



# BRAVE new LOFT

Contemporary photography and surreal objects  
take a young collectors' loft a giant leap forward



**FIRST IMPRESSIONS CAN MISLEAD.** "THIS IS not going to be a match," designer Julie Hillman thought to herself, upon meeting two potential clients in their three-bedroom, 3,000-square-foot Tribeca loft. "They were young, just out of college, and I love buying great pieces and collecting furniture. I thought they wouldn't understand my aesthetic." Surprise, surprise: Within minutes of showing them her portfolio, "I realized they were perfect. We threw out everything they had and started from scratch."

Within the spare, white-painted architecture, Hillman established a series of contrasts: Between the huge living/dining room and its few well-chosen furnishings; between the luxury of the cashmere-covered sofa ("as impractical as it gets") and the rusticity of the teak-plank coffee table; between such strongly geometric pieces as the sixties-vintage spherical Lucite chair and organic objects like hand-carved Brazilian totems; between the master bedroom's layered natural fabrics and its cluster of blue ceramic eggs.

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An "Egg" chair by Christian Daninos, a B+B Italia sofa, and an ottoman of Julie Hillman's own design anchor the vast living room. The photograph is by Vanessa Beecroft; Robert Bonfil designed the circa 1950 black ceramic vase.





Opposite: Beside the living room's leather daybed, designed by Hillman, cut amaryllis fill a Sabattini vase positioned atop a bronze table by Hervé Van der Straeten. Above: Raw-linen drapes are lined with a mustard-colored satin that's visible only from the banquette. Right: Vanessa Beecroft's *Black Madonna with Twins* commands the foyer.





Candida Höfer's photo mural of the Palais Garnier provides a theatrical backdrop for Christian Liaigre's dining table and Ingo Maurer's monumental Pierre Ou Paul chandelier.

An André Masson ceramic, Tommi Parzinger console, and a starburst wall fixture arrest the eye.  
Inset: A Fontana Arte pendant illuminates the kitchen.





Crowning this high-key mix is a small but remarkable photography collection, mostly large-format, strongly graphic images, some by major figures, selected by Hillman and her clients and expressive, the designer says, of the couple's clear, focused, and passionate nature. "They see something they love and go for it."

The outcome is anything but your typical "first apartment after school"—though it is put to a distinctly post-collegiate use: "They entertain like crazy," Hillman says. Indeed, the designer covered the radiators with "really long window seats" to accommodate the traffic. Still, no one's complaining. "Their friends love it there," she observes. "They say it's like going to a spa for the day." ~ See Resources.

**Landscapes dominate the master suite: a blue triptych by Sean Dack; Elger Esser's *Toscana 2002* (opposite page); and (left) Lawrence Beck's *Cascadilla Gorge VII 2005*. Hillman evoked a "very Zen" bedroom with a white-painted floor, fur rug, and cozy blanket from Alta Pampa, London, atop the platform bed. Blue ceramic orbs by Carolyn Ottmers inject a touch of the surreal.**



