

FULL CIRCLE

A Tribeca penthouse with 360-degree views counteracts the “fishbowl” effect with fine art, natural materials, and a little help from designer Julie Hillman

INTERIOR DESIGN JULIE HILLMAN

TEXT SALLIE BRADY

PHOTOGRAPHY ELIZABETH FELICELLA



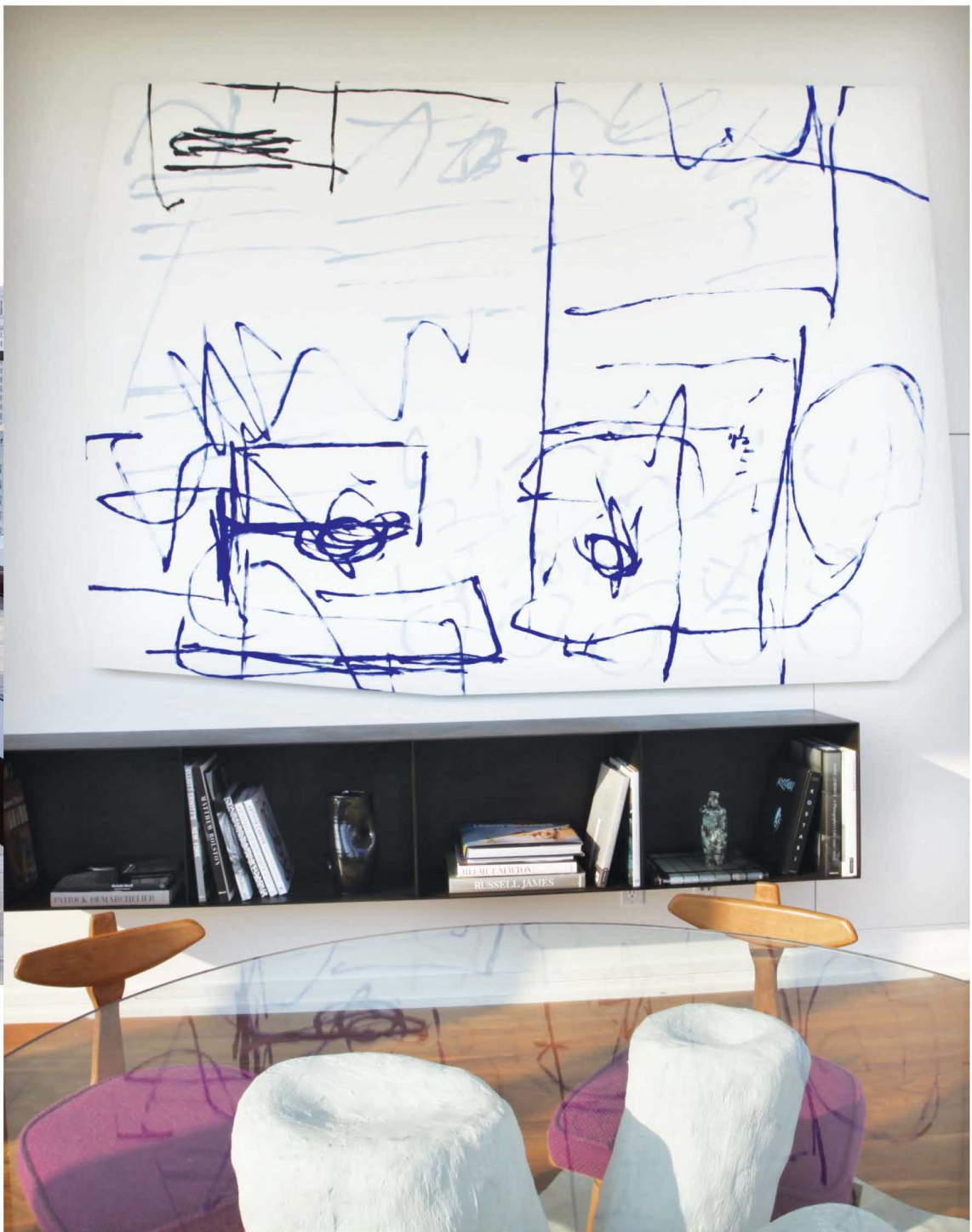


CREATING ATMOSPHERE

A 14-foot linen sofa partners with ottomans covered in elephant suede from Dualoy and a Nakashima table from Sebastian + Barquet. Wool and alpaca rug, The Rug Company.

