

view from the top

GRAND APARTMENT LIVING

edited by Janelle McCulloch

images
Publishing

duplex for a gentleman

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Axis Mundi and Studio ST

Once, the epitome of the ultimate bachelor pad was a place modeled on a James Bond-style abode, or the luxury loft that Hugh Grant lolled about in the film *About A Boy*: a well-stocked library (books, DVDs, jazz CDs), an equally well-stocked drinks bar to create an elegant martini or whisky (plus top-of-the-line wine cooler), and acres of space perfectly fit for undisturbed social activities. Today, the modern man's private domain is very different, thanks to a new generation of architects and designers—and a new generation of men—who understand that interiors are far more than just a space to 'entertain'. They are stylish, private retreats to escape from the world, while looking out majestically over it.

Located near the distinguished Astor Place in New York City, this 2200-square-foot apartment was conceived as an 'apartment for a gentleman', and its masculine sophistication raises the bar of bachelor pads to a refined and almost inimitable height. The client, a 40-year-old bachelor involved in the film industry, wanted a space conducive to hosting parties, both grand and intimate, as well as a sanctuary from the bustling city below. The apartment's best assets were its views, which sweep across the north, west, and south, and take in the Empire State Building, the Chrysler Building, and the Hudson River, but the building's postwar design and plain rooms meant that these views weren't being taken full advantage of.

The designers, John Beckman of Axis Mundi and Esther Sperber of Studio ST, set about creating a series of differentiated spaces, each with its own atmosphere and function, which together not only made up a coherent but flexible and easy living space but also embraced the inspirational skyline. The principal design element is a glass and metal conservatory, created by expanding the kitchen to the terrace, that blends inside and out, and features a fabulous hot-rolled steel TV wall—perfect for a man who needs to keep up with film and

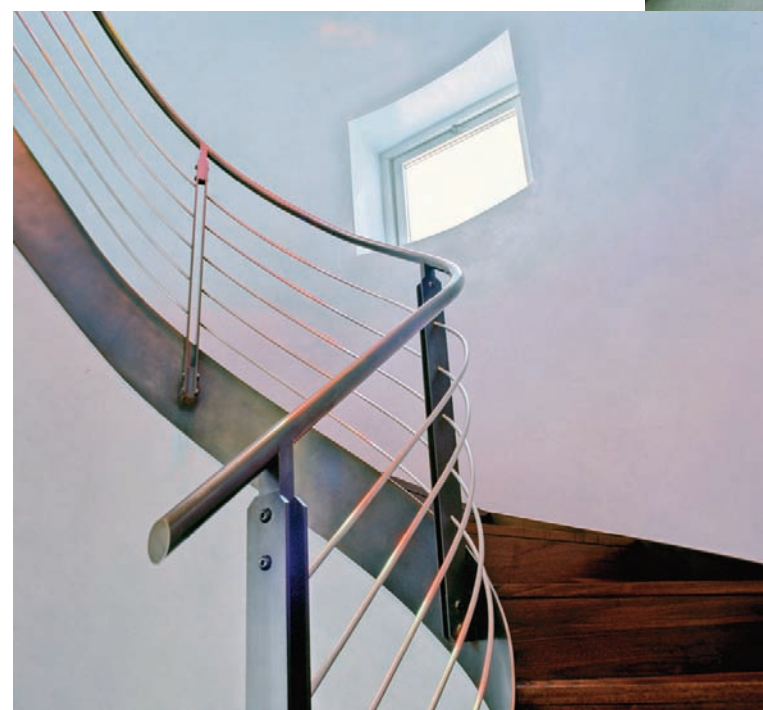
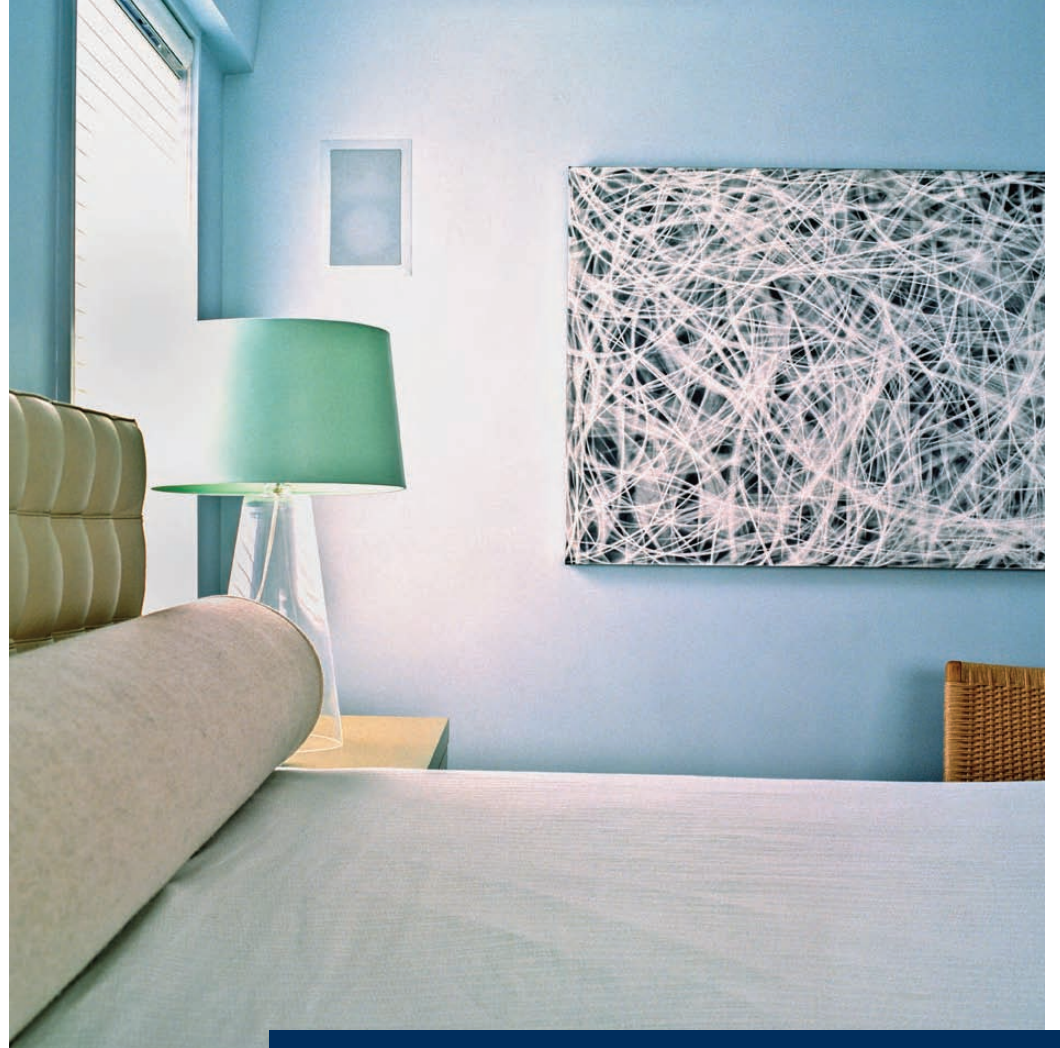
media industries—and Eero Saarinen table and chairs. Upstairs, on the second floor, there are further indulgence zones, including a magnificent master bath made from combining two closets, which features a white marble bath and a dark stained oak wood vanity with polished stainless steel fixtures. The dining room, meanwhile, is designed for dramatic dinner parties, with chocolate brown Venetian plaster walls and a large wenge wood table with 12 Mies van der Rohe Brno chairs.

