

INTERIOR DESIGN

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all the right moves

With clever spatial solutions and must-have furnishings, Roger Hirsch Architect and interior design firm Tocar revived a tired TriBeCa loft



"It was a model job," says Roger Hirsch. No, not a fashion shoot. The architect was referring to a collaboration between his namesake studio and the design firm Tocar, hired by a pair of design-savvy art collectors. Tocar partners Susan Bednar and Christina Sullivan concur. Explains Bednar, "Our firm's name is Spanish for 'to touch or influence,' which is what we do best with clients."

To transform the 1,900-square-foot TriBeCa apartment from blah to bedazzling, Hirsch, associate Myriam Corti, and Tocar agreed on total demolition. Despite the space's "loft" billing, low ceilings and superfluous walls made it enclosed and dark—more an "uptown" two-bedroom than a downtown loft.

"We opened up the entry by blowing out a guest-bedroom-cum-study and relocating the second bath. Immediately, it was more loftlike," says Bednar. But leaving an unarticulated expanse—with a loss of function areas—wasn't the game plan either. The clients still needed definition, work space, and a spot for the occasional guest to call home.

A few deft strokes addressed these exigencies as well as allowing the architects and designers to make a materials statement of their own. →

Architects Roger Hirsch and Myriam Corti built an ebony partition to articulate the loft's function zones, and Tocar partners Susan Bednar and Christina Sullivan placed Jérôme Abel Seguin's teak Polo bench in front. The clients contributed Serge Mouille's floor lamp and Eero Saarinen's Tulip table. Photography: Michael Moran.



Top: For the dining area, Tocar paired its own teak chairs with Seguin's teak Sian table, then added a 1960's molded-plastic Ettore Sottsass console and a paper collage by Dodi Wexler, hung on the sliding panel. **Photography:** Lisa Kereszt. **Bottom:** The living area's PK-31 chairs by Poul Kjaerholm, Solo sofa by Antonio Citterio, and Egg chair and ottoman by Arne Jacobsen, joined by a custom pony-skin rug and Tocar's python-covered side tables. The cocktail-table base is Zirca 1960. **Photography:** Michael Moran.

Just past the entry, Hirsch and Corti inserted their cleverest element: a 9-foot-long, 8-foot, 9-inch-high ebony partition that not only screened the dining area but also contained stealth guest quarters in the form of a custom Murphy bed. Tocar then added translucent cotton draperies affixed to a ceiling track, allowing them to be drawn for separation or tucked out of sight in the partition's touch-latch closets. The result: semiprivate quarters for visitors and, once they're gone, no wasted space for the clients.

A second multipurpose trick addressed work-play questions. On the living area's end wall, a 13-foot-long teak counter with flip-top segments incorporated business-minded storage drawers and a tackboard. Meanwhile, the wall above the ledge served as a film and TV screen for a ceiling-mounted projector. Charles and Ray Eames's Aluminum Group chairs, in apple-green leather, doubled as task seating and front row.

The architects and Tocar devised yet another clever treatment to separate the dining area and kitchen: a 9-foot-square, steel-edged sliding panel that also supports an intricate cut-paper collage by Dodi Wexler—one of many artworks the clients describe as "obsessive-compulsive." For the dining side, Tocar selected a Jérôme Abel Seguin teak table, complemented by custom teak chairs and a groovy 1960's molded-plastic console by Ettore Sottsass.

The kitchen's star piece boasts a similarly prestigious lineage. Bednar and Sullivan handpicked some 120 vintage Roger Capron ceramic tiles, numbered the back of each, and installed them—in the required order—on the top surface of a brushed-steel counter. "They were a lucky find," says Bednar. "Both we and our clients had seen them separately at the shop."

The living area's mix of contemporary, vintage, and custom furniture proved equally worthy of →



