

ELLE DECOR



What's
Hot
Now!

Luxe
Lamps

Must-Haves
for 2003

Julianne Moore
at Home

The Softer
Side of
Modern



From top: Nancy Feldman's pastel parlor. The study in Jenny Armit's mod California cabin.

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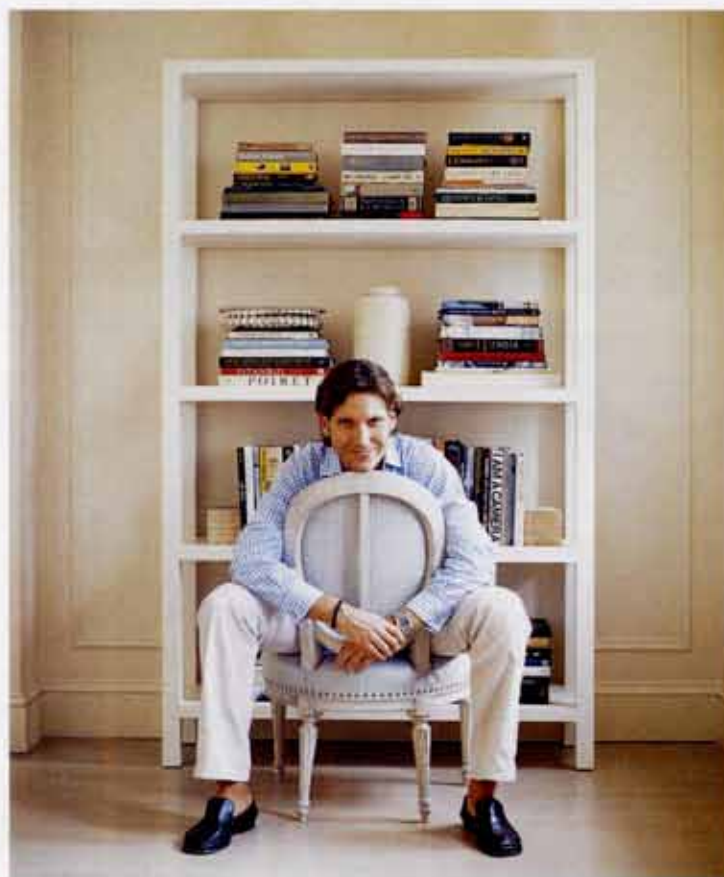


On the Cover
A 1940s crystal-and-mirror console sparkles in the entrance hall of Timothy Whealon's Fifth Avenue apartment. "Eye of the Storm," page 156. Photography by Pieter Estersohn; produced by Dara Caponigro.

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EYE OF THE STORM

WHEN GLOBE-TROTTING, TASTEMAKING,
AND COLOR-COORDINATING TAKE
THEIR TOLL, DESIGNER TIMOTHY WHEALON CHECKS
IN TO HIS LOW-KEY MANHATTAN OASIS

TEXT BY MARK WELSH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PIETER ESTERSOHN
PRODUCED BY DARA CAPONIGRO

Facing page: Interior designer Timothy Whealon in the living room of his Manhattan apartment. This page: A 1930s Jean-Charles Moreux patinated-plaster shell sconce hangs near a neoclassical-style sofa; the Louis XVI fauteuil is covered in a Rogers & Goffigon linen. See Resources.





Whealon designed the overmantel mirror with Thomas Donahue. The chandelier is Murano glass; the glass-top leather tables are vintage Jacques Adnet. See Resources.

F

irst glances can be deceiving. When you walk into Timothy Whealon's immaculate Manhattan apartment, for instance, the eye registers an all-white composition in Polar Bear and Chalk. But tell the affable designer how much you love his "white" mise-en-scène and it soon becomes clear that one man's white is another man's mint-green. The truth is that Whealon's 1,000-square-foot, one-bedroom aerie (located in a lower Fifth Avenue building whose very address makes Realtors salivate) is an exercise in chromatic calculation. "I like living with color that gradually reveals itself," says the Wisconsin native, "and no color has the capacity to do that quite like white."

In collaboration with color consultants Donald Kaufman and Taffy Dahl, whose line of paints is a favorite in aesthetic circles, Whealon created a palette that adapts with the day. And because of that, it's rarely just white. "Because white contains the full spectrum of color, it's always changing, depending on the light," explains Kaufman. "White can be blue-green at high noon and then become brown-gold at night."

