

# MANHATTAN

## DESIGNERS & DWELLINGS

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## THE VERTICAL LIMIT

When a prominent art dealer and his wife needed their five-story Carnegie Hill townhouse completely reimagined, architect Francis D'Haene provided the vision.

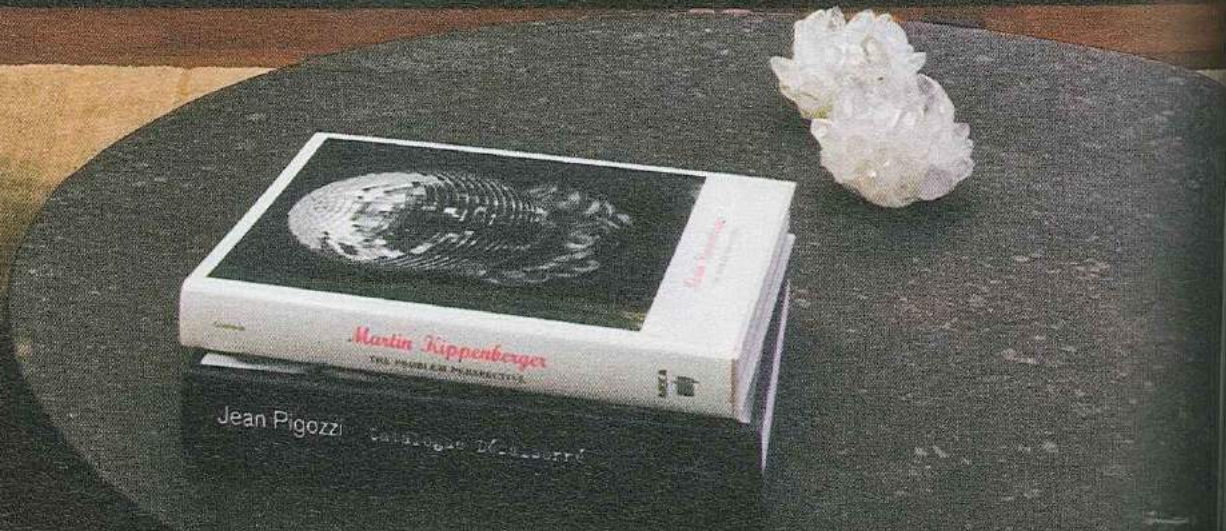
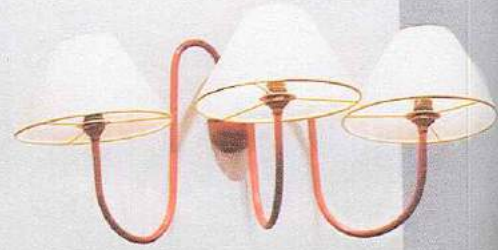
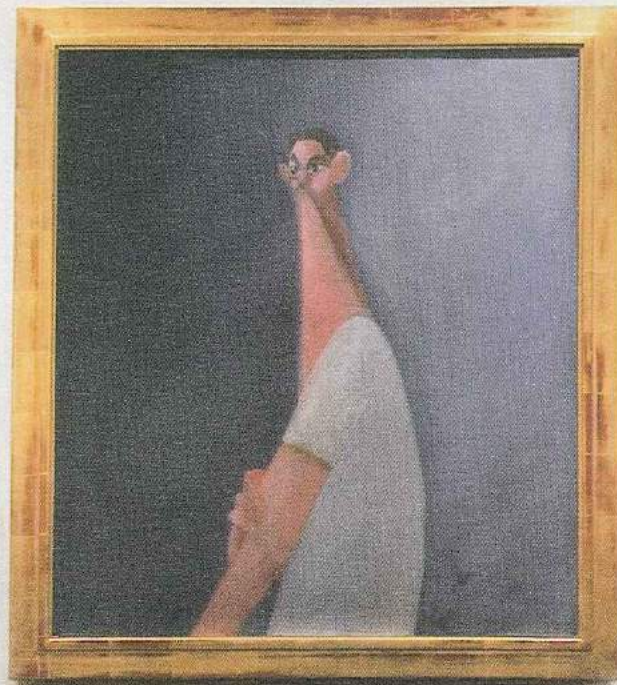
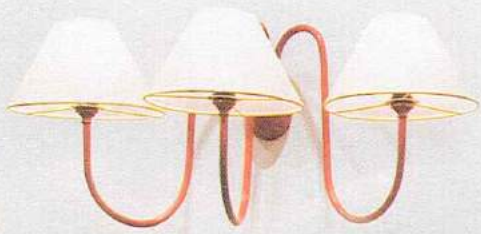
| By Melissa Feldman | Photography by Gregory Holm |

### ◀ LIBRARY

"I like paneling—it brings warmth, and it's appropriate," says architect Francis D'Haene, referring to the rosewood cladding. The Jean Royère wall sconce was purchased at auction, while the recessed lights are from Nulux, a supplier to art museums and galleries.

