

ELLE DECOR

MARCH 2023

THE ART ISSUE

INTERIORS
GOOD
ENOUGH
TO FRAME

Frankly Iconic:
New Life for
an Early Gehry
Masterpiece



The den of the two-story ELLE DECOR Penthouse at 53 West 53 by Fox-Nahem, in New York City. Sofas, chairs, and side tables by Atræ; chaise by Ottra; rug, the Rug Company; game table by Fas Pendezza from Artemest; accessories, Maison Gerard; paint in Hopper Head by Farrow & Ball; ceiling fixture, Visual Comfort & Co.; painting by Zhang Huan, Pace Gallery. For details, see Resources.

ELLE DECOR unveils our Joe Nahem-designed penthouse, high above Manhattan.

BY HELENA MADDEN PHOTOGRAPHS BY KELLY MARSHALL STYLED BY BEBE HOWORTH

ON CLOUD NINE

There's been an influx of cloud-piercing New York City towers over the past 10 years, each staking its claim to Manhattan's increasingly crowded skyline. One standout is the 1,050-foot-high 53 West 53, a Museum of Modern Art neighbor developed by Pontiac Land Group and Hines and executed by the Paris-based Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel. Its distinct diagrid facade—an exposed structural system that frames the view from every unit in the building—is further elevated by a recent addition: the ELLE DECOR Penthouse.

ELLE DECOR A-List designer Joe Nahem, of Fox-Nahem Associates, based in New York, brought the space to life. Few design firms are more familiar with the magazine. “I’ve been a part of the ELLE DECOR family for probably three decades,” says Nahem, who, alongside his late business partner, Tom Fox, landed his first ELLE DECOR cover in his 20s. His approach to the space centered on the work of lesser-known artisans alongside pieces from more established brands. “ELLE DECOR is so diverse in the people that it represents. To me, that’s always exciting.” That artful mix is immediately felt in the living room, where soaring 22-foot ceilings and spectacular views of Central Park provide a compelling backdrop for seating by Vladimir Kagan for Holly Hunt, positioned opposite a monumental wall installation by the ceramist Peter Lane and sculptural plaster floor lamps by John Koga from Ralph Pucci.

For Nahem, one of the penthouse’s best features is its interior architecture, courtesy of Thierry Despont. “A lot of other buildings don’t have this gorgeous hardware or these lacquered 10-foot doors,” he says. “That was a great starting point. The choices weren’t bland or in the background.” Nowhere are those preexisting elements more prominent than in the kitchen, where white marble countertops and polished-nickel accents create a refined environment for entertaining. Nahem brought color into the space with a kaleidoscopic resin table and pendant lights by designer Elyse Graham. As with many of the other more boutique names in the building, it’s not the first time Graham and Nahem have collaborated on custom work. “When we first connected on Instagram, she was doing vases and small vessels,” he says. “I asked her, ‘How would you like to do a whole bathroom?’” The rest, as they say, is history.

Similar anecdotes punctuate Nahem’s vision throughout the space. He recounts how the artisan Hoon Kim, whose immense metal and resin artwork stands in the dining room facing the floor-to-ceiling vistas, previously worked with him on a bathroom wall in Robert Downey Jr.’s Hamptons abode. The designer Ian Felton, who created a custom bench



for the penthouse, recently rushed a glass table to a project in Miami right before deadline. Even the foyer offers its own compelling narrative: Reynold Rodriguez, who designed the mirror, console, and chairs, has developed a practice that revolves around salvaging wood from fallen trees in Puerto Rico.

Some of the penthouse’s most unexpected design flourishes appear in the bedrooms, one of which features a bed wrapped in saddle-brown leather from top to bottom. A favorite of Nahem’s, the Campana Brothers piece from DDC is offset by sumptuous wallcoverings from Phillip Jeffries. A sense of play permeates the guest rooms, from the ceramic nightstands by longtime Nahem collaborator Chapter & Verse to the anemone-shaped, alpaca-fleece lounge chair by Brandi Howe. The primary bedroom feels softer in contrast, featuring an all-white palette and an adjacent walk-in closet and bathroom clad in Verona limestone.

