THE GREAT DESIGN ISSUE
Brilliant Ideas and Insider Tips on Furniture, Fabrics, Lighting, and More...

THE SEXIEST YACHT IN THE WORLD

PETER MARINO: THE ULTIMATE COLLECTOR
A PERFECT PLACE

After finding her New York City dream apartment, a young mother taps decorator Michael S. Smith and architect Oscar Shamamian to make it a gracious family setting.

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A Doug Aitken wall sculpture sets a spirited tone in the living room of a Manhattan home renovated by designer Michael S. Smith and Ferguson & Shamamian Architects. A pair of George III consoles flank the Louis XVI marble mantel, while custom-made Jasper armchairs face a Matteo Bencidi cocktail table from Paul Keaveny Gallery; the Louis XVI chair is upholstered in a Brunschwig & Fils velvet, and the carpet is by Davis Leslie Biscu. For details see Sources.
In the annals of New York City prewar real estate, few architects are as admired as Rosario Candela. Best known for the residential buildings he designed in the 1920s and ’30s along choice stretches of Park and Fifth avenues, Candela set a gold standard for city living—and his graciously proportioned apartments remain the object of countless fantasies. Such was the case for one young family, who gave up what many Manhattanites would consider a pretty ideal home—a charming maisonette on Park Avenue—for a spacious Candela floor-through a few blocks away that needed major work. “I wasn’t really looking to move,” says the homeowner, a part-time social worker who grew up in the neighborhood and shares the residence with her son. “But this was my dream building and my dream apartment, so I ran with it.”

Running, in this instance, meant enlisting the talents of Los Angeles–based decorator Michael S. Smith and architect Oscar Shamamian of the New York firm Ferguson & Shamamian, who together crafted handsome, refined interiors that respect the classicism of the original design while keeping the tone relaxed and light. Since Shamamian had worked on projects for the client’s mother and sister over the years, a rapport was already in place. What’s more, the architect had renovated units on neighboring floors, so he was familiar not only with the building’s celebrated floor plans but also with its quirks and key personnel.

While there was never any thought of radically reconfiguring the existing layout, which is remarkable for its stately entrance hall (the property has some of the city’s most dramatic foyers) and for positioning all principal rooms at the front of the home, the team decided to strip the apartment to its studs anyway. “There was a lot of nuance to what we were trying to do,” explains Shamamian, “so even though the main

Above: At the far end of the entrance hall, a Stephen Antonson light fixture overlooks sculptures by Carol Bove (left) and Nancy Dwyer. A Jean Dubuffet painting is displayed between a set of Marc Bankowsky sconces from Maison Gerard, and bronze mirrors by Robert Lemarley are mounted on the opposite wall. The marble-and-stainless-steel floor is by Ferguson & Shamamian and Michael S. Smith.
Behind the living room's custom-made Jasper sofa, an artwork by Rebecca Horn is installed next to a cabinet-on-stand designed by Ferruccio Laviani for Fratelli Boffi. The bronze side table is by Robert Kuo.
In the dining room, a custom-made chandelier by R. W. Russell is suspended over a pair of Nancy Lorenz tables and a set of Quattrain chairs. The artworks are by Richard Serra (left) and Heimo Zobernig, and the carpet is by Niba Rug Collections.
Clockwise from above: A Tina Barney photograph presides over the family room; the Jasper sectional sofa is clad in a Schumacher chenille, the chair is by Mattaliano, and the Azadeh Shiladovsky low table is from Jean de Merry. The kitchen is appointed with a BlueStar range, a Sub-Zero refrigerator, and sink fittings by Michael S. Smith for Kallista; the stools are by York Street Studio, and the flooring is by Porcelanosa. In the powder room, an Eve Kaplan mirror is set against glass panels by Nancy Lorenz; the hanging lantern is by Paul Marra Design, and the sink fittings are by P.E. Guerin.

public rooms stayed in place, we felt it was cleaner to take it all down to the slab and then build it back up.”

This approach allowed the designers to make subtle adjustments to the flow. By shifting room openings, they were able to create more wall space for the homeowner’s large art collection, which includes works by Jean Dubuffet, Richard Serra, and Tina Barney. They also combined two bedrooms to form an impressive master suite that encompasses a set of baths, a study and a dressing area (both clad in cerused-oak paneling), and a bedroom outfitted in serene shades of gray and cream. And they gave the entrance hall a bold new floor, a graphic pattern of black, white, and gray marble offset with stainless-steel inlay.

For Smith, it was crucial to fashion a place where his client could entertain in style and where her son would feel free to play. Says the homeowner, “I was looking to make it both as sophisticated and as kid-friendly as possible.” Smith achieved this balance by leaving plenty of open space throughout (and using durable rugs and fabrics) while skillfully mixing new furnishings with antiques.

The dining room, for example, showcases a pair of custom-made Nancy Lorenz resin-and-white-gold tables that seem right at home surrounded by Louis XVI-style chairs. Overhead is a contemporary
The master bedroom, clad in a Jasper fabric, features a Darren Almond photograph. The bed is dressed in Nancy Koltes linens and an antique coverlet from Kathleen Taylor the Lotus Collection; the bench is vintage Pace Collection, and the rug is by Carini Lang.

Above: The master bedroom, clad in a Jasper fabric, features a Darren Almond photograph. The bed is dressed in Nancy Koltes linens and an antique coverlet from Kathleen Taylor the Lotus Collection; the bench is vintage Pace Collection, and the rug is by Carini Lang.

