



# Lofty

ambition



A combination of contemporary design and modern antique furnishings dramatically transforms this New York loft into an inspiring work of art. TEXT: Clare Ryan IMAGES: Jordi Miralles

## NEW YORK LOFT



WONDER WALL: The large bare walls leave room for the owner to display pieces of artwork.



The historic cobblestone streets of SoHo, Manhattan, weren't always lined with international boutiques such as Chanel and Prada. Once merely a manufacturing and commercial zone, SoHo today stands as one of the most affluent neighbourhoods in New York and has the largest collection of cast-iron buildings in the world.

Over time, the warehouses were abandoned and the area's historic buildings had been almost totally demolished until New York City's Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the area as historic.

The buildings were converted into residential spaces and the lofts became popular amongst artists, offering the perfect studio set-up with spacious rooms, oversized windows and high ceilings.

The vibrant artistic culture of SoHo

turned the area into a vibrant and eclectic neighbourhood full of high-end art galleries and antique shops that embrace the area's past culture.

Located in the centre of SoHo, this Green Street loft adopts old-world style by incorporating architectural elements from the surrounding scenery.

New York-based firm Slade Architecture completed the interiors, furnishings and architecture of the loft, which was initially split into two apartments and a series of smaller rooms.

"We wanted to expose and highlight the character of the original large open loft space, while also inserting new elements that had their own distinct volumetric material and colour qualities," says James Slade of Slade Architecture.

James says the existing classic SoHo shell



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“The client had a strong interest in modern and clean aesthetics, but didn’t want it to look like typical modern furnishings that have become ubiquitous.”



and iconic views were inspiring factors behind the design.

“We kept the original industrial floor and stained it to provide a strong counterpoint to the new insertions,” says James. “There was also the client’s focus on entertaining and interest in collecting and displaying Korean antiques, while simultaneously maintaining a contemporary, clean aesthetic.”

The loft instantly generates a feeling of space; defined by oversized windows at the back and front of the building. In order to emphasise the view and allow natural light to fill the space, Slade Architecture designed the loft to be open from one end of the building to the other.

Three large standing dividers arranged

down the centre of the loft provide privacy and define the different living areas. The volumes are designed to create two long corridors that link the spaces together, while still allowing a continuous view through the entire depth of the apartment.

The eye-catching aluminium bookcase, designed to hold the owner’s collection of traditional Korean trunks, is a standout feature of the loft and embraces the client’s distinct style.

“We designed this to provide bespoke armature to store and display the Korean antiques,” says Hayes Slade of Slade Architecture.

“The goal was to highlight individual items while aggregating them to avoid

clutter – so the space reads as modern and clean.”

The bookcase separates the living, dining and kitchen area from the study. The side of the bookcase facing the living room is deep and designed specifically to exhibit the trunk collection and the opposite side provides sufficient dense storage and shelving for books and personal possessions.

“We selected all of the furniture and finishes,” says Hayes. “We designed a custom silk rug in the living room that fades from blue at the edges to silver in the centre and a custom orange silk rug in the study.”

Sitting above the main living floor are the bedrooms and bathrooms. The master bedroom is cleverly designed to also convert



**LET THERE BE LIGHT:**  
Large windows on both sides of the loft not only provide views of the surrounding area, but allows natural light to fill the different living spaces.



into two bedrooms by a sliding wall. Vibrant orange is introduced in the master bedroom by adjustable lacquer shelves that are inserted into the slates of the teal slat wall that doubles as a bed head.

The adjustable shelves create much-needed storage for the room in a clean and striking manner.

“The client had a strong interest in modern and clean aesthetics, but didn’t want it to look like typical modern furnishings that have become ubiquitous,” says Hayes. “With this in mind, we used modern vintage pieces purchased mostly at auction, new production furnishings and a few custom pieces of furniture that we designed specifically for the space.”

Concealed by a full height laminate wall on the north side of the apartment is the storage and utility area, powder room, guest bathroom and access to the egress stairs, as well as a loft sleeping area.

Two of the panels create a large pivot door that close off the bedroom area and provides access to the egress stair.



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## THREE IS NOT A CROWD

The loft is fitted with a powder room, guest bathroom and master bathroom. Each bathroom has been designed in a different colour.

The powder room is an intense red glossy tile, the guest bathroom, which is tucked under the fire-stair, is covered in four shades of green.

Each surface is a different green mosaic to accentuate the individual volumes created by the staircase. The master bedroom has a large convertible bath and shower combination, and the shower has a teak slat floor that can be removed to reveal a large soaking bath.



OPEN WIDE: The kitchen island faces the main living areas and acts as a breakfast bar.

The white wall embraces the aesthetics of the area and from a distance looks like a continuous white surface when in fact each panel features a different white laminate, all with different finishes and textures; glossy, patterned textured, metallic, matte and plain white.

Solid acrylic blocks define the upper cabinet doors of the kitchen and a marble countertop – that matches the marble on the steps to the bedroom – balances the marble kitchen island that is supported by a concealed steel structure.

The striking custom-built table in the dining and kitchen area is one of a kind. Designed out of a single slice of Mokore, the

table is the focal point of the dining and kitchen area.

“The client was interested in a communal and casual entertaining style,” says James. “He likes to have different types of events, from impromptu gatherings of friends to more formal dinners to big cocktail parties.”

The table is the length of the east-facing window and is specifically designed to seat 20. An opposing long bench supplies additional seating for the table and the general dining area.

“The custom hardwood table – 5.2m long and made from a single 5.8cm-thick section of a tree – is complemented with

an uninterrupted bench seat,” says James.

“This seating arrangement combined with the highly open kitchen and oversized counter was our answer to the goal of communal, cool, mature, stylish party space.”

Because of the weight and size, the solid top had to be delivered with a crane and sits on two custom-made blackened steel supports. The table complements the modern and clean aesthetics of the apartment.

“The space maintains that sense of openness, so characteristic of the classic loft, while comfortably providing a private residence,” says Hayes. ❶

**CONTACTS:** ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS AND FURNISHINGS: James Slade, Hayes Slade, Stephanie Wong, Steven Lazen, Jeff Wandersman and Nancy Hou from Slade Architecture, 150 Broadway 807 New York, New York, [sladearch.com](http://sladearch.com);  
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