

A PERFECT GEM

When a Palm Beach couple transform their New York pied-à-terre, they entrust Daniel Romualdez to craft a dazzling jewel box in the sky.



A pair of custom Eve Kaplan mirrors from Gerald Bland flanks the entrance to the dining room. The Louis XVI benches have seats in a John Boyd Textiles fabric. Walls in Soft Chamois and trim in White Dove, Benjamin Moore. The custom dining table has a Gracie top and a base by Walnlands. Vintage Frances Elkins chairs, Liz O'Brien. Custom chandelier, Philippe Anthonioz. 1970s French sconces, Galerie Lafon-Vosseler. Rug, Cogolin. Artwork, Enoc Perez.

INTERIOR DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE BY DANIEL ROMUALDEZ
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“His work is never predictable and eschews trendiness,” says the homeowner of her architect and interior designer, Daniel Romualdez. “He also has impeccable taste.”



ABOVE: Paneled walls in shades of white enhance the living room's gracious proportions. Custom sofa in a Lee Jofa velvet with trims by Samuel & Sons and Cowtan & Tout. Custom cocktail table, Tom Thomas Gallery. Lamp in foreground, Christopher Spitzmiller. Artwork over sofa, Pat Steir. **OPPOSITE:** Custom settees in a Rose Cumming silk satin. Cocktail table, Garrison Rousseau. Sconces, Lucca Home. Artwork over mantel, Heinz Mack.

Dramatic statements—a graphic floor, contemporary artworks, a tiger-patterned carpet—abound. In the entry hall, the custom console is from Hollywood at Home. Louis XVI chairs in a Colefax and Fowler fabric. **OPPOSITE:** The study's vintage Billy Baldwin slipper chairs are in a Zimmer + Rohde fabric. Carpet, Patterson Flynn Martin. Artwork, Conrad Marca-Relli.



WHEN ARCHITECT AND INTERIOR DESIGNER Daniel Romualdez takes on a project, his first order of business is to envision his clients in the rooms. “I try to make sure that their style works nicely with the space,” he says, “so that they look their absolute best in it.”

This particular client—the wife of the couple who asked Romualdez to reconfigure and decorate their Manhattan pied-à-terre—dresses, he says, “in a very fashionable, modern way.” So even though the great majority of the furniture the designer was given to work with was antique, the goal was to create interiors that felt decidedly “modern, not stuffy.”

The couple were attracted to their Upper East Side roost by the generously proportioned living room and spectacular views. It took them four years to find the apartment, and when they did, their first call was to Romualdez. He had previously “updated” a room in their primary residence, a house in Palm Beach. “Daniel has a unique ability to adapt to his clients’ tastes so that their homes reflect *their* personal aesthetic, not his,” says the wife, herself a former decorator. “His work is never predictable and eschews trendiness. He also has impeccable taste.”

To freshen the apartment, Romualdez installed mirrored panels in the enlarged entry hall. He also painted the living room three shades of white and the dining room caramel. (“The color is new to my palette,”

says Romualdez, whose own New York City apartment uses lots of black and white. "But I always try to push myself past my comfort zone.")

Contemporary pieces, including a pair of Eve Kaplan mirrors and a gilded fiberglass copy of an Emilio Terry console, were mixed in with the older ones. "I love it when clients bring their own furniture to the table," Romualdez says. "It makes a home feel layered and interesting."

Such was the extent of his clients' love that Romualdez could engage in plenty of creative recycling. An existing sofa was enhanced by the addition of bullion fringe and placed in the study, which is paneled in cerused oak.

Embroidered trim from an old set of silk curtains was removed and added to new linen curtains for the living room. "The things she had were of great quality," he says. "I kept asking, 'Why can't we use this?' I think she was surprised. But when you save money on certain things, you can splurge on some really strong pieces."

In the end, Romualdez says, "it was a very easy, fun collaboration. She really liked everything. When that happens, I get a little bit nervous—I wonder, Are they paying attention?"

Not only was she paying attention, she was also inspired to buy the apartment's two major artworks, the Pat Steir canvas in the living room and the large Enoc Perez oil in the dining room. "I love that she went shopping after she saw the rooms," he says. And even though her husband was less involved in the process, he later sought out Romualdez at a party to tell him how much he loves the space. "That, to me, was the icing on the cake." □

ROOM: The master bedroom is in a palette of blue, cream, and taupe. Custom headboard and chair in a Rogers & Goffigon fabric. Louis XVI bench in a Le Crin stripe. Curtains in a Manuel Canovas fabric. Sconce, Robert Kime. Rug, Patterson Flynn Martin. For more details, see Sourcebook.

