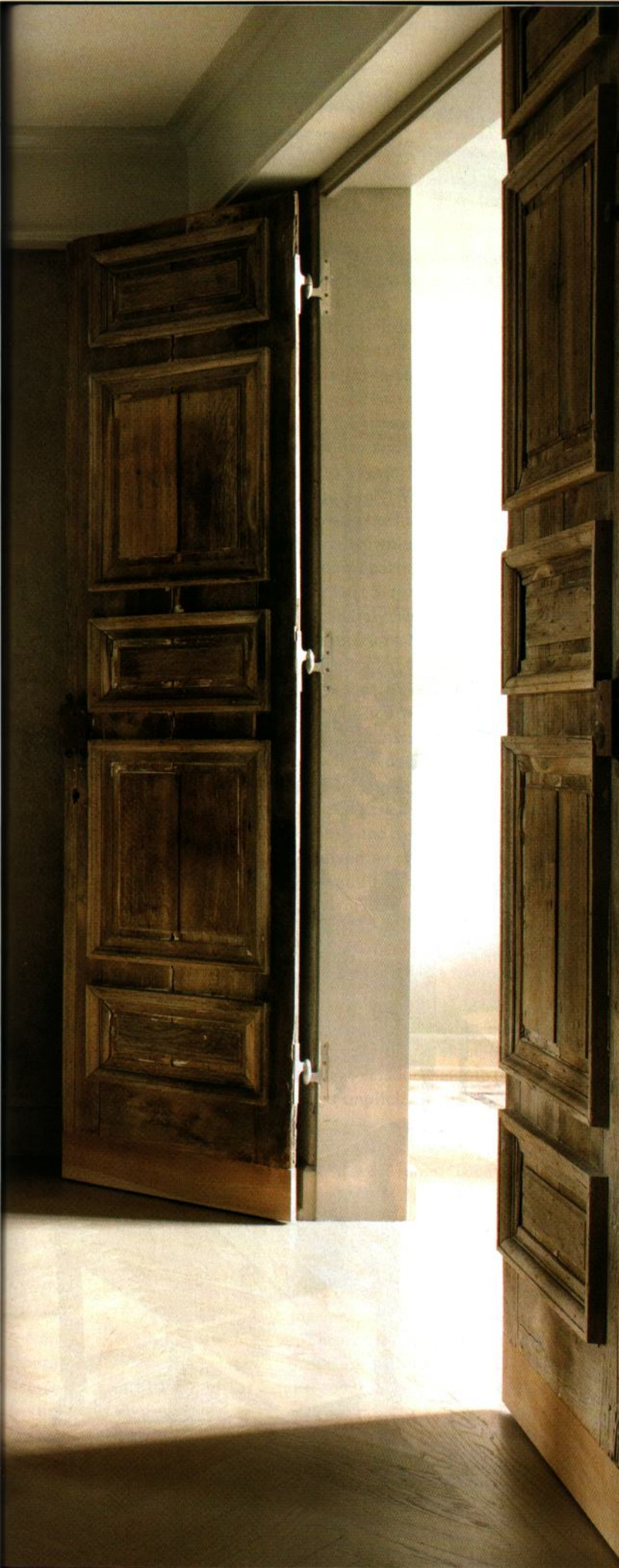


The foyer of Tina and Jeffrey Bolton's Manhattan apartment, which was designed by John Saladino. The table is by Dennis & Leen, the spoon-back chairs are by Saladino Furniture, and the portrait is by Ellen Emmet Rand; the oak doors are Louis XVI, and the walls are finished in scratch-coat plaster. See Resources.







## REPEAT PERFORMANCE

*After their kids move out, a couple once again call upon their favorite designer and old friend, John Saladino—this time to create their ultimate urban oasis*

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TEXT BY BARBARA KING  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM WALDRON  
STYLED BY JC GARCIA-LAVIN



The drawing room's antique fauteuil is from the clients' collection; the sofa, cocktail table, and other chairs are all by Saladino Furniture, the painting is by Fabio Rieti, and the rug is by Sacco Carpet. **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP:** In the dining room, the leather-covered chair and custom-made screen are by Saladino Furniture, the lithograph is by Willem de Kooning, and the walls are upholstered in a Knoll Textiles fabric. A screen covered in a Bart Halpern velvet, a Burton Silverman painting, and an antique table inherited from Jeffrey's mother in the drawing room. See Resources.





