

UPPER WEST SIDE

# BRILLIANT BROWNSTONE

DESIGNER GERALD C. TOLOMEO LAYERS COLOR, TEXTURE, AND INTRIGUING FORM TO TURN A SOMBER TOWNHOUSE INTERIOR INTO A GLAMOROUS PLACE FOR A PARTY



Jewel-like color, curvaceous furnishings, and textural finishes come together in a living room designed for entertaining. The iconic Arne Jacobsen Egg chair and ottoman, covered in purple-and-fuchsia wool tweed, partners with a custom sofa, done in orange cut velvet by Ashley Hicks for Lee Jofa. Together, they create a conversation group around the wood-burning fireplace. The apartment's walls are treated with a variety of textural finishes, including Venetian plaster, mirrored tile, and, above the hearth, Macassar ebony veneer.



THIS PAGE: For fun, the kitchen has an indoor grill, for efficiency, it forgoes a behemoth fridge in favor of under-the-counter cold storage drawers. Clean-lined lacquered cabinets with frosted-glass doors keep everything organized. OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: The custom barquette incorporates hidden filing drawers, which facilitate the dining area's transition from party place to work space. The ceiling, tiled in tangerine mosaic glass, adds sparkle. OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT: A resin lamp found at auction illuminates the stairwell leading from the ground floor to the owner's private bedroom below.



THE SEASON FOR MIXING AND MINGLING doesn't end on New Year's Eve in this Upper West Side apartment. "Jane Ann Genesi is a people person," says interior designer Gerald C. Tolomeo. "She is high-energy, full of fun, and always ready to have a party of any kind, any time of year." For that, Genesi—an entrepreneur who is the President and CEO of her own company—needed a Manhattan apartment that was close to all the action and conducive to free-spirited, spur-of-the-moment entertaining.

She found it, at least in part, in this one-bedroom duplex, situated on the ground and basement levels of an Upper West Side brownstone. The central location—within a quick commute to her home in Westchester and conveniently located to Manhattan-based colleagues and clients—made the brownstone the perfect place to conduct business by day and kick back by night. As is the case with many urban townhouses, however, the brownstone's innately dark interior was lacking in the kind of warmth Genesi hoped to convey.

"The brownstone is on a great block, and the building is terrific," says Tolomeo. "But the apartment itself was rectangular, boxy, and architecturally uncomplex." It did have certain planes that piqued Tolomeo's interest, though, and he used every one to its best advantage. Using an alternating array of rough and smooth materials, the designer covered every exposed surface—walls, floors, and ceilings—with surprising textures. Mirrored tile covers a wall in the main entry. Iridescent tangerine-colored glass tile creates a reflective surface on the entry-hall and dining-room ceilings. And, in the bedroom, walls are padded and upholstered in chamois-colored faux suede and paired with the ceiling's pewter-leaf paper to create a jewel-box effect.

"The rooms are filled with my favorite colors, brilliant jewel tones," says Genesi. "As beautiful as the apartment is by day, it is truly spectacular at night, when the light reflects off the ceilings, and all of the oranges and golds seem to glow." When guests are expected, Genesi lights hundreds of tinted-glass votives, to create a sense of magic. Textures and colors mix and mingle with ease—just like Genesi's guests. **SEE RESOURCES**

West Side sophistication meets 1940s Hollywood glamour in the basement-level bedroom, where the star attraction is a sinuous custom console built by cabinetmaker Glenn Van-Sickle, which serves as both vanity and storage piece. The iron-frame door (custom designed to match the originals upstairs) opens up to a staircase, lined with purple votives, that leads out the garden. On the ceiling, pewter-leaf paper creates a warm shimmer; walls are padded and upholstered in chamois-colored Ultrasuede for warmth. Linens embroidered in the apartment's signature orange and plum dress the bed, which has built-in drawers underneath, designed to keep this private sanctuary serenely free of clutter.

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