

## ON THE MARKET

# Sharon estate abounds in history of art, artists, and patron of both

**T**his Sharon estate of the magnificent arts curator and collector Melva Jane Bucksbaum is like a living landscape painting. In that sense, in how it offers a harmonious balance of both serenity and beauty, of both scenery and greenery throughout its more than 50 acres of lush land in the Litchfield Hills, it reveals a stunning aesthetic worthy of the art museum which it surrounds. That is right. At the heart of this natural work of art — one which has been finely sculpted by Mother Nature — is a museum which Bucksbaum built in 2009. Given her life rich in the arts, and given her vast inventory of the finest paintings and sculptures, a venue was seemingly necessary. Her art was part of her. “A collector, curator, and patron of the arts, Bucksbaum was known for collecting art that pushed against the status quo, support-



The focal point of the property is “The Granary,” a 14,000-square-foot art gallery that Bucksbaum completed in 2009.



The home balances original and renovated features, as seen here in the chef's kitchen, redone to resemble one found in a modern home.

ing both established and emerging artists,” said Megan D. Robinson, in 2018, in a brief biography on artandobject.com. Bucks-

baum, who died in 2015, was a longtime trustee of the Whitney Museum of American Art. With her third husband, former commodities trader Raymond J. Learsy, she accumulated a magnificent collection for display within the museum she named “The Granary.” It boasted more than 400 contemporary, impressionist, modernist, and post-impressionist works, including pieces by artists such as Robert Mapplethorpe, Terry Winters, Henri Matisse, and Peter Paul Rubens. The Granary somehow made the already flawless plot of land even more perfect, but it wasn’t the property’s only building. At its heart is a circa 1840 Colonial, one which Bucksbaum believed was in dire need of an exhaustive renovation. “The Colonial, it was frumpy and needed to be redone,” said listing agent Graham Klemm. “When (Bucksbaum) bought it in 2005, the property was merely a house and guesthouse and barn.” The home was modernized to complement contemporary art, and a few years later came the 14,000-square-foot contemporary stone-and-wood museum. The property also includes a swimming pool and pool house; the second floor of the pool house served as a library for art books. There is also another circa 1880s house that served as a guesthouse, another two-bedroom guesthouse, and a two-bedroom caretaker’s cottage. Altogether, there are eight buildings. But no matter what, according to Klemm, “the whole property is focused on displaying and living with art.”

But it doesn’t come with the art. All of that was sold at auction in 2018.



Melva Bucksbaum, who was known as a prolific art collector and was once vice president of the Whitney Museum, put her own iconic stamp on this magnificent 1840 Colonial.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

## IN THE DETAILS

**Listing:** Klemm Real Estate

**Price:** \$20,000,000

**Bedrooms:** 5 **Baths:** 6

**Acreage:** 51

**Year built:** 1840

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— By Jack Coraggio