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ARTFUL DRAMA

NEW YORK
COSMOPOLITAN





INTERIOR DESIGN BY LUIS BUSTAMANTE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER VITALE
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OPENING PAGES: Walls in Elitis velvet from France and ebonized wood floors showcase art in interiors by Luis Bustamante. Henri Matisse paintings flank Antoni Tàpies canvas. Antique marble fireplace surround. Rubelli cut velvet on black 19th-c. armchairs. French Empire consoles. ABOVE: Chairs by Bustamante in Rubelli cut velvet; pillows in Manuel Canovas fabric. Curtains and table in Jim Thompson silk stripe. On table, Lalique vase, framed painting by Matisse, Grand Tour 19th-c. mementos and Soane urn lamps. OPPOSITE: Framed art by Pierre Bonnard, *left*, and Cy Twombly. FOLLOWING PAGES: Rubelli fabric on sofa by Bustamante; Tassinari & Chatel red velour on pillows. Benches by Bustamante in Le Crin horsehair. Antique gueridons. Framed art by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *left*; Max Ernst, *top center*; Pablo Picasso, *bottom center*; and Édouard Vuillard, *right*. Savavieh carpet on Stark rug. Florals throughout by Pilar Crespi.

"LUIS BUSTAMANTE HAS A **KEEN EYE**
FOR DISPLAYING ART AND A GENIUS FOR LIGHTING IT."







OWNING A NOTEWORTHY ART COLLECTION

presents a conundrum: How to display it without conjuring either the ascetic ambience of a gallery or the chronologically determined atmosphere of a museum?

Interior designer Luis Bustamante of Madrid, Spain, faced this enviable challenge when he took on the Manhattan abode of a well-traveled husband and wife who are serious art lovers. He discovered their impressive array of paintings—by European and American masters of various periods—that required knowledgeable handling and skillful integration into an apartment where the owners could enjoy both entertaining and a relaxed home life.

The couple's assortment of antiques also reflects their international sojourns and considerable taste. Additional "givens" were the apartment's floor plan and the rooms' substantial proportions. These attractions, along with the glorious natural light, are what originally convinced them to purchase this pre-World War II residence.

Bustamante embraced both the physical space and the goals of the project. "Of course, it is easier to start from scratch, but this is a fantastic location with fantastic collections," he says. The designer—a painter earlier in his career—feels a special sensitivity for fine art. This apartment was his first commission in New York City, yet the owners intuitively recognized that, as a person of culture and cosmopolitan flair, he would be right at home.

The designer first corrected the flow of the rooms by rearranging the furnishings and supplementing antiques

COVER AND RIGHT: Paintings by Robert Motherwell, *left*, and Willem de Kooning, *right*. Soane chairs and curtain trim in Rubelli velvet. Wall trim and cut velvet for tableskirts by Brunschwig & Fils. Walls, windows and custom light fixtures by Luis Bustamante in fabrics by Jim Thompson. Taste Setter Collection porcelain. Baccarat glassware. William-Wayne & Co. cup vases. Floors painted by Lucrezia Moroni.





with new upholstered seating, designed by Bustamante in sumptuous materials. Following the lead of the European-born wife, whose former fashion career kindled her passion for color and textiles, he chose rich background shades for the walls, interpreting them in both fabric and paint.

Persuasively guiding the owners to consider their art anew, Bustamante suggested the placement of pieces according to composition and hue, thus mixing periods—just as he had prescribed for their antiques. He devised a comprehensive lighting plan, making use of a ceiling-recessed European system that allowed him to angle or narrow any beam or to bathe a work in a warm glow.

“When we walked in one day a few weeks into the job and saw all the punctures in the ceiling, we were horrified,” says the lady of the house. “But when it was done, we came to see that his treatment of the flexible lighting and our art was brilliant. His use of lighting is masterful.”

