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LONDON CALLING



A MANHATTAN
HOMEOWNER SATISFIES
HER "OH, TO BE IN
ENGLAND" LONGINGS



WRITTEN BY LISA CREGAN
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY PIETER ESTERSOHN
AND JOHN BESSLER
PRODUCED
BY JENNY BRADLEY



Living room An armchair from Hickory Chair swivels to face a television hidden behind a sliding panel in the built-in bookcase.
Entry hall Walls sheathed in waxed mahogany contrast with the matte texture of the limestone-and-marble floors. Curved shelves at the top of the stairs take the atmosphere of the upstairs library into the hallway.
Portrait (clockwise from front right) Homeowner Lynn Eichenberger and her golden retrievers Molly and Maui, Celerie Kemble, James Wagman and Anne Bannon of James Wagman Architect, and Kristen Wilson from Kemble Interiors. **Preceding pages** Lacy outdoor furniture from Richard Schultz provides a place to perch and admire the Manhattan skyline. In the living room, sofas, antique bergères, and a midcentury Murano glass coffee table offer formal seating. A Patterson, Flynn & Martin rug grounds the room.



Could there be a more life-changing move than one from a stately home on London's leafy Hampstead Heath to a condo on New York's Upper West Side? That little jolt of corporate reality is exactly what Lynn Eichenberger faced a few years ago when her banker husband, Stephen, was transferred back to the United States after 10 happy, child-rearing years in England. London had become home for Lynn. So the mission for architect James Wagman and interior designer Celerie Kemble was as much psychological as physical—they needed to transform an architecturally ordinary duplex on the 21st floor of a Depression-era tower into a place with the kind of Old World character and grace their homesick client had grown accustomed to.

Wagman was very familiar with the building, having worked previously on eight of its apartments (including his own mother's), and he knew all the tales. "This apartment was Ethel Merman's at one point," he says, "and not much had been updated since."





Dining room A Murano glass chandelier commissioned by Lynn in London lends the lacquered walls even more sparkle. Kemble tucked grass cloth between the ceiling coffers to bring the eye up and make the room feel taller. **Kitchen** The breakfast nook's vintage Murano glass chandelier inspired the room's blue-and-white palette. A custom curved bench covered in a Clarence House toile is Lynn's favorite spot for morning tea. Wagman reconfigured three small rooms to create the spacious kitchen. Steps lead to a terrace where the family enjoys alfresco meals along with views of the city.



A substantial renovation seemed the answer. "It was a full gut," explains Kemble. "We spent most of our time standing around in the freezing cold in the bare bones of the place, but we still wanted to stay at the end of the day and have a cup of tea. This job was all about nice people being nice to each other, which is kind of rare."

The most dramatic alteration in a spectacularly dramatic overhaul was the redesign of the entry. Originally, guests walked through the front door and found themselves in a claustrophobic stairwell. "It was like walking into a mouse house—it was the apartment's Achilles' heel," Kemble recalls. Wagman borrowed from the Arts & Crafts aesthetic of 19th-century architect H.H. Richardson to deliver an elegantly redesigned foyer. An array of highly waxed mahogany panels now stretches from floor to ceiling and climbs the stairs to the second-floor library, beautifully realizing Lynn's dream of an entry "not grand but still awe-inspiring."

At every opportunity, Kemble and Wagman chose beautifully crafted traditional design, then punched it up with joyful hits of

the unexpected. Take the dining room's striking green walls. "We definitely had some back-and-forth about that color," laughs Kemble, "James and Lynn weren't high on painting the whole room—moldings included—in the same dark color. It sounded crazy to them." Wagman admits, "We did fight Celerie tooth and nail over that dining room lacquer. In retrospect it was foolish, because now it's the nicest room in the house."

Today, natural light streams across the gleaming antique table and chairs the Eichenbergers brought back from abroad, and Kemble proudly describes the room as "a box of reflected light with a beautiful deep-teal glow."

In the large living room, Wagman raised the room height to a majestic 13 feet by removing a 1960s dropped ceiling. Kemble promptly covered the expanse of walls in an ethereal pale aqua silk. "I think silk creates an emotional response," she says. "The walls are more of a fog than a dead end; they're more mood than flat color."



“WE WANTED TO STAY AT THE



END OF THE DAY AND HAVE A CUP OF TEA.” —designer Celerie Kemble

The living room is divided into two well-appointed seating areas—one for more formal affairs with two sofas separated by a delicate glass coffee table, plus two French-style bergères upholstered in sage green. The opposite end of the room accommodates comfy club chairs that swivel to face a television hidden behind a sliding panel in a built-in bookshelf. A bold-textured rug unifies the room while also quietly stealing the scene.

“The pile and pattern of this rug remind me of the maze at Hampton Court Palace,” says Lynn happily. “But my husband teases Celerie that next time we visit London we’ll have to find an antique Oriental rug for the living room. Her eyes get very wide, and she says, ‘NO!’”

“I like Oriental rugs, too, but in moderation,” Kemble offers. “Too many antique carpets get musty fast.”

Mustiness was never going to be an issue with this team, even with the profusion of antiques and ceramics that Lynn had collected in London. “Her color palette is blues, greens, and

yellows—I call them happy botanical colors,” says the designer, “and although Lynn has extremely traditional taste, she let me go a little more vibrant, do traditional with a dollop of modern.”

Like the raspberry and kelly-green bedroom that’s set aside for visits from Lynn’s two grown daughters. “I’m from Palm Beach, so pink and green come easily to me,” Kemble notes, “and this palette makes the girls’ room fun and fresh and different from the rest of the house.”

In contrast, the master bedroom is a soft buttery yellow cocoon of silk upholstered walls—a treatment Lynn really wanted. “I think it’s a very comfortable kind of thing in a bedroom,” she says, “like something you’d see in a great hotel.”

Library Wagman designed a mahogany-enveloped niche overlooking Central Park as a built-in work area for Stephen. Kemble made it comfy with a wing chair from Hickory Chair. A sleeper sofa from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams turns the room into a makeshift guest room when needed. The area rug from Merida lightens the space.



Master bedroom An Art Deco-style archway references the building's pre-war architecture and adds charm to the space. Draperies, headboard, and bed skirt are fashioned from a striped fabric from Pierre Frey. **Master bath** Mirrored cabinets from Robern stand out against walls covered in Farrow & Ball's "Broad Stripe" wallpaper. **Daughters' bedroom** Dressed in a lively Muriel Brandolini print, the headboard harmonizes with a raspberry bed skirt in a Cowtan & Tout linen. Bookshelf interiors are painted green, a touch Kemble says brings order to the colorful chaos of books.



But Lynn's favorite space, and the room in which she spends most of her time, is the kitchen. Wagman combined three small rooms to give Lynn, a former caterer who loves to cook, an expansive kitchen. New French doors lead out to a 2,800-square-foot terrace that wraps the apartment and has astonishing views of Central Park and the Manhattan skyline. "The terrace was just raw space originally," says Wagman, who reimagined it with a regal (and very English) row of columns and an outdoor living room.

In the summer, Lynn's pots overflow with herbs, hydrangeas, and espaliered apple trees. She grills outside all year long. When Lynn, Stephen, and their children (Sarah, 28, Emily, 26, and Sean, 24) all manage to cross paths for one of Lynn's alfresco meals, apartment life must seem far closer to those pastoral years across the pond than to the clamor of Manhattan streets below. ■

Architect: James Wagman

Interior designer: Celerie Kemble

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