



A pair of canine friends welcomes visitors to Dan Fink and Thomas O'Brien's home. The property consists of two structures, an 1800s former schoolhouse called the Academy and the newly built Library. **OPPOSITE:** Potted begonias and a fig tree flank the entrance to the walled garden.



# PERSONAL SCRAPBOOK

*Thomas O'Brien and Dan Fink have turned their Bellport, Long Island, getaway into a visual tour de force that tells the story of their lives and serves as an incubator for new ideas.*

INTERIOR DESIGN BY THOMAS O'BRIEN  
AND DAN FINK  
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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: A bar cabinet in the Library holds vintage Steuben, Baccarat, and Heisey glassware; cabinet exterior painted in Southern Vine and interior in Townsend Harbor Brown, Benjamin Moore. A slipper chair sits in front of a custom Aero Studios bookcase in the Library; Thomas O'Brien table, Century Furniture; painting, Thomas Eakins. In the entry hall, an early-20th-century Irish mahogany settee is covered in a Pierre Frey velvet; print, Irving Penn. On a stairwell landing, the camelback needlepoint sofa is antique. OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: In the Library's living room, a custom silk folding screen from Aero separates two seating areas; Thomas O'Brien chandelier, Visual Comfort. The stair hall features an Oushak wool runner from Asia Minor Carpets.

**IT HAPPENS EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT.** In frenetic Manhattan, after a wild week of running their respective design firms, two men pack a vehicle with bags of drawings, samples, notes, and necessities, plus cats and dogs (two of each), and begin the journey due east. Just one hour and 20 minutes later, as they pull into the village of Bellport, New York, where the streets are lined with picket fences and clapboard cottages, they haven't just switched towns—they've changed their lives.

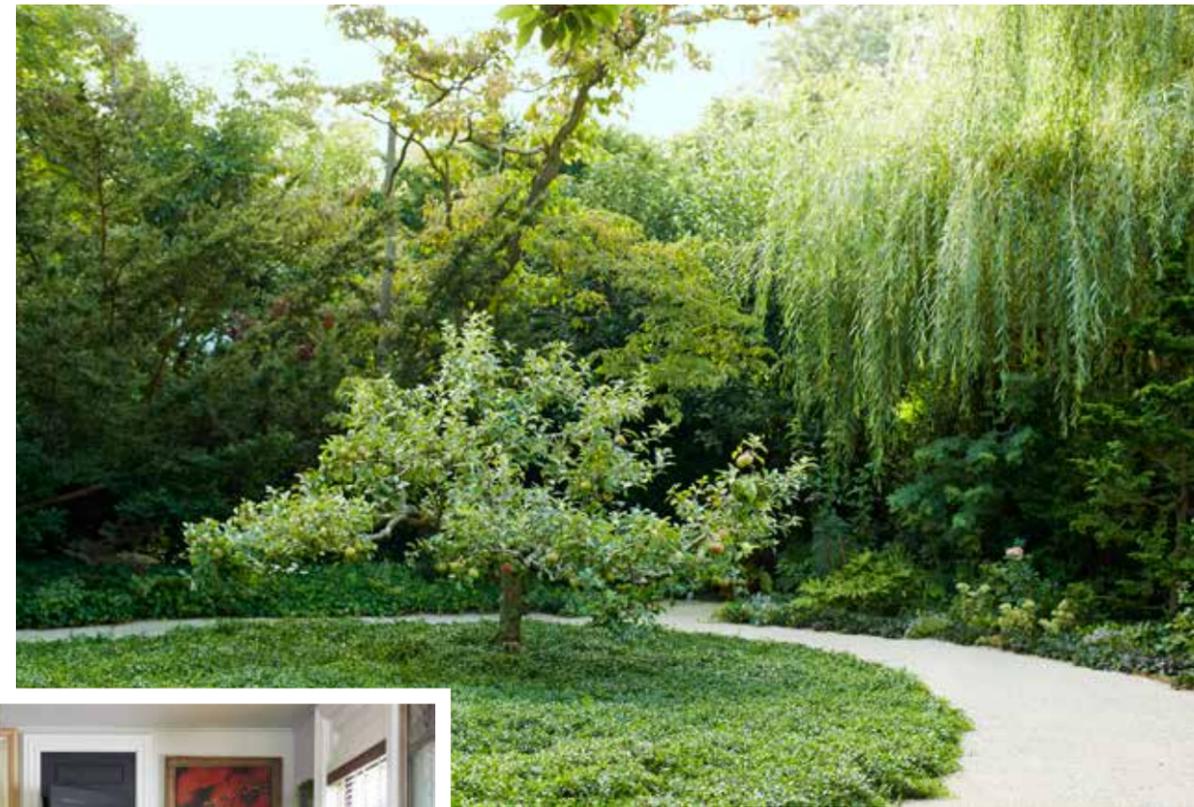
Dan Fink calls it "moving day," his weekly migration to the former seaport on Long Island's south shore. Waiting for him there are two elegant structures: a shingled 1833 schoolhouse turned residence and, barely 40 feet away across a narrow lane, a shingle-and-brick building designed by his husband, Thomas O'Brien, founder of the New York design firm Aero Studios and its retail offshoot, Aero. The latter structure looks straight out of the 1800s—though its addition evokes the 1920s—but the whole composition is a sleight of hand, one in which O'Brien takes great pride. "When we were building it," says O'Brien, "so many people thought it was a house we were renovating. But in fact, it's all new."