As the sun shifts over the neighboring brownstones of Greenwich Village, Whealon's living room walls come alive like sly chameleons, shifting from cream to celadon to burnt umber and back again. The floors, too (another product of the Whealon-Kaufman-Dahl collaboration), have their own



mysterious life, the bleached, stained, and painted planks distinctly taupe one moment and a luminous dove-gray the next.

This tranquil environment provides Whealon a respite from his hectic career as a fine- and decorative-arts consultant as well as interior designer for a roster of international projects, from a John Russell Pope house in Watch Hill, Rhode Island, to a 1956 motorized sailboat plying the high seas. "I work all day with color," says the designer, citing a recently completed Sutton Place apartment with yellow plaster walls and plum drapes. "I wanted my home to be peaceful and calm."

Though it may be calm now, when Whealon moved in two years ago, the space was anything but. (Its last owner was Downtown Julie Brown, the saucy sexpot turned MTV veejay.) First on his list was restoring the apartment's original 1922 character by adding symmetry and architecture to the rooms. After creating the perfect shell, Whealon combined what he calls "aesthetically simpatico objects" for a slice of Paris-in-New York flair. "I'm a classicist who likes to mix things up," he says.

Whealon's taste for the classics was cultivated when he enrolled in the training programs at Sotheby's London and New York. However, his discerning eye was cultivated before he ever wore long pants. "As a kid in Milwaukee, I spent every cent I earned from my paper route at auction houses,"





An 18th-century English mahogany table from Cove Landing in the living room; the étagère was designed by Whealon. Facing page, clockwise from left: A Viking stainless-steel range. A late-18th-century iron-and-wood table and a banquette upholstered in Manuel Canovas's Mandarin toile from Cowtan & Tout. The table is set with Century Limoges porcelain by Puiforcat and tumblers from Muriel Gateau. See Resources.



he recalls with a boyish grin. "The first thing I ever bought was a George II mahogany chair with a needlepoint seat. I was 12." His passion for collecting grew more ardent over the years, and during shopping excursions abroad for both himself and clients, he snapped up objects and furnishings for the home he envisioned. "Everything was purchased with a master plan in mind, even if I didn't have an actual floor plan," he says. "I spent a fortune keeping things in storage." When Whealon eventually found his home in the Emery Roth-designed building, each item fell into place with ease.

In the living room, treasures like a pair of Louis XVI armchairs, an early-1800s Italian fruitwood side table, and a bottle-green Murano chandelier share space with an 18th-century English mahogany breakfast table that's faded like a well-worn saddle. "I can seat six around the table for dinner," Whealon says, who keeps a set of folding campaign chairs tucked in the foyer closet. "Just as long as everyone keeps their elbows in."

The designer may have a penchant for timeless furnishings, but his art collection is unabashedly contemporary. "I cre-

ated the rooms around the art," says Whealon, a member of the Guggenheim Museum's acquisition committee. A series of four Agnes Martin lithographs, an early purchase, hangs above the burlap-beige neoclassical-style sofa in the living room, and stark black-and-white studies of Richard Neutra houses and photographs by Gerhard Richter dot the hall leading to the bedroom. The latter space—all muted cocoa and cream, no chartreuse or fuchsia intruders here—is anchored by a reproduction David Hicks carpet and showcases an eclectic array of stylish artifacts, like a handsome 1820s English mahogany campaign chest, an Ellsworth Kelly lithograph, and an 18th-century Burmese Buddha.

One of Whealon's favorite finds, though, is downright down-home: a split landscape depicting two rural views by photographer Mike Smith. He chose the work because its stony colors fit well with his blanched decor. But, the designer says, the image caught his eye because "it reminded me of the back roads in Wisconsin." This resolute Midwesterner may have traveled far and wide in search of the sophisticated, but it's clear where his heart is. ■



The bedroom: curtains are Picnic II linen by Rogers & Goffigon; the bedcover is made of the company's Paradiso cashmere. Whealon found the antique Burmese Buddha in Hong Kong. Facing page: The master bathroom's sink and shower fittings are by Waterworks; the mirrored medicine cabinet is by Michael S. Smith for Kallista. See Resources.