

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ARCHITECTS & DESIGNERS BUILDING

# DESIGN

DESIGN  
TAKES SHAPE

TOM  
KLIGERMAN  
**NINA MAGON**  
CLODAGH  
**STUDIOLAB**  
STEPHANIE  
COHEN

COLOR &  
CONTRAST

FROM BLACK AND WHITE TO BRILLIANT



# LIGHT BRIGHT



A large dining table anchors the space between the kitchen and living room.

# A CONTEMPORARY ABODE COMES TO LIFE IN A CLASSIC 19TH-CENTURY MANHATTAN APARTMENT BUILDING

WRITTEN BY **THOMAS CONNORS** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **REAGAN WOOD**









Dove-colored counter stools echo the subtle veining of the Calacatta marble-topped island and backsplash. The fixtures from **Lefroy Brooks** evoke the building's historic style.

**D**izzyingly tall and extravagantly detailed, the pinnacles that piece the Manhattan sky set a new standard for living in the city that earlier residents would deem as fantastical as a

trip to the moon. But when William McKinley was in the White House, living in the likes of The Dakota or The Osborne must have struck most New Yorkers as equally unreachable. While utterly antique by many of today's benchmarks, the grand apartments of the past never go out of style, especially when they are lovingly and intelligently re-imagined.

With its ornate Renaissance-meets-Beaux-Arts profile, the 125-year-old Orleans on the Upper West Side may appear dated and stuffy, but inside, there's a unit that shines as bright as any residence in the clouds. The work of StudioLAB, which operates from offices on Union Square, the space was fashioned from three apartments that hadn't quite kept up with the times. Gutted and reconfigured but graced with the kind of details—herringbone floors, coffered ceilings—that echo the aesthetics of an earlier era, it combines a pre-war ambiance with crisply uncluttered contemporaneity.

With four bedroom and four baths, the apartment certainly isn't small, but as architect Matthew Miller notes, "In New York City, you're fighting and designing every inch to get the most out of the program, so the architecture must take precedence." Miller's scheme, which rides on







Opposite: StudioLAB kitted out the home with plenty of built-ins, such as the shelving in the primary bedroom. The wall behind the bed and the bed rails are upholstered in fabric from **Holly Hunt**. The wine bar in the living room (bottom left), and the vanity in the primary bath (bottom middle) were also designed by StudioLAB. In a head-to-toe tiled guest bath (bottom, right), the fixtures are from **Lefroy Brooks**.

an open plan that maximizes views of the American Museum of Natural History, is adeptly scaled, generating a very-of-the-moment sense of space without sacrificing intimacy. When conceptualizing the layout, he provides the client a proposed furniture placement drawn to scale, then collaborates with Director of Interiors Krisha Salud, to source the final finishes and furnishings.

“I am a modernist, and love midcentury Scandinavian furnishings, however not every client likes the same style,” says Miller. “You have to listen to the client first, feel what they want, and guide them into making the right decisions so the end product is harmonious and well-designed.

“This client’s other homes were much more traditional and ‘heavy.’ While they didn’t want too modern a space, they were open to a more contemporary look. Keeping

traditional details, such as the crown moldings and wall paneling, and blending an open plan, bright white millwork, and neutral palette furnishings, we were able to find an excellent medium that fits the style of the building’s history and appealed to the client’s taste, but still made for a refreshing look.”

Shades of white pervade the home, from the kitchen cupboards and countertops to the bathrooms and bedrooms. Wood plays a key contrasting role, as evidenced by the substantial planks of the dining table and the various built-ins, including a compact wine bar. In the living room, old and new meet in the metals of the modern chair and coffee table and the Queen Anne style of the side table legs. Grounded in the past, but not lost in it, this residence hits that sweet spot between what was and what ought to be. ■



The living room’s all-white color scheme is broken up by a pale-blue carpet and gray accents, like the lounge chair and coffee table.