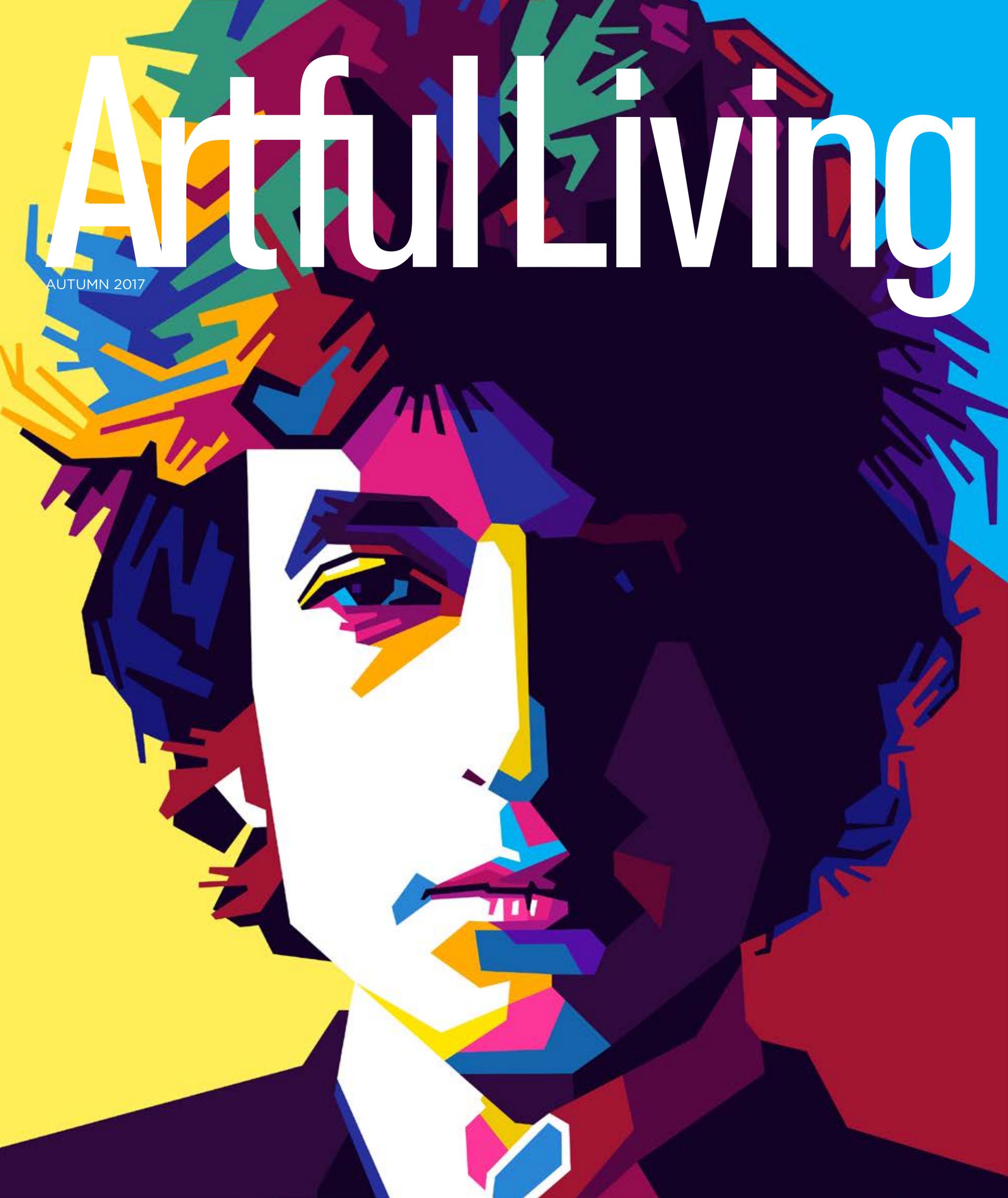


Artful Living

AUTUMN 2017



Past Present

A BELOVED LODGE UNDERGOES A THOUGHTFUL UPDATE.

BY MARGUERITE HAPPE



PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN GILMORE

When John and Marcia Huepenbecker purchased Moose Camp, a former hunting and fishing lodge situated in central Minnesota, they knew Talla Skogmo was the only interior designer who could truly understand their intention to make it an authentic family retreat. After all, she's a cabin person herself — someone who realizes that a cabin is not simply a lakeside getaway but a repository for memories of time well spent.



“Part of my passion for this project comes from spending every summer of my life at a family lake home that my grandparents built in 1926,” says Skogmo. With Moose Camp, the challenge wasn’t simply to create an extraordinary space for the couple and their three children but to retain the property’s historic value and essence. “My job was to help them interpret what they were trying to do and make it look like I hadn’t been there,” she adds.

The most substantial interior overhaul was to the kitchen, which Skogmo explains was “designed for a woman to sit there and cook eggs and never come out of.” They transformed the space by doubling its size and adding a granite island. “We went from a tiny, dank kitchen to a modernized, well-lit kitchen,” says John. “It’s the perfect space for people to gather and eat meals or play games.”

Throughout the process, Skogmo worked to ensure that every update remained authentic. “We relied upon a Minneapolis cabinet shop that literally replicated the cabinets from when the cabin was built, but they added new glass knobs and bin pulls to make them more functional,” she says. “We also put in a door. Marcia commented that for the first time, you can actually see the lake from the kitchen!”

In the grand salon, Skogmo complemented the original walls and stone fireplace with era-appropriate décor. “We added custom-made moose light fixtures to illuminate the room rather than installing recessed lights, which wouldn’t have existed back then,” she says. Bolero chairs from Hickory Chair designer Mariette Himes Gomez strike the perfect balance of simplicity and comfort, and the furniture throughout the home is thoughtfully upholstered in indoor/outdoor fabric (in other words, wet bathing suits are always welcome).

The final product is a retreat with truly historic charm, a rarity in an age of overdone lake homes and stark, untimely décor. “What’s so wonderful is that people like John and Marcia have purchased Moose Camp and want to keep it intact and take care of it,” says Skogmo. “I know that those who are long gone are cheering that it’s all still as it once was.”

