

THE  
NEW YORK  
TIMES  
STYLE  
MAGAZINE

# THE REVIVAL OF EVERYTHING

The Improbable Chic of Gerald and Betty Ford  
Hippie Architecture at Its Finest  
The Sexy '70s and Oddly Charming Po-Mo '80s  
Fashion's Newfound Crush on Fringe







Book Report

## Objects of Discretion

The exceedingly private philanthropist Maja Hoffmann shares fragments of her exquisite personal collection of art and design.

BY TOM DELAVAN



"THIS IS THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT" is a book named after a nursery rhyme, a cumulative tale of a string of events in which, despite the repetitive mentions of his home, we never learn who Jack is. The subject of the book is the world-class collection of contemporary art assembled by the Hoffmann-La Roche heiress Maja Hoffmann, who would prefer, like Jack, to remain behind the scenes.

It is refreshing to see someone in the ego-driven art world understate her role, but it is increasingly difficult for Hoffmann to maintain a low profile, as she has become one of the most important art patrons in the world, with projects that include a Frank Gehry-designed cultural center in Arles for the Luma Foundation, which she created to produce and show work that would otherwise not be realized.

The book reflects her conflicting desires to share her art and convey the experience of living with it while still remaining private. Another kind of collector would be pictured proudly among her acquisitions in opulent settings, but Hoffmann is deliberately absent in the book, preferring to, as she says, "portray a very human environment without ever showing people in it." Her homes seem incidental, appearing mostly in tightly cropped images, never identified and only mentioned in passing in the book's afterword. With lush photography by François Halard and art direction by Beda Achermann, Hoffmann has created a poetic record of her collection that feels more like an art object than a conventional book. The text of the nursery rhyme is woven throughout in a font designed by the artist Rirkrit Tiravanija, injecting a note of humor and, according to Hoffmann, "removing all traces of vanity that a book showcasing one's collection could entail."

"This Is the House That Jack Built" plays down Hoffmann's actual houses while (like the nursery rhyme) conveying the centrality of the idea of home, yet one is struck by the breathtakingly original interiors furnished with the best examples of 20th-century design. Hoffmann's eye for architecture and furniture is as discerning as it is for paintings, and she manages to create spaces where the art, despite its importance, doesn't overshadow the life of a room. "This Is the House That Jack Built," [steidl.de](http://steidl.de). ▀

**SKILLED EYE** Clockwise from top left: her home in Arles; the art patron Maja Hoffmann; her home in Gstaad with Jean Royère armchairs, a George Nakashima coffee table and Glenn Brown's photographs "The Dead (parts 1 to 3)," 1999; Hoffmann's London flat with an untitled work by Cy Twombly and a Pierre Paulin lamp.





# TRUE WEST

As he did with fashion — making us see vintage clothing as valuable — so he does with architecture. The purist Mark Haddawy would no sooner tweak a Halston gown than alter a great '70s house. Even one he lives in.

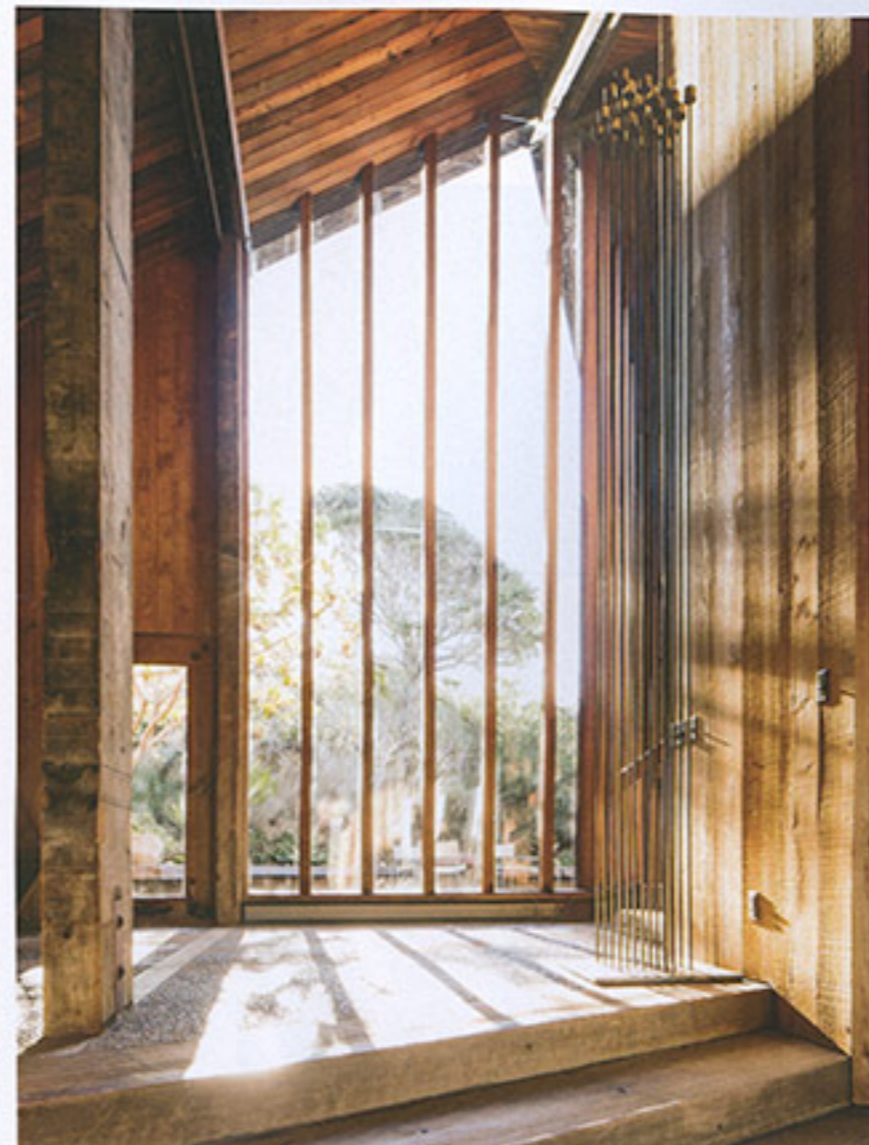
BY AMANDA FORTINI  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEFAN RUIZ

