

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF DESIGN

JANUARY 2011

Global Style

GREECE
PARIS
NEW YORK
CALIFORNIA
TUSCANY
BRAZIL

\$5.99US \$6.99FOR

01>



08430

0 357076 0



BELOW: Sting and Trudie Styler. LEFT: The couple's garden in Tuscany is the work of Arabella Lennox-Boyd.

86 SERENE PURSUIT

In Carmel, California, a shipshape house is built for a couple craving a Zenlike retreat

Architecture by Dirk Denison
Text by Patricia Leigh Brown
Photography by David Matheson

94 LIVING UP TO A LEGEND

The brand-new wing of a Los Angeles mansion pays homage to the work of a 1920s tastemaker

Architecture by Marc Appleton
Interior Design by Windsor Smith
Text by Joseph Giovannini
Photography by Erhard Pfeiffer

102 OUTSIDE INTERESTS

A decorator loves her Manhattan penthouse—especially its wraparound terrace

Architecture by George W. Sweeney
Interior Design by Friederike Kemp Biggs
Text by Jean Strouse
Photography by Derry Moore

112 INTO THE WILD

The natural materials used in a tropical beachfront house embody Brazil's earthy traditions

Architecture by Bernardes + Jacobsen
Text by Raul Barreneche
Photography by Iain Kemp

120 À LA MODE

A couture-quality flat in Paris is a childhood dream come true for its American owner

Interior Design by Jean-Louis Deniot
Text by Penelope Rowlands
Photography by Marina Faust >



31

Byzantine Dreams is one of Versace's latest dinnerware designs for Rosenthal.



Working with architect George W. Sweeney, interior designer Friederike Kemp Biggs refashioned a New York penthouse for herself and her husband, Jeremy. Sweeney added an arched transom window in the home office.



Outside Interests

Designer Friederike Kemp Biggs loves her gracious Manhattan penthouse, but it was the wraparound terrace that sealed the deal

TEXT BY JEAN STROUSE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DERRY MOORE

W

HEN DESIGNERS

Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux began construction on Central Park in the 1850s, Manhattan above 42nd Street stretched off into swamps, fields, and ledges of dense gray schist. No one at the time could have imagined the residential towers that would later line the park's margins or the patchwork of terraces all over town that would raise profusions of green toward the sky.

Terraces are what drew Jeremy and Friederike Kemp Biggs to a particular apartment on the city's Upper East Side. The Biggses are, among many other things, generous supporters of the New York Botanical Garden, and had lived for two decades in a 5,000-square-foot triplex



penthouse with a lushly planted outdoor space. When the time came to downsize, after their children were grown, Friederike looked at another penthouse apartment that had “very good bones,” she recalls, but seemed too small at 2,700 square feet. An expert on the subject of design potential—she has run her own decorating firm, Kemp Interiors, for many years—she walked away, came back, brought her husband, and returned again. Finally the couple decided to buy. “The terraces on three sides did it,” she says. “They nearly doubled the space.”

Friederike then brought in New York architect George W. Sweeney, with whom she had worked on projects for clients as well as on her own Martha’s Vineyard house and her former triplex, and together they gut-renovated the apartment. They had two rules, Sweeney reports: “Open each room to a terrace,” and “Make use of every square inch.” In the process, the architect tore down walls, raised ceilings, and relocated pipes. He installed new central

air-conditioning, plumbing, electrical wiring, and gas lines; he shortened the central hallway, replaced windows with French doors, and added pocket doors as well as concealed shelving and drawers—and, finally, he fashioned moldings and casings to suit the residence’s fine prewar heritage.

The elevator now opens directly into the apartment, and from the foyer a visitor’s eye is drawn through the entrance gallery and living room to French doors that open onto the south-facing terrace—exactly according to rule number one. Friederike, a passionate collector of antique decorative arts, especially porcelain, brought most of the furnishings from her previous home and managed to cover every square inch in the new one—rule number two. She laughs about the abundance of objects. “My husband calls it my junk,” she says. “You could clear off all the surfaces here, and six months later they would be re-covered.”

The proportions and apertures of the living room did not change, but the addition of a parquet de

ABOVE: An antique Japanese screen and a Yamaha grand piano dominate one end of the living room. **OPPOSITE:** In the foyer, a Vaughan ceiling lantern with a Queen Anne mirror and an English hall table; the walls are covered in Zoffany hand-screened paper.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

A custom-made carpet by Stark ties together the eclectic living room.

An antique Irish mirror over the living room mantel.

A terrace view.

The new mahogany library features an antique desk and stool.

A decidedly modern flat-screen TV concealed behind faux book bindings.

The dining room's chinoiserie paper by Gracie echoes the Lee Jofa damask toile on the wing chair.

An outdoor dining table amid greenery.

OPPOSITE: Biggs painted the kitchen cabinets with a rubbed finish of black over Chinese blue, limned in gold.







A bluestone slab supported on two cast-iron urns serves as a table in the outdoor dining area. Landscape designer Halsted Welles filled an assortment of planters with ivy, boxwood, lobelia, and hydrangea; potted clump birch trees provide shade.




Versailles floor and a black marble mantel—from France via New Orleans—and black trim bring up what Friederike calls “the question of black.” She makes lavish use of the darkest color throughout the apartment, even in the now entirely ebony-hued kitchen. (A serious cook and hostess, she went so far as to special-order a black Le Creuset Dutch oven.) All the black, says Sweeney, “disguises edges and makes spaces mysterious,” while mirrors on multiple surfaces “bounce the daylight around.”

For Jeremy Biggs, an investment manager, the most important room in the apartment is his mahogany-paneled library, with an inscription on the ceiling adapted from a letter Thomas Jefferson wrote to John Adams in 1815: “I cannot live without my books.” Like the living room, the library has French doors leading to the terrace. When the weather is warm, Jeremy reads outside in the early mornings and the evenings.

Friederike chose landscape architect Halsted Welles to design the terraces after seeing the

impressive job he had done for a friend. Welles selected bluestone for paving, exterior wall surfaces, and even some planters, believing that the use of a few simple materials enhances a sense of space. He worked with the architectural elements of the site, lining one side of a brick arch with ivy and ferns and varying the heights of grasses, shrubs, and trees. About those trees: Welles had several of them hoisted by crane off the terraces of the previous Biggs apartment 20 blocks north, trucked down the avenue, and then hauled up to the new terraces, also by crane. Amid the Japanese maples, Kousa dogwoods, weeping birches, espaliered apple trees, old roses, and climbing hydrangeas, Friederike then placed furniture, cushions, and awnings—in handsome black, of course. The effect is spectacular: rich greens during the day, and the incandescent white of subtly lit flowers after dark. And surrounding it all is the Manhattan skyline, with its other gracious gardens in the air. □

ABOVE: In her master bath, Biggs worked with Sweeney to maximize the room's storage capabilities, then used a Scalamantré wallpaper to match the company's silks in the adjoining bedroom; chinoiserie shelving displays porcelain.



Friederike laughs about the abundance of objects. "You could clear off all the surfaces, and six months later they would be re-covered."

Generous doses of black—in the Stark carpet, the lacquer bed by Rose Tarlow Melrose House, and the foreground furnishings—add a confident edge to the pale-blue master bedroom. Biggs selected a Scalamandré silk printed with flowers and birds for shades, seating, and bed pillows. The same fabric in pink on a tiny stool acts as an exclamation mark.