COOL & COLLECTED

After designer Amy Lau's lightening and brightening, a frumpy Hamptons home becomes a showcase for modern art and midcentury finds—and reveals the sleeker side of blue and white.

For the palette of a living room in a house in Water Mill, New York, decorator Amy Lau was inspired by the vibrant hues in a series of etchings by artist Anish Kapoor. The sofa at left is by Vladimir Kagan. The dining chairs are vintage. Sectional, M2L. Vintage Gio Ponti armchairs are paired with custom ottomans from Dune. Custom wool-and-silk rug, House of Tai Ping.

Interior Design **AMY LAU** Interview **CRAIG KELLOGG** Photography **PAUL RAESIDE** Producer **DORETTA SPERDUTO**

CRAIG KELLOGG: This home feels absolutely up-to-the-minute. Is it brand-new?

AMY LAU: Not at all. It's a four-bedroom Shingle Style house, the kind that's pretty typical of its location in Water Mill on Long Island, New York. The couple—she's in real estate and he's in finance—had rented it for years before buying it because they loved the setting. When I arrived from the city, I got that immediately. It's surrounded by coastal wilderness and shorebirds. But the architecture was way too old-fashioned for them, and the divided-pane windows blocked the beautiful view of Mecox Bay. We replaced them with plain double-hungs and big, uninterrupted walls of glass.

The decorating also did an about-face. Did you have to push the clients?

I didn't. A few years ago I designed her apartment in New York City. She always says, "Let's have fun." She is very fashionable and loves everything tailor-made. She and her partner are passionate about horse racing and art collecting. This whole job was bespoke: The owners appreciate the value of custom commissions and understand that they are investing in the heirlooms of tomorrow.

Were the original interiors this bright and open?

Actually, it was quite dark and dingy. We worked on the renovation with local architect Salvatore Iannone, Jr., and it turned into a huge job. My clients are not big chefs, but they like to entertain, so the first thing they wanted was a new kitchen and a larger dining room. We opened up the kitchen so it now overlooks the living room. It feels like a gallery, with walls clad in matte-glass panels that were back-painted gray. We also gutted every bathroom, reconfigured the entire ground floor, and replaced all of the floors with bleached-walnut planks that echo the color of beach sand.

I've noticed you often use pastel-tinted whites as opposed to crisp whites. Why?

To me, a stark white-white says summer only, and this home is used year-round. Warm whites are versatile: They feel fresh in warm weather and like a cozy cashmere sweater when it turns cold. I looked at dozens of slabs of Italian marble to find the perfect off-white. I especially love the living room's ivory wool curtains, made from a Japanese fabric that looks handwoven. I added texture wherever I could to make things feel relaxed.

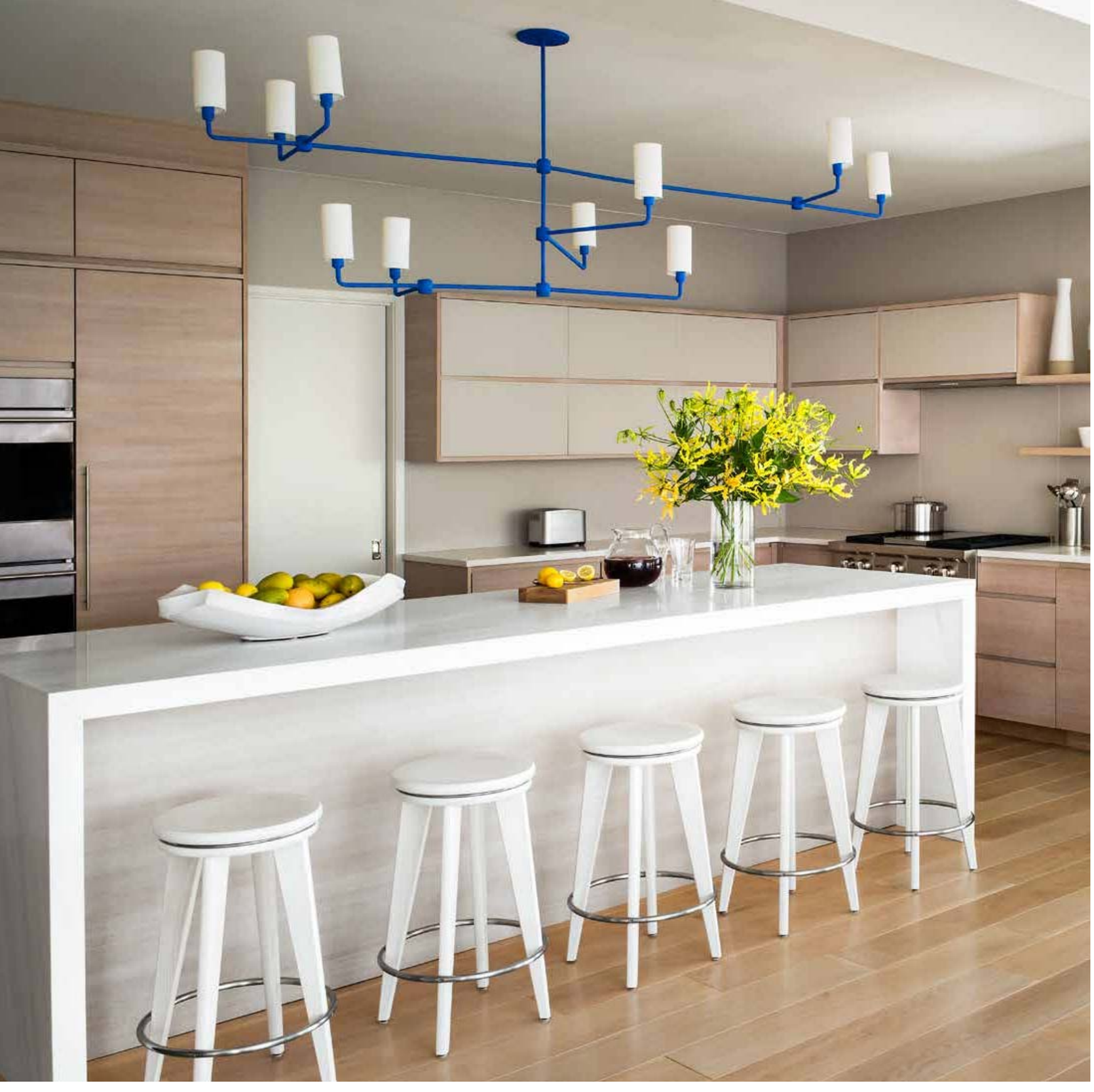
The living room features a striking and colorful set of Anish Kapoor etchings. How did you design around them?

