

The New York Times

INSIDE

Starting Over, and Over, and Over

By PENELOPE GREEN

MANY domestic partnerships are unraveled by a renovation or, at the very least, sorely frayed by one. Yet, over 12 years and 3 huge projects, according to Michael Haverland, an architect, and Philip Galanes, a lawyer and novelist, their architectural and design collaborations have been the engine and the fuel of their life together.

Every home tells a story about its inhabitants; in the case of Mr. Haverland and Mr. Galanes, their environments have been particularly expository.

Their latest collaboration, just finished, is a one-bedroom floor-through in an 1890s town house on East 82nd Street. It speaks of the two men's very different tastes and styles, and of how they can be combined in striking ways.

The walls are the apartment's big gesture, covered in some places with a romantic, hummingbird-themed antique blue wallpaper chosen by Mr. Galanes; in others with a glossy white laser-cut lattice-work designed by Mr. Haverland, an of-the-moment Modernist; and in still others with wood panels laser-cut in a negative of the wallpaper pattern. The effect is a surrealist confection, a surface treatment that both embraces the idea of a 19th-century room and its decoration and plays havoc with it.

Their story starts with a table and a chance meeting: in 1991 Mr. Galanes was a young corporate lawyer new to the city. He was 28, fresh out of Yale Law School, and living in a one-bedroom apartment in a small 1920s building on the corner of East 10th Street and University Place that he bought for \$160,000. He filled it with random but useful things that he found in his mother's basement in Brattleboro, Vt., the town where he grew up, and at flea markets and tag sales in

Continued on Page 6



PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE BUCK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A COMBINATION THAT WORKS Philip Galanes, left, and Michael Haverland's latest collaboration, their third, showcases Mr. Haverland's of-the-moment architecture and Mr. Galanes's taste for the past.

8

IN THE GARDEN

What nurseries are ordering for spring.

By Anne Raver

2008



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**FROM SCRATCH**

This 19th-century apartment had been stripped of details, so Michael Haverland and Philip Galanes supplied their own. The oak paneling, top left, came from a salvage shop, as did the oak mantel, below. Laser-cut panels in the hall lead into the bedroom, center left, and the living room mixes a Cole & Son wallpaper with trellislike cutouts and paneling designed by Mr. Haverland, below and bottom left.



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From Page 1, This Section

New Haven.

A year or so later, he met a furniture dealer who was selling a small dining table, and all of a sudden, he said, "I had this feeling the two of us would go through life together."

He was talking about the table. It was designed by George Nakashima, and it cost \$4,000, much more than he could afford. But he bought it anyway.

And that was the start, Mr. Galanes said, of his looking at furniture and objects in a completely new way, "as things you might feel really strongly about," he said. "And it was not a bad moment to teach yourself because it was still a time before things got crazy."

In 1996 Mr. Galanes attended a political fund-raiser at the Princeton Club of New York. Bored by the party, he wandered off and found himself entangled in a tour of the club being given by Michael Haverland, then a 29-year-old architect working for Robert Venturi, whose firm had redone the place.

"What Michael was talking about was much more interesting than the cocktail party," Mr. Galanes said. Before long, Mr. Haverland had joined Mr. Galanes and the Nakashima table in the little apartment on East 10th Street.

It became the first habitat they designed together. Mr. Galanes was deeply immersed in early- and mid-20th-century furniture by this point, accumulating slowly but learning fast. Mr. Haverland was teaching full time at Yale's architecture school, coming home on weekends to work on the place.

By the end of the decade, as real estate prices began to soar in Manhattan, neighbors in the building were cashing out, and the two men, who felt they had seriously outgrown their one-bedroom, decided to join them.

They sold the apartment for \$500,000, and bought two one-bedrooms in the same building on the same line on the 10th and the 11th floors, for \$425,000 and \$480,000. By 2000, they had combined them in a renovation designed by Mr. Haverland that cost about \$1 million and included a floating staircase connecting the apartments.

It was a time of expansion, "the beginning of a dialogue about how we would like to live together," Mr. Galanes said. "The exciting part was finding a partner who was going to force me to think through every last detail, down to the old brass switch plates. Still, it was a tentative kind of expansion. The place always had a feel that it could be returned to its original state if we failed or lost heart."

(Once it was done, an article in The New York Times praised it as "a smooth synthesis of old and new that looks as if it should have always existed," free of the awkward arrangements of rooms plaguing many combined apartments.)

