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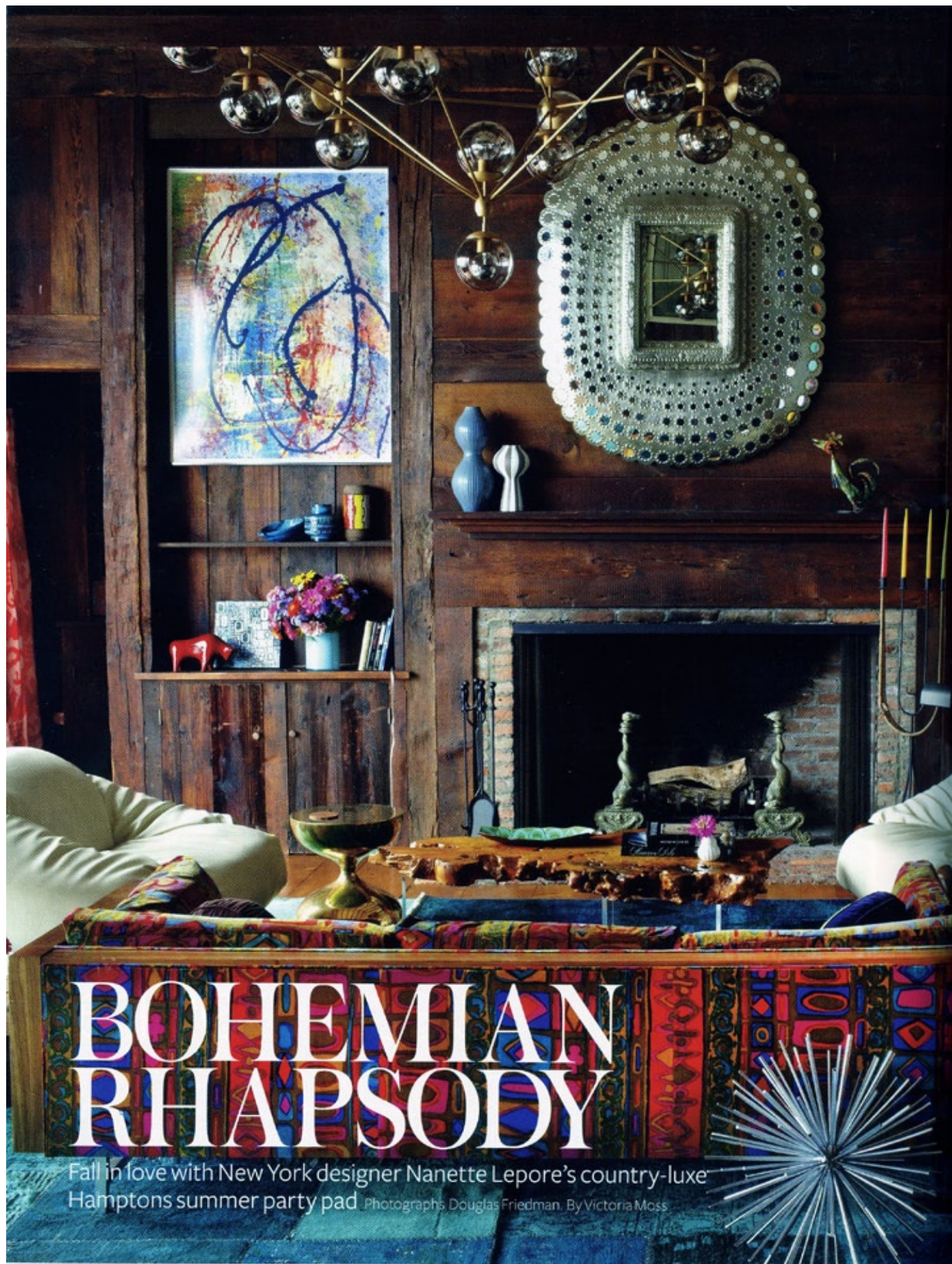
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