

TOWN & COUNTRY

FEBRUARY 2019

ANNE
HATHAWAY'S
2019
LIFE
RESOLUTIONS

IS EXERCISE
MAKING YOU
FAT?

LET'S ALL
JUST MOVE TO
NEW
ZEALAND

ETIQUETTE
FOR THE NEW
POT
ELITE

MOMMY,
ARE WE
RICH?

THE RIGHT WAY TO
TALK TO YOUR KIDS
ABOUT MONEY

THIS OLD

A modern living room interior. A curved beige sofa is positioned against a wall with large windows. A large abstract painting with blue and black geometric shapes hangs on the wall. A glass coffee table with a black metal base holds a blue bowl, a small sculpture, and other decorative items. A modern chandelier hangs from the ceiling. A tall black floor lamp stands next to the sofa.

Design's PRINCE CHARMING breathes new life into some old bones, proving that a historical mansion doesn't have to be a period piece.

By Olivia Martin Photographs by Rishad Mistri Produced by Cynthia Frank

HOUSE?

DRAMATIC ENTRANCE

Jean-Louis Deniot conceived the entry as an amalgam of eras anchored by Italian Midcentury chairs, a French Louis XV console, and Melange sconces by Kelly Wearstler. Custom furniture by Deniot in the living room (left) is paired with a coffee table by Michel Mangematin and a Volubile chandelier by Hervé Van der Straeten.



Behind the stately front door of a classic Upper East Side townhouse, a little black spaniel named Winnie skitters across terrazzo floors. Like a well-trained uptown hostess, she is surveying the premises before a visit from *T&C*, and she is pleased with her view: fluted walls, a mirrored foyer, a marvelous brass staircase ripe for a regal entrance, hers or her masters'.

When they moved in a few years ago, the couple—she a fashion and beauty executive, he a financier from a New York family with a proud lineage—found a dignified grande dame dating from 1899. They enlisted the help of French architect and interior designer Jean-Louis Deniot to modernize the four-story, 20-room historical treasure and turn it into a home fit for kids running around, not to mention Winnie, and entertaining.

"We demolished literally everything except for the façade, which was landmarked. You could see through the entire house from here," Deniot says as he looks out from the entrance hall. He took particular care to devise a floor plan that put a premium on high ceilings and pulled natural light into the heart of the building.

The design world darling is well known for his deft handling of historic properties. At 21, Deniot was managing restoration and renovation projects while still attending the prestigious design and architecture school Ecole Camondo in Paris; he started his own firm four years later. He has since received commissions from places as far-flung as Hong Kong and Los Angeles, where he is opening his newest office. Some of his more notable projects include a 30,000-square-foot palace in New Delhi, a 57-foot tower in Miami's Biscayne Bay, the interior of a private Falcon 2000 jet, and the recently opened Hôtel Nolinski in Paris.

The debonair 44-year-old had previously worked with the owners of the New York townhouse on their first apartment, on Fifth Avenue; for the second collaboration they gave Deniot carte blanche. "When the clients trust you, they know you are making the right decisions for them. Ironically, several suggestions they gave me for the first apartment—which I didn't end up doing—I did here," he says.

Working within the historically protected façade meant the windows had to remain unscathed, though in the back he framed them in metal for a more industrial look. Throughout, the designer rebuilt the rooms to be larger and more open, and he paired his architectural maneuvers with custom furnishings, many of which he designed himself. In one sitting room the low line of the curved sofa allows for unobstructed views of the leafy street below. And in the library, a remote-controlled mirror panel conceals a Samsung TV above a Louis XVI fireplace, imported from France.

"It's a fun James Bond moment," he says. "You can do something like this only when you build the entire house around it."

The bespoke touches that Deniot did not design he commissioned from specialists around the world. An artist from Chanel's couture atelier in Paris hand-painted the Roman shades in the sitting room, and a series of light fixtures in the hallways were made individually in Morocco.