Aren't they amazing? They seem to glow with a gorgeous inner light. We removed an ugly fireplace in order to have an entire wall to display them. The clients and I went to the gallery to pick out the eight pieces we liked best. I matched their hues to colors in a Benjamin Moore paint deck and brought those swatches when shopping for furniture and accessories. The custom rug was designed to be painterly, with a pattern that resembles watercolors. Those blues were also color-matched to the Kapoor etchings.

The dining room's chandelier is a conversation starter in itself. Is there a story?

It's a site-specific piece that I commissioned from the New York artisan Lindsey Adelman. I wanted it to look like a mermaid's fishing net. She and her team arrived with handblown-glass globes and a prefabricated armature, then composed the fixture on the spot. It's so beautiful at night when the sun goes down and the lights come on. I would kill to host a dinner party under it.

ABOVE: Lau in the foyer. She commissioned the sculpted floating cabinet from the Parisian artist Jacques Jarrige. **OPPOSITE:** Lau divided the expansive living room into two seating areas: one for conversation and another for television. In the foreground, a vintage lounge chair swivels to face the TV. Custom sofa, Dune.



LEFT: In the kitchen, stools from Altura Furniture nestle under a custom island framed in Bianco Dolomiti honed marble. Bleached-walnut custom cabinetry is paired with counters in Caesarstone's Blizzard quartz. Double wall oven and range, Wolf. Custom light fixture, Bone Simple Design. **RIGHT:** Modern Living Supplies chairs in a Rubelli fabric. The custom Knotty Bubbles chandelier is by Lindsey Adelman. **BELOW:** The powder room "looks like a memory box filled with seashore curiosities," Lau says. Lunaris Fog wallpaper, Calico Wallpaper. The agate sink by Brenda Houston is custom.

LEFT: The master bath has a Wetstyle tub with a Dornbracht faucet. **BELOW:** The family room's custom Vladimir Kagan ottoman is covered in an iridescent leather resembling fish skin. A. Rudin custom sectional in Dedar and Knoll Luxe fabrics. Angora rug, the Rug Company. The walls are painted in Benjamin Moore's Spring Mint. **RIGHT:** "I love the coziness of textured fabrics and lush carpets at the beach," Lau says. A guest bedroom has a Shine by S.H.O bed. Rosemary Hallgarten throw, ALT for Living. The ceiling fixture and bench in a Black Edition linen are vintage. Rug, Amy Lau Design.
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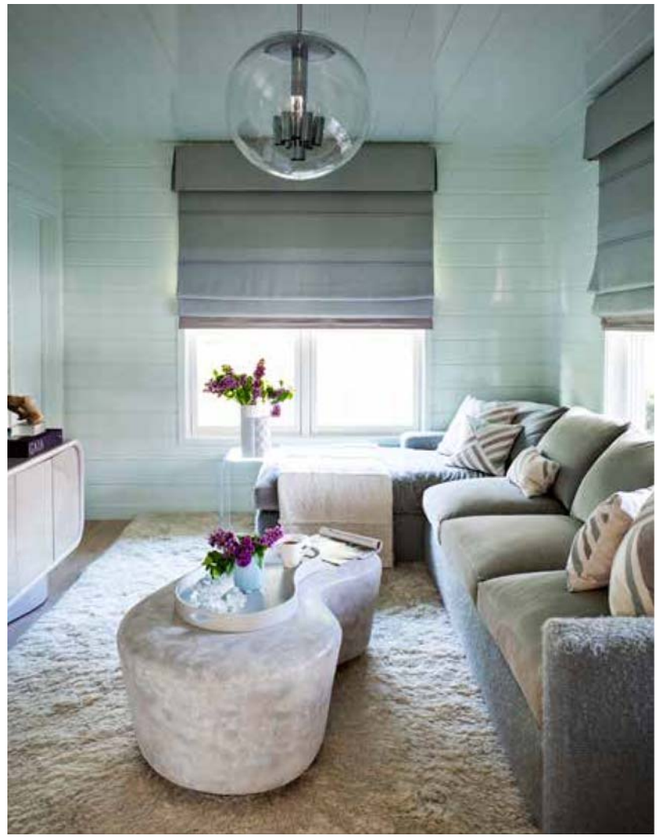

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> **—Amy Lau**