

ELLEDECOR®

CHIC
SUMMER
STYLE!

THE A-LIST

60 TOP TALENTS

INSIGHTS, IDEAS
& INSPIRING
HOMES FROM OUR FAVORITE
DESIGNERS



SENSATIONAL
OUTDOOR FURNITURE

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ELLE DECOR

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Burger Raspberry (left) by Takashi Tomiyoka. The corner of the dining room of a Manhattan apartment designed by Robert Couturier. A children's bedroom in Marfa, Texas.

TALENT SHOW

What's impressive about the best American designers—and I think we've got a pretty good lineup of them in our A-List, beginning on page 99—is that they all have a signature style, and yet they never cease to exceed our expectations. Whenever we see recent projects by any of these designers, we always experience a moment of surprise and delight. None of them is confined to a particular look—rather, each uses his or her look as a springboard to something entirely new.

That's why Stephen Sills didn't hesitate to revamp a stunning apartment he had created for a friend 20 years ago. Robert Couturier, who is known for his over-the-top mix of vivid colors and bravura antiques, happily took on the assignment of creating a modern home in a Manhattan tower. And Steven Volpe ended up lovingly restoring a ramshackle country house that he had originally dismissed as a teardown. Whatever else you might say about the work of our A-List, it is never routine.

While we were finishing this issue we received the sad news of the death of Albert Hadley, whose designation as one of ELLE DECOR's Grand Masters no one would dispute. I first met Mr. Hadley many years ago, when I was a young writer assigned to do a story on his weekend house in Connecticut. Needless to say, I was intimidated. I didn't know what to expect of the abode of someone who had already achieved near-legendary status. Yet the place turned out to be a small cottage a 10-minute walk from the local train station. None of the rooms was large, yet all

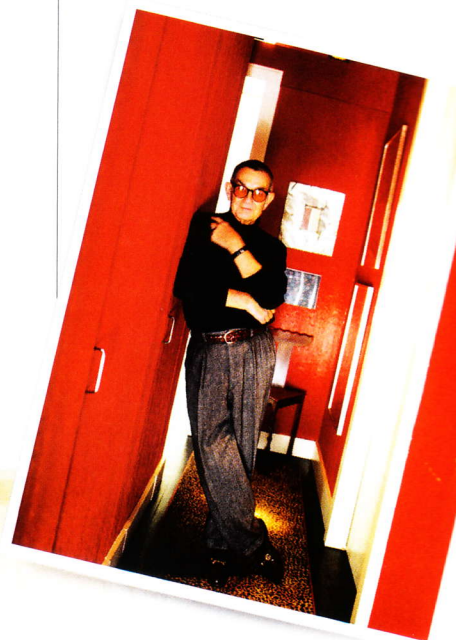


exhibited Mr. Hadley's signature flair. The floors of his basement office were painted shiny red, and the tiny backyard had been transformed into a perfect vision of serene green geometry.

He could not have been more gracious or patient. When I expressed my admiration, he demurred modestly. When I blurted out that I was surprised his home wasn't larger or grander, he replied simply, "Well, what more could I need?" I can't think of a better approach to design, or a clearer summation of what makes American style so great.

Michael Boodro

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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
Albert Hadley, in his Manhattan apartment. The New York City living room he designed for his friend Diana Quasha, photographed for ELLE DECOR in 2010. James Huniford and Evette Rios, coauthors of *Design on a Dime*, the festive spring party that benefits Housing Works.

Thank you to Baccarat
and Michael Aram
for the A-List award.



