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New York Attitude

A COLLECTING COUPLE'S SHERRY-NETHERLAND APARTMENT OFFERS THE PERFECT FRAME FOR THE CITY

Interior Architecture by Richard Meier & Partners
Interior Design by Rose Tarlow
Text by Joseph Giovannini/Photography by Scott Frances



Architect Richard Meier and interior designer Rose Tarlow collaborated on the renovation of a couple's 2,500-square-foot Central Park apartment. OPPOSITE ABOVE: In the entrance hall, Tarlow devised slotted doors that afford privacy but still let light flood in on a slab of ancient Roman *marmo africano* and the building's original mail chute. ABOVE: The reconfigured living area faces Fifth Avenue.



"Tearing down all the walls would mean a lot of construction, but you'd be able to see the whole sweep of the park," says Rose Tarlow.

A bookshelf designed by Tarlow spans the length of the living area to unify the newly enlarged space. The expanse awaits selections from the clients' prominent collection of postwar art. The Bactrian stone disks date from 2000 B.C. Upholstered furnishings, Rose Tarlow—Melrose House. Green pillow fabric, Calvin.

There are slaves of New York, and then there are the captives of The Sherry-Netherland: people who have lived for decades in the famed, iconic Fifth Avenue tower topped by an ornate Gothic-style minaret. Their idea of switching neighborhoods is to move to a different floor, often for a better, more Epicurean view of Central Park, the Plaza opposite and the towers of Central Park West. Like antiques that move up the food chain to London, Paris or New York, never to leave again, people just don't seem to budge from the Sherry. No other address captures so elegantly the New Yorkness of New York.

Then again, maybe it's the Cipriani room service.

For years, a prominent Los Angeles philanthropist and his wife have had a pied-à-terre in the building, which is part hotel and part co-op, and they recently moved into their third apartment—to a different neighborhood in the sky. This time they are on a lower floor of the tower: still overlooking the park's green canopy but not so high up that they lose intimate contact with the trees. Their apartment is large enough to surround the elevator core, giving them views throughout and circumnavigational sunlight—rare in New York's asparagus patch.

The existing layout, original to the 1927 building, did not make the most of the apartment's raw materials—the light, the view and the mystique of the corner of 59th and Fifth. As in most such New York buildings of a certain age, the rooms were traditionally decorated and a tad parsimonious, both discreet and discrete, an orderly suite of well-behaved, introverted boxes that looked in rather than out. "In the last apartment," says the wife, "I didn't like being in one little room where the TV was, scrunched in a den that was eight feet square. We needed a friendlier apartment where we could use all of it."

"My wife and I wanted it to be a loft-like apartment," says the philanthropist, whose California-based foundations contribute to the arts, education and medical

"The intent for this residence was to open up the existing layout," explains Meier. RIGHT: For the dining area, which fluidly connects the living area and the kitchen, Tarlow chose caned and ebonized-teak chairs by Pierre Jeanneret, from Christie's, to go with a table of her own design. A Franz West pendant hangs from the ceiling.





research. "Not quite a SoHo or NoHo loft, but something that admitted a lot of light." The clients also wanted to transform the prewar apartment into a gallery-like environment for their collection of postwar art, one of the foremost in the world. The designer they chose, Los Angeles-based Rose Tarlow, favored sleek, unadorned surfaces that would be ready to receive works of art as the couple made suitable selections.

To bring the light, view and mystique inside, Tarlow decided to merge the three rooms at the front of the apartment, along Fifth, into a long space with a colonnade

of picture windows parsed at the perimeter. "My clients knew tearing down all the walls would mean a lot of construction, but you'd be able to see the whole sweep of the park and up and down Fifth Avenue," says Tarlow. Working with New York architect Richard Meier, who made a rare appearance in an apartment commission, she positioned the master bedroom and guest room along the flanks of the apartment. The south end of the main room is served by a small, elegant kitchen that opens to the dining area.

Having made the bold architectural

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Aigre venter was used on the walls and shelving of the office. Desk and lamp, Pollaro. Desk chair fabric, Great Plains. Carpet, Mansour. **OPPOSITE:** Meier strove to emphasize the brilliance of lacquered surfaces and stainless steel in the Bulthaup kitchen. Tarlow introduced casual seating at the oak-topped bar.