

THE
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STYLE
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THE NEW LOOK

JOSEPH DIRAND'S SEXY MODERNISM
AN ODE TO UNDERDECORATING
TANGIER'S MOST REFINED ECCENTRICS



COUNTRY LIFE
At Hauser & Wirth's farmhouse/gallery space, photographs by Ron Horn hang above the mantel in the living room. The tufted armchairs were covered in linen to match the toile de Jouy wallpaper by Sanderson.



Arena

Art Matters



In each room, a predominant color — pale pink, dusty blue, sea green — appeared and was used to form a palette, from the hand-dyed linens of the curtains to the pretty vintage, retro floral wallpapers that line some of the bedrooms.



MIXED MEDIA
Clockwise from top left: a mural by Guillermo Kuitca wraps around the dining room; a bathroom suite in the attic; two works by the artist Caro Niederer in one of the six bedrooms, covered in a mix of vintage wallpapers.

Art Matters

This Old House

A powerhouse gallery bucks the trend toward 'important' architecture in big cities and sets up an outpost in English farm country.

BY NATASHA GARNETT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOBIAS HARVEY

WHEN RUMORS FIRST SURFACED in the art world a couple of years ago that Hauser & Wirth was thinking of opening yet another gallery space, few were surprised. Since Iwan and Manuela Wirth and Ursula Hauser founded their first exhibition space in Zurich in 1992, they have made a huge impact on the international art scene, representing Louise Bourgeois, Paul McCarthy, Martin Creed and Sterling Ruby, to name a few, and subsequently expanded to London and New York. People speculated that the new branch would be located in another European city, Miami or East Asia. Instead, they chose a derelict 18th-century farmhouse in Somerset, England.

With its rolling hills and vales, historic market towns and pretty villages, it is certainly one of the more picturesque English counties. But Somerset is not necessarily associated with art — until you visit Durslade Farm for the first time and see what the gallery has done with this incredible space. Set on the outskirts of the town of Bruton, surrounded by 100 acres of fields and woodland, Hauser & Wirth is in the midst of transforming this model farm, with its outbuildings, cowsheds, piggery and threshing barn, into a destination spot for artists and collectors alike. In addition to a six-bedroom house for

private guests of the gallery — and paying guests when rooms are available — Durslade includes five indoor exhibition spaces and a restaurant, as well as landscaped grounds by the Dutch master of garden design Piet Oudolf, whose work includes the High Line in New York, for outdoor sculpture and installations.

Five years ago, the Wirths fell in love with Somerset and bought a country retreat, eventually deciding they wanted to give something back to the area. While

it's very much a rural community, it is also an escape for a number of creative types, including Alice Temperley, whose family owns a nearby cider farm; the leather designer Bill Amberg; the singer-turned-vintage-guru Pearl Lowe and her husband, Danny Goffey, former drummer with Supergrass; the photographer Don McCullin; and the artist and film director Sam Taylor-Johnson.

Central to the project is the farmhouse itself, set to



open in July. Before being restored and renovated by the Paris-based architect Luis Laplace, the property was left untouched for 50 years and abandoned for 10. "I had many ideas when I first saw the place," Laplace says, walking across the threshold into the large, spacious kitchen. "The most obvious approach was to mix tradition with the contemporary — paint the house with a lot of traditional heritage colors and lime washes, put in uniform bathrooms, that sort of thing. But as we stripped it back, the house gave us more and more information about its past and I was determined not to lose that but play with it." In what is now the kitchen, a fake wall, which was probably put up in the 1960s and had an unsightly electric bar heater attached to it, was dismantled to reveal an enormous hearth fireplace. Faded linoleum was pulled up to expose beautiful flagstone floors. But Laplace's real joy came when the builders began to peel back the layers of paint that had piled up over the years. In each room, a predominant color — pale pink, dusty blue, sea green — appeared and was used to form a palette, from the hand-dyed linens of the curtains to the pretty vintage, retro floral wallpapers that line some of the bedrooms.

As for the art on the walls, naturally Hauser & Wirth turned to their star roster. In the central sitting room, there is an installation by Pipilotti Rist: an intricate chandelier of antique bottles, ornaments and glass, which is hung near a video installation she made of the local area. A strip of Paul McCarthy's "Dimension (blue)" wallpaper adorns a corner of the master bedroom. And a mural by the Argentine artist Guillermo Kuitca wraps around the dining room.

At first glance Durslade is the perfect English farmhouse, the type of shabby-chic home that one would love to while away a weekend at with friends. But look closer at the artworks, and it's clear that a clever commercial venture is underway. In this instance, business and pleasure mix beautifully. ▀



RUSTIC MODERN Clockwise from top right: the kitchen was stripped back to its original glory and outfitted through the local vintage boutique Phillips & Skinner; the downstairs bedroom looks onto the dining room with a Roni Horn photograph above the bed; another bedroom, with views of the courtyard, has been decorated with wallpaper by Paul McCarthy and upholstered furniture from Du Long et du Lé.