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November/December 2015

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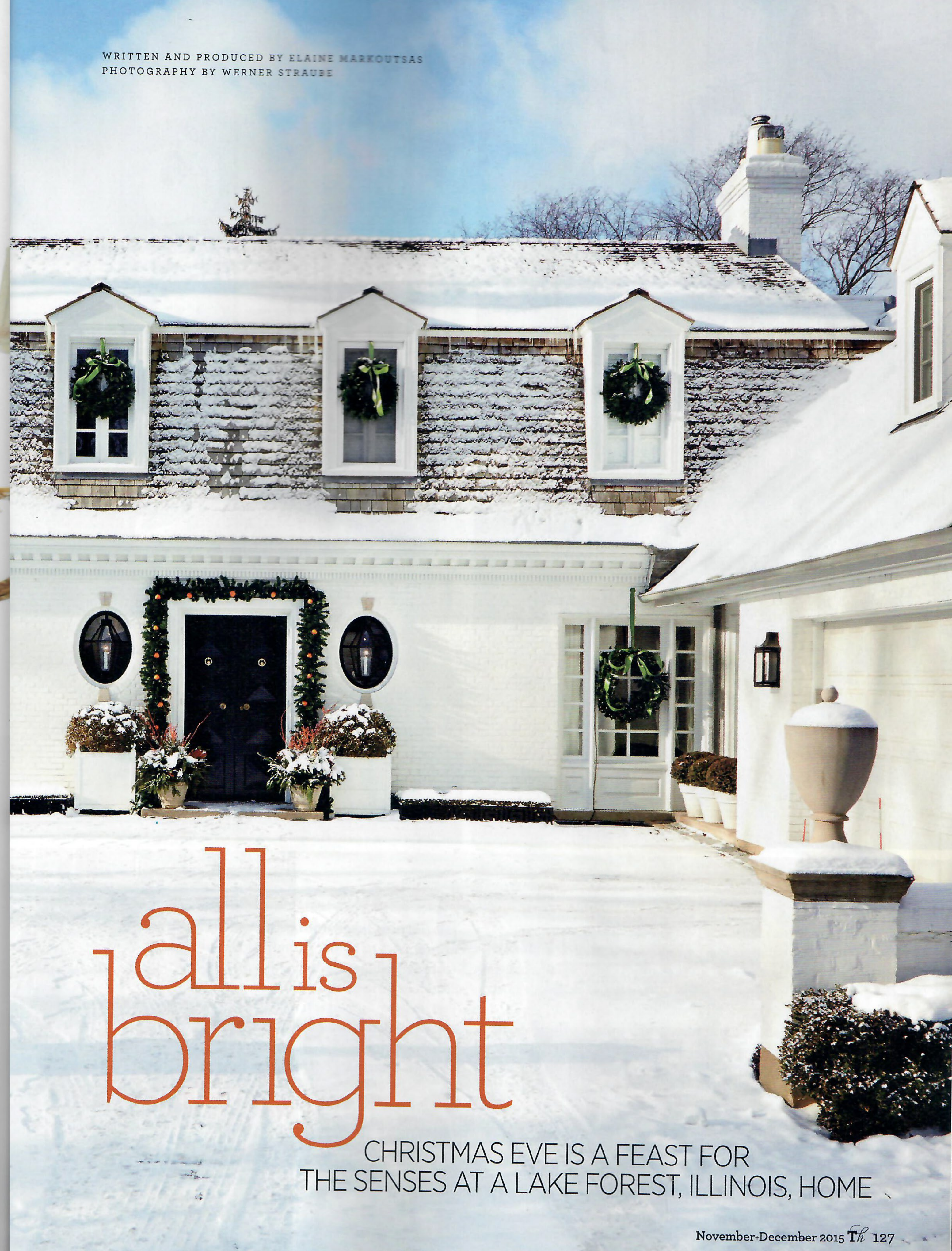
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5 CARING WOMEN
CHANGING THE WORLD p87



WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY ELAINE MARKOUTSAS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY WERNER STRAUBE



all is bright

CHRISTMAS EVE IS A FEAST FOR
THE SENSES AT A LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS, HOME



Living room bay window A skirted custom banquette is clad in Old World Weavers silk velvet with a Greek key tape border. Christmas tree Meet Adler, a West Highland terrier. Living room fireplace An elegant George Smith sofa from London mingles with lacquer, faux tortoise, and brass tables. Homeowner Interior designer Shelley Johnstone Paschke. Preceding pages Orange and gold accents dress the living room mantel. A garland studded with clementines trims the front door.



