIGHT:** Reminders of family values are sprinkled creatively throughout the house, such as messages on the stairs. **OPPOSITE:** The seating area at the opposite side of the kitchen is a cozy retreat where the family can relax. Plenty of seating and the position of the piano and wall art work together to put everyone at ease.



today's young families. Such qualities are found inside as well, proving that she is adept at focusing on the big picture and the small details. Nothing escapes her scrutiny, and the home is warmer for it.

"While I wanted a two-story entryway, I was opposed to a traditional design whereby the stairs dump into the hall. By moving the stairs to the side, anchored to the front wall and creating glass panels rather than traditional banisters, a rather narrow foyer feels much more expansive and is flooded with natural light," she says. "Adding to this open concept, we designed two commercial-grade glass front doors that peer into the formal dining room. The rear of the dining room is complete with fifteen-foot-plus folding glass doors that open to the rear yard, perfect for entertaining and welcoming guests to the expansive patio and fire pit."

Anchoring the look is the seven-to-nine-inch plank character grade oak flooring on the first floor, except for the mudroom's white

brick tile with gray grout in a herringbone pattern. And because everyone loves a multitasking mudroom, Michelle made sure her design suited the realities of a busy young family—it had to keep things organized and be functional. "The mudroom includes metal mesh drawers under the bench and cubbies to allow shoes to breathe. Also, an oversized closet hides a secondary washer and dryer to service the pool towels or extra sheets and linens," she says.

KITCHEN

"Creating a kitchen that works for entertaining and family life was of great importance," Michelle says.

Instead of attempting to corral guests into a formal living room or being separated from her children while preparing dinner, she made the heart of the home comfortable for everyone. She opened the space between the kitchen and a sitting area and included cool



LEFT: The kitchen is designed with efficiency for the user.
BELOW: Re-imagining the home bar and wine storage in the kitchen prove utility can be stylish.
FAR LEFT: The dining area



design accents, such as a footrest under the bar/island. Comfortable seating with soft pillows and an oversized coffee table are arranged within earshot of the kitchen.

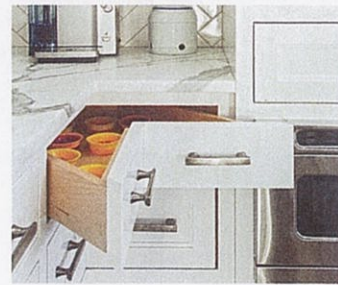
The kitchen reveals careful planning; Michelle offers just a few examples: “The drawer beneath the Miele coffeemaker is designed to hold my tallest coffee mug,” she says. “The drawer under the microwave is designed to hold the popcorn. Smaller drawers flanking the range were intentionally designed to hold mason jars with chalkboard lids for spices. Drawers, dishwasher, bar ice maker and Sub-Zero refrigerator are paneled to create a refined, uniform look. Wherever available, appliances were selected in graphite gray rather than stainless. The white knobs on the range add character and interest. While we used subway in a herringbone for the backsplash, opting for taupe grout tied in the khaki variations in the stunning Statuary marble countertop. Playing on the nautical theme, choosing yacht cleats rather than conventional appliance pulls for the Sub-zero was more affordable and offers whimsy to the space.”

A lot can be learned about this designer by looking closely at one particularly clever feature in the kitchen: The custom wine cellar. “Why hide the bottles in the basement? Not only is it practical, it is functional, especially with a lock at the bottom to keep teenagers at bay,” Michelle says. The second island became a two-tier bar for entertaining. It holds a small refrigerator, drawers and an extra cabinet for storage. The stain is custom and the countertops are honed Bardiglio. It also serves as a showstopping conversation piece when friends stop by.

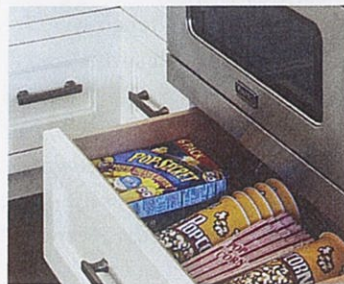
THE ORGANIZED KITCHEN



Design drawers deep enough for spice jars (handwritten labels, too).



