



COLOR CONSCIOUS

NEW YORK GALLERIST PAIGE WEST
BRIGHTENS HER VIVIDLY PAINTED MONTAUK HOME
WITH PLAYFUL CONTEMPORARY ART

BY LIZ ARNOLD | PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELIZABETH FELICELLA

Maybe it's the white walls of her gallery that did it. Or maybe it's because she loves color. But when Paige West, the curator and owner of Chelsea gallery Mixed Greens, applied her figurative paintbrush to the blank canvas of her Montauk vacation house, she really dipped in: There's hot pink, a lot of green, a combination of purple, red and her favorite color, orange.

For the prismatic project, West brought in her friend Ghislaine Vinas, the interior designer she's worked with on several occasions starting with her first gallery location eight years ago. "I don't go into a space without consulting Ghislaine! I bring a vision, and she has the expertise," West explains. "She makes it happen."

In this case, it had to happen fast. West and her husband, real estate developer JC Keeler, with whom she has a two-year-old son, Charlie, weren't looking to buy. The pair was considering rental properties in Montauk, where JC spent

childhood summers working at his grandfather's marina. But then they came upon the 5,000-square-foot, cedar-shingled beach house a day after it went on the market. "There was something about it and the view that felt like home," West says. They closed in January 2006 with the goal of getting it ready for summer.

"It wasn't tough," Vinas says. "Paige makes decisions quickly; she takes risks, she doesn't care much about labels. She just wants to do things that are fun, and it's a house that makes you smile when you walk in."

Though West knew she wanted lots of color, the challenge was selecting art to complement those vibrant walls. "It was really tricky for me to find works that didn't clash," says the gallerist. "Whereas most people might start with wallpaper and flooring, I think about which painting goes where. It's my first instinct," she explains.

For the dining room, West envisioned a coral



Bright and White | "I bring the vision and she brings the expertise," says homeowner Paige West about her interior designer, Ghislaine Vinas. For the dining room of her Montauk home (PREVIOUS SPREAD LEFT), West wanted a bright coral color, which Vinas offset with a white lacquered table on Eero Saarinen bases. To create a playful feel, she had the linen upholstery on the chairs covered in vinyl. **Animal Instinct** | In the entryway (OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT), Watson, a basisset bound, admires Xtreme Watersports, a Dirk Westphal print from West's Mixed Greens Gallery. It was chosen to match the orange Poltrona Frau bench. **Ebb and Flow** | Beachy tones of sand and blue soothe in the living room (LEFT). The oceanic theme continues with the art—a Leah Timari painting hangs above the sofa, and photos from Fiona Gardner's "Mermaid" series are above the mantle. The curvaceous Orgone low table is by Marc Newson for Cappellini. **Game On** | At a game table at one end of the living room (OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT), clear vinyl upholstery on green-edged antique chairs reveals yarn stuffing. **Sea Legs** | Bristle-like Edra chairs (BOTTOM LEFT) line a custom table from Maine Cottage Furniture. Benjamin Moore's soft blue Teardrop adds to the serene, ocean-side feel. **Run Forest** | A custom designed headboard (BELOW) in one of the guest bedrooms was painted a bright orange, adding a splash of color in an otherwise neutral space. A Ghost Tree coat rack by Erick Ginder for Velocity Art and Design brings the forest theme set by the Cole and Sons wallpaper into a third dimension. See Resources.



color, and while she went looking for suitable art, Viñas designed a dining table with a high-lacquer top perched on two Eero Saarinen Tulip bases. For the chair upholstery, she covered the yarn-like linen fabric with transparent vinyl. "You can still see the texture, but it makes it more casual," Viñas explains. Meanwhile, West came through with four Maira Kalman gouaches from the Julie Saul Gallery.

The master bedroom is a study in chocolate brown and turquoise. Again, Viñas took things down a notch by upholstering the fancy vintage headboard in a casual corduroy. A tall mermaid lamp West found on Istdibs.com illuminates a corner while lending a sense of humor—and hitting a sentimental note. "JC and I went to the Mermaid Parade in Coney Island on our first date, so we've got a thing for mermaids," she says.