A-LIST

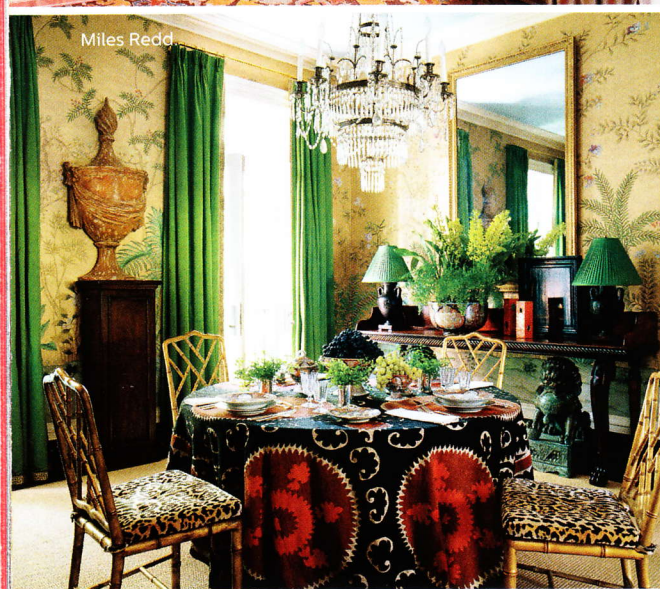
2012

ELLE DECOR'S A-LIST IS OUR **THIRD** ANNUAL SALUTE TO THE COUNTRY'S TOP TALENTS—THE DESIGNERS WHO CONTINUE TO EXCITE, INSPIRE, AND INTRIGUE US. PLUS, WE'RE PLEASED TO ADD 10 NEW MEMBERS WHOSE WORK WE'VE BEEN FOLLOWING WITH DELIGHT



Richard Keith Langham.

Bunny Williams.



Miles Redd.



Thomas O'Brien.



Muriel Brandolini.

THE ELLE DECOR A-LIST

THE DESIGNERS WHO INSPIRE US MOST

Bassam Fellows
Jeffrey Bilhuber
Alessandra Branca
Muriel Brandolini
Sheila Bridges
Darryl Carter
Eric Cohler
Robert Couturier
Mark Cunningham
Ernest de la Torre
Jamie Drake
Waldo Fernandez

Thom Filicia
Steven Gambrel
Victoria Hagan
Alexa Hampton
James Huniford
Kathryn M. Ireland
Jay Jeffers
Suzanne Kasler
David Kleinberg
Richard Keith Langham
Martyn Lawrence-Bullard
Jeffrey Alan Marks
McAlpine Booth & Ferrier
Richard Mishaan
Juan Montoya
Charlotte Moss
Joe Nanem
Thomas O'Brien
Alex Papachristidis

Miles Redd
Suzanne Rheinwein
Katie Ridder
Roman and Williams
Todd Alexander Romano
Daniel Romualdez
Shelton, Mindel & Associates
Stephen Sills
Michael S. Smith
Matthew Patrick Smyth
William Sofield
Robert Stilin
Madeline Stuart
Steven Volpe
Kelly Wearstler
Timothy Whealon
Bunny Williams
Vicente Wolf
Yabu Pushelberg

GRAND MASTERS 8 DECORATORS WHO HAVE DEFINED AMERICAN STYLE

Thomas Britt
Mario Buatta
David Easton
Mica Ertegun
Muriel Himes Gomez
William Hodgins
John Saladino
Rose Tarlow

ELLE DECOR Style



ALL-STAR LINEUP

A decorator at the top of his or her game knows just when to hold back—and when to go full throttle. The goal may be to soothe or dazzle, the place may be haute or humble, but a skillful designer is always completely engaged and in control. Every home is a unique challenge, the outcome is never predictable, yet you can't imagine it any other way.



In the living area of a Manhattan apartment designed by Robert Couturier, the custom-made sofa sits on a Corian base, the lamp is by Hervé Van der Straeten, and the bronze cocktail table is by Hubert le Gall; the Crochet chair is by Marcel Wanders, the marble Cumulus tables are by Joris Laarman, and a 1960s Paul Tuttle chair is upholstered in an Élitis velvet. See Resources.

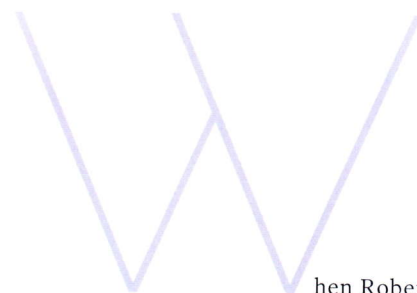
A Mod, Mod World

A clean, well-lighted space in a Manhattan tower gives Robert Couturier the chance to put a contemporary spin on his

TEXT BY TIM MCKEOUGH · PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON SCHMIDT · PRODUCED BY ANITA SARSIDI



trademark flair for luxury



When Robert Couturier began designing the interior of an apartment in a midtown Manhattan skyscraper, his client expressed one primary desire. "She wanted something ultracontemporary, because she had done everything else," Couturier says. The Polish businessman's wife had previously overseen the design of a number of the family's other homes in Europe. "They have incredibly beautiful houses," says Couturier. "They have one in Warsaw, another by a lake in the Polish countryside, a place in Geneva, a place in Sardinia, and a boat. Each reflects a different side of her personality."

