



Don't Take Your Eyes

Behind the doors of a traditional Upper East Side apartment, chaos ensues: a floor-to-ceiling mix of patterns and textures.



Off The Walls

Benjamin Moore's Ladybug Red envelops the family room in a high-gloss finish, while the ceiling subtly shimmers with Modern Masters' metallic Flash Gold paint.

Interior Designer Phillip Thomas Text Kaitlin Menza Photographer Thomas Loof Stylist Robert Rufino



The entryway acts as a segue from the outdoors, “almost as if you are walking through a secret garden,” says designer Phillip Thomas (below). Custom wallpaper, Gracie. Custom console, Phillip Thomas Inc.

Opposite: A cross-hatched paint finish by Andrew Tedesco in the living room is a soothing backdrop for gold accents and punchy prints. The armchair is covered in Les Indiennes Multicolor by Quadrille, the ottoman is in Velours Tiger by Nobilis, and the slipper chair is in Cachou by Lelièvre; all are custom by Phillip Thomas Inc.



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“When my clients and I started working on their first apartment, they said, ‘Oh, I think we should do the living room in gray,’” remembers designer Phillip Thomas. “And I looked at them and said, ‘I adore you guys, but you’re not gray people. You’re full of life, and you need color in your home. That’s who you are.’”

Four years later, the clients hired him again to decorate their new apartment on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. “Every home is a snapshot into those people’s lives at a specific point in time,” says Thomas, the founder and principal designer of the New York-based firm Phillip Thomas Inc. “This time,” he says, “they wanted to amp it up.”

So he did, beefing up the colors to super-saturated tones, mixing and matching sumptuous fabrics, and cloaking every room in some kind of interesting wall treatment.

Visitors often find themselves doing double takes. In the living room, what at first glance looks like misty-blue grass cloth is actually a meticulously custom-painted crosshatch pattern



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Above and right: "You can go a little quirky in kids' rooms," Thomas says. Wallpaper, Spatter by Hinson. Roman shades in Quadrille's Wave-length fabric with Pierre Frey Portofino trim. Door paint, Benjamin Moore's Tangy Orange. *Opposite:* Thomas used the lack of natural light in the wet-bar area as an excuse to go glam. DPH70 wallpaper, Nobilis. Ceiling wallpaper, Osborne & Little. Custom cabinet paint, Fine Paints of Europe.



by Andrew Tedesco. And an explosion of blue-and-white patterns in one of the homeowners' sons' rooms is punctuated with poppy-like orange, the door revealing a clever stripe of it along the edge once opened. Some surprises are even practical: In the kitchen, what looks like silk wallpaper is really a very sneaky washable vinyl.

Then there is the circus hiding in a powder room. "The husband is such a character, and that's technically *his* bathroom," Thomas laughs. "There's something about the paper that just reminds me of his *joie de vivre*; it captures his sophistication as well as his playfulness." The designer first encountered the pattern—de Gournay's Deco Monkeys—inside Loulou's, the exclusive nightclub in London where every room is papered in a different wild print. He never forgot it. "I mean, how can you help but smile when you walk into that powder room?" he says.

Prints pop not only on the walls, but also on floorboards, sofas, pillows, and curtains. "It's a dialogue between all the different materials in a space," says Thomas, doubling down on the theatricality of the project as a whole. **"That's what's really important, because not everybody can be the leading lady. You have to have supporting actors and people behind the scenes."** So in the living room, the seating is piled with pillows in watery celadons and lipstick pinks, while a tiger-striped ottoman plays the role of bold neutral.

At the end of the floor plan is a jewel box (and, Thomas admits, his favorite room): the red-lacquered family room. "It is such a challenging finish to get right, because the higher the sheen, the less forgiving the surface will be," he explains—but that didn't stop him from using it across every inch of wall and molding. The glossy gamble paid off. "For me, it's very important that your eye is constantly captivated," Thomas says. "The way light is reflected, the movement of light, it gives the space life. It makes you really take note of the beauty." ■







Thomas was inspired by the husband to use de Gournay's playful Deco Monkeys wallpaper in this powder room. "These clients are nothing if not colorful people—in the way they dress, the way they lead their lives, and their personalities," he says. *Opposite:* While there are dramatic flourishes elsewhere, the goal for the kitchen was "to create a space that was light and airy." Vinyl wallpaper, Soie Végétale by Élitis. Ceiling paint, Benjamin Moore's Mediterranean Breeze. Roman shade, Lanterns fabric by Galbraith & Paul. Chevron Riviera chairs, Serena & Lily. For more details, see Resources.

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