What do you get when a Belgian architect is hired to rebuild a Scandinavian art dealer's 1895 townhome? A fantastically chic residence that multitasks as party space, gallery and family retreat. The 4,500-square-foot dwelling is meticulously outfitted with of-the-moment collectible art, quaint curiosities and coveted furniture pieces by design icons including Jean Royère, George Nakashima and Serge Mouille. Francis D'Haene, who studied architecture in Brussels before heading to New York, launched D'Apostrophe Design in 1996, and quickly began catering to a clique of art-world professionals with impeccable style and sizable bank accounts (dealer Per Skarstedt was an early devotee). But the main benefit to working with creative types is that everyone starts on the same page: "I don't need to educate my clients," says D'Haene. "Whatever canvas we create, the end result is always nice because of their taste."

The ground-up renovation of the Upper East Side abode took two years to complete and required that every pipe, plank and wall be ripped out. In their place went sumptuous finishes such as rosewood, Brazilian walnut and French Pompignan limestone. The owners' initial collection of objets d'art boasted a Jean Prouvé desk flanked by two Mouille lamps and Royère's Ours Polaire sofa from 1952. "When we make a new home, the client wants to live with his collection, interact with



*Martin Kippenberger*  
THE PROBLEM OF REALITY  
Jean Pigozzi *catalogue raisonné*

#### ON COLLECTING

"We prefer not to use vitrines or put things behind glass," says D'Haene. "Depending on what the collection is, I encourage people to live with it." In this house that means art, music, guitars, minerals, corals and skulls that the client discovers in places ranging from Deyrolle in Paris to little-known sources in St. Barth's.



#### MEDIA ROOM

"We wanted the media room to be family oriented. Smaller pictures and the sheepskin rug add to the coziness," says D'Haene. (The owner has a weakness for animal skins, which are scattered throughout the house.)

#### THE ARCHITECT

After moving from a Soho loft, which followed a horizontal plan, the owners required a different approach for the townhouse. In planning the floors, D'Haene focused on a hierarchy that was geared to living up and down, with kitchen and dining area on the first floor so that privacy extended up through to the master suite on the fifth floor.



it, change it," says D'Haene, discussing the process of managing accumulation. Recent additions to the living room include a work by artist du jour George Condo and a 1950s Pierre Jeanneret Juge armchair upholstered in hide. The ground floor was retrofitted with a sleek kitchen storage system milled from teak. Textiles, including all draperies, were custom-made, while contemporary flourishes like the Falklands pendant light by Italian designer Bruno Munari hanging in the dining area and a lamp by Brooklyn-based David Weeks in the master bath adhere to the idea of acquiring design with a pedigree. And lest he be accused of shortsightedness, D'Haene allocated plenty of the basement for storage should his client keep amassing at a prodigious rate.



◀ KITCHEN AND STORAGE

Parties happen on the ground floor. Food gets laid out on the kitchen island, and everyone gathers and then circulates. The kitchen also has an enormous storage capacity. "That is always a concern," says D'Haene. "We do an extensive inventory of what people have: art, clothes, shoes, kitchen, everything. We photograph and measure, and then we try to give everything a new space."

◀ STAIRCASE

One of the few remaining original interior details is the 100-year-old staircase. "It gives a certain character," says D'Haene.

▲ LIVING ROOM

For art dealers and collectors, it's a matter of blending the interior with an eclectic art collection. "The work we did here is modern and contemporary, but still warm and not minimal," says D'Haene.

▶ DINING ROOM

The upstairs parlor floor was shortened to make way for a double-height ceiling in the ground floor dining area, where Hans Wegner's Wishbone chairs encircle an e15 Bigfoot table. In the spring and summer, dining extends to the garden through folding double doors.

