

Geometric patterns that are worth repeating.

BY RIMA SUQI



Witold Rybczynski on resisting the tyranny of the new.

BY KARRIE JACOBS

# Home

The New York Times

THE DETAILS

## Grandma Never Had It So Good

Why? Because she lives in a tiny backyard house in Portland, Ore.



LAURE JOLIET FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES  
A 480-square-foot garage, now a home: one of many small dwellings encouraged by the city.

By SANDY KEENAN

In most cities, adding a second house to a single-family lot would be illegal or would set off an epic battle with the neighbors that could drag on for years. But not in Portland, Ore.

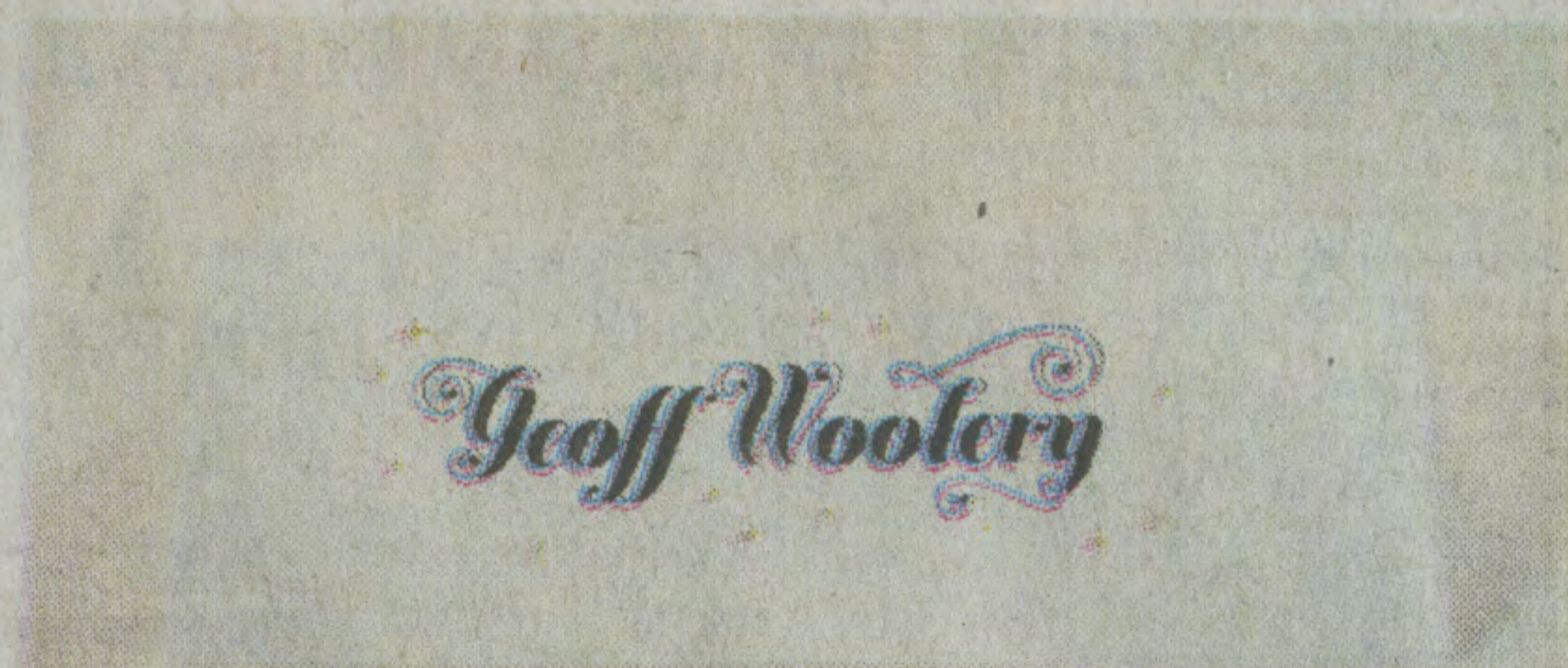
There, this kind of housing — referred to officially as “accessory dwelling units,” but better known as granny flats, garage apartments or alley houses — is being welcomed and even encouraged, thanks to friendly zoning laws. And additional living spaces are springing up everywhere, providing affordable housing without changing the feeling or texture of established neighborhoods the way high-rise developments can.

In the southeastern part of town, Jen Wetland, 40, and Bryan Scott, 37, converted their two-car garage into a 480-square-foot home using mostly salvaged materials, for about \$60,000. Then they moved in and rented out their four-bedroom house, which more than covers their living expenses. They’re delighted to talk about how fabulous downsizing feels and how it allows them to work less and play more.

Stephanie and Sam Dyer, who are both 34 and live in the coveted Boise neighborhood, built a 342-square-foot version of their bungalow so their parents could have somewhere to stay when they visit. The rest of the time, the couple have been steadily recouping their \$110,000 investment by renting out the little house through sites like Airbnb and VRBO.