IN BIG SUR, that mythically gorgeous 90-mile stretch of sparsely populated coastline on California's Highway 1, it is not man's egotism that assaults you, but nature's. The redwood trees stand dignified and imposing, silent emissaries from another time. The jagged cliffs of the Santa Lucia Mountains drop hundreds of vertiginous feet into the foaming, crashing waves. Each night, the tarry blackness arrives thick and heavy, a blanket swaddling you with a completeness that can be disconcerting, while the ocean roars somewhere in the distance. In his 1962 autobiographical novel, "Big Sur," Jack Kerouac wrote, "In my imagination dreaming about this big retreat, there'd been something larkish, bucolic, all homely woods and gladness instead of all this aerial roaring mystery in the dark." (Kerouac had a breakdown in Big Sur as epic as the environment, and partly because of



**ALL THE ELEMENTS** The light-filled entry of the Shaw House, built in 1974 with redwood timbers salvaged from the local Dolan Creek Bridge in Big Sur, Calif., and now owned by Resurrection Vintage co-founder Mark Haddawy (inset), its view of the Pacific Ocean.





**OPEN ENDED**  
Clockwise from above: the stone hot tub next to the house overlooking the Pacific Ocean; the dresser in the master bedroom with a Khmer torso and a Peruvian plate; in the entry, a 12-foot Bertola sound sculpture. Opposite: the living room with a 2014 Mira Nakashima sofa, a pair of Philip Arcander chairs upholstered in sheepskin and a 1963 George Nakashima slab coffee table.

it.) Then there are the seasonal mudslides and wildfires, the clingy dampness of the daily fog.

Big Sur is a place of elemental extremes. Perhaps this is why, although it is home to several high-end, rusticated resorts for tourists in search of a temporary escape from urbanity's blare, it has only about 2,000 full-time residents. Mark Haddawy — co-founder of the retailer Resurrection Vintage, restorer of architectural homes, collector of art, antiques and furniture — has built a career on his uncompromising tastes, and Big Sur suits his sensibility. "People are like, 'Oh, how can you stand the five-hour drive?'" Haddawy says, referring to the trip from Los Angeles, which he makes, without exception, one weekend a month, often to go fishing or kayaking with friends. "If this was any closer to L.A., it wouldn't be what it is. It's so incredible that this place is so preserved," he adds, as he maneuvers his tanklike Mercedes G550 up, up, up and around a ridge, past a copse of stately redwoods and a 500-foot passenger-side drop.

The unspoiled terrain — there are long stretches on Highway 1 where you can't see a house — is the result of some of the strictest local zoning laws in the nation. This means the past remains ever-present here. The welcome absence of gaudy mansions, strip malls,

hectoring billboards or visible construction of any kind gives you the impression that you are experiencing the same place beloved of so many writers and artists, from Robinson Jeffers to Henry Miller to Edward Weston to Hunter S. Thompson, who, in 1961, wrote, "The steamroller of progress has made slow headway in Big Sur."

