

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF DESIGN

MAY 2010

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In 1911 Robert Goelet IV, scion of one of America's wealthiest families, employed Carrère & Hastings to build a Renaissance Revival villa on a hilltop overlooking Glenmere Lake, some 65 miles north of Manhattan. His architects' taste for majestic scale, used to great effect in their design of the recently completed New York Public Library, no doubt played a role in their plans for the 35-room, 31,000-square-foot mansion set on 3,000 acres in Chester, New York.

Goelet was no stranger to the grandeur of the Gilded Age. His family had accumulated a fortune in banking and with savvy real estate investments, and when his father, Ogden, died, Robert's sizable inher-



Carrère & Hastings designed Glenmere Mansion, in Chester, New York, in 1911 for Robert Goelet IV. Designer Scott Snyder was asked to reimagine it as a chic hotel. LEFT: The entrance court. Morgan Wheelock was the landscape architect. Tischler und Sohn windows. THIS IMAGE: In the living room, a work by Helen Frankenthaler hangs between French doors. The original functions of most of the public rooms were preserved. Edelman leather on scroll-arm chairs and on open-arm chair in foreground.



itance included several residences—one of which was Ochre Court, a Richard Morris Hunt–designed summer “cottage” in Newport, Rhode Island. The younger Goelet would continue adding to that wealth through his railroad, hotel and real estate holdings and as a director of Chemical Bank and of New York Trust Company.

Glenmere Mansion had fine antique marble fireplace surrounds from Europe, along with fragments of antique sculpture that accented the stucco walls of its formal three-story central court, and murals painted by J. Alden Twachtman. Beatrix Jones Farrand designed its grounds—

most notably a sunken formal one. The decorative metalwork (iron balustrades and window grilles) was the province of Samuel Yellin.

But the evolution of the estate over the past century followed that of many of America’s great homes. Until the 1930s Robert Goelet remained at Glenmere. Then, later in the decade, he began selling pieces of the property, culminating in the sale of the house and gardens in 1940. Stripped of its splendid interiors, save for details such as the fireplaces and other built-in antique stonework, the mansion was then variously converted into a hotel

and a party venue, falling into greater dilapidation with each transformation.

In 2007 it was bought by its current owners, who had a plan for Glenmere, one guided by their passion for the world’s grand hotels: The once elegant residence would live again as a chic hotel. To accomplish this, they called in Scott Snyder.

“The condition of Glenmere was deplorable,” Snyder recalls. “The house needed an identity, and it needed lots of work.” He brought in his team—“Mark Kelly and our interior architects are credited with the success of the project,” he’s quick to point out—and got to work. “I

was very sensitive to the fact that we had to take care of the building itself first so that could last another 100 years.”

Looking out from Glenmere, there is not another building in sight; and, with its adamantly Italianate exteriors, terraces and gardens, “you could be in Tuscany—it has such an Italian flavor,” says Snyder. (Landscape architect Morgan Wheelock was called on to address the grounds.) “Yet the interiors are very Grand Tour, where the concept of the Italian villa didn’t follow through to every detail. It has an American flavor—with Georgian interiors adjacent to Italian interiors. The Goelets



FAR LEFT: Eglomise panels and an 18th-century chandelier lend a Georgian feel to the Supper Room. Snyder involved DeGraw & DeHaan Architects in the project. Drapery wool from Rogers & Goffigon. Kravet chair vinyl. Banquette vinyl from Pollack. Patterson, Flynn & Martin carpet.

ABOVE: A backlit onyx panel above the bar adds a warm glow in the Frogs End tavern, which Snyder imbued with Hispano-Moresque touches. The table tops are also onyx. Pollack wall-covering. **LEFT:** A portrait by an unknown artist is in the library. Chair vinyl, Kravet. Patterson, Flynn & Martin carpet.



The guest rooms and suites have been brought into the 21st century via Snyder's insistence on simple silhouettes.



The hotel has 19 rooms and suites. **ABOVE LEFT:** The Duchess suite. Above the bed is a Charlie Hewitt monotype—one of many artworks found specifically for the property. Sofa linen, Clarence House. Farrow & Ball wall paints.

LEFT: Carrara marble covers the floors and wall in a bath in the Penthouse suite. Davis & Warshow tub and sink. **ABOVE:** The Vanderbilt junior suite. Clarence House window seat velvet. Club chair and ottoman, Schumacher. Stark carpet.

were extremely adventurous for the early 20th century.”

The designs of the public spaces and 19 guest rooms and suites have been brought into the 21st century via Snyder's insistence on simple silhouettes. Calm, serene, fresh colors and materials set the relaxed tone in the guest accommodations. In the Vanderbilt junior suite, for example, a Georgian-style commode mixes with a rough-hewn, organically shaped side table. Drama is reserved for and given full play in the public rooms (most of which retain their original functions). Of them, Snyder

observes, “The backgrounds are so good, you can play tricks to animate a space and be a bit quirky—add a twist to it so it looks appropriate. It's all both cutting edge yet traditional, providing interiors that live up to the architecture.”

Throughout, Snyder incorporated the large collection of art that the owners purchased specifically for the property—ranging from 19th-century portraits and examples of Abstract Expressionism by Frankenthaler and Motherwell to the primarily French and English porcelain for the China Room, the private dining

room. They complemented those finds with pieces discovered on shopping trips to Europe and around the United States.

With its thoughtful interiors, Snyder's restoration of Glenmere Mansion is a monument to a vanished age, but a monument that strikes a sensitive balance between a proud past and its new present. □

Glenmere Mansion

845-469-1900
www.glenmeremansion.com