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VERANDA

THE JOY OF COLOR



PICTURE PERFECT

A Manhattan designer finds magic in the mix, blending his own collections ever so artfully.

INTERIOR DESIGN BY BRIAN MCCARTHY
PRODUCED BY CAROLYN ENGLEFIELD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAX KIM-BEE
WRITTEN BY KATE BOLICK

Old meets new in an intimate living room. Sofa in Duralee velvet and lounge chairs in Gianluca Berardi fabric, all A. Schneller Sons. Pillows in Brunschwig & Fils and custom fabrics. Trim, Samuel & Sons. Coffee table, Vosges. Vintage desk. Maquette, Willy Kreitz. Antique Régence side table, Japanese table, gueridon, and alabaster ceiling fixture. Stool, Marc Bankowsky. Rug, Beauvais. Art, left to right, Jacqueline Humphries, Michael van Ofen, Desirée Dolron, William Steiger, and Michael Krebber.

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"FOR ME, DECORATING INTERIORS IS LIKE PAINTING," SAYS MANHATTAN-BASED DESIGNER BRIAN MCCARTHY. "YOU BEGIN WITH YOUR CANVAS ON AN EASEL AND A POINT OF VIEW. THEN YOU START

sketching, building up layers, until eventually it takes on its own natural form."

McCarthy doesn't use that analogy lightly. An art lover with a wide-ranging collection of contemporary paintings and photographs, he appreciates the complexities of creating harmony and balance out of disparate elements. He is a classicist by training—before starting his own business, he was a partner at Parish-Hadley—and, with his own unique spin, he brings high-style traditionalism into the twenty-first century.

One might think, then, that the classic prewar apartment he shares with his partner, Danny Sager, would be the ultimate blank slate for his talents. Built in 1929 directly opposite Carnegie Hall, the two-bedroom has never been chopped into smaller spaces by developers, so its elegant proportions maintain their original integrity.

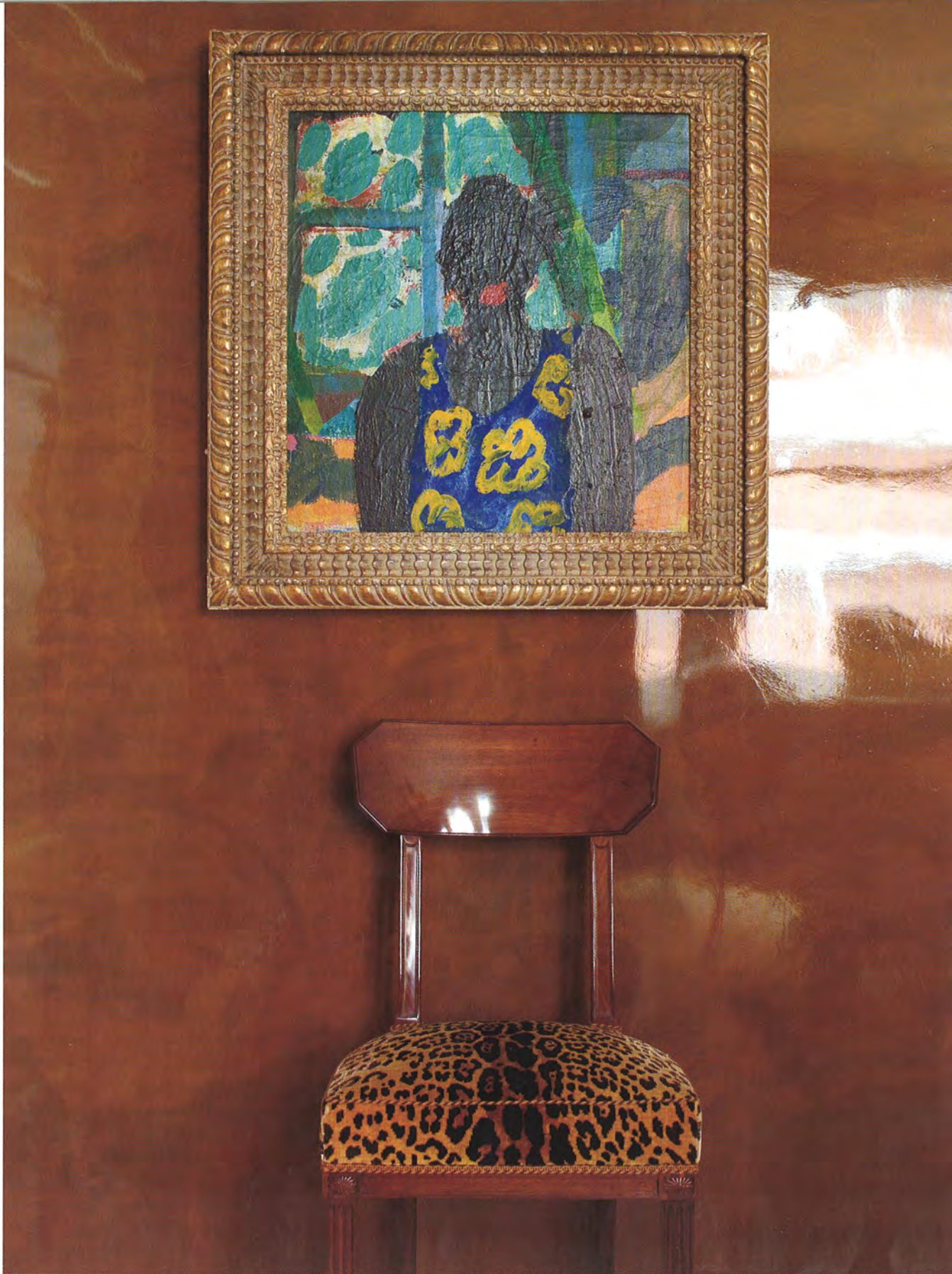
"My own home is a nightmare!" he says with a laugh. "It's so much easier to edit my thinking for a client. But decorating for Danny and myself is much more abstract and difficult. We have so many ideas, and so many things we've collected over the years, that it all becomes a bit of a puzzle."