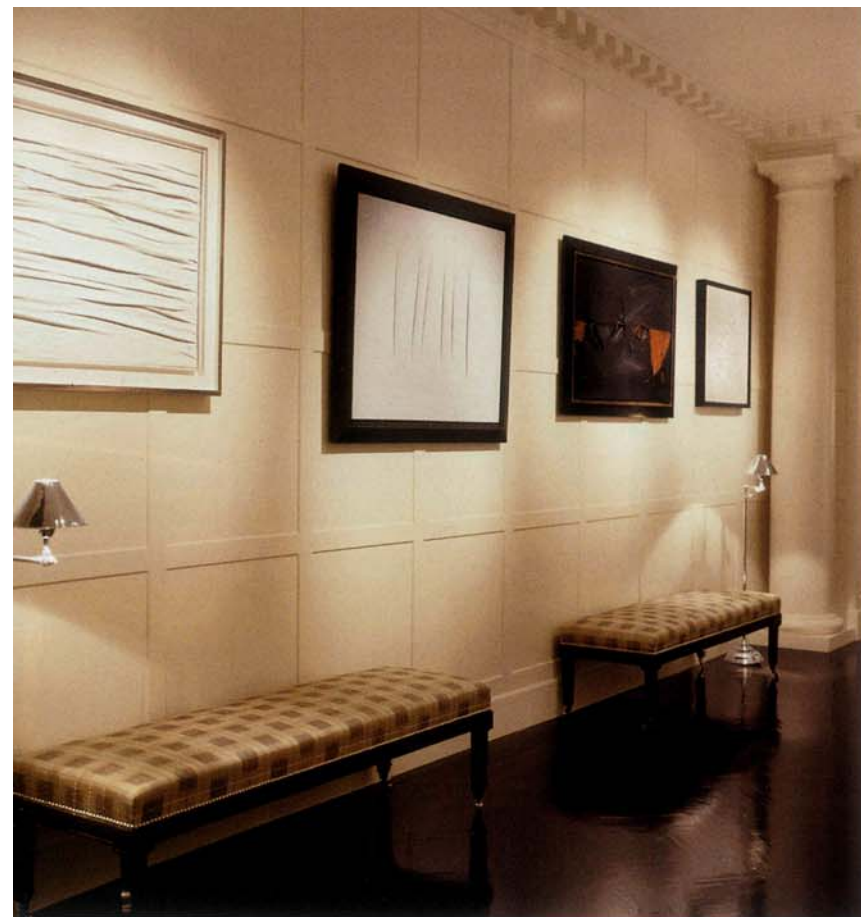
The owners wanted it all—contemporary splendor and comfort—and Bustamante delivered. They make use of their living room daily, with coffee and newspaper or laptop computer, yet the space also serves as a handsome reception area for their guests. The front hallway offers an ingeniously paneled backdrop, friendly to changing artwork. The elegant dining room, with two skirted tables, cozily seats a dinner à deux or welcomes a party of sixteen.

American friends remark that the place feels European. Europeans sense an American touch. The home is as worldly as its delighted owners and is uniquely tailored to them. “Working with Luis was the easiest experience of our lives. As he brought in each piece, we knew it was perfect.” □

Wool-cashmere by Loro Piana covers walls of master bedroom. Headboard, bedskirt and canopy, all by Luis Bustamante, in Fabricut silks; canopy interior in Jim Thompson silk. Léron linens. Cashmere blanket from India. Benches by Bustamante in velvets by Lelièvre and Manuel Canovas. Italian alabaster lamps on Lamberty shagreen side tables. Art by Richard Serra. Soane console. Bokid abaca rug.







ABOVE: Art, from left, by Piero Manzoni and Lucio Fontana; two Alberto Burri works. Benches by Luis Bustamante in Jim Thompson silk. BELOW: Art, from left, by Mark Rothko, Burri and Clyfford Still. On George III console, mobile by Alexander Calder. Custom lamps. RIGHT: Pastel by Edgar Degas. Sofa, chairs, ottoman and pillows, all by Bustamante, in Manuel Canovas velour and Colony stripe; Galón fringe. Other pillows in Rubelli fabric. Custom floor lamps. Stark rug. Story on mobile, page 140.



