

Christine Mack is redefining the title of ‘patron of the arts’. The Swedish-American former model collects of-the-moment works based on pure instinct, using her influence to introduce promising young Swedish artists to the fickle American market. Step inside Mack’s art-filled, Bridgehampton mansion, topped with its very own mini-golf course.

Welcome to the Mack Shack

Words by RACHEL SMALL Photographs by COLIENA RENTMEESTER

CHRISTINE MACK SMILES WARMLY as she brews a cup of green tea in the kitchen of her immaculate modernist gem of a Bridgehampton mansion, also known as the Mack Shack, as the welcome mat declares. The blonde 54-year-old cuts a willowy frame. There’s an ease in which she is put together that’s mirrored in her surroundings. Slick vertical lines give visual definition to Mack’s expansive living room, in which we eventually settle for our chat.

We’re discussing the recent fires in Maui and how the extent of the disaster seems to have been underreported. Reflecting on this, she muses on the contributions of artists to portentous moments in history. “You know, you can read the news,” she says. “But [artists], they react in a very personal way when they create art. With social issues, political issues, environmen-

tal issues, gender issues, they’re painting that. That’s their story at the moment. And, when you get that art, and you look back, you remember that time.”

She believes that, given their outsized collective contribution to the culture at large, artists aren’t getting anywhere close to the support they deserve. “There’s not enough people helping artists and realising how important artists are,” she says.

Mack’s involvement with the contemporary art world began in 2015, when she walked into Art Basel Miami – her first time at an art fair. “We happened to be in Palm Beach for Thanksgiving,” she recalls of her art world ‘aha’ moment. “When I went into the art fair, and I just saw what was going on, I was just... I was so excited. I never knew that there was so much art. So I started collecting.”

Mack was born in Manila, where her American father worked for a time as an engineer, while her mother was employed at the embassy of her native Sweden. After her parents split when she was seven, she moved with her older sister and mother to Stockholm. But it was the summers she spent visiting her father in New York City that proved particularly formative. “The first time I came to New York, I fell in love,” she says. “The energy, the excitement, the diversity, the grids, everything. I loved it from day one.”

She went on to study graphic design at Parsons, funding her housing and education by modelling for the likes of Thierry Mugler, *Elle* and H&M. After college, she landed a graphic designer gig at Hearst before moving on to launch her own firm. “I had so many friends starting businesses who needed logos, so I was helping them and got so busy >



Christine Mack in her Bridgehampton home.

Suit jacket, €750,
Cotton t-shirt, €270,
Suit trousers, €460. All Acne Studios.
Sneakers. Talent’s own.

Painting by Jim Thorell.



The grand entranceway of Chris' home, featuring a book from Ulf Lundin – a nod to her Swedish roots.

Painting by Amy Myers.
Vintage glass table with travertine stone.
Daybed. *Lovehouse*.
Vintage vase via *Marie-Christine shop*.



Emerging and established artists from the Nordics and beyond feature on every available wall of the home.

Painting by Andreas Ericksson.
Custom made stone coffee table. *Demuro*.
Custom made rug. *Beauvais*.
Stool in Dedar fabric. *Peg Woodworking*.
Wall light. *Studio Van Den Akker*.



Painting by Chloe West.
Vintage wood desk. *Burl*.
Vintage desk chair in Dedar fabric. *August Savini*.



This summer escape is designed for entertaining— just check out the stocked bar.

Ceramic urn by Roger Herman.
Painting, in the bar, by Alicia Adamerovich.
Wallcovering, *Holland and Sherry*.
Custom made bar stools, *Skylar Morgan*.



The family's beloved dog.
Painting by Daniel Arsham.



Cashmere tank top, €100. *Anine Bing.*
Denim trousers, €315. *Frame.*
14k yellow gold necklace, €2,990. *Jennifer Creel.*
Overshirt,
Cap. Both *Richard Mack's* own.



The view of the ocean from Chris' roof.

> I started my own business,” she says. “One job led to another.” She had a range of clients in fashion and hospitality, designer Nicole Miller among them.

It was around this time that Mack bought her first work of fine art: a massive, two by two metre drawing by the American artist Amy Myers, whose ‘Kalpa’ (2001) – a composite of mathematically perfect concentric circles overlaid with a series of bulb-shaped protrusions – greets guests in the foyer of Mack’s home. “There was something about it I just loved. And I bought it at a gallery and it was a lot of money for me – my student money – but I had to have it,” she says.

I notice the charm on the gold choker she’s wearing. It’s the shape of Robert Indiana’s iconic pop art ‘Love’ sculpture from 1970 that sat on Sixth Avenue in Midtown for decades (after being removed in 2019

for restoration, it’s making a brief return to Rockefeller Centre’s campus this autumn). The necklace, designed by her friend Jennifer Creel, seems highly appropriate for a devoted Swedish New Yorker whose foundational aesthetic tastes arose from studying graphic design.

She’s spent the last couple of decades-plus raising three sons, ages 17, 23 and 25, with her real estate company CEO husband Richard, whom she married in 1998. Throughout her home, unexpected flourishes – like a rooftop mini-golf course – hint at a fun-for-the-family vibe underlying the considered décor. “It was the developer who came up with the idea to put a pickleball court on the roof, but I knew that all the balls would end up in our neighbours’ house and thought mini golf would be better.” She adds, triumphantly: “So far, no balls have

left the property!” Surely no small victory for a mother of three boys.

Has the broader — and rapidly expanding — crossover between art and fashion had much of an influence on Mack’s personal preferences as of late? “I don’t like changing fads, changing jewellery, because I don’t like to spend time doing it,” Mack says of her interest in fashion. The Robert Indiana necklace has become her go-to, paired today with a simple, lime green tank dress. “It’s funny, because when she made it for me, I was not into the whole art thing,” Christine says. “And now it’s so appropriate, because I’m always at an art fair! So I wear this almost every day, because it’s the one I love the most.”

