

A HOME OF ONE'S OWN

WITH THE HELP OF DESIGNER TIMOTHY WHEALON, A LONGTIME UPPER EAST SIDE RESIDENT STAKES OUT SOME VERY SOPHISTICATED SPACE IN A SUNNY NEW PAD FIT FOR CELEBRATING THE SINGLE LIFE.

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Flooded with luxurious southern light, the paneled living room in Lynn Gilbert's prewar apartment on Manhattan's Upper East Side has an airy ease that matches the owner's current mindset. She worked with designer Timothy Whealon to make the spaces feel more contemporary, and took her time picking out modern artworks by (from left) Joanna Pousette-Dart, Thomas Demand, and Stanley Whitney. The serenity of the space holds a surprising amount of pattern, including Bennis's Injigo Lace on the custom armchairs, Peter Dunham's Udaipur on the lumbar pillows, and a vintage geometric Turkish rug from Rug & Kilim.



When Lynn Gilbert let go of the Upper East Side apartment she'd called home for more than 20 years, she assumed she'd end up somewhere new—downtown in Tribeca, maybe, or further uptown in Carnegie Hill. Instead, she landed in a classic eight within sight of her old building. Living in such proximity to a place she was trying to leave behind could've felt like defeat, but here's the truth: She now starts her mornings ensconced in her kitchen window seat, looking out onto gobs of open sky above the tops of the landmarked townhouses on 73rd Street, and knows she wouldn't have it any other way.

What prompted the move, as circumscribed as it was? "I got divorced. It wasn't a tricky divorce," says Gilbert, "but you want a fresh start, a place that's about you and your life, a place where there are no ghosts in the walls." Something about the way sunlight flooded in through the southern exposure in the living room spoke to her the

first time she saw the apartment, but the interior, untouched for decades, needed someone with vision to make it shine again.

In stepped designer Timothy Whealon and architect David Hottenroth, who reimagined the floor plan to make the rest of the apartment feel as airy as the sun-soaked living room. A window in the kitchen was enlarged to create Gilbert's aforementioned roost, the dining room converted into a library ("a dining room is just a space I'd walk through, but I actually spend time in the library," says Gilbert), and the home's 1928 period details brought back to the forefront. "We saved the things that were original and beautiful, and let go of

Brass-shaded lamps by Kelly Wearstler for Visual Comfort shine against antiqued mirrors by Martyn Lawrence Bullard. Panels of Guy Goodfellow's Javan Weave fabric were painstakingly mitered to fit the ottoman's hexagonal shape. Brass drinks tables by KRB; rug by Patterson Flynn. Spencer Finch's *Yellowstone Hike (Clear Lake Trail)* hangs above the fireplace. OPPOSITE: A set of Miró lithographs bridges the gap between the entry's 1928 marble floor and the modern lines of the custom console. At night, Jamb Pavilion Globe lights and sculptural cast bronze lamps from Victoria Stainow gallery set the space aglow. Chairs in Tashkent linen by Robert Kime.





everything else,” Whealon explains.

Whealon then set about creating a restful environment that reflected Gilbert’s desire for a sunnier new outlook. He cast off the heavy possessions—oriental carpets, brooding landscapes—that filled the dark rooms of her old apartment in favor of a lighter, edited classicism. The original pine boiserie that lined the walls of the living room was brightened with coats of a chalky milk paint that makes the nutmeg-colored velvet sofa, aubergine linen armchairs, and abaca and antique Turkish rugs feel all the richer. The library—the apartment’s one dark room—was slicked in a custom blue-green lacquer that played well with the deep green of the original verde antico marble floor that’s visible in the barrel-vaulted foyer. In Gilbert’s bedroom, soft pink strié walls and a high-gloss white lacquered ceiling make the canopied bed feel extra cossetting.

The otherwise reserved Gilbert turns effusive when describing the result—the word “love” comes up a lot, often repeated in threes. “I was thrilled to have a pink bedroom after years of compromising with my husband on a gender-neutral color, but the

light coming off the ceiling is just spectacular,” she raves. “And I’m surprised how much I love the marble floor in the entry, and the way it leads perfectly into all that color in the library. And the abaca rugs in the living room, which Tim had to talk me into. Love, love, love.”

Finding the art, which took two years, was a joint adventure that Whealon—an astute art advisor who studied art history and trained at Sotheby’s—shared with Gilbert and her mother, Gail. Whealon praises the discernment of both women: Lynn, a docent at the Metropolitan Museum of Art who spends her days surrounded by some of the most remarkable art ever produced, “really took her time and responded to things,” he explains. Gail, meanwhile, is an experienced collector in her own right—in fact, it’s her folio of Miró prints, formerly stashed away in a closet, that now hangs in her

The library’s high-gloss finish bounces the limited light around the moody space. The custom millwork is built around a sofa that belonged to Gilbert’s grandmother and has been in every apartment she’s ever lived in. The vintage Ward Bennett swivel chairs are in a Fermoie linen. Art, Uta Barth. OPPOSITE: A series of Andy Warhol drawings from his 1957 book *25 Cats Name Sam and One Blue Pussy* are beloved by Gilbert, whose son is named Sam. The vintage Warren Platner dining table seats four; a different top expands to fit eight, negating the need for a dining room. Custom picture light, Ann-Morris.





daughter's entry, a magical pairing with the 1920s marble floor.

Further into the apartment, the mood becomes more hushed. In the bathroom, says Gilbert, "I wanted something quiet and clean. Not spa-like, just calm, a place where I can relax, and not worry about anything." When Whealon suggested hanging the antique Baguès rock crystal sconces that flanked the fireplace in her former apartment above the vanity, "I was very skeptical, but he nailed it," she says. That's a single vanity, by the way: "The architect asked if I wanted a double sink, and I said, 'No—I don't need a second sink mocking me,'" she laughs. Now she has acres of counter space, and rooms that fit her life exactly. And when she passes her old building? "I just wave and keep walking with a very satisfied feeling."

ABOVE: The kitchen is a clean slate, with a softly polished Calacatta marble counter and backsplash and putty gray walls and cabinets (Ammonite and Wevet, both from Farrow & Ball). A whisper of pattern plays out in the linen shades and matching throw pillows done in Robert Kime's Pea Pods pattern. LEFT: Subtle lavender-toned wallpaper (Fairfield by Anna French) creates a soft, relaxing backdrop in the bathroom. The vanity is outfitted with Waterworks fixtures. OPPOSITE: "I'm like a five-year-old with a fantasy of a pink bedroom and a canopy bed, but this is the grown-up version," says Gilbert. The four-poster is covered in Robert Kime's Seychour linen. Streamlined bedside tables from John Rosselli Antiques are topped with Roy Hamilton ceramic lamps.