The price for those interested in purchasing the penthouse is available upon request. It can be bought fully furnished for an additional fee, should you want the total look. The keys come with access to 53 West 53’s full suite of amenities, including an in-house restaurant, pool, movie theater, and MoMA membership. Nahem, for his part, describes the lofty listing as a sort of trifecta: “You’ve got art, architecture, and that view—what else is there?” ■

ABOVE: The foyer’s console, chairs, and mirror are by Reynold Rodriguez. Wallcovering by Élitis; paint in Salt by Farrow & Ball.

OPPOSITE: In the living room, the sofa and accent chair are by Vladimir Kagan for Holly Hunt. Cocktail table, Maison Gerard; Lucite table, Lorin Marsh; rug, the Rug Company; clay installation

by Peter Lane; totem (in background) by Casey McCafferty.



The table base and chairs in the dining room are by Patrick Naggar for Ralph Pucci. Tabletop by Ralph Pucci; chandelier by John Koga for Ralph Pucci; console by Chapter & Verse using Peter Lane tiles; lamp, Maison Gerard; pottery by Humble Matter; rug, the Rug Company; paint in Ammonite by Farrow & Ball; art installation by Hoon Kim.



LEFT: The media room's sofa, chairs, and tables are by Molteni&C. Sconces, Visual Comfort & Co.; scallop-base console, Tuleste Factory; table light by Eny Lee Parker; wallcovering, Élitis; rug, the Rug Company; artworks by Tony Smith, Pace Gallery.

BELOW LEFT: The bed in the guest room is by the Campana Brothers for Edra from DDC. Nightstand and sconces, Maison Gerard; wall-covering by Phillip Jeffries; photographs by Robert Longo, Pace Gallery.

BELOW: In the children's room, the custom beds and headboard are by Savoir, upholstered in Dedar velvet and dressed in linens by Yves Delorme. Nightstands by Chapter & Verse; lamps by Saint-Louis; artworks by Thomas Nozkowski, Pace Gallery.



The custom closet in the primary bedroom is by Scavolini. Chandelier by Saint-Louis; bench by Alfonso Marina; vintage rug, Mansour; clothing and accessories by Christian Siriano.



In the primary bedroom, the mattress and bed are by Savoir with trimming by Samuel & Sons. Dresser by Ironies; nightstands by Ottra; bedside lamps and ceiling fixture, Visual Comfort & Co.; vintage floor lamps, Maison Gerard; paints in Strong White and Skimming Stone by Farrow & Ball; artwork (above bed) by Maya Lin, Pace Gallery.



The vintage chair in the primary bathroom is from Rago/Wright. Side table by Lorna Lee for Holly Hunt; pedestal, Maison Gerard; paint in Tailor Tack by Farrow & Ball; rug, Mansour.



PROMOTION

A CLOSER LOOK

FOR THE ELLE DECOR PENTHOUSE AT 53 WEST 53 BY FOX-NAHEM, THE FIRM TAPPED VISIONARY ARTISANS & MAKERS TO PUT AN EMPHASIS ON THE HANDMADE. THE RESULT? NEXT LEVEL.



Bookcase by **Poltrona Frau**, books from **Assouline**, Stiffkey Blue paint by **Farrow & Ball**, wallcovering from **Phillip Jeffries**, chair by **Brandi Howe** and purple dew drop by **Ian Alistair Cochran** from **Tuleste Factory**.

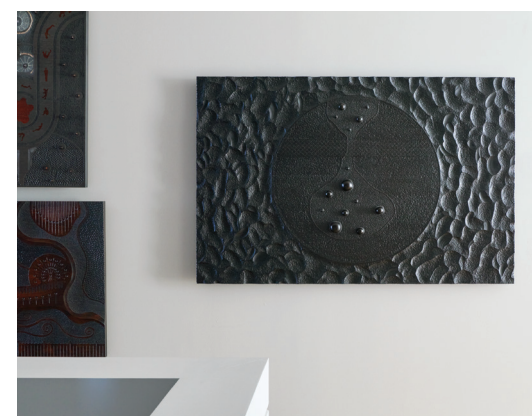


< Custom bar and shelving by **Amuneal**, Ammonite paint by **Farrow & Ball**, vase by **Lorin Marsh**, pottery by **Humble Matter**, vintage pottery from **Maison Gerard**, art by Tara Donovan from **Pace Gallery**.