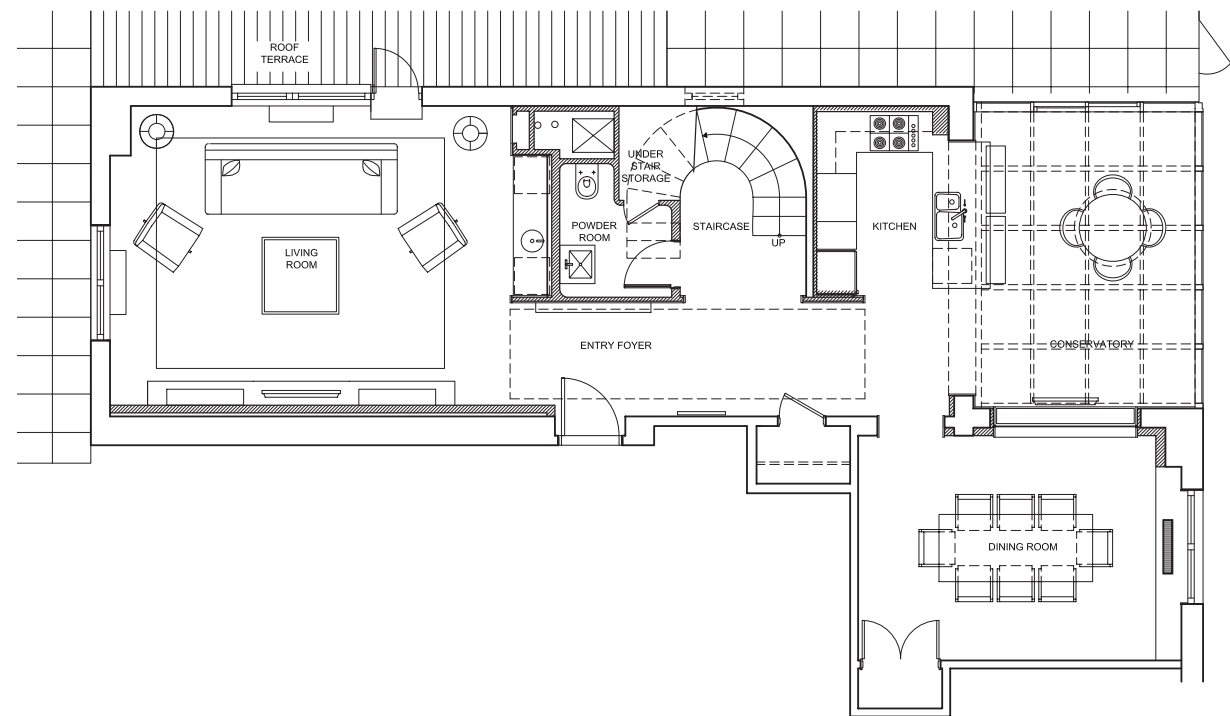
Materials chosen in the interior design were selected to reflect the atmosphere of "masculine sophistication: dark wenge wood for the linear, almost 'Miesian' entry wall and also the living room wet bar, walnut for the flooring, lavender Venetian plaster and panels of waxed steel for the walls, and handsome blue marble counters for the kitchen. There is also an Artemedie Nur light with Metamorfoosi technology to provide the requisite 'bachelor pad' ambient lighting. The glamour element was provided by a plush, nightclub-style ruby red powder room, which offers a 'wow' factor for party guests.

The main conversation starter, however, is still undoubtedly the views. Here on the 19th and 20th floors, high above the metropolis, the vista is what really distinguishes this apartment from many others, and makes its owner feel on top of the world every time he comes home, no matter what kind of day he has had down below.



Photography: Andrew Garn





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