Lenore Prato, 45, worried that she would be the first member of her large Italian family unable to provide a home for her parents as they got older. So Ms. Prato and her husband, Ken Finney, 44, built a 660-square-foot cottage that sits behind their

CONTINUED ON PAGE D7

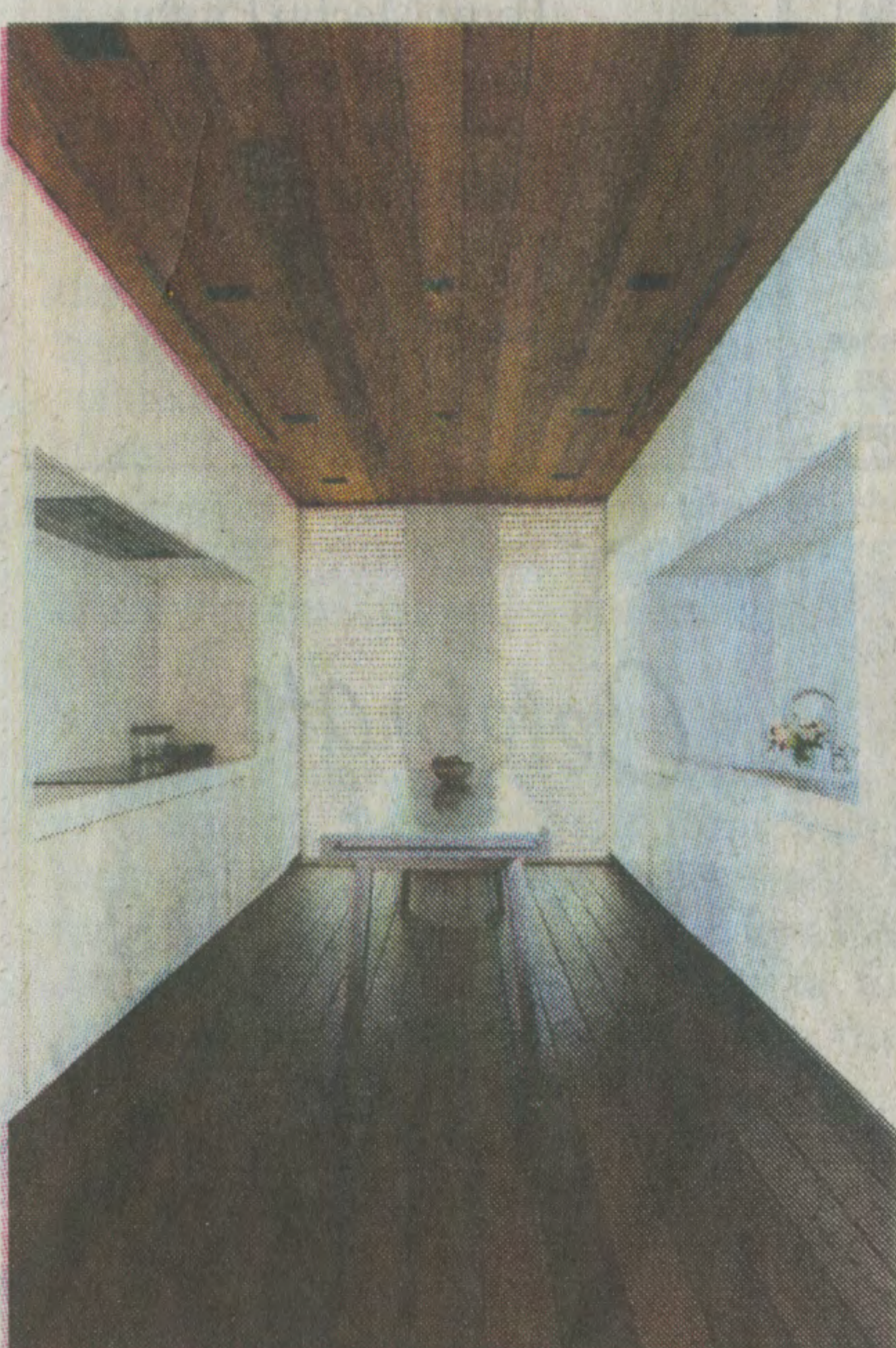


Top, Lily Thorne and Simon Davenport foraging; clockwise from left, Lisa Bayne and Andy Astor’s rings, by Lynda Bahr; a tea towel favor by Lauren Ireland’s mother; Jessica Hische and Russ Maschmeyer’s table vignette; a tent card lettered by Ms. Hische; and Ms. Thorne’s centerpiece.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT WRIGHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES (FORAGING AND CENTERPIECE); KRISTEN MARIE TOURILLOTTE (PLACE CARD AND FLOWERS); LYNDA BAHR (RINGS); AND JACOB ARTHUR (TEA TOWEL).