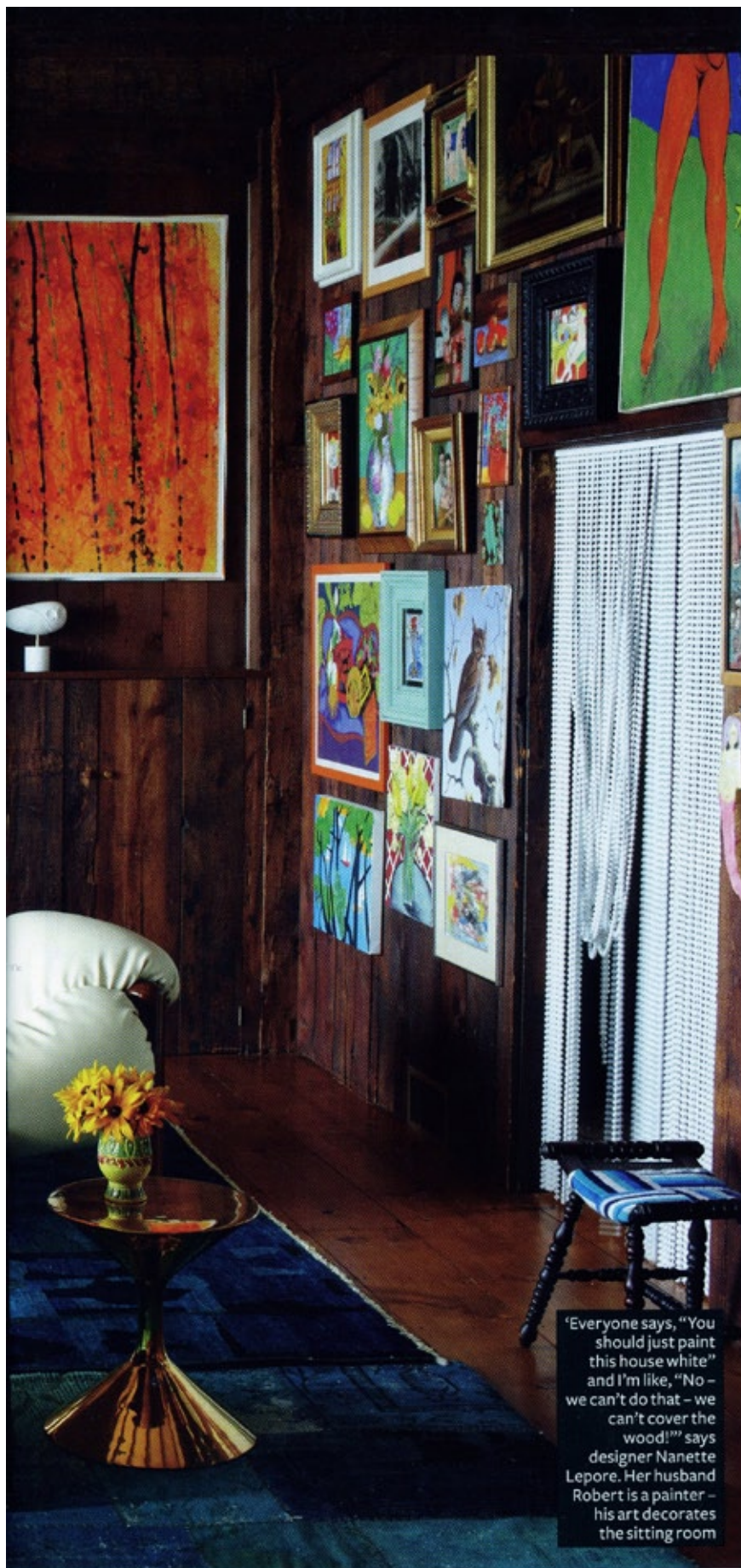
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BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