Get creative, like a corner drawer, to maximize storage.



Store popcorn near the microwave for a movie night at home.



Put dishes in a place where they are easy to see and reach.



ABOVE: The master bath, a soothing retreat
LEFT: Interior designer Michelle Hogue of Hogue Interior Design
FAR LEFT: The master bed and bath are romantic yet contemporary, filled with texture and an interplay of patterns, soothed by a minimal color palette.
RIGHT: The kids' rooms and study spaces are designed to maximize storage while also keeping them fun and inviting.

BEDROOMS

Michelle painted bedroom floors white to create an open and airy feeling. This is certainly true in the master bedroom. “I wanted this space to feel like a retreat, a boutique hotel room complete with spa bathroom,” she says. “To accomplish this, I kept the room void of casegoods, created a posh sitting area and designed a feature for the fireplace. The reclaimed barn wood with Pietra Cardosa fireplace surround exudes modern farmhouse. With the poetic lighting from the Made Goods coco bead chandelier, the Lillian August handblown glass pendants flanking the bed and the dancing flames in the birch logs of the gas fireplace, the bedroom lighting is purposeful and romantic. By far, the intent of the lighting design and the effect are my favorite features.”

The guest room is comfortable for visiting families and a fun space for the children to host slumber parties. It includes a kitchen, living area, desk, bath and bedroom with two queen beds. Cole & Son Hicks Hexagon wallpaper covers the

bathroom walls, complementing the feature wall of the bedroom, clad in Hicks Grand Hex paper. Hues of blue are featured throughout the suite with pops of cherry and lime green. Navy wingback beds are covered in linens by School House Electric, Serena and Lily, Best Made wool blankets and topped with vintage linen pillows. “A weathered wood side table adds substance and repeats the natural grain found in a similar coffee table in the living room,” Michelle says, explaining that clean lines in the white Lillian August slipcovered sectional serve as a blank canvas for seasonal pillows and throws, while flamed and honed black granite counters with a custom white-glass backsplash offer consistency and create harmony with other materials used throughout the home.

The children's rooms are appropriate for how they live, their size and how they'll grow—plus, they have to share space. Michelle says, "I like to think about what the eye will see from each entry point. For example, when I enter a bathroom, I would prefer not to see a niche in a shower and stare at shampoo bottles. When designing the children's wing, I was faced with similar scenarios. Presented with a traditional Jack-and-Jill layout and several variations, I felt space was not being maximized. One variation created a door to the bathroom off the main hallway; this was not appealing. Instead, I created a shared closet and single bath." It's brilliant. Her boys' rooms are opposite each other. Rather than have closed closets that create clutter, she opened the space between the rooms, built out a linen closet and created two identical built-in closets. "There is even enough room for an office niche, which we currently use as Minecraft territory," she says of the popular game, which, appropriately, is about building spaces.

PLAYING FAVORITES

With a home this big and lovely, you have to wonder if the designer has a favorite space. Not surprisingly, it comes down to the personal details. "I have favorite moments," she says. "I love looking up from my Verellen sofa in my



The guest room is complete with a kitchenette, double beds and bath, making it a treat for visiting parents and serving as a place to host slumber parties.



family room and seeing the words 'p.s. i love you p.s. i love you' wrapped around a side wall from the kitchen to the back hallway. I adore reading anything new on the chalkboard paint throughout the house. I smile every time I walk up the rear staircase and read our house rules painted on the steps. Making s'mores with family and friends has become a summer tradition. Poker night in the formal dining room makes my heart smile large that it's not a traditional, stuffy and stagnant room. Even the venetian plaster begs to be touched and feels like butter each and every time I run my hand over it."

The takeaway? "Plan your space for how you live. It makes your life easier, more enjoyable and more personal. It really is all about good design." **W**