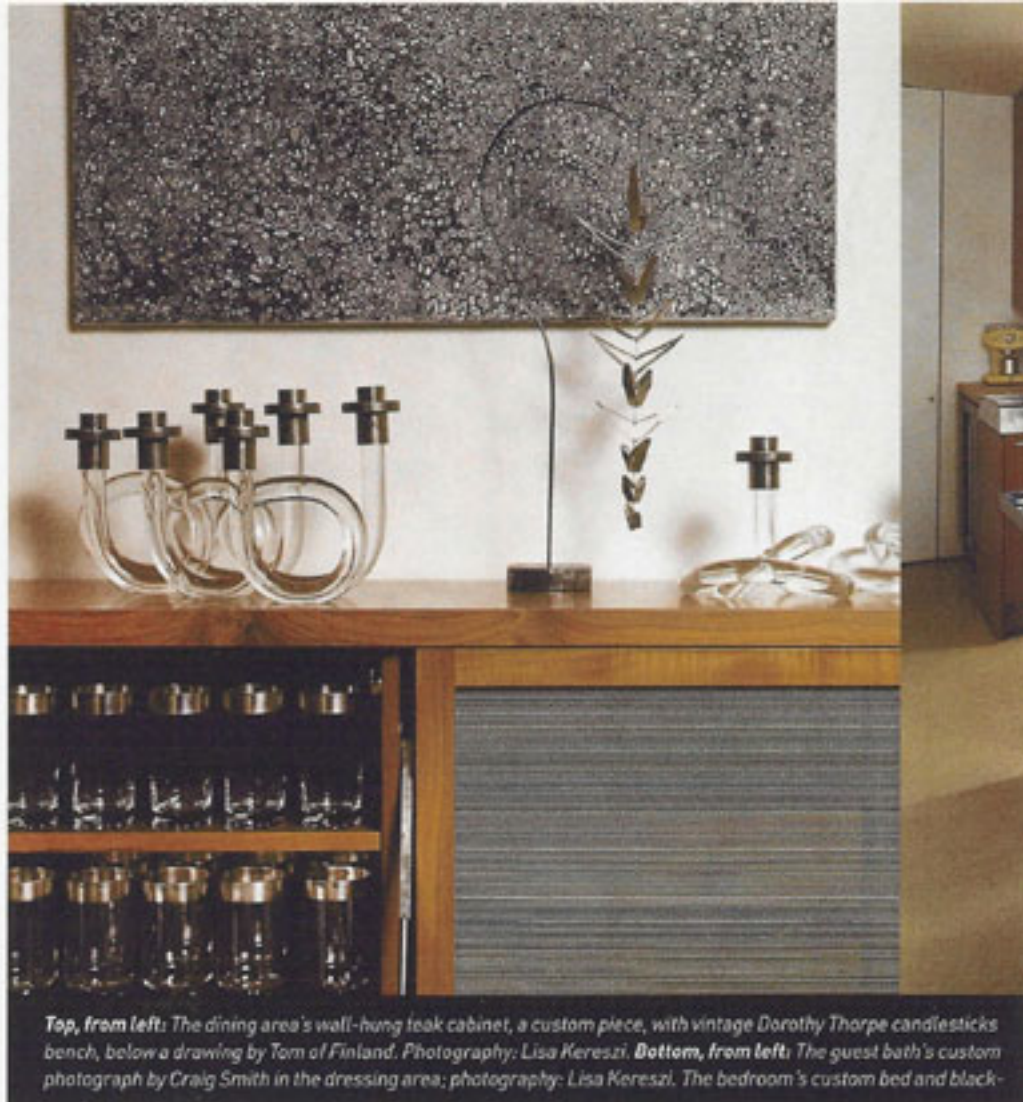
Top: The living area's teak counter and Charles and Ray Eames chairs. Photography: Lisa Kereszi. **Bottom:** Learning from the compact rooms at boutique hotels, the architects built a Murphy bed into the entry's partition. Photography: Michael Moran.

discerning eyes. Seating comprises Antonio Citterio's Solo sofa, Poul Kjaerholm's PK-31 chairs, and Arne Jacobsen's Egg chair and ottoman. Tables are all Tocar creations. For side tables, Bednar and Sullivan designed python-covered models; for a cocktail table, the designers combined a chrome base, circa 1960, with a glass top. To anchor it all? A ne plus ultra custom rug, stitched squares of Italian pony skin.

Hirsch, Corti, and Tocar installed American black-walnut flooring in the art-filled master suite, along with a 9½-foot-high panel of acid-etched glass to separate the bedroom from a dressing area. Up-lit by fluorescents recessed in the floor, the panel reveals the blurred orange-painted backs of the dressing area's three storage towers—like an uncanny architectural Mark Rothko.