Haddawy, 47, who has bushy, expressive eyebrows, warm eyes and a mild, earnest,

intelligent manner — all of which combine in some ineffable way that calls Jake Gyllenhaal to mind — is a student of the past, a scholar-connoisseur. At Resurrection, the "collectible and historic clothing" venue that began in a defunct East Village mortuary in 1996, and now has boutiques in New York City and L.A., he (along with his business partner, Katy Rodriguez) helped transform the notion of "vintage" from Salvation Army thrift-store trifle





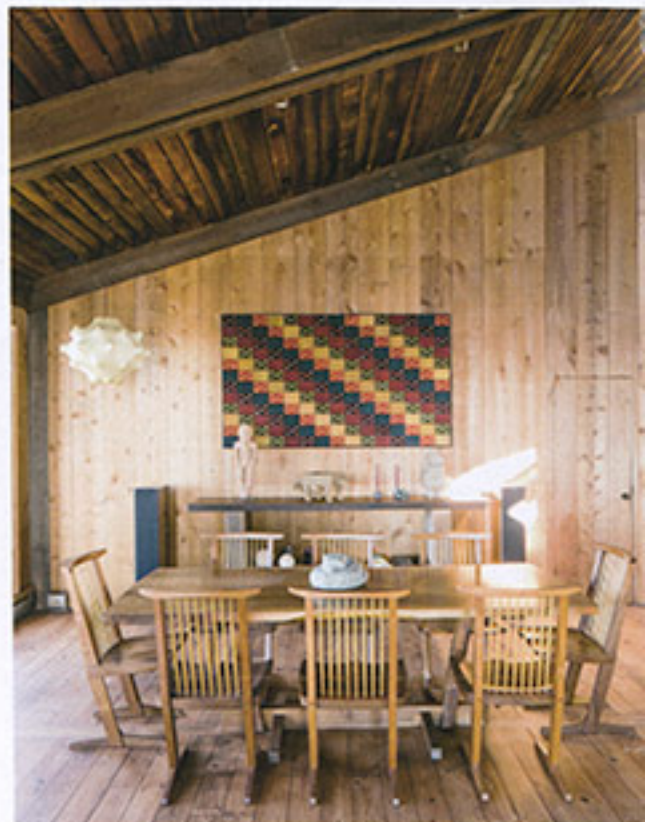
to high-end collectible bought as an investment.

Rodriguez, who ran the store in New York while Haddawy did the buying from the West Coast, remembers: "We had a unique take at that time. It was a high/low concept, and there weren't really stores like that then. ... It was a super-curated view from the beginning. Every single piece was selected. That's what Mark's always had a talent for: He can look at stuff and see what's great." Maroon 5's lead singer, Adam Levine, for whom Haddawy acts as a kind of aesthetic guru — Haddawy restored his Hollywood Hills home and is designing a

Although the guiding principle in restoration these days is to recast the past by putting one's own stamp on it, Haddawy's projects are characterized by their fidelity to the original architect's vision. "I'm just trying to do the right thing for the house," he says. "I'm not trying to make any bold moves." On his website, where he lists his projects, the date of completion is always the original year the house was done. He brought his own

new one for him, as well as advising him on his collections of art and vintage Rolexes — calls him "a curator of all things amazing" whose discriminating taste is "really, really elegant OCD." The day we meet, Haddawy is dressed with studied casualness in an orange surfer T-shirt printed with a cluster of mushrooms, green-and-white leather Nike high tops and a Rolex, all vintage.

In recent years, Haddawy has gained a reputation as a restorer of midcentury modern houses in Los Angeles. Among the projects he has completed for clients that include the director Marc Forster, the photographer Mark Seliger, the designer Jeremy Scott and nearly every member of Maroon 5, are two John Lautner houses, four Richard Neutras and Pierre Koenig's Case Study House No. 21. Although the guiding principle in restoration these days is to recast the past by putting one's own stamp on it, this is not Haddawy's approach. His restorations are characterized by their fidelity to the original architect's vision. "You have to decide, what did the architect do, and what did somebody do 10 years later?" he tells me. He is unassuming, almost egoless, about his work. "I'm just trying to do the right thing for the house," he says. "I'm not trying to make any bold moves." On his website, where he lists his projects, the date of completion is always the original year the house was done. He brought his own



Los Angeles home, John Lautner's 1956 Harpel house, back to its former low-slung midcentury grandeur over the course of three years by removing a second-floor addition, as well as other design travesties like track lighting and stucco walls. "Mark's a purist," Rodriguez explains. "He wants to know historically what was done, and make sure that's what's done. He looks at it like: Why do I need to question this thing? Why would I buy a Halston dress and then, like, alter it and change the line?" In the realm of midcentury architecture, Haddawy is the equivalent of a restorer of old masters paintings.