**TINA AND JEFFREY BOLTON** met renowned American decorator John Saladino 42 years ago, when they were weekend neighbors in Connecticut, introduced by a mutual friend. The Boltons were newlyweds, working on Broadway and in television—Tina a dancer, Jeffrey an actor and dancer who was just transitioning to the investment business. “When I met them they were a sweet couple very much in love,” says Saladino. “And they’re still a couple very much in love. You’d have to be to sleep in a double bed. It’s the first one they ever owned, and it goes with them wherever they go.”

Over the years, Saladino decorated the Boltons’ country house twice. “He made it warm, inviting, and casual,” Tina recalls. For years, their Manhattan home was a three-story, brick-walled Carnegie Hill townhouse where they raised two children. But with their daughter and son grown and gone, they were looking for something different, a little less informal. They were ready for a little glamour. “All of a sudden, we were a couple again,” says Tina. Whom else would they turn to, other than Saladino? “We’ve always loved what John does—the old-world artistry and the luxurious minimalism,” says Tina. “I told him, ‘It’s time for a grown-up apartment.’”

In 2006, the Boltons bought a seven-room apartment in a gracious, new building on New York’s Upper East Side. So trusting were they, that they actually went on vacation in Italy two years later when Saladino was ready to install their new interiors. Nonetheless, they weren’t prepared for the emotion that overtook them as soon as they walked in. “It took our breaths away,” says Tina. “We felt as if we were stepping into another time, another world. The atmosphere was dramatic and sensual, but it was also instantly calming.”

“A room is a failure if you’re not moved,” the designer explains. “I would like to think your blood pressure has gone up here, and then you have to pause in the entrance hall and observe. I have arrested you for a moment. Some people get very excited and then get quiet. Some get quiet right away. You have left the madding crowd of New York City and entered an environment of tranquillity, a walk-in still life.” He designed the entrance hall with walls of scratch-coat plaster and staggered doors of weathered wood, to suggest the outdoors and create a heightened contrast with the bright polish of the living room. “I’m preoccupied with juxtapositions,” Saladino says. “I like to put dark next to light, rough next to smooth, humble next to rare, and handmade next to technological.” Another preoccupation—or signature—is nuanced, elusive color. “They’re metamorphic colors that change according to the time of day—gray to celadon, beige to taupe,” the designer explains. “They’re always implicit, never explicit. I never do anything obvious.”

The simple furniture shapes and solid-color upholstery that Saladino believes to be timeless can be found in every room. “I don’t like a lot of curves—all that modern furniture that looks like a collection of marshmallows,” he says. “So much decorating today is in-your-face—the wow factor. I like holding back. I’m more interested in what you have out than in what you put in. These rooms have a lot to do with putting together disparate pieces while respecting the ways colors move across them, and also respecting, more than anything, scale.” Not that everything is evanescent. The designer never loses sight of practical considerations. One of the couple’s favorite rooms is Jeffrey’s office, which doubles as a guest room. The sprawling sofa is actually two adjacent twin beds on casters that can be swung around and pushed together, so that they can create a king-size bed or be used separately as singles.





In Jeffrey's office, which also serves as a guest room, the cocktail table and daybed are covered in a leather by Keleen, and the sofa is by Saladino Furniture, the prints are by artists of the Ashcan school, and the walls are covered with a wallpaper by M. Romanoff. **FACING PAGE:** In the master bedroom, the travertine-top nightstand is custom made, the bed has been with the owners since they were first married, the painting is by Bernardo Siciliano, the curtains are of a Larsen linen, and the carpet is by Sacco Carpet. See Resources.







Only a few pieces of furniture remain from the Boltons' previous home, including an antique table inherited from Jeffrey's mother that serves as the bar in the living room. But their ever-expanding collection of art stayed. "We started buying from flea markets when we really didn't have any money," says Tina. "We just bought what we could." They're particularly drawn to figurative art and to period pieces that reflect a sense of time and place, like WPA prints. Their latest obsession is glazed pottery. "We buy not for the name, but

simply for what we like, what turns us on at the moment," she adds. She rotates artworks as the mood strikes, although she hangs them sparingly. An empty wall, she thinks, has its own kind of beauty.

As for their sentimental old mahogany double bed, "I don't think it would have been John's choice to keep it," Tina acknowledges with a laugh. "But he let us bring ourselves and our personalities to the space. This is the story of who we are—the story of our lives as a couple. And, oh, do we feel grown-up." ■