They call the new building the Library (the older structure is dubbed the Academy), and together Fink and O'Brien have filled it with collections of furniture, objects, and, indeed, books. But there are no Dewey decimal cards here, and you won't be told to keep your voice down. Weekends mean lots of chopping and whirring in the capacious kitchen, old movies playing, and even spontaneous crooning. "I sing from old songbooks," says Fink, who heads his own interior design firm, Dan Fink Studio. He accompanies himself on a 1920s Steinway piano that was a Christmas gift from O'Brien. Meanwhile, O'Brien works from an Italian desk in his office that was a surprise present from Fink. In this way,





THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A Macoun apple tree in the walled garden. The laundry room's 1920s Chinese table; washers and dryers, LG. A 19th-century alabaster sculpture in the stair hall; wallpaper, GP & J Baker. Fink's office is adorned with a framed vintage Olympic flag and Turkish *ebru* panel; doors are painted in Raccoon Fur, Benjamin Moore. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Vintage batik and suzani fabrics in the studio. The custom walnut kitchen island has a marble top; range and hood, Wolf. The sunken garden and greenhouse. O'Brien's office walls are upholstered in a Lee Jofa fabric in a colorway of his own design.



*"These rooms are about time, current and past," says Thomas O'Brien of the home he shares with Dan Fink.*





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: In a guest bedroom, the carved American pineapple-post bed is antique; wallpaper, Brunswick & Fils. The light-filled master bathroom has a sink and fittings by Waterworks. In the master bedroom, a pair of Louis XV-style chairs is covered in a Pierre Frey silk velvet; 19th-century Chinese Ningxia dragon rug; walls in Tissue Pink, Benjamin Moore. Fink's office bathroom features cork wall tiles.



the entire property is a repository for many of the couple's most treasured things—a three-dimensional scrapbook, if you will, of two lives whirled into one. "These rooms are about time, current and past," O'Brien notes. "There's so much about today that doesn't have that character."

The retreat is also an effective incubator of ideas. Clients and design partners often visit to experience the rooms. The homeowners, too, come here for endless inspiration. O'Brien's barware line for Reed & Barton was based on the 19th-century glassware and vintage bar tools he keeps here. His first outdoor furniture collection, launching this fall from Century Furniture (see page 56), is based on the vintage wicker and metal furniture that decorates the garden.

Recently, Fink and O'Brien purchased a former grocery-store building in town. This summer, they plan to open an emporium in the space filled with new and vintage furniture, lighting, dishes, cookware, hardware, and even food and dry goods. The name of the shop is Copper Beech, after the tree that stands mightily between their two Bellport houses, under which the two were married in 2015. "We're trying," says Fink, "to spend more than just weekends here." □



Working with O'Brien and Fink, head gardener and horticulturist Suvi Asch planted honey locust trees in the allée by the Library. For more details, see Sourcebook.