

The image is a composite. The top half features a vibrant night-time city skyline, likely Chicago, with numerous skyscrapers illuminated in various colors like blue, green, and red. The bottom half shows the interior of a modern apartment. It has a curved ceiling with recessed lighting, large floor-to-ceiling windows that offer a view of the city, and contemporary furniture including a light-colored sofa and a white spherical floor lamp.

view from the top

GRAND APARTMENT LIVING

edited by Janelle McCulloch

duplex drama

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New York, New York, USA
Foley & Cox

There is something about the words 'New York penthouse' that makes you think of impeccably decorated abodes: the Cartier mansion, or the former home of Lady Fairfax in the Pierre Hotel, or the penthouse of penthouses—the triplex owned by William Parish in the film *Meet Joe Black*. For some reason, the words 'penthouse' and 'impeccable design' just go together, perhaps because the very mention of the former always inspires the latter.

For this reason, when it came to decorating a duplex penthouse on the city's Upper East Side with a spectacular terrace and a view over Carl Schurz Park, designers Mary Cox and Michael Foley of design firm Foley & Cox knew they had their work cut out for them. Especially when the terrace was used each year for lavish Memorial Day parties to kick off the summer season. To make matters more challenging, the owner and her family had lived in Malibu for years and were accustomed to brighter environments. The penthouse needed to be visually rich but it also needed to be light-filled and luminous, without being too LA.

Nevertheless, Cox and Foley weren't deterred. The pair is experienced in the penthouse look, having launched an interiors division for Ralph Lauren before starting their own business in 2002. They are adept at doing sophisticated but understated designs for over-the-top spaces.

With this duplex, they already had a head start in that the bones of the apartment were promising, and the scale and proportion of the rooms were right. They simply added a few subtle architectural embellishments, such as a new mantelpiece that emphasized the Art Deco design of the exterior, and a ziggurat detail in the ceiling. And then they set about 'dressing' the interior.

To create more shimmer and shine inside, not to mention a Hollywood-sized dose of glamor, Foley & Cox added lustrous materials, fabrics, and finishes that reflected the light. The old palette of yellow, gold, and red was done away with

and in its place a new, soothing neutral color scheme of silvers, beiges, whites, mushrooms, and platinums was introduced, which both opened up the interior and set the scene for the apartment's stylish new life. A glass chandelier was hung from the dining room ceiling, over the 1930s dining table, which immediately gave the space life, while wooden floors replaced carpeting, and zebra-print chairs in the living room provided a further wow-factor. On the terrace, chairs upholstered in platinum-colored cushions gave this already spectacular space a rich edge, while oyster-and-cream striped sofas beside the fireplace and a sumptuous amount of pannacotta-toned luxury in the bedroom, from vanilla walls to ice cream-white bed linen, created restful spaces high above the din of Manhattan.

While successfully creating a gorgeously glamorous, and fittingly luxurious penthouse space, the designers had to be careful that the new interior didn't interfere with the owner's collection of large-scale photography, which they did by keeping each of the rooms extremely 'composed.' Every piece, from furniture to fittings, was chosen with care, and rooms were pared down to the most beautiful essentials.

Now, apartment, artwork and interior meld together as one. It is a penthouse that has been cleverly dressed and accessorized, and the result is a beautifully turned-out space fit for both living and entertaining in style.



Photography: Nathan Kinkman



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