



Architecture: David Y. Shteierman, DJ Associate Architect, PC Interior Design: Nicole Fuller, Nicole Fuller Interiors



If Walls Could Talk

A symphony of handcrafted finishes acts as artwork in a family's Brooklyn townhome.

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rt has been a pillar of Nicole Fuller's life from the very beginning. Born to an artist mother, raised in the industry and now married to a painter, Fuller is as steeped in fine art as she is in interior design. When

the opportunity presented itself to envision a new home in Brooklyn for her very first clients—a stylish couple whose previous home was filled with an extensive blue-chip collection—the designer took the bold step of merging her two passions and doing something neither she nor they had done before. “I thought, ‘Why not try something different?’” she recalls, adding: “My concept for this house was that the walls themselves would be works of art in lieu of paintings and sculptures.”

Giving the impression of a 1920s-era town house despite the fact that it was recently built from the ground up, the residence was meticulously designed by Fuller and architect David Y. Shteierman. Heeding their clients' wish for elegance and sophistication imbued with a sense of history, the design team conceived a grand residence distinguished by robust classical details. Elaborate plaster moldings, coffered ceilings, a formal layout and large-scale rooms graciously accommodate the couple plus their children and grandchildren, along with the many guests they entertain.

Yet the house manages to eschew a strictly traditional designation thanks to its singular, imaginative framework. “Because the bones of this home have such form, beauty and elegance, I wanted to create finishes that were 100 percent unique,” Fuller explains. The entry and stair tower offer a noteworthy example. Working closely with a team of artisans, the designer canvased the three-story space with layers of molded Italian plaster, creating a subtly textured abstract pattern enhanced by a smooth, iridescent finish. “I wanted it to look like you're staring at a pearl,” she says. “It's white, essentially, but it's forever changing throughout the day and can look pale gray, pastel pink and sometimes powder blue.”

For the adjacent dining room, Fuller selected a gleaming, hand-painted scenic floral wallpaper, whose pewter background was chosen to complement the room's formal furnishings and high-style contemporary chandeliers—an eclectic mix that speaks to the couple's appreciation for creative expression. Rather than employing the wallcovering in a conventional manner, Fuller instead created a dynamic setting by amplifying the scale of certain scenes and framing them with molding. “We wanted to bring the birds, trees and butterflies to life and magnify them. It draws you into a story,” she notes. And while the same motif is repeated across the hall in the living room, continuing the visual thread of conversation, the effect is anything but repetitive. Of her studied approach to laying out panels in episodic progressions, Fuller explains: “If you're walking through a magical forest, you never see the same tree twice.”

The designer credits a team of skilled craftspeople, whom she considers fine artists, with helping her realize her vision. “By working together so closely and understanding their art, we were able to create incredible things,” she says. Take the downstairs seating nook, whose luxurious details include diamond-patterned plasterwork, tufted upholstered walls and a metalcraft mirror that is more akin to a sculpture. Upstairs, in the couple's bedroom, walls that appear to be boiserie are actually panels of reclaimed wood to which plaster artists have added ornate reliefs with a matte finish. Even the room's drapery could be considered a work of art: Inspired by the frayed seams of a Lanvin dress, the curtains are sewn in such a way that their two coordinating fabrics look as though they have been ripped apart then stitched back together.

Fuller concedes that assembling this patchwork of trades and custom details entailed a great deal of planning. But, as complex as delivering this house may have been, she firmly believes the effort was worth it. “We went the distance and pushed the boundaries,” says the designer. “And that's what takes a house from beautiful to great.” ■



A glamorous vestibule gives visitors a taste of the enticing architecture and singular details to come. Tucked in a niche of custom-molded pearlescent Italian plaster is a floating console by interior designer Nicole Fuller topped with a vintage objet from Flair.



Right: A seating nook off the stair hall features luxurious inner walls and a banquette, all covered in an off-black Dedar velvet. The arch's plaster detailing was a collaboration between Fuller and DJ Associate Architect, PC. The mirror is Hervé van der Straeten.

Opposite: The graphic den has mahogany-paneled walls inset with Loro Piana cashmere upholstery. Wool-blend curtains of Stark fabric add another layer of coziness, as do a set of Jehs + Laub armchairs atop The Rug Company's Ponti rug. The lacquered coffee table is by Sé.





Above: Designed by Fuller in collaboration with Christopher Peacock, the kitchen sports a matte gray-blue lacquer by Fine Paints of Europe and honed Statuario Venato stone floors and counters. Murano-glass chandeliers by Fendi Casa provide a glamorous pop.

Opposite: A round UFO table by Property and curvy chairs from Living Divani repeat the breakfast area's elliptical floor plan. The space is illuminated by a Lindsey Adelman rubbed-brass chandelier and the curtain fabric is Scalamandr .





Above: The star of the dining room is the custom hand-painted Gracie wallpaper, whose soft pewter background allows the room's other pieces to share the spotlight. "I wanted it to be dramatic, but to also become the backdrop," notes Fuller.

Opposite: The dining room boasts an enticing mix of periods and styles, including a customized Barlas Baylar-designed chandelier from Hudson Furniture, a Belgian dining table and antique chairs sourced in Paris. A wool-silk rug by The Rug Company lies underneath.

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The primary bedroom's walls are embellished with hand-molded plaster painted Farrow & Ball's Purbeck Stone. A Damien Langlois-Meurinne chair and Ralph Pucci table provide a reading spot. The bedside pendant is Hervé van der Straeten and the Lucite sconces are by William Haines.