NEW YORK DESIGN AT HOME

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MICHAEL HAVERLAND

Michael Haverland and his partner, Philip Galanes, had lived across the street from their current apartment's building for more than a decade, and it had always been a favorite of Haverland's. Haverland used the classic Greenwich Village building designed by Helme and Corbett in 1925 as a case study when he taught housing design at Yale. He found the cross-section of the building, with alternating duplexes, to be a brilliant solution and admired the floor plans, proportions, and fenestration. At the time of its construction, the building bucked the trend of taking advantage of the new building code that allowed for ceiling heights to descend to eight feet and became known for retaining many of the characteristics of homes from that period, including large parlors with double-height ceilings.

The apartment did not require a gut renovation, but Haverland felt it needed some work. They added central air-conditioning, a new powder room on the first floor, and new finishes, window treatments, and millwork. They also did work in the kitchen and bath. They made every effort to retain the remaining original details, such as the steel staircase and plaster ceiling medallions. The double-height living room was also his biggest design challenge. He felt that the sixteen-foot-tall stark-white walls in the room distracted from the elegance of the vaulted ceiling. Many decorative options were explored, but none felt fresh or appropriate. The solution was already part of the space; it just needed Haverland's creativity to extrapolate it. He decided to cover the walls with circular and octagonal medallions made of computer-milled and lacquered MDF, which were abstracted versions of the barrel-vaulted ceiling's original circular and octagonal plaster ornamentation. Haverland's solution allows these existing decorative elements to trickle down the walls. As they do, they decrease in size and spacing, mediating the scale between the large volume and the objects in the room.

Haverland has infused every corner of this home with a playful quality that seems to stem from the joy of design and his joy in collecting it. He is not afraid of the whimsical, cheerful, or colorful for interiors, and his sustained interest in mid-century design often embraces the place where these two notions come together. Bright colors are used to underscore the pedigree of some of the upholstered furnishings, while white walls seem to frame and exalt each object. Haverland thus stained the wood floors a dark hue and left the walls a matte white; this combination created the ideal grounds for the diverse colors and textures of the furniture and objects he would fill the space with. Haverland understands the objects he has created and their installation here, and while he is still respectful of function, he always shows them of in the most positive lights.

The entry foyer introduces visitors to Haverland's interest in vintage furnishings, color, and whimsical decorations used with restraint. The Jean Royère mirror, with cheerful inlaid dried flowers, hanging above the Jacques Adnet entry table illustrates this point.

For the living room, Haverland created a series of circular and octagonal medallions that were inspired by the barrel-vaulted ceiling's existing plaster ornamentation. The new medallions decrease in size as they cascade down the walls. This helped mitigate the daunting sixteen-foot-high, stark-white walls.

Campbell's
Zuppa di
Pomodoro
SOUP

This space off the living room and kitchen was originally intended as a dining room, but because Haverland and his partner frequently dine out in New York, they decided to turn the intimate area into their TV room. A Madsen and Schubell "Pragh" lounge chair, circa 1950, occupies the far corner. The sofa, designed by Edward Wormley, and the collection of tables by George Nakashima are from the same period.

After searching for a fixture that could hang in the stairwell and illuminate both the upper landing and the foyer, Haverland decided to have one made. He purchased two Gino Sarfatti lamps and used the parts to create a long pendant.

The clothes, drawers, and shoe cubbies in the hallway fill the void created by the barrel vault of the living room ceiling below and the space created by the unique building section. Haverland reconfigured this area to function as a closet without cumbersome doors. While it mandates a certain level of tidiness, it is in ingenious use of otherwise awkward space.

In the bedroom, Haverland applied the same wall treatment used in the living room but modified the design. The detailing provides the otherwise bland space with abundant interest. Custom shutters were made out of lightweight, high-density foam and clad in wood so they look like conventional shutters but have superior acoustic properties.