Sea enchantresses again reach terra firma in the living area, where shades of blue and sand evoke the beach. Fiona Gardner's photography from her "Mermaid" series, which also graces the bedroom, is mounted above the fireplace while an acrylic of a fishing scene by Leah Tinari hangs on the next wall. West points out that contemporary furniture, such as an Arne Jacobsen chair, makes an excellent counterpoint to contemporary art. "There aren't a lot of artists doing solid backgrounds," she says. "Contemporary art has a lot of imagery, and the sleek lines of contemporary furniture don't compete."

In the purple and red guest room, West and

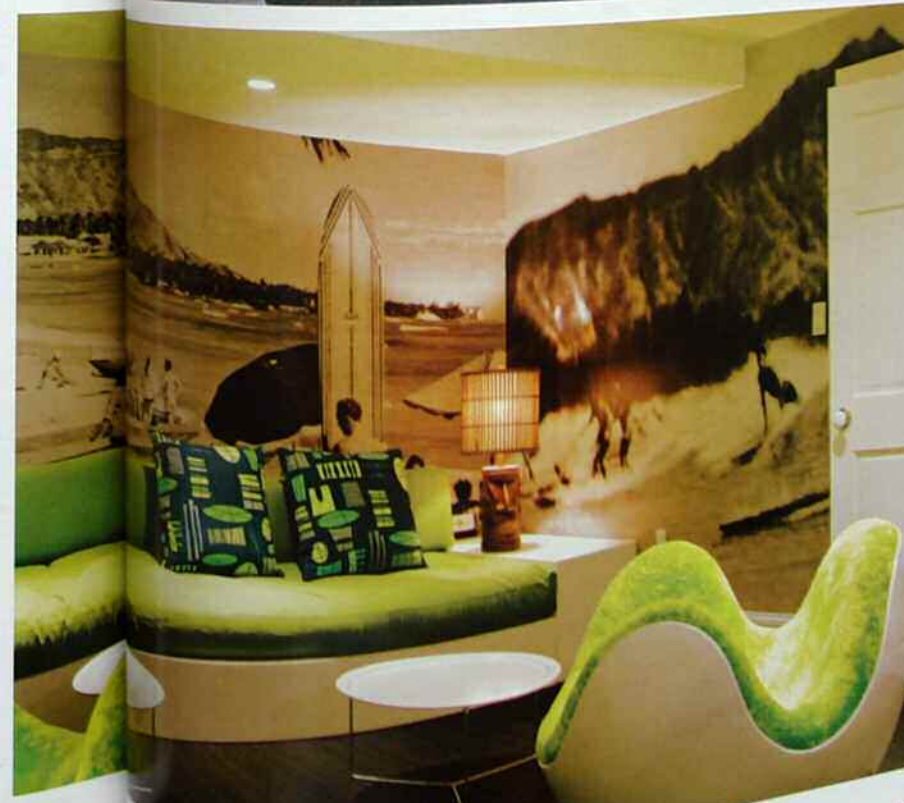
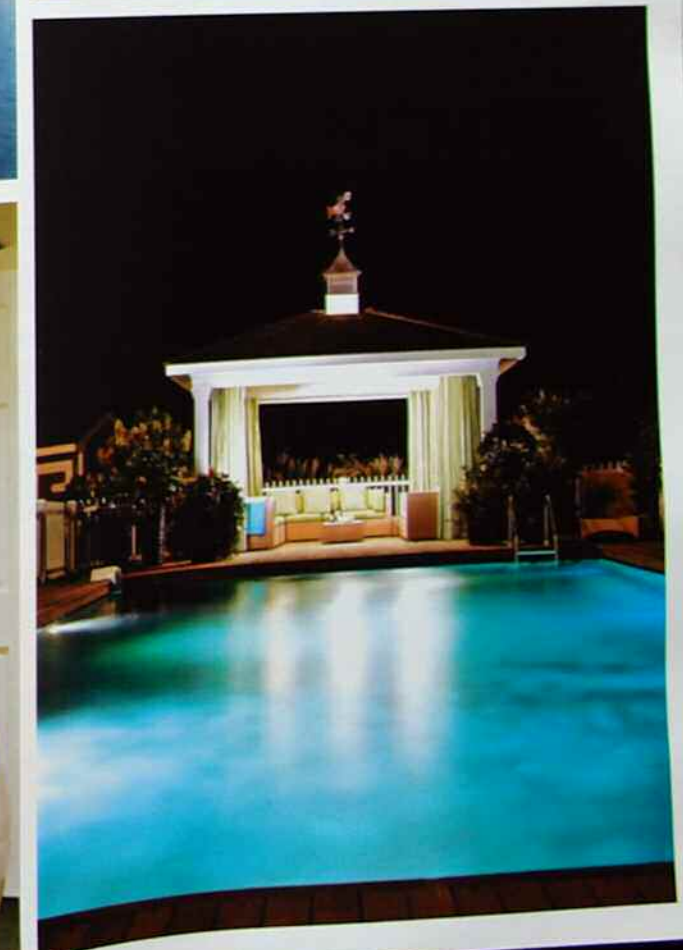
Viñas shared one of their classic collaborative moments. "For the mirror," the designer recalls, "I said, 'Let's do it white,' and Paige said, 'Ghislain, no! Why are you being a wimp? Let's do it orange!' She was totally right," she says, laughing.