They filled their town house in the sky, as Mr. Galanes called it, with the furniture he had begun to collect: that first table, a Florence Knoll couch, a Prouvé bookcase, Hans Wegner chairs.

Mr. Galanes's career was complicated and absorbing: he joined Golden Books Family Entertainment in the mid-1990s, and presided over two bankruptcy reorganizations of the company, which was acquired by a partnership of Random House and Classic Media in 2001. He worked on a novel from 5 to 8 a.m. each day before work until he resigned in 2001 to pursue writing full time.

Mr. Haverland, meanwhile, stopped

Three renovations in 12 years, and they're still together.

teaching at Yale as his private practice grew, and designed for himself and Mr. Galanes an elegant and modest glass house in East Hampton, which took its inspiration from the Maison de Verre, the early-'30s Modernist icon in Paris.

By June 2004, Mr. Galanes's first novel, "Father's Day," had been published and their new house completed. It was again filled with 20th-century furniture he had chosen.

The project solidified the men's relationship but became a turning point for Mr. Galanes. Having poured "the experience of a lifetime" into the book, the idea of waking up surrounded by the same four walls on 10th Street within which he had summoned it became less and less appealing. "It called for some sort of drastic change," he said.

At the same time, Mr. Haverland's architectural practice swelled, with commercial and residential clients like Calvin Klein, David Salle, Tod's and Arthur

Elgort. And the house brought Mr. Galanes, by then an auction house pro and something of an expert on 20th-century furniture, something new too: design clients.

"It felt like it was possible for me to have a handful of private clients," Mr. Galanes said, meaning legal and design ones, "and also have time for writing, which is all I wanted to do."

In 2005 they sold the 10th Street duplex for \$2.65 million and moved to East Hampton. The move was a "kind of conservatism," Mr. Haverland said, a retrenching as they grew their businesses.

They sold nearly all the apartment's furniture at Sotheby's. "It was that moment when every hedge fund manager discovered Prouvé," Mr. Galanes said. The Nakashima table alone went for \$30,000.

The 82nd Street apartment is a fresh start in a new neighborhood. In it, you can see Mr. Galanes's increasingly refined taste in 20th-century furniture and Mr. Haverland's evolving interest in combining cutting-edge technologies with period details.

When they bought the apartment, for \$1.3 million over a year ago, the whole building had been stripped of its surface flourishes inside and out, in a series of late-20th-century renovations — which

is not to say it presented them with a blank interior.

There were dark, built-in cabinets throughout, peach walls and, in the tiny kitchen, a hulking Viking stove, a Sub-Zero refrigerator and pink granite counters, which Mr. Haverland, who becomes irritated by expensive and ill-fitting appliances and other status accoutrements, had removed.

There are all sorts of neat tricks designed into the place. The laser-cut wood panels that echo the living room's antique wallpaper run along a wide center hall and turn into the bedroom, where they conceal a closet that houses an extension ladder. "If you live in a house like this, you need a ladder to change a light bulb," Mr. Haverland said, pointing to the 11-foot ceilings.

Hidden behind panels in the hall are the bathroom and the galley kitchen, which Mr. Haverland sheathed in a gray porcelain enamel, the kind used for whiteboards. "I wanted it to look like Halston's bar," he said. (The ceramic pulls on the cabinets cost 99 cents at Home Depot.)

Last week the kitchen was empty except for two white dog bowls on the floor, which had been cleaned out by Chicco, a 3-year-old miniature red poodle.

"There's no use pretending the kitchen is anything more than it is," said Mr. Galanes, who, like Mr. Haverland, is not much of a cook.

Mr. Galanes's new novel, "Emma's Table," will be published in August by HarperCollins. Its plot centers on a Nakashima table at auction, and the underhanded behavior it induces, most particularly in a character named Emma, a domestic diva and brand name clearly based on the post-prison Martha Stewart.

"I wanted to come up with a table I could see someone acting really badly for," said Mr. Galanes, who remembered his own strong feelings for his first fine piece of furniture. "In a weird reversal," he said recently, explaining how age loosens one's grip on the strong feelings of youth, "it was extremely easy to sell, though I'd always vowed I'd be carried out on it, feet first."

TAKE 1, TAKE 2

A large 10th Street duplex, right, started the couple's long-running collaboration in life and design. Their East Hampton glass house, far right, represented true commitment.

2000



2004



LEFT, ANTOINE BOOZ; RIGHT, CHRIS BAUSCH