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HAMPTONS REAL ESTATE

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LIFE & LUXURY

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BEACH COTTAGE

Inside the Hamptons Home of Campion & Tatiana Platt

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EROS/STEFFLER PHOTOGRAPHY

“I wake up every day challenged to do new things,” says acclaimed architect and interior designer Campion Platt. “A lot of my prototypes end up in my house,” he says of the furniture in the Southampton beach bungalow he shares with wife Tatiana Platt, a former AOL executive, pointing to a leather chair in a guestroom. The “jet set” couple splits their time between a “jewel box” two-story loft in SoHo and a generous spread in Palm Beach. Here in the Hamptons they seem so at ease and away-from-it-all, with their children’s drawings and Lego creations decorating the living room juxtaposed with two works by artists James Houston.

Their love story began a decade or so ago when they were set up on a blind date. At the time he, a former model, was an established architect with a degree from Columbia University and an emerging interior designer, making a name for himself as one of *Architectural Digest*’s Top 100 Architects and Designers working his way up and down the Upper East Side. The statuesque Tatiana was in Washington, DC working for AOL and, he says, had quite a “dramatic sense of style” with an apartment emblazoned with leopard print, red walls, and plenty of white lacquer and gold.

Today the pair juggles family life with three young children—Fox (6), Xenia (5), and Rivoli (4)—a business empire, and multiple social commitments. Their Hamptons lifestyle includes nights at the Watermill Center, “[Watermill Center Artistic Director] Robert Wilson is a friend and I was on the board,” notes Tatiana, as well as the annual Parish Art Museum’s Midsummer Gala.

“I like to collect art but I don’t like to collect things,” Campion says when discussing their extensive art collection with pieces by Hunt Slonem (who gifted the couple with his famous bunny paintings to commemorate the birth of each of their children), Julian Schnabel, Donald Sultan, Ross Bleckner and Peter Beard.

“We got this place when we were just newlyweds,” says Tatiana of the bungalow just off Mecox Bay. As it is located right on the water, the family enjoys as much time outside in the summer as possible. Dinner on the dock with snapping turtles and “monster fish” jumping in the tall grasses and evenings spent by the fire pit, which is clad in Turkish marble. The extensive patio, which Campion says is warm under the foot and not hot like bluestone, makes this retreat an idyllic nest.

“Our favorite room is the outdoor shower. No one ever uses the indoor shower in the summertime. In the late afternoon with the sun and a breeze,” says Campion. “There’s something when you get closer to nature that’s really fabulous.”

At 1,500 square feet, the home is quite petite compared to its much larger neighbors on Burnett Creek. Tatiana asserts that “maximizing small spaces” might be the signature element of Campion’s design aesthetic both as an architect and designer. “We got this house for the location, we love the beach. We thought to sell this house and we looked at a place in Bridgehampton. We had all the designs and aimed at what a 3-year-old would want. The house had rock walls,” Campion says of the dream house they designed but never built, while focusing on their Palm Beach abode instead.

“After Hurricane Sandy hit we were flooded here with two feet of water in the basement,” he says of the natural disaster that was the impetus for the major renovation of their cottage. Tatiana gave him free reign to design the cottage, looking forward to the surprise and says she “loved it.” Capitalizing on the views—the kitchen, large living room and dining room all face the creek. The former first floor master bedroom, now a guestroom, features a set of dramatic black and white tent panels that the couple picked up in Morocco, which now serve as a pair of curtains. In a second guestroom, bold pink and copper hues are the perfect backdrop for treasures collected in their travels, as well as pieces from designer showhouses past.

The lower level was completely gutted and converted to a kid-friendly bedroom suite for the children with recessed curtain rails and panels to provide privacy. A cork wall with the children’s summer camp accomplishments and artwork decorate the hall to the garage-turned-master-bedroom. The garage-door-turned-window works by large lengths of rope, a nod to the nautical, rope wraps the metal frame to hide the mechanicals. “The kids love lowering the [light blocking shade], it’s like something out of *Star Wars* for them,” adds Tatiana.

“I started in New York 30 years ago and have had my own practice for the last 27 years,” says Campion. “I started doing smallish projects and renovations.” The designer just completed a large home in Southampton, is finishing a penthouse in San Jose, Costa Rica, and has begun interior

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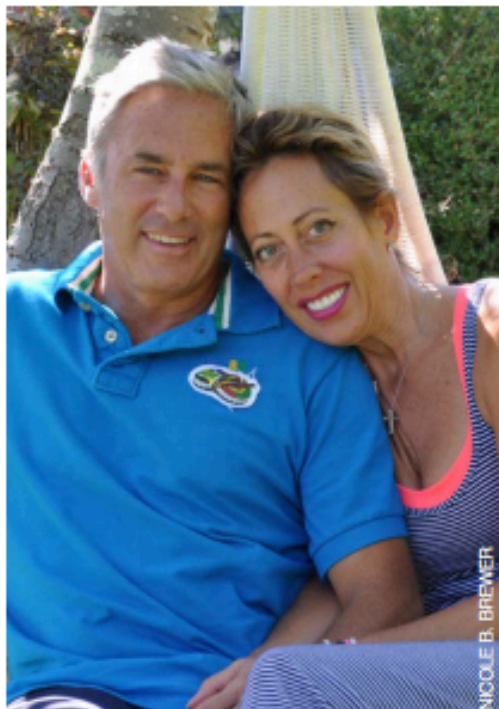
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design projects in Bridgehampton, Philadelphia and New Jersey. He'll soon be travelling to China, though about half of his work is in Central Park West and Park Avenue duplexes.

Campion's turn from architecture to furniture design came out of necessity. "For small apartments we had to find furniture to fit. I've been making furniture now for 25 years," he explains. The discerning client "wants to create something personal. Each client is different and each piece is different." Over the years Campion has developed personal relationships with the artisans and craftsmen who make his vision a reality. "The story of the furniture and the rugs become a story of the house. It used to be that way—250 years ago before we started mass producing furniture."

"In a branding world, designers are hired for their aesthetic," says Tatiana, who manages all of the social media for the company. "His specialty is being able to take small spaces, like this one, and maximize the use of it. To create special finishes and built-ins."

As both an architect and interior design Campion, whose clientele includes Roger Waters, Robert DeNiro, Meg Ryan and his friend Jay McInerney



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(who wrote the foreword for Campion's book, *Made to Order*), says he can "look at a room as a whole. In my office it's a collaborative effort and the only way to make the two come together. I like a space to have a fresh and modern feel where your eyes move through the room." As opposed to an interior designer who might start with the rug to set the room, he says, "I started doing interior design because I was interested in it. I always do the carpet last."

Because his work is so fluid, Campion was chosen by Russell Simmons to design the original Def Jam offices. "That was the Wild West. We did a lot of street architecture with a hallway of convex mirrors, which made the jewelry look bigger. We also had aluminum casts made of the sneakers of the principals that we strung up and backlit. It was a new take on things that were important in Rap Culture at the time and making that part of the design."

"You are building their life for them," Campion says of the work that still inspires and challenges him while taking him to the ends of the earth and back. "I know how important it is to spend time with my family... now I go to work and then I get to come back to my wonderful cottage by the pond."