

DESIGN FOR THE WELL-LIVED LIFE

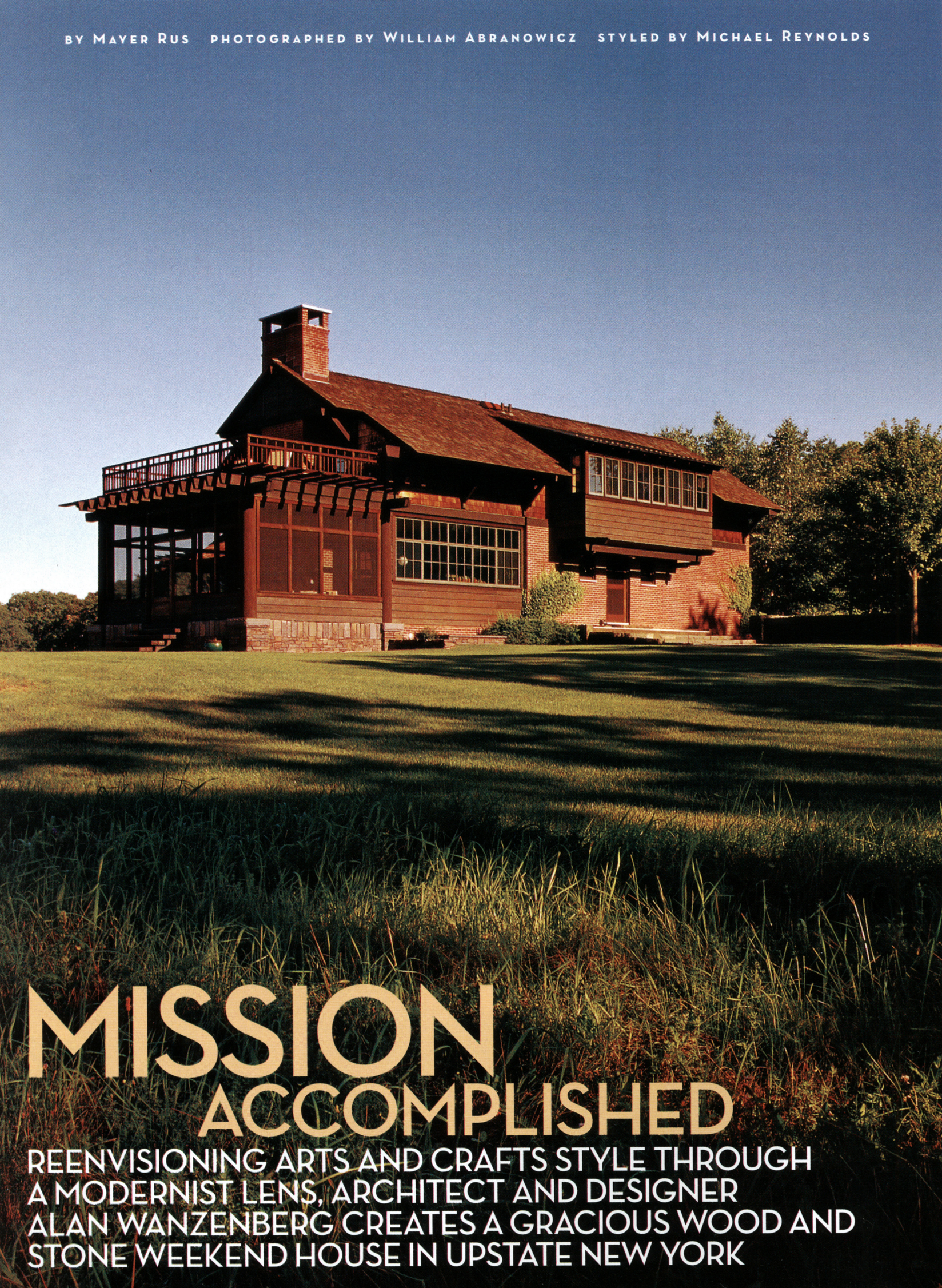
HOUSE &GARDEN

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Outdoor Style

62 GREAT IDEAS FOR SUMMER DECORATING

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MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

REENVISIONING ARTS AND CRAFTS STYLE THROUGH A MODERNIST LENS, ARCHITECT AND DESIGNER ALAN WANZENBERG CREATES A GRACIOUS WOOD AND STONE WEEKEND HOUSE IN UPSTATE NEW YORK



The living room's built-in white oak shelving, this page, holds several of the owners' craft collections, including a group of mid-20th-century blown-glass vases from the Blenko Glass Company in West Virginia, a firm still going strong. ■ Interior detailing extends the architectural language established by the house's exterior, opposite page.