For Mack, navigating the ebbs and flows of the art world has presented a far more fulfilling challenge. “Not having a background in >



Chris first came to New York as a model.

Knitted bedspread, worn as a dress. *Talent's own.*

“There’s not enough people helping artists and realising how important artists are”

> art history, or collecting, or being to collections, my advertising and graphic design background, where you think about trends, what’s coming next ... I started collecting art that way,” she says. “What’s going on now? What do you think is going to happen later?”

Mack’s fascination with the art world has often neatly dovetailed with her numerous other philanthropic endeavours; she’s involved with the Child Mind Institute, Challenged Athletes Foundation and the Partnership to End Addiction, among other charities. Spearheading arts initiatives for NYC food bank City Harvest, Mack also facilitated the installation of a food-themed mural by graffiti artist Cey Adams – known for classic Def Jam Recordings album covers including The Notorious B.I.G.’s Ready to Die – at the foundation’s packing facility.

Of the work by now big-name artists she collected early on — Rashid Johnson, Rita Ackerman, Kehinde Wiley, to name a few — many of the pieces are on display in the Mack family’s palatial townhouse on the Upper East Side.

But the airy minimalism of the 12,000-square-foot Bridgehampton home has made an ideal backdrop for the bevy of works by emerging Swedish and Scandinavian artists she’s turned her attention to over the past few years. Mack collaborated with interior designer Monica Fried in furnishing the space. In Mack’s words, Fried shared her vision of keeping the aesthetic “neutral, comfortable, Scandinavian and chic.” “Everywhere you sit feels comfortable,” she says.

The finished interiors now boast pieces from the likes of Scandinavian artists Camilla Engstrom, Leo Park, Jim Thorell, Sara-Vide Ericson, Elin Odentia, Malin Gabriella Nordin and Klara Kristalova, to name a few.

Another Scandinavian artist with work on view at the Bridgehampton house, Los Angeles-based Stockholm native Rugiyatou Jallow, is among the inaugural residents at the Mack Arts Foundation. Mack launched the residency, which is geared toward non-NYC-based artists, out of Greenpoint, Brooklyn, in the summer of 2023. Rashid Johnson is also on the advisory board. “I’m a collector because I love art collecting. But I really want to find somewhere where I could kind of embrace these artists and help them come in and help them come back to neighbourhoods that have become too expensive for them,” Mack says. “I think it’s good for the community, I think it’s good for the neighbourhood.”

Of meeting Mack on a studio visit in February 2022, Jallow recalls her “radiant positive energy and her big smile”. “She came into my studio in such a warm and friendly way, which helped me to relax as I personally can feel a bit awkward around new people,” she says. “Being a woman in the art world isn’t easy, especially of mixed race like me. So having the support from another established woman in the art world is important. The fact that she knows the culture and traditions I come from growing up in Sweden is so significant. Essentially she is a warm reminder of

home, someone I trust, when I’m out here pursuing my dreams as an artist.”

Integral to many of Mack’s art world connections – including making the intro to Jallow – is Carl Kostyál, whose eponymous gallery, with locations in Stockholm, London and Milan, has touted emerging artists from both sides of the Atlantic since its founding in 2010. “Although Christine is a great supporter of our galleries program, I think of her primarily as a friend and patron of the arts,” says Kostyál. “She is an old school activist whose primary currency is generosity. With relentless energy, she promotes young talent from Sweden. Her Brooklyn residencies will allow artists to make many equally talented friends and will give them invaluable exposure to the American experience.”

Concerning broader conceptual threads running through her collection, I mention to Mack that many of the works seem to foreground mythological themes. Take, for instance, Jallow’s ‘Två i en’ (2022), depicting an enigmatic figure sitting in an infinite field of florals, while disembodied hands – one Black, one white – float in front of her face. Elsewhere, Odentia’s ‘Madonna’ (2023), beyond the biblical lore of its title, portrays a blue and eggshell abstraction in the shape of an infinite, circular strip, its inside etched with a starry night-like pattern, as a black rectangle floats in its centre: something of a universal mediation on cosmic bodies.

“That’s what I’m drawn to, a little bit,” Mack affirms. “I like the mystery of it. I don’t like things to be obvious.” ❁



The open-plan kitchen is at the heart of her home.

Cotton poplin blouse, €179. *Boss.*
Gold necklace. *Talent's own.*
14k yellow gold ring, €239. *Jennifer Creel.*
Rib knitted cashmere socks, €240. *The Row.*



Given that Chris and her husband have three boys, the basketball court and mini golf course (found on the roof) see a lot of action.

Nappa leather dress, €3,990,
Leathersandals, €890. Both *Chloé*.



Shirt, €200,
Suit trousers, €350. Both *Anine Bing*.
Hat,
Sneakers. *Talent's own*.



Though the art world keeps Chris busy, she always finds time to stay active. Here we find her in her home gym.

Oversize faux leather trench coat, €335. *The Frankie Shop*.





Just imagine the dinner parties.

Dining light. *Egg Collective.*
Dining table. *Ralph Pucci.*
Rattan dining chairs. *Knoll.*
Lounge armchair. *Espasso Esferea.*
Custom made drapery.



The neutral tones throughout the home leave space for colourful artworks.

Alpaca wool oversized turtleneck sweater, €350,
Denim trousers, €250. Both *Anine Bing*.

Painting by Tania Marmolejo.
Leather coach. *Lawson Fenning*.
Rug. *Rosemary Hallgarten*.
Vintage side table in travertine.
Sheepskin pillow. *1818 Collective*.
Vase. *Comerford Collection*.



Leather coat, €5,980. *Gucci*.

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