## If You Build It, You Can Stay

An unusual beach-house share in the Bahamas. Page 6.



TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

# Your Hand in Marriage

For those intent on doing it themselves, a wedding offers the ultimate challenge.

By JULIE LASKY

When Lisa Bayne married the first time, her friends baked a wedding cake topped with bride-and-groom cookies. This being 1976, in Berkeley, Calif., the cookie couple was nude, though the same could not be said of Ms. Bayne and her then-husband, who wore his-and-hers tunics that the

bride had sewed by hand from vintage fabrics.

Today, Ms. Bayne, 61, has two grown children and is the chief executive of Artful Home, an online art gallery based in Madison, Wisc. But her allergy to traditional weddings is more or less the same.

For her marriage to Andy Astor, 57, in

October, she created banners and flags from handmade paper to mark the site of their ceremony on a windy mountain road in Sonoma, Calif. Her bouquet combined dahlias and calla lilies with herbs plucked from her garden. After taking lessons from an artisan preserves maker in Berkeley, the couple produced several varieties of

CONTINUED ON PAGE D4

## THE DETAILS

# Your Hand in Marriage

CONTINUED FROM PAGE D1

jam, which they distributed to their 46 guests. Mr. Astor, the managing director of a technology services company and a novice glass blower, planned to contribute glassware for the occasion, but managed to complete only 20 pieces by the time it rolled around. Instead, the couple assembled a motley thrift-store collection.

“We wanted the wedding to feel like the life we live in Northern California,” Ms. Bayne said, speaking on the phone recently from her home in San Francisco. Still, she added, “I don’t think it was the ultimate D.I.Y. wedding.”

I was curious to find out just what that creature may be. In few areas has the do-it-yourself fever raged as intensely as in the \$52 billion wedding industry. D.I.Y. flourishes on blogs like Practical Wedding and Offbeat Bride, and is a dutiful component of mainstream magazines like Brides and The Knot. A tour of Pinterest or Etsy will turn up almost every hand-wrought artifact you can possibly imagine that is eaten, worn, tied around a napkin, suspended from a rafter or carried off by guests in a little bag.

Of course, fluffy-white, off-the-shelf weddings remain an option, but the tools for tailoring an event to fit the contours of your idiosyncratic being are as abundant as the inspirations.

“You can have ribbons customized in a hundred different colors,” said Darcy Miller, editorial director of Martha Stewart Weddings. “You can have flags put on straws. There are tissue-paper pompom kits.”

Ms. Miller, who has worked at the magazine since its first issue in 1995, was just warming up.

“Today, I think D.I.Y. is infused in all weddings,” she said. “We like to think of it more as ‘design it yourself’ than ‘do it yourself.’ It’s very much about putting your personal stamp on it and making it your own.” (Which doesn’t mean D.I.Y. is economical, Ms. Miller warned. Though it may seem as if it offers a budgetary advantage, that’s only until you calculate the time that goes into your efforts and the cost of replacing materials when projects are bungled.)

So how do brides and grooms cope with such a profusion of ways to be special?

The first thing to recognize is that there really is no such thing as a D.I.Y. wedding. Only people with Leonardo-like skill sets and an aversion to sleep are capable of personally customizing every detail. Even the craftiest among us need assistance.

For example, when Jessica Hische, 30, a graphic designer and lettering artist, and Russ Maschmeyer, 31, a product designer



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISTEN MARIE TOURTILLOTTE; BEN BLOOD (TATT)

for Facebook, planned their wedding last summer, they asked 15 of their artist friends to create artworks as gifts. These were assembled into an online narrative about the couple’s courtship that also served as an invitation.

Guests were given a password to the document that allowed them to access details about the occasion, while everyone else was free to enjoy the sweetly self-ironic story of love in hipster Brooklyn. Even Gawker, which savaged the piece — driven to particular outrage by its revelation that Mr. Maschmeyer once took up bread baking while in recovery from a bad relationship — issued a rare apology after the couple’s many friends and admirers protested.

The document was letterpress printed and distributed to wedding guests as a keepsake. That decision, Ms. Hische said, proved to be the most expensive in a celebration that began with a civil ceremony at the San Francisco City Hall, culminated nine days later in a dance party for 300 at the Green Building in the Gowanus neighborhood of Brooklyn, and involved two picnics on two coasts, each with custom illus-

Jessica Hische and Russ Maschmeyer’s extended wedding celebration took place on two coasts late last summer. In San Francisco, a wedding guest drew a celebratory tattoo on her own arm, top left. The couple in Brooklyn, top right; boutonnieres for their party at the Green Building in Gowanus, above; that venue, designed by Sugar and Fluff, left.