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GLOW UP

FOR A CONNECTICUT WEEKEND HOME, ARCHITECT **ROGER FERRIS** AND DESIGNER **JENNY FISCHBACH** ELEVATE A NEW-BUILD FARMHOUSE WITH A SLEEK MODERNIST SPIN.

BY JULIE LASKY PHOTOGRAPHS BY DURSTON SAYLOR AND PAÚL RIVERA



The exterior of a weekend home in Westport, Connecticut, designed by the architect Roger Ferris with interiors by Jenny Fischbach. The facade is in fiber-cement clapboard, and the entrance is framed in black steel.

PAUL RIVERA



OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT: In the great room, the sofas are by Minotti, the Homenature armchairs are in a Fortuny fabric, and the custom cocktail table is by Fernando Mastrangelo; the custom hexagonal ceiling fixture is by LightArt, the steel sash windows and doors are by MHB, and the room is painted in Benjamin Moore's Super White. In the entry hall, the horizontal wall lights are by John Wigmore for Ralph Pucci, the French white-oak flooring is from Exquisite Surfaces, and the artwork is by Meghann Riepenhoff. **BELOW:** The family room's Homenature sectional is in a fabric from Holland & Sherry, the custom ottoman is in a Holly Hunt leather, and the side table is by Desiron. **RIGHT:** In the dining area, Vica chairs surround a custom table by Asher Israelow, and the console is by Gregory Nangle. **BELOW RIGHT:** The kitchen's refrigerator is by SubZero, the range is by Thermador, the hood is by Bertazzoni, and cabinetry is by Bulthaup. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Interior designer Jenny Fischbach.



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JENNY FISCHBACH TELLS A STORY ABOUT THE OWNER OF a weekend house she designed in Westport, Connecticut. Fischbach, who founded her own Manhattan interior design studio after working as a partner at Cullman & Kravis, was meeting about the project at the client's primary residence when she smelled delicious soup being made and asked what was in it. The client promised to give her the recipe, but what arrived at her office later that afternoon was actual soup. "Who sends soup?" Fischbach asks.

She and her colleague, Casey Pugatch, made the Westport house easy and soothing in the spirit of this thoughtful person and her comfort food. They created a retreat

with formal purity but no preciousness, so a family with two teenagers and a large dog could mess around without fear. And they did it all in shades of gray, and without laying down a single rug.

From a distance, the residence, set on nearly nine acres on Long Island Sound, looks like a cluster of farmhouses—or as the home's architect, Roger Ferris, describes it, "Monopoly houses." A closer look reveals that the buildings are attached and have fiber-cement clapboard siding in place of cedar shakes. Steel grids divide the big windows into human-scale panes; the roof, with gable lines as pure as a child's drawing, is standing-seam zinc.

Ferris says he wanted to see how far he could abstract the idea of this vernacular New England style "without losing what it means to be in a warm farmhouse on the water in Connecticut." Inside, the tease continues with floors that appear to have been salvaged from a barn but are in fact newly distressed white oak. Their warmth and texture make them "the MVP of the project," Fischbach says.

And where you might expect to see rustic beams in the two-story great room, you instead find a custom lamp shaped like an exploded field of hexagons. The sculptural fixture adds a layer of visual interest to the soaring space and bounces light off the ceiling.

DURSTON SAVILE: PORTRAIT: COURTESY OF JENNY FISCHBACH





ABOVE LEFT: A custom neon sign by Name Glo in the entry stair hall displays a quote supplied by the homeowners. **ABOVE:** In the master bedroom, the custom bed has a Tabu ash-veneer headboard and is dressed in linens from James Perse and pillows from Ralph Lauren Home; the Hervé Langlais armchairs and ottoman are from Galerie Negropontes. **LEFT:** The back of the house at sunset. The lounge chairs are by Gandia Blasco, and the umbrellas are by Tuuci. For details, see Resources.

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DURSTON SAYLOR (2); PAUL RIVERA

You also find a monochromatic color scheme, if you can call it color at all. “The client was very clear that her palette was gray,” Fischbach says. There is not a stick of brown furniture in the house. The minimalist dining table was ebonized to wipe out any trace of a natural wood tone, and the stacking tables in the family room were washed in gray. “It is hard to find so many grays that speak to each other nicely,” Fischbach says, adding that they looked as if they could have migrated into any part of the house.

In the great room, a large cocktail table cast in layers of cement, sand, and crushed glass incorporates all of the tones and subtly echoes the waves outside. Fischbach and her client commissioned the piece from the Brooklyn designer Fernando Mastrangelo after seeing a version at the Salon Art & Design fair in New York.

The distinction between artwork and functional object

melted in collaborations. The designers worked with the lighting artist John Wigmore to mock up rice-paper light boxes for the gridded-glass entrance to make sure the quantity and scale were right. For the neon sign installation that illuminates the interior staircase, the family supplied the phrase *Everyone’s going to bed early tonight*. Then Pugatch “obsessed”—her boss’s word—over the size and font of the letterforms.

The immersive combination of textures, heightened by the absence of color, might draw your attention away from the fact that there is not a single rug on those handsome oak floors. “The whole premise was ease,” Fischbach says. “If there’s not a rug to get ruined, you don’t have to worry.”

After finishing the project, Fischbach redid her own apartment, all in gray. “I was totally brainwashed,” she says. “This is the most calming palette to live with. Although I do have a rug or two. And no dog.” ■