Opposite: A master bath includes a pendant lamp by Delisle, a bespoke lacquered-metal vanity, and a marble-mosaic floor by Ferguson & Shamamian and Michael S. Smith.

chandelier by R. W. Russell that evokes the sun and moon with crystal spikes and Swarovski amber spheres. "It's one of the first things I bought for the apartment, and it's among my favorites," the client says.

In the living area a Mattia Bonetti acrylic-top cocktail table with a looping bronze base resides harmoniously near a Regency-style desk. One end of the room is anchored by a Doug Aitken illuminated wall sculpture spelling out MAGIC—a piece that, not surprisingly, "has become a real focal point," the homeowner says. And then there are the furnishings that appear to straddle the historic-versus-current divide, such as the Ferruccio Laviani–designed baroque cabinet-on-stand, its ornate gold-leaved base crowned by a chest of red mirrored glass. "It has a classical form but with a playful, whimsical quality," Smith says.

The piece, like the other shimmering accents found throughout the dwelling—the gold leaf on the library ceiling, the custom-made Nancy Lorenz glass panels on the powder-room walls—serves a purpose beyond mere decorative appeal. "New York apartments rarely have the light that a house on a large property does," Smith notes. "So one way to make them visually interesting is to use reflective surfaces to bounce light around." His strategy was readily embraced by the client. "I love anything that sparkles," she concedes.

But don't mistake such flourishes for flashiness. In this exquisitely tailored urban oasis, comfort is paramount. "A residence should be a place where you immediately feel at home," says the owner. "Not that I ever plan to commit any crimes, but if I were put under house arrest here, I'd be perfectly content."
DEPLOYING A NUANCED PALETTE OF SILVERS AND GRAYS, ARCHITECT LEE F. MINDEL TRANSFORMS A MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE INTO A LUMINOUS, SINGULARLY SOPHISTICATED OASIS.
Stepping off the elevator directly into the New York penthouse of Jane Hertzmark Hudis and Dr. Clifford Hudis, you can’t help but reflexively take off your shoes.

Clearly the city’s grit and grime have no place in this pristine Upper East Side home, which bears the minimalist stamp of its designer, architect Lee F. Mindel of the Manhattan firm Shelton, Mindel & Associates. In stocking feet, you immediately—and viscerally—experience the luxuriousness of the pale-hued apartment, whose fine, thin carpets act as bafflingly plush landing pads. It’s as though you’re walking both on the clouds and among them.

Jane, the global brand president of Estée Lauder, and her husband, a renowned physician, knew that sumptuous rugs would be a critical element in their home long before they hired Mindel to renovate and decorate it. “The notion that the floor is as vital to a space as anything else was part of my upbringing,” says the cosmetics executive, whose mother, Ellen Hertzmark, has worked at the bespoke rug company V’Soske for decades. “She has collaborated with all the top architects in the world. That she would do the rugs was a given.”

It was Hertzmark who introduced the couple to Mindel, one of her close friends, and the two conceived the apartment’s many matching wool-and-silk carpets, which are woven in a subtle grid pattern to echo the streets below.

Mindel was struck by the city views when he first toured the two-bedroom residence, located on the 12th floor of a new building and boasting a pair of breathtaking terraces. Inspired by moody skies and the rooftops and façades of the surrounding buildings, he envisioned the interiors as an abstract panorama of grays. Today that subdued neutral palette—it can almost read as mauve or the softest blue depending on the light—extends into every
Clockwise from top left: In the entry area, a vintage André Borderie table lamp mingles with artworks by Raoul Dufy (left) and Iran do Espírito Santo atop an Antonio Citterio console for Hermès. Vintage Charlotte Perriand sconces and a V'Soske runner enrich a hallway. A circa-1956 Poul Kjærholm candelabra is suspended above the master suite’s vintage Rena Dumas desk; the lamp is by Gino Sarfatti. The dining room displays a Jouko Kärkkäinen artwork.
A Derick Pobell mobile enlivens the dining room, for which Shelton, Mindel & Assoc. designed a cerused-oak table and suite of side chairs; the rug is by V’Soske.
room and corridor. “Lee designed the apartment as one continuous gesture,” Jane says. “I love how the pale tones are referential to the world outside. Just please don’t title this article ‘50 Shades of Gray’!”

Mindel made only minor adjustments to the existing floor plan, removing a coat closet and a powder room from the entry so that the living and dining rooms are visible as soon as you set foot in the home. Fabrics, finishes, and furniture, however, assume an architectural presence in the muted, pared-down interiors. Dressing many of the windows are pleated curtains that, Mindel observes, resemble fluted columns when open but also feel ephemeral, “like clouds passing through the sky.” Lacquered accent walls reflect light while providing the illusion of depth.

To keep the apartment from appearing too calm and static, Mindel selected furnishings with a sense of motion. The living room is anchored by a pair of mirrored folding screens custom designed in the spirit of Serge Roche. “They’re set on wheels and suggest movement and space beyond,” says the architect. In the dining room a balsa-wood mobile by Derick Pobell hangs above a cerused-oak table and a suite of Louis XVI–style chairs. “It’s captivating watching it move and change with the shifting light,” Jane says of the sculpture. The same is true of the Timo Sarpaneva mobile—featuring concentric circles reminiscent of a solar system—that animates the master bath, dangling in a window niche over the freestanding tub. And suspended above a Lucite desk in the adjoining bedroom is a Poul Kjærholm