

The conservatory of a Westchester County, New York, house designed by B Five Studio. The custom daybed is upholstered in Rogers & Goffigon linens, the leather chairs by Mario Bellini are from Cas-sina, and the rattan armchair and ottoman are by Bielecky Brothers; the rug is by ABC Carpet & Home, and the flooring is Botticino marble tiles by Country Floors. **FACING PAGE:** A hillside is planted with maidenhair ferns, Japanese beech ferns, and hellebores; the gardens were designed by Reed Hilderbrand. See Resources.



# A NEW ARCADIA

*In Westchester County, New York, the B Five Studio team conjures a refined vision of country life, where understated luxury pays homage to a setting of unparalleled verdant beauty*

TEXT BY NANCY HASS  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM ABRANOWICZ  
PRODUCED BY ROBERT RUFINO





## CALL THEM “THE COLLECTOR” AND “THE BUILDER.”

They have spent two decades molding the northern Westchester County property they call “the farm” into an estate that’s as idiosyncratic and over-the-top as they are.

“We started this in our late 20s, early 30s. Undertaking it just a few years into our relationship was really an act of faith,” says the Builder, surveying the dozen buildings on the meticulously landscaped 56-acre spread about 50 miles north of Manhattan. “It’s an amazing evolution—a combination of who we are, and who we’ve become.”

One thing the couple knew from the start was that they didn’t want the kind of cookie-cutter baronial manor typical of wealthy exurbs. Besides, the Builder dreamed of a Georgian while the Collector, who has amassed a trove of Scandinavian glass and pottery, has tastes that run more to midcentury modern. So they hired Ronald Bentley and Salvatore LaRosa of the Manhattan firm B Five Studio to design a traditional-style main house that, at 8,000 square feet, is classically rigorous and elegant in proportion, yet purposefully modest by Masters of the Universe standards. “We were inspired by a Jeffersonian ratio of spaces,” says the Builder. “We didn’t want a lot of rooms we never used that were just for show.”

As the years went by, B Five Studio, which has also designed residences for the couple in Florida and Manhattan, helped them create a series of sleek outbuildings with a minimalist aesthetic and, most important, a variety of views of the rolling lawns and formal gardens, which were designed by Boston landscape architectural group Reed Hilderbrand. “From each location they wanted to get a wholly different vantage point,” says Bentley, “to have a series of experiences and vistas that would always be interesting.”



In the living room, the sofa and armchair, which are covered in a Brunswick & Fils linen velvet, and the cocktail table are custom designs; the circa-1950 side tables are by Philip and Kelvin LaVerne, the painting is by George Herbert McCord, and the walls are painted in Benjamin Moore Regal Select in Green Tint. **FACING PAGE:** The rear of the house and the boxwood-edged perennial garden; the cat, Laverne, is one of three on the property. See Resources.



The dining room chairs and mahogany-top table are custom designs, the 1958 pendant light is by Poul Henningsen, and the custom-made rug is by Hokanson Carpet; the walls are painted in Farrow & Ball Estate Emulsion in Picture Gallery Red. **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP:** In the kitchen, Bertoia barstools from Knoll, Caesarstone countertops, and a back-painted glass tile backsplash; the ovens are by Miele, the range is by Wolf, and the floors are lined with terrazzo tiles. A custom runner by Stark on the center hall staircase, which is painted in Pratt & Lambert Accolade in Pearl Tint.





The cedar-clad poolhouse features a custom sofa covered in a Rogers & Goffigon mohair velvet, an Arne Jacobsen Swan chair, a vintage Scandinavian rug, and a Saarinen table and Bertolli chairs. **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP:** An umbrella by Frontgate beside the swimming pool. Adirondack chairs from Design Within Reach on the lawn, with a view to the woods. See Resources.



With the outside painted a soulful brown, the two-story, center-hall main house has traditional Palladian elements. A brick-clad “core” comprises the living room, dining room, library, and a laboratory-white kitchen. The core is surrounded by a sweeping marble-floor corridor punctuated by hanging lanterns; it leaves the impression of a historic house that might have been lovingly expanded in recent times. The colors in the public rooms, painstakingly chosen by LaRosa, are variations of the primaries: lemon velvet sofas in the living room, a russet dining room, the deep blue-carpeted central staircase. “You want there to be simplicity but also richness,” says LaRosa.

Those sumptuous tones set off a handsome collection of 19th-century Hudson River School paintings. While some of the artists of that group also applied their luminous technique to scenes of the American West and New England, the couple say they prefer depictions of the Hudson River area itself, which they’ve come to think of as their spiritual, as well as literal, home.

Despite the classical elements of the structure, there is a spareness in the decoration that is quintessentially modern. Much of the furniture was custom designed by LaRosa with nods to both the 19th century and more recent eras, a delicate dance of styles. In the living room, a grandfather clock and a bust of Jefferson (a gift from the Collector for the Builder’s 50th birthday) are surrounded by floating shelves. The massive mahogany dining room table has patinated metal legs that echo those on the cabinets that flank the fireplace. “The perfect example of how I’ve evolved is that we originally had







A collection of 19th-century American landscapes in the master bedroom, including one by Edward Gay above the fireplace; the bedside-table lamps are by Poul Henningsen, the bench is by Christian Liaigre, and the walls are painted in Pratt & Lambert Accolade in Pebble. **BELOW:** The tub in the master bath has been fitted with custom legs, the showerheads are by Speakman, the fittings are by Dornbracht, and the floor is Botticino marble tiles. **FACING PAGE:** The garden pavilion overlooks a koi pond; a stainless steel and cedar bridge leads to a lawn. See Resources.

an antique French chandelier over the table, which I loved,” says the Builder, “but I was eventually convinced that the Poul Henningsen light fixture would be better. And I have to admit it is.”

Several of the outbuildings, which Bentley topped with playful double-parabolic roofs, were created to indulge the Collector’s passions: hot yoga, done in one of the gym’s large rooms (there’s also a massage room and a vast complement of weights and equipment), and flora, which takes root in the 2,500-square-foot greenhouse with walls made of a crushed glass material that sparkle in the sunlight. (The resident horticulturist assembles many of the property’s planting pots by hand, from concrete, peat moss, and vermiculite.) On weekend mornings, the Collector takes a stack of magazines to the garden pavilion, a small freestanding living room with killer views, to listen to jazz and sip a latte.

The couple don’t have children, but nonetheless consider their farm a place for family. Their apartment in Manhattan is a sleek retreat, and the Miami pad is a whitewashed weekend getaway steps from the city’s nightlife, but it is here that they unwind and open up. In recent years, they’ve taken under their wings some of their young employees, themselves new parents. In summer, they all gather at the poolhouse for barbecues. The two also entertain grown-ups, of course—drinks on the veranda or in the conservatory, then dinner for 10 or more—but the sounds of children laughing and running through the grounds is what appeals to them most these days. “You want to share what you’ve created,” says the Builder. “Watching people you love enjoy it, we can’t describe how good that feels.” ■

