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CELEBRATING A MODERN AESTHETIC, INSIDE AND OUT



Photographs

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It's the quintessential New York apartment — INTERIOR DESIGNER BRUCE BIERMAN

Previous folio: A Sonia Delaunay gouache-on-paper complements neutral modern elements. Below: Custom furnishings include a light fixture by David Weeks for Ralph Pucci and reproduction Jean Prouvé cabinet. Cassina Cab armchairs surround Murray & Co. dining tables, crafted of Bateig Blanca from Stone Source. Table legs are from Boffi Soho.



For a couple who have four places to call home, waking up and remembering in which one they laid down their heads the previous night might pose a problem. But when Bruce and Billy Kolber-Stuart awake in their Chelsea loft, the dramatic cityscape glimpsed through every window immediately proves they are in their Manhattan "nest." Those views—the backdrop for clean, postmodern urban interiors—make this "the quintessential New York City apartment," says designer Bruce Bierman, who helped the couple design and decorate the two-bedroom, 2,200-square-foot penthouse.

Bruce Kolber-Stuart, who directs a private family foundation, and Billy, the founder of the *Out & About* travel newsletter and now a screenwriter, each had his own reason for wanting to own a place in New York City. Billy grew up in the area and wanted to be able to see friends and family more often; Bruce, who is a West Coast native, says, "When I was growing up in Los Angeles, New York City was always the place to run away to. It is the place where dreams are made and fulfilled."

The couple, who also own a Spanish Revival house in Beverly Hills, a Western-themed home in Palm Springs, and a 1950s





Bruce Bierman designed a "disappearing kitchen," with appliances deftly housed out of view. Antique stools were re-covered in leather to continue a colorway found throughout the loft. The couple purchased the Verini glass during their travels.

retro-style Fire Island summer cottage, were instantly drawn to the Chelsea community. "I like a sense of knowing where the laundry, diner, and that type of thing are," says Bruce. The couple found what they were looking for in a former commercial building that was converting to luxury apartments. "We bought the space when there were no walls," Bruce recalls; the penthouse's northeast exposure and 11-foot-high ceilings were major draws. The couple also liked the fact that the master and guest bedrooms were on opposite sides of the apartment, allowing privacy for both guests and owners.

The Kolber-Stuarts had known interior designer Bruce Bierman socially for several years and had been impressed by his work. The trio came up with a plan, as Bierman puts it, "to create a space that incorporated classic furniture and expanded on it with newer pieces and antiques."

Custom furnishings based on iconic modern designs were often overscaled to fit the apartment's proportions. The couple's art collections also helped inspire the decor. In the open living-dining area, original works by French artist and designer Sonia Delaunay offer dramatic displays of line and tone. Bierman chose a brightly colored custom cabinet—based on a Jean Prouvé piece that Delaunay helped design with Charlotte Perriand in the 1950s—to accompany the paintings. Elements such as the Barcelona chairs and couch (which Mies van der Rohe designed to sit freely in an open, light-filled space such as this) further advance the design aesthetic.

"Another goal was to design a loft space that was masculine and that had a place for everything so it would not appear cluttered," Bierman says. Many items in the home were chosen not just for their form, but also for their ease of use. The television rests on an antique easel that can be moved from room to room; the reproduction Prouvé cabinet has doors that flip down to hide a computer, monitor, and printer.

Because there are no other highrises in the immediate vicinity, the interior was not allowed to work against the expansive views. The overall outcome, Bierman says, is a "cloudlike effect," as light, clean-line interiors coexist effortlessly with the Manhattan skyline outside. **NYH + see Resource**

Art plays an important role in the couple's lives. Below: Uruguayan painter Ignacio Iturría's work hangs in the guest room. Opposite, from top: Sonia Delaunay originals in the living room. Frank Sheehan's sumi ink-on-paper works atop the master bedroom's headboard.