AIRY DIMENSIONS AND STYLISH MODERN ART AND FURNISHINGS RELIEVE THE CLOISTERLIKE QUALITY INHERENT IN MANY ROOMS OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT



Appearances can be deceiving. At first glance, this upstate New York home designed by Alan Wanzenberg seems to speak the familiar architectural language of American Arts and Crafts. All the earmarks of the style are evident: honest, elemental building materials like wood, stone, and tile; the structure's simple form; construction that celebrates individual artisanry. But the sense of familiarity quickly evaporates upon closer inspection. This is no dry, predictable exercise in period verisimilitude. Wanzenberg and his husband and wife clients—he's a television writer, she's an artist—have animated the venerable historic style with a fresh, contemporary attitude.

"In the late 1980s, I designed a Manhattan apartment for them that reflected our shared interest in the American Arts and Crafts movement," Wanzenberg says. "A few years later, they bought 500 acres in Columbia County and decided to build a house. We again looked to Arts and Crafts, but this project was not so driven by period references. The design evolved in response to the topography of the land and my clients' needs."

Wanzenberg's first order of business was identifying an ideal location for the house on the erstwhile turkey farm. The hilltop site strikes a balance between desires for intimacy and heroic stature above the property's hills and lawns. In



TRADE SECRETS

FURNISHINGS A custom-designed coffee table is flanked by George Nakashima stools and two '50s French reverse-curve armchairs. Malacorte sofa by B&B Italia (now discontinued). **FABRICS** Chairs covered in Great Plains' Winter Harvest wool in Pumpkin. **PAINTING** By Louise Fishman.









the landscape design by Edwina VonGal, a grove of trees protects the back of the house, while the front opens out onto views that stretch from the Berkshires to the Catskills.

Wanzenberg's refined composition provides eloquent testimony to his mastery of Arts and Crafts detailing and construction. "Earlier projects such as Twin Farms [the posh Vermont retreat he designed with his late partner, Jed Johnson] demanded a certain virtuosity in craftsmanship," he says. "This kind of architecture is all about skill, subtlety, and precision. The effect must be confident but never precious."

Wanzenberg assembled a team of elite woodworkers, masons, textile artists, and metal fabricators to execute his plans. His vision for the project also dictated the use of local materials. "The craftspeople and sources all come from this part of the



ELEMENTAL MATERIALS SUCH AS WOOD, STONE, AND METAL ARE BALANCED BY SURPRISING TOUCHES LIKE THE ANILINE-DYED GREEN OF THE KITCHEN CABINETRY

The screened porch, opposite page, is framed in stained cedar atop a base of New York limestone and Vermont granite. Eaves create a visual rhythm. ■ A hand-hammered bronze fireplace hood adds heft to the light-filled living room, opposite page, lower left. ■ Thomas Moser's Bowback stools face a soapstone breakfast bar in the kitchen, this page. Handblown glass lights, by Deborah Czeresko. Teak Danish bowls, from R 20th Century, NYC. Finn Juhl bowl, from Antik, NYC. Range, Viking.



INDIVIDUAL SPACES IN THE HOUSE GAIN INTIMACY AND DEFINITION THROUGH ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS SUCH AS THE GABLED CEILING IN THE MASTER BEDROOM





country," he explains. "The house began to develop a vernacular sensibility tied to the character of this region."

The spirit of Wanzenberg's updated riff on Arts and Crafts becomes more pronounced as one moves through the house's interiors. In place of the dark, moody cloisters typically associated with the style, the architect created airy spaces that sing with natural light. Wanzenberg's design encourages easy circulation and a sense of openness. Individual rooms gain intimacy and definition through architectural details: a barrel vault crowns the study; the master bedroom has a gabled ceiling; a flat ceiling emphasizes the cubic quality of the living room.

Interior finishes and furnishings buoy the house's unexpected character. Wanzenberg selected stylish objects that fall outside the boundaries of Arts and Crafts but remain sympathetic to the movement's aesthetic spirit. The mix includes 1950s French chaises and lighting, a contemporary sofa by B&B Italia, vintage Billy Haines chairs, and various designs by George Nakashima. Punches of color—check out the aniline-dyed evergreen kitchen cabinets—accent the otherwise restrained palette. Arts and Crafts has never been so light on its feet. □

TRADE SECRETS

FURNISHINGS Triangular side tables, opposite page, complement the bedroom's gabled ceiling. A custom bed is finished with hand-stitched leather. Billy Haines chairs, Donzella 20th Century, NYC. CARPET Patterson, Flynn & Martin. LIGHTING Isamu Noguchi's Akari hanging and table lamps. CHAISE Brown Jordan, above. Shopping pages, see back of book. For more on Arts and Crafts, houseandgarden.com.