But the client envisioned her Manhattan home as "the modern one," he says. A mutual friend put her in touch with Couturier. While the decorator is known as a master of mixing periods and styles, he was thrilled to push his work in a new direction. "Although what I usually do is very different from what she wanted, she recognized that I have a demanding eye and a knowledge of design," he says. "I always love and welcome a challenge. There is nothing more boring than repeating oneself over and over again." Couturier drew much of his inspiration from the personal style of the client herself. "There is something simple yet incredibly sophisticated about her that I felt immediately at ease with and that I wanted to translate into her home," he explains.

The client and her husband visit New York only occasionally, notes Couturier, and had one other wish. Their daughter is attending college in the U.S., and they use New York as a meeting place. The 4,500-square-foot space needed to incorporate both an appropriately chic apartment for the visiting parents and a separate suite for the daughter. Beyond those basic requirements, the client gave Couturier full creative license.

Stepping through the apartment's entrance, it's immediately apparent that Couturier has delivered.

A Laarman table, an Aqua Creations light fixture, and a marble sculpture by Pascal Haudressy in the dining area; a collage by César hangs above a pair of Poltrona Frau chairs. **FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** The living area screen is by Peter Lane, and the rug is by Rosemary Hallgarten. A Mattia Bonetti lamp beside a console by Aranda/Lasch in the dining area; the large painting is by Wojciech Fangor. In the entry, the painting above Nendo's Cabbage chair is by Henryk Stażewski, and the mirror is by Van der Straeten; the floors are bleached oak. See Resources.





with great zeal, on his client's request for a contemporary look. Pristine white walls, light wood flooring, and reflective surfaces set off a dramatic collection of cutting-edge art, before giving way to a wall of sunny windows overlooking Central Park and the Upper East Side. But the design isn't only about providing a singular, breathtaking moment. Making the most of the apartment's unconventional layout—its diagonal walls and corners that terminate at odd angles—Couturier designed an interior that slowly reveals itself, with frequent shifts in color, texture, and mood.

The main living space, which is defined by a skeletal floor-to-ceiling ceramic screen designed by Peter Lane, has the cool, open feel of a gallery. When Couturier first met his client, he recalls, "She was dressed all in white, with a blond bob and not one hair out of place." He wanted the apartment's public spaces to reflect her "very controlled look," he says. Of course, any decent gallery needs stunning works—in this case, it's a museum-worthy selection of contemporary furnishings, including limited-edition pieces by Aranda/Lasch, Joris Laarman,



The study's Alessandro Albrizzi desk is paired with a 1970s Brazilian chair, the custom-made daybed is upholstered in a Clarence House velvet, and the table is by Pouenat Ferronnier; the artwork is by Edward Krasinski, the curtains are of a laser-cut microsuede, and the rug is alpaca. **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP:** The master bedroom's walls are covered in a velvet by Sahco, and lamps by Mauro Fabbro flank a custom-made bed upholstered in a Rubelli velvet. The wall panels in the master bedroom's sitting area evoke the New York City skyline; a desk by Nicolas Aubagnac holds a Tamara de Lempicka drawing, the chair is by Archirivolto, and the floor lamp is by Philippe Hiquily. See Resources.





and Marcel Wanders. One could imagine a collector lovingly acquiring them over the years, but that was not the case here. “We found everything in two days in Paris and two days in New York,” says Couturier. “It was loads of fun, because she’s very decisive and very quick.”

The feel of the space changes dramatically upon entering the master bedroom. There, the materials and color palette create a cozy, cocoon-like environment. Walls are covered with pleated velvet. Furniture and accessories feature patinated metals, dark woods, and gold accents. Most striking is a series of doors and wall panels depicting the New York skyline, made from liquid metals and resins, which adds an Art Deco touch to the room.

Each of the other private rooms has a distinct personality. “In some projects, people don’t want that,” says Couturier. “They want them all to be the same. But I think this is more fun—especially when you have so many rooms.” The study, for instance, is grounded in black and white but enlivened with pops of mustard-yellow. Even the five bathrooms and two powder rooms cater to different moods, from cool and modern to playful and glamorous.

Couturier believes the apartment’s mix of furnishings is an ideal reflection of his client’s diverse interests and world travels. “She’s incredibly chic and elegant—when she visits, she comes with six Vuitton suitcases,” he says. “I think it’s rare that an apartment is such a perfect fit.” ■