It may not be calm on Christmas Eve in this classical mid-20th-century home in Lake Forest, Illinois. With a family that includes five kids—from preteen to college-age—there’s a lot going on. But the holiday vibe is as low-key as it is picture-perfect: holiday playlist cued up and candles flickering, with fresh tulips, roses, and aromatic greens laced throughout. And it’s happy, boosted by sunshine-orange accents, starting with the clementines woven into the evergreen garland that frames the front door.

“Even the type on my Christmas cards is orange,” says interior designer Shelley Johnstone Paschke, who created the warm, welcoming home she shares with husband Brett and their blended family: her sons, Hunter, 20, and Ford, 17, and Brett’s sons, Will, 15, and Luke, 14, and his daughter, Lauren, 12.

“Fresh flowers and candles are very important to me. That feels like home,” Shelley says. Just no poinsettias, please. Her mom owned a floral shop, and she saw plenty of those when she and her sister were growing up in Madison, Wisconsin.

Simplicity, elegance, and attention to details are the hallmarks of Shelley’s style, and that doesn’t change when she’s decorating for the holidays. “I like to keep it clean and fresh, with beautiful pinecones and greens, apricots and oranges, gold accents.”

A formally set dining table notwithstanding, that even means going a bit rogue on the food. “We don’t do the big roast,” she says. “We like hors d’oeuvres: shrimp, cashews, fun dips.” Then it’s sandwiches and light fare to save room for homemade grasshopper pie.

“There are no rules,” Shelley says—and that applies to decorating too. “Go with what’s comfortable.” Fancy details sprinkled





Library Inspired by a vintage tortoiseshell box, Shelley had decorative painters replicate the look on the ceiling. An antelope-pattern carpet from Stark anchors vintage rattan chairs with chevron linen cushions. Shelley converted the top of a Brunschwig & Fils tea table into a backgammon board. A Salvador Dali lithograph hangs among vintage boxes. Solarium A tufted "Kames" sofa from Crate & Barrel is flanked by painted wicker chairs with checked cushions.



through rooms feel casually elegant. Rich embellishments are informed by Shelley's stint in London, where she studied at the Inchbald School of Design and was exposed to dressmaker details such as Turkish corners, knife pleats, and application of trims on pillows and lampshades, as well as lacquering, gold leafing, and the creation of soft tinted ceilings and cashmere walls.

With her global experiences, she happily embraced the idea of layering. In fine European interiors, "nothing is from the same place," she says. Shelley adds to that collected look with antiques and finds from travels, rounding out with custom-designed pieces.

For the living room, she designed a banquette to blend with upholstered pieces and antiques she purchased in London. Those are teamed with mid-20th-century modern glass and brass tables, with notes of faux tortoise and chocolate lacquer.

Classical motifs like Greek keys are consistent throughout, and animal prints are repeated fun choices. "I love the juxtaposition of traditional and modern," she says. "That keeps it timeless and fresh. The brass is a little '70s vibe."

To dress a room that was enclosed during remodeling, Shelley had a trellis applied to the walls and painted the ceiling the vivid hue of an Hermès box. "I love bursts of color in fairly neutral spaces," she says.

She couldn't imagine living in any other home. "It's comfortable and pretty and also functional for our busy, modern lifestyle," Shelley says—particularly at Christmas. "It was important to make the house a place we all love. And everyone loves being here." ❧

Interior designer: Shelley Johnstone Paschke
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