

Haute Property
NEWS, STARS, AND TRENDS IN REAL ESTATE



This modern Houses at Sagaponac residence was designed by Hariri & Hariri.



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THE MOST UNIQUE SUBDIVISION IN THE HAMPTONS FEATURES HOMES FROM THE WORLD'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS ARCHITECTS; NOW, ONE OF THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURES IS FOR SALE. BY MIKE OLSON

The late real estate developer Harry “Coco” Brown had a vision: to take the 56 acres of Sagaponack scrub land he bought for \$1.6 million in the mid-’90s and turn it into an architectural playground where 34 top-notch designers, including Richard Meier, Philip Johnson, and Michael Graves, could each create the ultimate Hamptons home. Many of those unique designs were never built—see the Dutch plan that resembled an amoeba with an elevated living space in the treetops—but some did come to life. And the first to sprout up in this landmark development, a modernist gem at the end of Forest Crossing Road, has made its way back onto the market.

“It was totally pie in the sky, but it was a cool idea,” says Alastair Gordon, a contributing editor for architecture and design at *The Wall Street Journal* continued on page 124

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who contributed an essay to the book, *American Dream: The Houses at Sagaponac* (Rizzoli), chronicling Brown's unique vision (and spelling). "I liked the idea of doing simpler, less-is-more kinds of houses instead of all the neo-traditional, shingle style stuff that was de rigueur in the real estate world."

If breaking the mold was Brown's goal, he found a worthy partner in Iranian-born sisters Gisue and Mojgan Hariri, the *Interior Design* Hall of Fame inductees who dreamed up the home's design by drawing inspiration from sculptor Alberto Giacometti. "Hariri & Hariri have done all these amazing things from Morocco to Stockholm," explains Douglas Elliman Real Estate's Lori Barbara. "And when the Houses of Sagaponac were put into effect, this was the first house completed. There are maybe 10 or so, and they're all really special, but in my opinion none of them compare to this."

Indeed, the result was a departure not just

"The Hariri sisters know how to produce minimalism with a certain majesty."

—PAUL GOLDBERGER

from the shingle style but also the simplistic modern houses that had been cropping up all over the East End. The minimalist structure—two simple rectangular volumes forming an L-shaped plan surrounding a pool—sits right in the middle of the wooded property, large windows framing the most picturesque parts of the landscape. "There's so much open glass on both sides that you're in the house but set in nature," says Barbara, who notes that the home's 5,800 square feet and six bedrooms make this residence bigger than most other moderns. "They wanted to take advantage of the light in Sagaponack and that little forest area. They saw the magic in it."

The master bedroom shares this aesthetic, looking out over the 2.8 wooded acres and featuring a wall of green glass that separates the bed from the bathroom and slides open to reveal a multilevel closet and flat-screen television.

Two additional guest bedrooms highlight the guest wing, which also features two more bathrooms and a second living room. Meanwhile, a lower level boasts a workout area, sauna, bedroom with egress to the outdoors, and screening room with reclining leather chairs. (All of the furniture is included in the \$6.5 million asking price.)

Still, with everything the home offers, the most noteworthy may be the separate artist's studio.



The spacious master bedroom has a multilevel closet.

Also designed by Hariri & Hariri, it mirrors its older sibling by framing a tennis court just as the main house does the pool.

The New Yorker's architecture critic Paul Goldberger called the completed structure "elegant and sensual" while commending its "self-assured grandeur that plays on floating planes and transparent volumes." As Goldberger concluded: "Whatever else you can say about the Hariri sisters, they know how to produce minimalism with a certain majesty."

More than a decade later, cultural historian Gordon still considers this home at Forest Crossing Road among his favorites of all the Houses of Sagaponac. "Most of the people are thoughtful designers, but I thought the Hariri & Hariri house was the most successful," explains Gordon, whose publishing house, Gordon de Vries Studio, recently released its latest tome, *Fire Island Modernist*, chronicling the 1960s homes that transformed the area. "I think that's where the true modernist house—small, low maintenance with a lot of glass and big sun decks—really is a wonderful model. It's about being in that place in time, not just having the biggest party." *Lori Barbara, Douglas Elliman Real Estate, 20 Main St., East Hampton, 329-9400; elliman.com* **H**



INSIGHT

Haute homes: On top of buildings like the mixed-use Sternbraueri in Salzburg, Austria, and condominiums on the High Line, Hariri & Hariri (haririandhariri.com) have designed everything from a Swarovski Crystal Palace Collection chandelier to Kryptonite Jewelry, a couture collection.

The piano room has large windows that showcase the natural setting.