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ART IN DESIGN



BROOKLYN
in
the
HOUSE

INTERIOR DESIGN: MATT BERMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY: DONNA DOTAN



To me, Brooklyn is the scale a city should be," says Matt Berman, founding principal of New York architecture and design firm Workshop/APD. He describes finding the perfect home there for himself, his husband, Jim, and their son, Owen, on "one terrible, rainy day." But the magic of the Park Slope neighborhood, with its vintage gaslights burning outside hundred-year-old park-adjacent brownstones, shone through. One of those brownstones had a For Sale sign in the window—a circa 1910 beauty with classical details and big bay windows. "It was carved up in crazy ways to accommodate a group of actors," Berman says. Despite a few reservations, and a few Batik room dividers, the couple bought the eclectic house.

"We kept and restored a lot of the interior details," says Berman, who saved original wood paneling, plaster ceiling medallions, newel posts and stair railings. Updates included completely reworking the kitchen with cabinets from Workshop/APD's collection for Aster Cucine; reclaiming upstairs space previously made into an apartment; introducing innovative wall treatments like vinyl tweed, black riveted metal and deep gray paint; and adding a blue paint stripe to the stairway that ties in with strokes of paint in the art, the teal lamp in the living room and the Y Living chairs in the dining room. "There's an intentional repetitive color language that subtly ties the spaces together," Berman says. "Each room in the house tells its own story through the art, furniture, lighting and accessories we've chosen together."

The living room is an inspired layering of pieces, including a leather Giovanni Erba sofa from ABC Carpet and Home, a Brianna Martray drawing and a Saarinen Womb chair and ottoman, the latter covered in Paul Smith's Exaggerated Plaid fabric for Maharam—it's an extremely well-dressed chair. The artwork above it, by an anonymous artist, depicts a detailed page of art history notes peppered with vivid black and red paint. "We chose unusual pieces from artisans we've found over the years, like the Asaf Weinbroom sconces in the living room, and the one-of-a-kind dining table by Cleveland Art that's made from a reclaimed machine base and wood top," Berman says. Wardell Milan's *Early Spring. The Charming Evening* completes the dining room.

For his work-from-home setup, Berman has relied on a simple clear acrylic desk and a Pierre Jeanneret side chair, designed for the modernist utopia Chandigarh, conceived by his cousin, Le Corbusier. "This little setup at the window—a slim acrylic desk that almost disappears in the room and a Jeanneret chair that looks great and is relatively comfortable thanks to the caning—is my primary workspace in these at-home times," he says. "I love it because it offers an incredible view, lots of natural light and it works nicely on camera, which is where I spend most of my time Zooming with my team, clients and consultants." He has been very busy here, working on projects in New York, Connecticut, Cape Cod, Aspen, Los Angeles, San Francisco and elsewhere; the One Hotel in Nashville, the new Nautilus restaurant in Boston, and a Moxy hotel in Banff; a yacht, and a growing product design practice, which includes a major collaboration with Arteriors. With so much going on, Berman is grateful for an inspiring home base with his family, a Park Slope haven with a restored gaslight glowing out front. "This project was our labor of love—our family home," he says. "Jim has an incredible sense of design and incredible taste, and this project is very much us. Our home is a representation of our life and the family we share." ■ Matt Berman, Workshop/APD, workshopapd.com —Erika Heet