Fall in love with New York designer Nanette Lepore's country-luxe
Hamptons summer party pad. Photographs Douglas Friedman. By Victoria Moss



"I always buy things that I love, the whole decorating thing happens around it," says Nanette

My husband is getting sneakier," says designer Nanette Lepore on her weekly summer Hamptons escape plan with her artist husband Robert Savage. "He's now up here from Manhattan by Wednesday! I usually get the train on Friday and in two hours, I'm here and unwinding, ready for the weekend."

If you're imagining a classic Americana palette of Shaker-style blues and whites, then Nanette's East Hampton pad, in the coastal area of Amagansett, is a refreshing alternative. The interior boasts grand, 20-foot-high ceilings and rich mahogany, lifted by exuberant decor: a mix of quirky vintage finds, exotic draping and original art makes for one intoxicatingly inviting house.

It's the third Hamptons property that the family (they have a 12-year-old daughter Violet) have lived in, after buying their first place inland ten years ago, what Nanette describes as "a shack in the woods. It looked like a trailer – but it was on five acres and a bargain". Their second house was across the street from their current home.

"This house is on the water and when we saw the view from the terrace, I just fell in love with it – it blew me away. You could be on the coast in Italy, it's magnificent," says Nanette. "We bought it around three years ago from Scottish Formula One driver Murray Livingston Smith, who had all these sexy pictures of himself in race cars – he was like Steve McQueen! And he got the house from Peter Mayle, who wrote *A Year in Provence*, so it has a great history." ▶

"Everyone says, 'You should just paint this house white' and I'm like, 'No – we can't do that – we can't cover the wood!'" says designer Nanette Lepore. Her husband Robert is a painter – his art decorates the sitting room



Interior designer Jonathan Adler helped Nanette create the eclectic mix of fabrics. Below right, Nanette by the pool; and the kitchen, where she prepares for her regular weekend dinner parties

On embracing an eclectic style, Nanette divulges, "Everyone says, 'Oh, you should just paint this house white' and I'm like, 'No - we can't do that - we can't cover the wood!' That is so Hamptons: everything white-washed and clean-looking. I love that we're doing something different."

Nanette's eponymous fashion label, founded in 1992, has been worn by Freida Pinto and Scarlett Johansson, and seen on *Gossip Girl* - fans of its strong prints and energetic colours won't be surprised by the bohemian spirit of her home. During the week, she and Robert stay in their West Village apartment, which has, she says "a similar vibe, but it's more 'done' - the paintings are a little more curated".

Nanette's love of long summer nights was inspired by her creative parents (her father was an artist - Robert was his pupil, which is how the couple met). "My parents were always having parties - my mum would set us up with our own little party. People dressed up and there was lots of laughing and dancing." Now, with Violet, she's keeping the same family party spirit alive. "This house is great, because the kids can do their own thing. Living in the city, she can't get out a lot, so when she's



here, she runs with abandon - I love that.

"Throughout the summer, we'll have dinners every Saturday for between 15 and 30 people. Generally, every meal is outside and early in the season, we'll set the table. My daughter has that job - there are always candles and mixed-up linens. We turn off the lights and look at the sky - there are amazing shooting stars, especially in August.

"I have a staff of three women and we cook the same thing every week. We throw steak on the grill with fresh corn, potatoes and peppers. Usually, we'll have chilled prosecco, although last summer, we were into fizzy red lambrusco and Manhattans!"

The brightly coloured fabrics, largely down to American interiors guru Jonathan Adler, combined with flea-market finds and artwork by her husband and father, give a homely but modern feel - it screams "kick off your shoes and fix yourself a drink".

"I hate to go someplace when the hostess is anxious and you feel like she's worried about her furniture," says Nanette. "I don't care if people spill things. I don't want to put anything in my house that I'm going to be upset about if somebody wrecks it. I don't want to ever give that vibe to my guests - I want them to just have a good time."

“I don't care if people spill things. I want my guests to just have a good time”



NANETTE'S TOP FLEA-MARKET TIPS

- 1 "If you buy something and you don't like it, don't panic. Put it aside and in a year or two, you'll find a place to use it. Eventually, you'll feel really good about it - I'm always like, 'God, I was so smart ten years ago!'"
- 2 "Look for pieces you can use to decorate in an unusual way - we used old beach baskets to put flowers in, which was really cute."
- 3 "It's good to focus on one thing, like, 'Today, I'm just looking for pots', then you don't get distracted. The more things you open yourself up to looking at, the harder it is to get through a market and the more money you spend."
- 4 "Don't stress. I always buy things that I love; the whole decorating thing happens around it."
- 5 "It's good to put together collections, so you can create a theme - I have a crazy collection of shell art. Sometimes you think one is enough, but sometimes a lot is better!" ■