Because the property isn't a primary residence, the duo took some risks they normally wouldn't have; plus, time constraints forced them to get creative. In a few of the guest rooms—there are a handful, as the couple loves to entertain and are also expecting twins—Viñas either lacquered headboards she found at West Elm or designed her own. In the pink-walled bathroom, a shell chandelier from Anthropologie was spray-painted purple "to glam it up a bit."

For West, whose first book, *The Art of Buying Art*, was recently published by HarperCollins, this kind of creative and experimental attitude—investigating the new—informs her approach to art. For example, she bought the Fiona Gardner photography in the living room from Scope Hamptons, the annual art fair (this year running July 27–29) that promotes emerging artists. The best way to find the art you like—and what is appropriate for your home—West says, is to go out and see a lot of it. "You have a responsibility for this art," she maintains. "Whether or not someone tells you to buy it, you have to love it. You're the one who's going to live with it." And when you do, you can paint the walls whatever colors you want. ✨



Rockin' Time | In the red and purple guest room, a vintage chrome rocker and ottoman (LEFT) from ABC Carpet & Home is covered with fabric from Manuel Canovas/Coutan & Tout. **Kid n' Play** | The ends of a crib from eco-friendly company ducluc (OPPOSITE BELOW LEFT) are upholstered in a Designers Guild fabric to tie it into the orange walls and carpet. **Red Snapper** | The stairwell leading to the basement (OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT) is illuminated by a lobster from Lite Brite Neon in Brooklyn. **Hang Ten** | Surf scene imagery was made into a wall mural in the basement (BOTTOM LEFT), an area designed to be a hangout for kids. **Placentero Chairs** from Argentine company Brion Experimental mimic ocean waves. **Sea Life** | The cabana was designed by Viñas and outfitted with JANUS et Cie furniture and bright green accent lights (BOTTOM). **Little Branch** | Tree racks by Swedec (BELOW) bring nature onto the patio, which is also furnished with pieces from JANUS et Cie's Marrakesh and Orbit lines. See Resources.





and Beautiful | The master bedroom (OPPOSITE) is a study in brown and turquoise. A Venetian-style headboard was purchased at the Miami Antique and Design Expo and upholstered in a corduroy fabric. George Nelson Small Cigar Pendants can be switched on individually, offering flexible lighting. **Changing Shapes** | A simple color scheme with a mixture of patterns and textures gives the living area (LEFT) a retro feel with an edge. Graham and Brown's "Frames" wallpaper contrasts with a lace-patterned Flor carpet. **Light Sticks** | In the foyer (TOP RIGHT), guests are greeted by a painted twig sculpture from Donna Parker Antiques. **Under the Sea** | A mermaid lamp and art not only add a nautical touch to the master bedroom (ABOVE LEFT), but hold sentimental value for the homeowners, as they were from Donna Parker Antiques. **First Sight** | West and her husband were considering only rental properties in Montauk until they found their cedar-shingled beach house (ABOVE RIGHT) a day after it went on the market. See Resources.