A secondary seating area in the living room is the focal point as you enter the apartment. Sofa, A. Schneller Sons, in Clarence House fabric. Pillows, Gianluca Berardi. Throw, Loro Piana. Georges Jacob chair in Rubelli stripe. Antique chair in Clarence House velvet. Antique table. Crocodile console, Claude Lalanne. Lamp, W.P. Sullivan. Festoon shade in Clarence House strié. Trim, Samuel & Sons. Art, left to right, Michael Krebber, Pino Pascali, Rachel Harrison, and Marc Goethals.

Venetian plaster walls add shimmer day and night. **THIS PAGE:** Jacob D.R. Meslée table. Chairs, Vosges. Curtains in Brunschwig & Fils fabric. Vase, De Vera. Glasses, Gilmor Glassworks. Antique pedestal and chandelier. Rug, Beauvais. Flowers, Oscar Mora Floral Art & Design. Art, Mel Bochner. **OPPOSITE:** Georges Jacob chair in Brunschwig & Fils velvet. Art, Leonel Gonzalez.





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That he thrives on this complicated process is evident in the gorgeous results. In every room, furnishings from wildly differing periods are combined in unexpected arrangements that somehow feel fated—as if each French armchair and crocodile console had finally found its true home. Unusual artwork invites the visitor to take a closer look. “Art brings a heartbeat to a home like nothing else,” the designer says. “It’s so personal and subjective.”

Keen attention to color is crucial to McCarthy’s painterly process. In the dining and living rooms, an earthy, masculine palette of ambers, orangey corals, and browns unifies the furniture’s styles and shapes. For the guest room, he worked with a painter, mixing and mixing and mixing (“We mixed until we were blue in the face!”) to achieve the exact fresh, cool hue he was aiming for—a shade just a touch bluer than Tiffany’s.

“It’s wonderful for art,” McCarthy says of the color. “It doesn’t matter what art you have in that room—it’s all great, it all works.”

The master bedroom is almost impossibly subtle. “I wanted something very, very quiet, with nothing taking away from the art, or the serenity and quietness of the atmosphere,” he says. To wit, the white walls, ceiling, and trim establish a plain backdrop for black-and-white art—but what could be harsh is softened by the generous use of a light caramel. Overhead, an Isamu Noguchi paper lantern hangs like the moon.

But it’s the foot of the bed that offers his favorite element: a mahogany bench in faux-shagreen leather, rescued from the nineteenth century and set here for dramatic effect. “It’s such a pure, sculptural silhouette,” McCarthy says. “I wanted it to stand alone.” □



An unexpected Isamu Noguchi paper lamp sidesteps tradition. THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE, TOP: Custom headboard in Yoma Textiles faux suede. Antique Belgian bench. Wall lamps, Vosges. Linens, Linge au Coeur. Shade in Lulu DK fabric. Rug, Beauvais. Art, left to right, Minor White and Georges Rousse. ВОТТОМ: French Empire table and mirror as headboard. Linens, Pratesi. Art, Nicholas Prior.