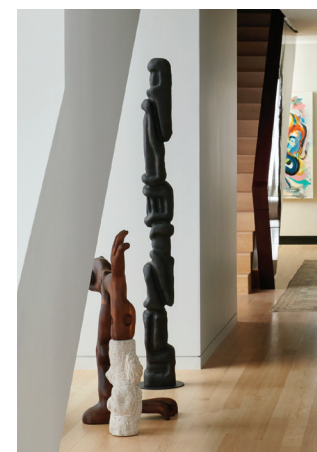
> Eddy paint by **Farrow & Ball**, table by **Elyse Graham**, chairs by **Julian Chichester**, art by Lucas Samaras from **Pace Gallery**.



Custom bar from **Scavolini**, glassware from **Saint-Louis**, tray from **Made Goods**, art by **Thomas Nozkowski** and **Peter Alexander** from **Pace Gallery**, wallcovering from **Elitis**, Hopper Head paint by **Farrow & Ball**, light from **Visual Comfort & Co.**



< Panels by **Caleb Woodward**, Ammonite paint by **Farrow & Ball**.



^ Totems from **Casey McCafferty**.



v Dresser from **Alfonso Marina**, pottery from **Humble Matter**.



v Chairs from **DDC**, ottoman from **Made Goods**, blue sculpture from **Humble Matter**, rug from **The Rug Company**.



< Demilune by **Caleb Woodward**, vase from **Maison Gerard**, light from **Saint-Louis**, Beverly paint by **Farrow & Ball**.

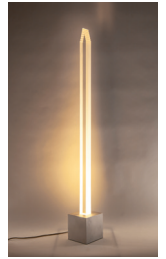
^ Custom wall, shelves and built-in desk by **Chapter & Verse**, chair by **Casey Johnson**, pottery from **Maison Gerard**.



PROMOTION

Digital art by **Jacco Olivier**, console from **Scavolini**, books from **Assouline**, rug from **The Rug Company**, chair and tables from **Molteni&C**, wallcovering from **Elitis**, pottery from **Maison Gerard**.

> Custom light by Yonathan Moore from **Tuleste Factory**.



^ Table from **Chapter & Verse**, custom light from **Lorin Marsh**, vase by **Humble Matter**, painting by **Joseph Conrad-Ferm** from **Tuleste Factory**, Selvege paint by **Farrow & Ball**.



Bench by **Ian Felton**, fabric from **Dedar**, rug from **The Rug Company**, drapes from **Holly Hunt**.

> Shapeshifter from **Casey Johnson**, lamp from **Visual Comfort & Co.**, bookend from **Maison Gerard**.



Bookcase from **Poltrona Frau**, throw from **Yves Delorme**, chair from **Artemest**, wallcovering from **Phillip Jeffries**, shade from **Conrad Shades**.

Thank you to our sponsors and partners: 53 West 53, Alfonso Marina, Amuneal, Artemest, Assouline, Atra, Caleb Woodard, Casey Johnson, Casey McCafferty, Chapter & Verse, Christian Siriano, Conrad Shades, DDC, Dedar, Elitis, Elyse Graham, Farrow & Ball, Holly Hunt, Humble Matter, Ian Felton, Ironies, Jacco Olivier, Julian Chichester, Lorin Marsh, Made Goods, Maison Gerard, Mansour, Marks & Tavano, Molteni&C, Ottra, Pace Gallery, Peter Lane, Phillip Jeffries, Poltrona Frau, Pontiac Land Group, Ralph Pucci International, Reynold Rodriguez, Saint-Louis, Samuel & Sons, Savoir Beds, Scavolini, Studio Hoon Kim, Rago/Wright, The Rug Company, The Mini Rose, Tuleste Factory, Visual Comfort & Co., Yves Delorme.