

February 9, 2011

Rita Konig Does Up a Penthouse

House Tour



Designer: Rita Konig

Location: Manhattan House — Upper East Side, Manhattan

Size: 1,150 square feet — 1 bedroom with 370 square feet wraparound terrace

The model apartment has changed for the better. Once upon a time, a real estate broker might have brought in a rented couch along with a couple of potted plants. Raising the bar in a soft real estate market means that we get to see the work of up and coming designers along with established pros.





This tour takes us inside a penthouse apartment in a classically modern 1950's building on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Rita König took great pains to make this apartment feel personalized — as if the visitor were arriving home. She went as far as shipping a portion of her personal library from London in order to fill the living room's bookshelves. Alongside a lineup of great books, the apartment boasts a diversity of unique finds, from the re-interpreted castaway to the undeniable antique. Rita infuses each element — be it worthless or utterly valued in another person's eyes — with a degree of attention that gives it instant aesthetic credence.



Apartment Therapy Survey

Style: I am never very good at describing my style, but I would say that I usually use a pretty light palette with blobs of colour, clean lines with a heavy emphasis on comfort and living. I am definitely more interested in how you use a room and enjoy it and what it feels like to be in, than I am in the contrast piping on the couch — although I am more than averagely interested in that!

Inspiration: Selfishly myself! I decorated the space as though it was for me.

Favorite Element: I love the bookcase, it was one of the first things I realised that I wanted to do. It helped to define the areas since without it I couldn't work out where to stop the sitting room colour and start the hall colour. More than that, however, it added such depth and warmth to the space. I love sitting in the green chair and looking over to that side of the room across the sofa and drinks tray to the bookcase filled with lovely things.

Biggest Challenge: Giving a model apartment some spirit, the most important thing for me was that it spoke to people as they came in and they could feel that it had some soul...in the same way you feel when you go into someone's home.

What Friends Say: That they would like to move in!

Biggest Embarrassment: Ever? Or at Manhattan House? Nothing embarrassing has happened — yet!

Proudest DIY: Best thing for me is not to do DIY! But probably the only DIY I am any good at is hanging pictures.

Biggest Indulgence: The Hugo Guinness painting in the hall

Best Advice: Don't be afraid to spend a bit on a few good things. You simply can't skimp on everything. Frankly, I don't really like skimping on *anything*, which is why I like to decorate slowly and spend a lot of time in junk shops. I hate big-box stores and buy very little there.

Dream Source: Has to be John Derian in New York and Core One in London.



Resources:

ENTRANCE HALL

- Paint is *Arsenic* by Farrow and Ball
- Console: West Elm
- Picture: Hugo Guinness
- Lamp: Marianna Kennedy in London
- Long Mirror against the wall: West Elm

SITTING ROOM

- Sofa: Verellen
- Grey and white geometric cushion fabric: *Ziggurat* from Quadrille
- Pair of chairs: Deans Antiques at Core One in London (he also has a store in Stamford, Connecticut)
- Cushions: Vanderhurd (showroom on Lafayette Street)
- Green table: purchased in Hudson, New York
- Lamp: Ruby Beets in Sag Harbour
- Little vegetable sculptures: John Derian
- Coffee table: Lars Bolander
- Log Baskets: Restoration Hardware
- Green Chair: Rose Garden Antiques in Reinbeck, green velvet upholstery is called *Orsay* from Pierre Frey
- Window seat fabric: from Cloth, by Christopher Farr
- Stool: by Tucker Robbins, purchased at Calypso Home
- Console table behind the sofa: Mecox Gardens
- Lamp: Abbot Kinney in Venice, California
- Trays: West Elm
- Artwork: all the art in the sitting room is from Sears Peyton except for the black and white wood cuts which belong to me
- Paint: *Rita Says* from Stark Paints (named after my column in British *Vogue*)

DINING ROOM

- Dining table & dining chairs: by Philippe Hurrel available from Profiles in New York
- Light: Noguchi
- Large photograph of the wave: by Clifford Ross from the Sonnabend Gallery

BEDROOM

- Bed: custom made by Charles Beckley in the Bronx
- Bedside tables: One Fish Two Fish in Savannah
- Bench at the end of the bed: Wisteria
- White linen for the curtains: Bernie de le Cuona
- Pink fabric on the window seat: Pierre Frey
- Wooden bedside lamp: Circa Lighting
- Ceramic bedside lamp: Aero
- Chest of drawers: Wisteria
- Murano glass lamp: my own
- Cane egg chair: Ochre on Broome Street
- Seat cushion: Madeline Weinrib
- Wallpaper: *Wisteria* by Nina Campbell at Osborne and Little
- Rug: Calypso Home

CLOAKROOM

- Wallpaper: Studio Four
- Poster: *The Paris Review* archives.