



# A Muttontown Masterpiece

BY RUTH BASHINSKY

**W**hen Carol and Gerard Repole moved into their 5,000-square foot custom-built home in Muttontown, LI, they did not realize just how large a project decorating it would be.

The spacious two-story colonial – which features five bedrooms, five bathrooms, a family room, a dining room, a living room and a finished basement – was a bare slate that needed everything from color on the walls to flooring, lighting, furniture, a banister along the stairwells, cabinetry and hardware in the kitchen and bathrooms, and decorative accents throughout the house. After interviewing several designers, the Repoles chose interior designer Wendy Garfield, owner of La Strada-Meuble, Objet, Décor.

“Many of the designers wanted to change the architectural design of the house; I did not want that,” says Carol Repole, who also worked with Paul Russo Architects in Locust Valley and contracting firm A.R.J.A.M. construction in Glen Cove. “My plans

were already drawn up. My goal was to have my house a home and make it look lived-in, rather than be a museum. Most of the designers we interviewed wanted you to purchase expensive items, which means that the kids would not be allowed in certain areas in the house. I did not want any room off limits. My house always has people in it and my children always have play dates here. Wendy knew exactly what we wanted. She understood our vision.”

Garfield listened closely to what the couple, who have two young children – Gerard, 7 and Gianna, 4 – were looking for in terms of their lifestyle, color and style preferences, and what they wanted from their home. Once that was established, Garfield was ready to begin. Working from a blueprint during the early stages, Garfield was able to help the couple transform their new house into their dream home.

Unlike other interior designers, Garfield’s approach to design is a unique one. The Montreal native, who is self-taught



Master Bedroom Suite



Kitchen

and who grew up in the business (her mother owns a home décor shop in Montreal), is also a professional opera singer. Long Island audiences might recognize her as the leading soprano for the Yiddish Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Group. She is also the creator of OperaMoms, a program that features two sopranos –herself and another singer – who celebrate their motherhood by singing classic arias at venues all across Long Island. Drawing on her design sensibility and musical background, the multitalented Garfield created a warm and inviting home for the active family of four. “There are many parallels between singing opera and decorating,” says Garfield. “In music you have your guides on how a piece needs to be sung. For example, the composer will put markings in the music – a crescendo here and a pianissimo there. In decorating, the composer becomes the client and I become the interpreter of the piece. My goal is to ensure that I meet my client’s vision. Part of the decorating process is to make sure it flows flawlessly and that the effort involved is not evident.”

The living room is one of those rooms that make a grand statement. Garfield incorporated Carol’s favorite colors – silvers, blues and greens – into her decorating scheme. The soft blue backdrop is very serene. Old World molding lines the walls. A chandelier with crystal rosettes and strands of octagon crystals hangs in the center of the room. A silver faux finish is painted above the mantel on the marble fireplace, which adds a charming dimension to the room. Ceiling-to-floor custom draperies in silver, blue and beige hues frame the windows, giving the space an elegant flair. Two upholstered chairs give the

room its symmetry as they surround a glass-topped coffee table with a mosaic-tiled base that was designed by Garfield. These details combine to create an intimate sitting area for people to gather, and a timeless and formal look the homeowners sought.

For the dining room, Garfield brought in an artist to paint an intricate leaf design onto one of the sage green walls, adding a stylish component to the space. A silver mirror in a chain-motif design hangs above a dark-colored buffet, adding another stunning detail to the room with its unusual fiery red and orange mosaic tones, giving the dining area a very Old Hollywood feel. Additional elements that complete the room include a rectangular chandelier and an oversized dining table that seats 12.

Never afraid to take risks when she is on the stage, Garfield applies the same philosophy to decorating someone’s home. “As a designer I try and convince my clients to consider something different because [otherwise] over time they will become bored. This can be achieved by keeping the integrity of the look. For example, if you fall in love with a tile, you don’t need to fill an entire bathroom with it.” The powder room reference is a perfect example. Garfield put tile on one wall and added glitter into the paint that was used on the remaining walls, giving the room a chic vibe. Carol, who admits she was reluctant at first because she did not want her bathroom to look like a disco, ended up loving the result. “I was worried, but Wendy encouraged me and I am thrilled with the way it looks.”

For a design consultation, contact Wendy Garfield at 917-922-2072 or visit [www.lastradadecor.com](http://www.lastradadecor.com).