Throw, Alta Pampa. Sabatini silver vase. Ceramic vase by Gilbert Valentin, Les Archanges.

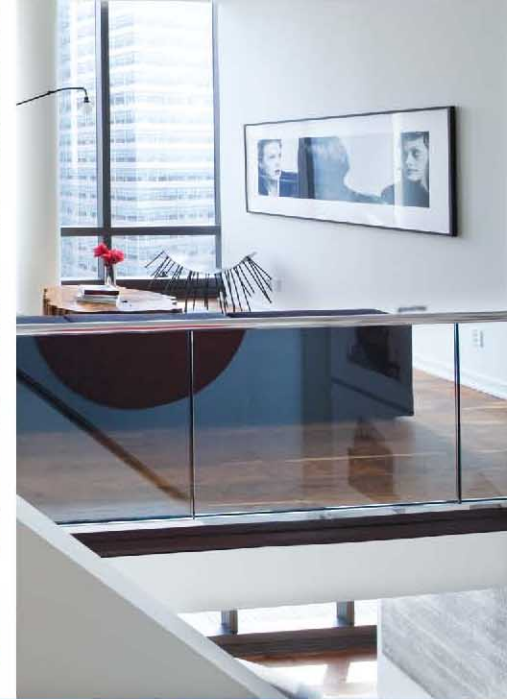




THE BEST OF EVERYTHING

Opposite, top: The living room flows into a library, and then a study. Opposite, bottom: *Accademia Firenze 1*, a photograph by Candida Höfer, from Sonnabend Gallery. The glass Pierre Paulin table lights up. Antique Moroccan wool rug, F.J. Hakimian. Vintage Vladimir Kagan sofa reupholstered in gray. Above: The library's Valentine Schlegel table is within reach of a cantilevered steel bookshelf of Hillman's design. *Museum 52*, by Stefan Sandner, hangs above it. Right: Willy Rizzo chairs in Dualoy leather anchor the South-facing sitting room.





BALANCING HIGH & LOW

Above, left: French cerused-oak chairs tuck under the resin-base table's glass top. Above, right: In the second-floor family room, a Prouvé Jib lamp hangs over a velvet sofa. Art stool, Howard Meiser. This image: Pottery Barn chairs surround a Robert Kuo lacquered table outdoors.

WE'VE ALL EXPERIENCED THE FEELING OF "LIVING IN A FISHBOWL." BUT FOR the lucky owners of this light-filled, 4,518-square-foot Tribeca penthouse with 360-degree windows and 2,000 square feet of wraparound porches, the idiom was reality. And for designer Julie Hillman, the penthouse presented a challenge. When asked to carve out a comfortable living space in a four-bedroom duplex with full-length windows and 12-foot-4-inch ceilings in a glittering, new high-rise, she knew exactly what her primary obstacle would be: "You're surrounded by concrete and glass," says Hillman. "You feel all of these downtown buildings coming in at you."

To balance that effect, the designer needed to create rooms that were warm and soothing—this in a quirky layout made up of long, rectangular spaces with odd angles. On the first floor, she divided the floor plan into

a free-flowing living room, library, and sitting room. Wherever possible, Hillman used natural materials: hardwoods, marble, hides, leathers, suedes, wicker, woven rope, wools, and linens. Furniture that she designed or sourced was plush, almost decadently luxurious, with many vintage mid-century pieces in the mix. Deciding the apartment needed multiple resting places for the eye—beyond the view—Hillman hired Amy Mestel, an art consultant with Barbara Balkin. Together, Hillman and Mestel integrated contemporary paintings, prints, and photography; important ceramics; silver; and tribal art into the rooms.

Not surprisingly, once it was put together, the penthouse's initial design drawback ended up being its strength: "It's showy and slightly edgy, but there's a calmness," says Hillman. "You can live here." — See Resources.