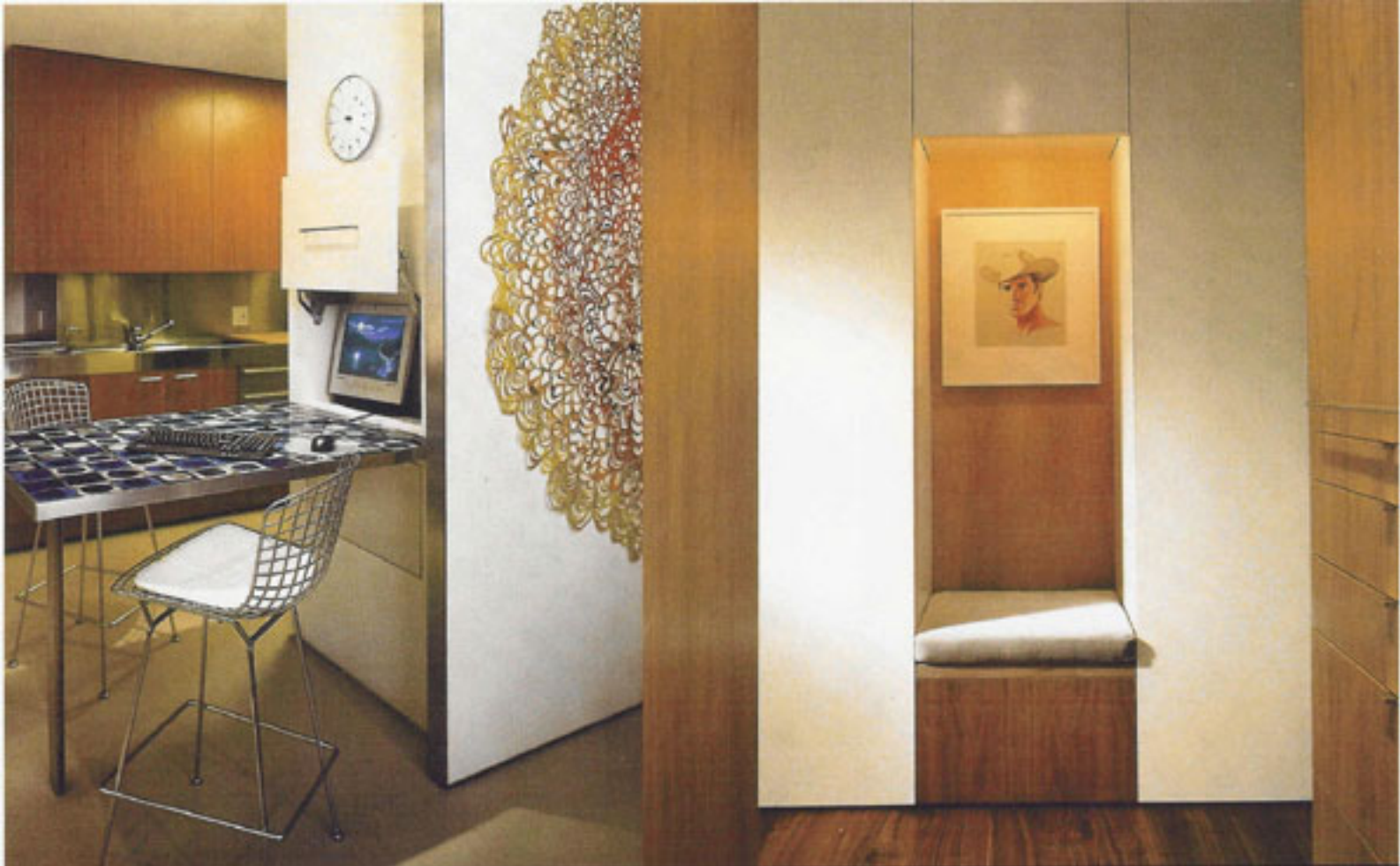
Given the loft's enviable art and furnishings, it's a surprise that all four participants cite the 45-square-foot guest bathroom as their favorite. Then again, with a floor of honed marble, a shimmering counter of Galaxy schist, a floating wengé cabinet, and an integrally lit mirror set flush against custom Jonathan Adler ceramic wall tiles, we can see why. 🍷

FLOORING (ENTRY, LIVING AREA, DINING AREA): ARDEX ENGINEERED CEMENTS, BENCH (ENTRY), TABLE (DINING AREA): RALPH PUGGI INTERNATIONAL, CUSTOM DAYBED (LIVING AREA): THOMAS PIZZILLO & SON, CUSTOM CHAIRS (DINING AREA): WILLIAM OLSEN, CONSOLE (DINING AREA), ARMCHAIRS (LIVING AREA): THROUGH BUKOWSKIS, CHAIR FABRIC (DINING AREA), CUSHION FABRIC (DRESSING AREA): J. ROBERT SCOTT, SOFA (LIVING AREA): B&B ITALIA, LAMPS, PILLOWS: AERO STUDIOS, CUSTOM COCKTAIL TABLE: SARACO GLASS (TOP), THROUGH DUANE (BASE), TASK CHAIRS (LIVING AREA): HERMAN MILLER THROUGH DESIGN WITHIN REACH; MAHARAM (LEATHER), CUSTOM DESK UNIT, CABINETS: TIMBRI WORKSHOP, MURPHY-BED DRAPERY (ENTRY): ROGERS & GOFFBON, CUSTOM KITCHEN COUNTER: ART & DESIGN WORKS; THROUGH GUERIDON (TILES), SINK (BATHROOM): JUST MANUFACTURING, FITTINGS: VOLA, FLOOR: STONE SOURCE, LIGHTING CONSULTANT: SM LIGHTING DESIGN, MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL ENGINEER: P.A. COLLINS, GENERAL CONTRACTOR: BUILD SOURCE CORP.



Top, from left: The dining area's wall-hung teak cabinet, a custom piece, with vintage Dorothy Thorpe candlesticks bench, below a drawing by Tom of Finland. Photography: Lisa Kereszi. Bottom, from left: The guest bath's custom photograph by Craig Smith in the dressing area; photography: Lisa Kereszi. The bedroom's custom bed and black-





and a Bernard Frize oil on canvas. A brushed-steel kitchen counter topped by vintage Roger Capron tiles and flanked by Harry Bertoia stools. The dressing area's flip-top ceramic wall tiles by Jonathan Adler, Galaxy schist counter, wengé cabinet, and floor of honed marble; photography: Michael Moran. A walnut closet system and a framed walnut flooring; photography: Lisa Kereszi.