The Shaw House, as Haddawy's Big Sur residence is called — it was designed by local architect Will Shaw for his second wife, Mary — is very much a part of Big Sur's past, right down to the redwood trees it's made of. Completed in 1974, the Shaw House can be grouped with what the architectural writer Richard Olsen has called the Big Sur "bridge timber" houses. These were built out of reclaimed redwood timber sourced from local bridges that were demolished and replaced with concrete and steel in the 1960s. (The lumber for the Shaw House came from the old Dolan Creek Bridge, located just south of the Esalen Institute, the storied human potential movement retreat center.) Among the more celebrated bridge timber structures are the 1969 Hill of the Hawk house and the 1971 Staude House, both built by the Carmel Valley architect George Brook-Kothlow, who also did a similar place for Clint Eastwood in nearby Pebble Beach.

Redwood is not the only indigenous material Shaw used in the construction of his three-bedroom, two-bath, open-plan, vaguely



**THE GREAT INDOORS** From top: above the George Nakashima-designed dining table and chairs hangs a Peruvian textile, from between A.D. 100 and 500; the open shelving between the kitchen and the living room is dotted with Haddawy's collection of pre-Columbian objects. Opposite: a guest bed, designed by Haddawy, made of salvaged redwood (inset) and the beach below the house.



hexagonal creation. The floors are cedar and Monterey pine, and the massive, forgelike stone fireplace is made of "rock from the side of the road," Haddawy notes, as we tour the house, his ever-present pair of Chihuahuas snorting and skittering around the locally sourced floors like cartoon characters come to life. "As you drive down the road, you see these rocks, they're part of the vocabulary," he says. Shaw also sought to replicate the gestalt (to employ an Esalen-appropriate term) of Big Sur, with its towering cliffs and trees. "When you look at the proportions," Haddawy says, of the 20-foot ceilings, "they work because you're used to this kind of scale here."

The Shaw House was a conservation-minded designer's fantasy. Mary Shaw, from whose children Haddawy purchased the property in 2013, never altered her husband's work. "It was just amazing how preserved it was," Haddawy says. "All the appliances, every knob, every faucet, every tub, every toilet, every light switch." Haddawy spent a year restoring the exterior (replacing the weathered siding and cantilevered deck, putting a new copper roof on the guest house, adding a hot tub made of local stone) but the interior is Shaw's. The lighting is original. The bright red claw-foot tub in the master bathroom, a groovy, Hefneresque take on a staid classic, is Kohler's 1973 centennial edition. Several pieces of redwood furniture Shaw designed (a side table, console and buffet that share DNA with the work of Donald Judd) remain. Even the kitchen appliances, save a recently expired refrigerator, are the '70s-era originals. "Like I said, he's a total purist," Rodriguez says, laughing. "Had the original refrigerator not been on the fritz, and unable to be fixed, he wouldn't be getting a new one."

The furnishings and art are eclectic and spare. The art consists mostly of pre-Columbian artifacts. (Haddawy's father, a college professor of English literature, collected antiquities; Haddawy, who left high school before graduating and did not attend college, began collecting seriously while working at a car stereo store in Berkeley.) The exceptions are a 12-foot Harry Bertoia bronze sound sculpture (its church-bell chime befits the house's cathedral-like feeling), a framed letter illustrated by Yves Saint Laurent for model and muse Marina Schiano and a handmade toy rocking horse from the 1930s that seems straight out of "The Velveteen Rabbit." Haddawy tells me he made a decision not to display much contemporary art "because it reminds me of a world I live in in L.A., and not here." His world in Big Sur is neither contemporary nor dated but oddly eternal, a place where time seems to have mysteriously expanded, contracted and folded in on itself. With its stark, monumental rocks rising out of the Pacific like something from a sci-fi movie or an archaic Celtic myth, it feels ancient and futuristic at once.



**LIFE ON TOP**  
Clockwise from right: a view of the house from the opposite hill; Haddawy perched above the kitchen; the exterior facing the back of the property. Opposite: floor-to-ceiling windows light the stairs in the entryway, leading to a loft.



The furniture, like the art, like Big Sur itself, treads this primitive-modern line. There are handmade redwood platforms for every bed, a Castiglioni lamp that resembles a jellyfish or a flying saucer and a plethora of Nakashima pieces: a dining set and a big, gnarled slab of a coffee table, both made of walnut, as well as a taupe chenille couch designed by Nakashima's daughter, Mira, for which Haddawy waited a

year. Through the floor-to-ceiling windows, we watch the day slide into evening and the ocean darken to the purplish shade of a bruise. "If I take you to the beach tomorrow, we're going to be the only people on the beach," Haddawy says, as the surf crashes violently below. "You're not going to see a boat; you're not going to see a house. You could be walking down that beach a thousand years ago." ❧