But the true showpiece is in the dining room, a wraparound mural by Parisian designer Florence Girette that recalls the great rooms of 17th-century France. "You can tell the artist had a good time working here," Deniot says. You know who else loves it there? A certain lady of the house with a shiny coat. «

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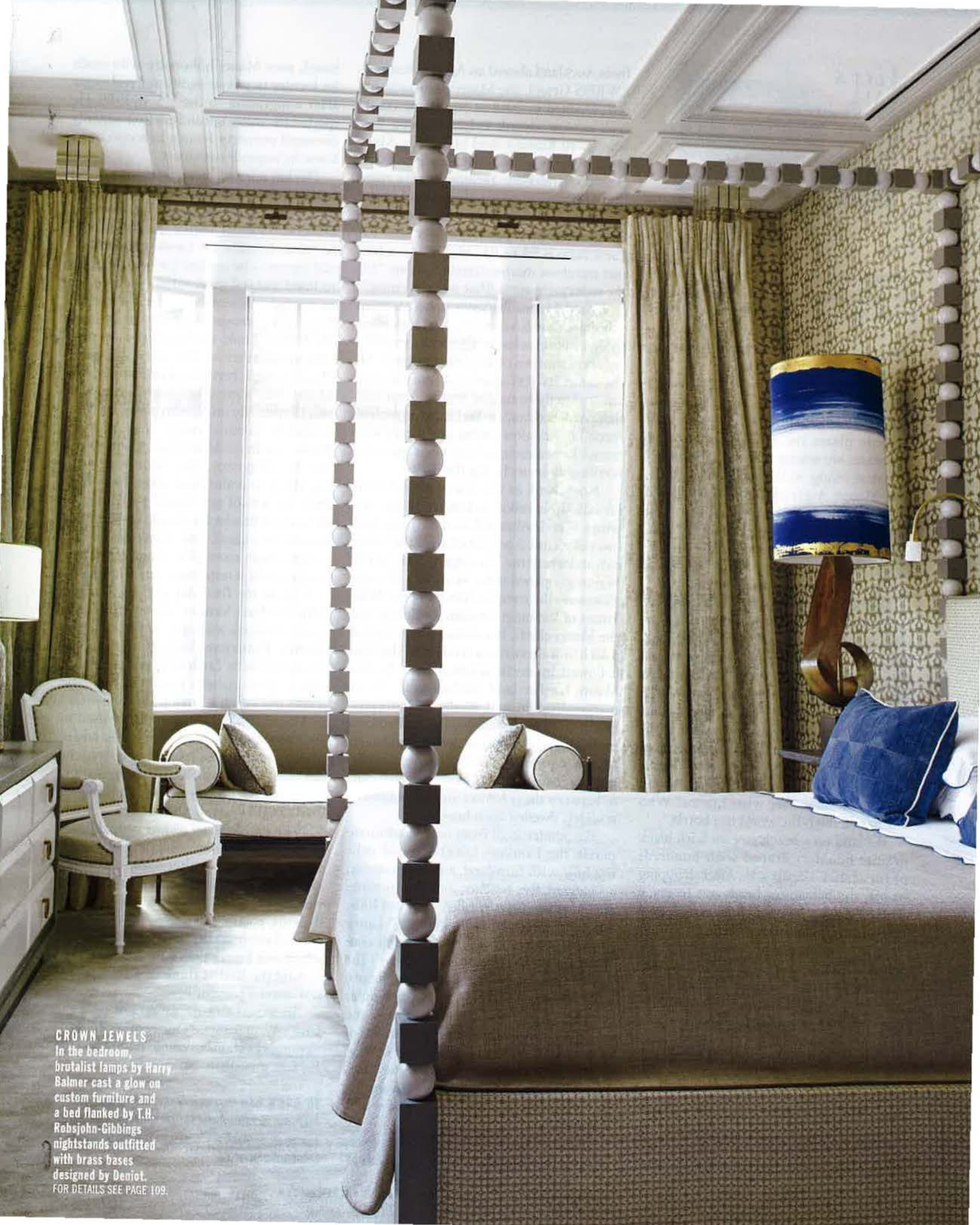


PIECE DE RESISTANCE In the dining room, Deniot (*above*) designed the gray oak table and velvet dining chairs against the backdrop of a commanding mural by Florence Girette and a pair of Lustre à Facettes lights by Hervé Van der Straeten. "The whole house is very layered, so it doesn't feel as new as it is," he says.



SUITE FRANCAISE
Custom seating and
a Paul Evans coffee
table fit together
comfortably in the
library, which also has
a Samsung television
hidden above the
Louis XVI fireplace.





CROWN JEWELS

In the bedroom, brotalist lamps by Harry Balmer cast a glow on custom furniture and a bed flanked by T.H. Robsjohn-Gibbings nightstands outfitted with brass bases designed by Deniot. FOR DETAILS SEE PAGE 109.