

NYC & G

New York Cottages and Gardens

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SPRING STYLE

**BROOKLYN
HEIGHTS
CHELSEA
MIDWOOD
THE CATSKILLS
UPPER
EAST SIDE**



**CHIC
CARIBBEAN
ESCAPE:
ST. LUCIA**

The High Life
The apartment enjoys a front-row seat to the action on the High Line below (THIS PAGE). A seating area in the main living space (OPPOSITE) includes a Las Venus sofa upholstered in an Élitis fabric, a pair of vintage Milo Baughman velvet armchairs, and a cocktail table by Glas Italia. Ceiling pendants from DDC illuminate the room. See Resources.



AS SEEN IN
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ELEVATED ELEGANCE

Interior designer Bennett Leifer creates a refined oasis high above the High Line

BY ALYSSA BIRD | PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARCO RICCA



“My aesthetic runs the gamut, but it always comes down to beautiful rooms done in a very restrained manner”



Like most art students, Bennett Leifer was fascinated by composition, color, and texture while he was an undergrad at Skidmore College. And like most art students, he didn't pursue his chosen discipline after earning his diploma, working instead in public relations for nine months, followed by a year and a half with Polo Ralph Lauren, where he helped conceptualize the design of the brand's retail stores. Further stints with such industry talents as architect Robert A.M. Stern and interior designers Juan Pablo Molyneux and Scott Snyder, among others, prepared him to launch his own company in 2013, where, not surprisingly, he was happy to become reacquainted with composition, color, and texture.

“Helping clients create backdrops for a lifetime of memories is very exciting to me,” says Leifer, a Long Island native whose firm has completed jobs in Los Angeles, Miami, Aspen, Hong Kong, and Paris, in addition to New York City. While the designer can deftly switch gears from a gilt-trimmed Neoclassical salon one minute to a slick, monochromatic aerie the next, balance is key in any interior he dreams up: “My aesthetic runs the gamut, but it always comes down to beautiful, elegant rooms done in a very restrained manner.”

Leifer's measured approach came in particularly handy when he was commissioned to decorate a young couple's three-bedroom, three-bath apartment in a new development overlooking the High Line in Chelsea. The mandate for the project: a subtle palette with strong silhouettes—and very few curves. The wife, who has a background in fashion, “has an aver-

Hooked On Graphics
In the dining area (ABOVE), Milo Baughman chairs from Design Within Reach surround a table by Alain Gilles. The kitchen (RIGHT) features walnut cabinetry, a Calacatta Gold marble backsplash and countertops, BDDW barstools, and pendants by Sonneman—A Way of Light. See Resources.

Serene Sanctuary
 A Jean de Merry light fixture and a work by Fernando Mastrangelo hold court in the master bedroom (THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE TOP), which features sconces by Trans-Luxe, x-benches from Barbarella Home, and an RH rug. Matching club chairs flank a Tucker Robbins console table and a lamp from DDC. The master bath (OPPOSITE BOTTOM) includes walls and floors of Calacatta Gold marble, a side table from Stephanie Odegard Collection, and artwork by Tracey Snelling. See Resources.



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sion to round things,” recalls Leifer. “It became such a joke that we still giggle about it.” Sticking mostly to the straight and narrow, Leifer began outfitting the home with sculptural, but simple, light fixtures, luxurious textiles, and a few pops of fun, such as the powder room’s pixelated floral wallpaper, a Designers Guild pattern that he describes as a cross between a Warhol and a Seurat. “I tried to honor what the clients wanted and remain true to the building’s architecture, while putting my own spin on the decor.”

The loftlike space also serves as an ideal setting for the couple’s art collection, which includes pieces by Fernando Mastrangelo, David Golde, Maud Vantours, and Damien Hirst. “Because of my background, I love helping clients with art,” says Leifer, who suggested a work from Mastrangelo’s “Drift Mirrors” series to preside over the pale gray master bedroom. In the open living, dining, and kitchen area, light fixtures from DDC and low-slung, streamlined furnishings are intentionally minimal, so as not to distract from the buzz of the High Line down below. “The views are so spectacular that we wanted to draw the eye outside and keep the interior finishes clean.” The sleek scheme also echoes the spare aesthetics of the neighborhood’s world-renowned art galleries, further integrating the residence into its surroundings. “It was just a white box before, and it still has an aura of austerity, but in a very chic, livable way.” ✨