

BILL SCLIGHT

A HAMPTONS ARCHITECT DESIGNING WITH INTENT

By JONATHAN VALDEZ



If you think the home furnishing and accessories store Homenature, located at 19 Pond Lane in Southampton, blends in effortlessly with its surroundings, there is a good reason why. Intent. Esteemed Hamptons architect Bill Sclight designed and executed the space to pay homage to the traditional white storefronts that Southampton has become known for, while also paying special attention to what makes the building unique.

According to Sclight, the Homenature structure dates back to the 1920s, back when the end of Jobs Lane was known for car dealerships and chauffeur hang-out spots.

The retail structure was originally a space used to sell cars. “When we started to do the demolition on the building, we found an old car door in the rafters,” Sclight said. He explained that while the structure had good bones, it was essentially torn down, although some of the repurposed steel beams were used for the new building.

The project was a collaborative effort between Bill Sclight and Homenature’s owners, John Heinemann and Tim DiSalvo. Sclight listened to what they wanted, and then honed and executed his clients’ vision, ultimately making their dream come true.

Photo Credit: Marsin Mogielski



Photo Credit: Paul Domzal Edge Media

Staying true to Heinemann and DiSalvo's vision, the store design incorporates materials that are used in the home furnishings and products found at Homenature. For example, Sclight used teak wood for accents around the space and light yet warm maple for the wood floors. These elements combined with the stunning steel-and-glass staircase located at the back of the store truly invite customers and guests in, allowing them to naturally flow to the back of the store for an elevated retail experience that reflects the essence of being out East.

Calling the Hamptons home since 1985, Sclight loves to honor the history of the Hamptons in his design aesthetic, referencing the strong beach community and noting that historically a main priority for people who travel out East is taking advantage of the breathtaking beauty of nature. That is why the store features a dramatic glass-wrapped corner to truly highlight the exterior view of Monument Square and Agawam Park, giving consumers an open feel that alludes to the beach lifestyle. With Sclight, it's not just a window but rather an access point to the great outdoors of the Hamptons. The Homenature



building also boasts an outside roof balcony that suggests a perfect spot for evening cocktails in summer.

Making sure things flow to ensure a vision comes to life is something that comes natural to Bill Slight. Architecture is a profession that he transitioned into after his days of being an editor at such prestigious publications as the *New York Post* and the *New York Times*, where he worked as an editor for the iconic *Styles* section as well as the *New York Times Magazine*. “I used to stand beside Rupert daily making sure that the paper closed,” Slight said. It’s no wonder that Slight’s keen eye for detail makes a plethora of former clients recommend him for projects and real estate professionals call upon him for reconstruction and revamping of properties — both residential and commercial.

Working directly with clients is one of Slight’s favorite parts of the design process. When working with a client on a residential space, it is imperative for him to get key information, like family size and how often they like to host guests. A big part of



Photo Credit: Marsin Mogielski

having a house in the Hamptons is using it to entertain friends and family from near and far. Slight also enjoys seeing his ideas and drawings come to life. He says he finds it gratifying to see hard work leading to happy clients.

When you are building in place as special as the Hamptons you want someone who not only has a wonderful eye for aesthetics but also understands and respects the history of the area. Someone who will take the time to understand the impor-

tance of space, flow, lighting, and visual appeal to create an elevated, chic yet cozy environment that is unique to the land that it is built on. When you look at a design like Homenature, and deep dive into the small details that make it unique, you then understand why working with an architect like Bill Slight is so important. Someone who is excited to design, curate, and build the future of the Hamptons with not only style, but with intent.

A CONVERSATION WITH ARCHITECT WILLIAM SCLIGHT

BY ANTHONY GIAMPETRUZZI

PHOTOS BY NICK MANSFIELD



Homenature Interior, Southampton

Southampton architect and developer William Sclight, of W. A. Sclight Architect, P.C., has been designing homes in the Hamptons for 30 years. It's his second career. In the 1970s and early '80s, he was a newspaper editor, working at the *New York Times* and *New York Post*.

However, since appearing on the scene in the Hamptons in 1985 with a new master's degree from Pratt Institute, he has become one of the region's premier architects. One of his most recent creations is the new building for Homenature next to Agawam Park in Southampton Village.

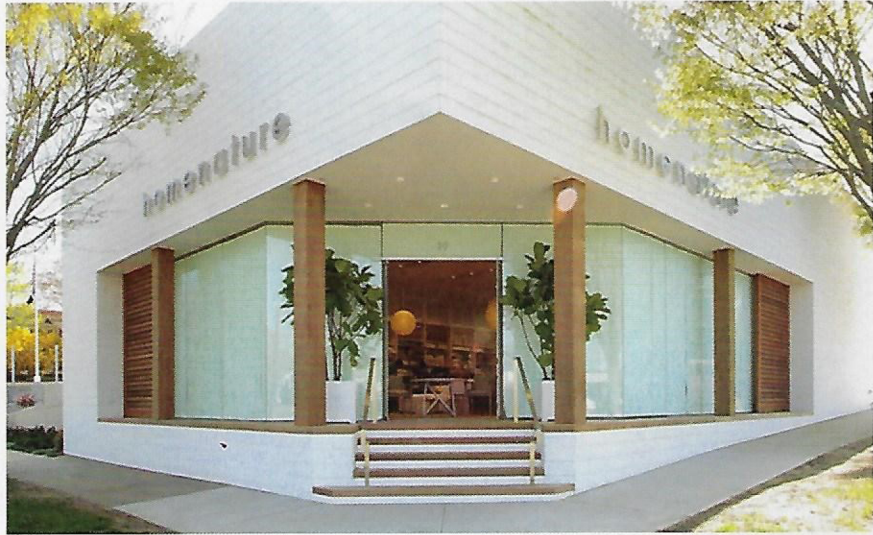
Social Life wanted to know more about Bill, his take on architecture, and what drives his designs.

Social Life: You say being an architect is sometimes like being a journalist. How so?

William Sclight: When you make a building you are telling a story. Each client's needs are different, so there is special importance in getting to know the lifestyle and aspirations that the



Bill Sclight



Homenature Exterior, Southampton



Homenature Interior, Southampton

homeowner seeks to express through the architecture. Every project should be evaluated to make the best use of the site and to make the home a contributing and sustainable part of its environment, setting, and surroundings, including, in the villages, being a compatible neighbor to nearby properties.

SL: What is more frustrating: When a client has an idea about what they are looking for, or when they have no clue at all?

WS: When someone doesn't know, that can be quite difficult. But the truth is, people always know what they want, they just don't know how to articulate it. That's where I come in, where a good interviewer always comes in. You can learn a lot listening carefully and observing, even paying attention to the way people dress. I ask clients if they have magazine clippings; what is it that catches their eye. It makes a mosaic. You get a picture.

SL: What would you say has been the largest design change in the Hamptons over the past few decades?

WS: Unfortunately, in recent years, a few large developers have asserted dominance on the East End. The downside is a tendency for the built environment to be filled with cookie-cutter homes: the same ideas, the same formulas over and over. In my opinion, there is an aesthetic imperative to make the building a thing of beauty, a contributor to the environment, and a positive addition to the community's sense of place.

SL: What is your home like?

WS: It is an environment that is comfortable, memorable, familiar, and exciting. Your home must give you a feeling of repose, peace, and well-being. It should be as much a part of your existence as the clothes you wear, and it should present to the world who you want to be.

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