

INTERIOR DESIGN[®]

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*ringing in
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CITYliving

Expansive glazing on the rear facade of the ground-up, 7,000-square-foot town house maximizes light and views, while automatic double shades maintain privacy in the four bedrooms on the third and fourth floors. Fencing is ipe. ➤



neighborhood gem

firms: workshop/apd; april bovet interior design
site: cobble hill, brooklyn



Clockwise from above: In the dining room, Eos chairs ring a custom concrete table beneath a Rich Brilliant Willing pendant fixture. White-oak built-ins backdrop an Antonio Citterio sofa and ottoman in the living room. An ebonized-oak screen and Belgian brick define the entry. The facade combines the same brick with steel-framed windows. GamFratesi stools pull up to the kitchen's granite-topped island.

Each of the five boroughs contains a constellation of neighborhoods with their own cultural quirks and pervading personalities. In Cobble Hill, ethnically diverse mom-and-pop shops and traditional brownstones entwine with a boho art scene, yielding an old-school yet forward-thinking Brooklyn vibe. It's here that Workshop/APD founding principal Andrew Kotchen was given the opportunity to nestle a unique piece of architecture between two 1900's town houses, at once putting into relief the district's dual natures.

"It's rare to get the chance to run an intelligent design process that isn't based in historical preservation," Kotchen says of the ground-up plan he conceived for his client, a married couple with two teenage children. After performing initial zoning studies, he and the WAPD team demolished the existing residence and inserted a modernist glass-and-steel town house, encompassing 7,000 square feet and four bedrooms across six floors. "We didn't set out to take up every inch of buildable square footage," Kotchen continues. "The focus was on creating comfortable, livable rooms." Leveraging ideas from past projects with this client, he has devised, in its "calming simplicity," an exemplar of the contemporary urban home.

The streamlined program begins with a triple-height entry atrium that references elements from the facade. A screen of ebonized-oak slats rises the full 31 feet and then crosses the ceiling, the orientations nodding to the exterior's vertical windows and horizontal Belgian bricks, which extend into the entry. Furthermore, the slat color links to the blackened steel framing those windows. It all functions as a sort of decompression chamber, providing a "gradual transition to and reveal of the interiors," Kotchen notes.

Beyond is the main living level, where the architect constructed volumes that flow and intersect seamlessly for maximum functionality. The kitchen is central, specially designed to support the client's love of cooking and entertaining. Flanking it are the dining and living rooms, and directly behind its generous island is a clear path to stairs leading down to an expansive terrace and lawn for casual outdoor gatherings. Surfaces are clad in brushed stainless steel or black granite for textural nuance and

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durability. Extensive white-oak built-ins provide storage in the living room and conceal it in the dining room and kitchen. “We approached the structure as a compositional exploration, using restraint to avoid over-embellishing,” Kotchen explains.

It also provided a neutral envelope to backdrop the cadences of daily family life. April Bovet Interior Design was brought on to infuse the home with a sophisticated palette that complements rather than competes with the architecture. “We integrated many of the client’s mid-century modern pieces,” April Bovet says, “but the new furnishings were chosen to act as a counterpoint to the house’s geometry.” In some cases, that meant rounded and soft, as seen in the plump midnight-blue GamFratesi kitchen stools and the living room’s comfy Antonio Citterio sofa upholstered in discreet gray canvas. Others channel the architecture more literally, such as the dining table’s twin concrete slabs, unified by a blackened-steel ribbon. “A moment of peace is provided through the continuity of the design,” she adds. That continuity continues in the main bedroom suite, which occupies nearly an entire floor, setback 8 feet to allow for a terrace. Kotchen lined



Clockwise from top left: Slabs of honed Pietra Cardosa surround the main bathroom. Nondirectional brushed stainless steel juxtaposes with the white oak of the kitchen’s custom cabinets. The custom screen spans the entry’s triple height and ceiling, from which antiqued bronze pendants hang down 5 to 18 feet. Carrie Crawford artwork and a bone-china pendant decorate the main bedroom.



From top: Outside the main bath’s shower are dual sinks and a Tom Dixon vanity stool. Bluestone slabs enclose the penthouse terrace’s hot tub. A vintage Jens Risom cocktail table stands on a Stephanie Odegard rug in the penthouse lounge.



its bathroom in gray Pietra Cardosa, while Bovet upholstered the bed’s headboard in a coordinating charcoal wool.

A flourish of fuchsia tones animates the penthouse lounge, which opens to a glorious terrace with hot tub. Even though it rises above its neighbors, the town house blends with the surroundings, drawing its power as much from its clarity and simplicity as from the panoramic views of historic rooftops and aging church spires. —Jennifer Fernandez

FROM FRONT RESTORATION HARDWARE: CHAIRS, TABLE (TERRACE), SOFA PILLOWS (LIVING ROOM), NIGHTSTAND (BEDROOM). **RICH BRILLIANT WILLING:** PENDANT FIXTURE (DINING ROOM). **OSO INDUSTRIES:** CUSTOM TABLE. **JERRY PAIR:** BANQUETTE UPHOLSTERY. **CARL HANSEN & SØN:** CHAIRS. **THROUGH SUITENY:** CHAIR FABRIC (DINING ROOM), STOOL UPHOLSTERY (KITCHEN). **VITRA:** SOFA, OTTOMAN (LIVING ROOM). **SOUDA:** CUSTOM TABLES. **TIBETANO:** CUSTOM RUG. **GUBI:** STOOLS (KITCHEN). **GALLEY:** SINK FITTINGS. **RANGECRAFT:** HOOD. **LACAVA:** TUB, TOWEL HOLDERS (BATHROOM). **CEA:** SHOWER FITTINGS, SINK FITTINGS. **TEAKWORKS:** CUSTOM MAT. **VISUAL COMFORT & CO.:** PENDANT FIXTURES (ENTRY). **ROOM & BOARD:** BED (BEDROOM). **ORIGINAL BTC:** PENDANT FIXTURE. **TOM DIXON:** STOOL (BATHROOM). **DIAMOND SPA:** HOT TUB (PENTHOUSE TERRACE). **MITCHELL GOLD + BOB WILLIAMS:** SOFA (LOUNGE). **THROUGH ABC CARPET & HOME:** CONSOLE. **THROUGHOUT FURNACE S.ANSELMO:** BRICK. **STONE SOURCE:** PIETRA CARDOSA, PAVERS. **DESIGNER DOORWARE:** HARDWARE. **RESAWN TIMBER CO.:** WOOD FLOORING. **BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.:** PAINT. **MBS CUSTOM MILLWORKING:** WOODWORK. **GUNN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE:** LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT. **CRAFT ENGINEERING STUDIO:** STRUCTURAL ENGINEER. **DANTONIO ENGINEERS:** MECHANICAL. **ZL ENGINEERING:** PLUMBING, ELECTRICAL. **GZA GEOENVIRONMENTAL:** CIVIL. **R.SUTTON & CO.:** GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

