



In this TriBeCa living room, a custom sofa sits with a 1950s Italian bookcase, and an ottoman, chairs, and stool, all by ASH NYC. The painting is by David Austen, and the custom table lamps are handmade by Episode.

MAGAZINE

Inside a Spirited TriBeCa Loft Where Color and Pattern Reign

One family's industrial Manhattan apartment undergoes a colorful metamorphosis at the hands of AD100 firm ASH NYC

By Hannah Martin

Photography by Miguel Flores-Vianna

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When you step off the elevator and into this fifth-floor Tribeca loft, a lush crimson curtain of Victorian cut velvet frames one end of the foyer, just past a rather outspoken Kenny Scharf painting and an 18th-century Rococo mirror. “I like to look at things through a theatrical lens,” says Will Cooper, partner and chief creative officer of AD100 firm ASH NYC. He asks, “What narrative unfolds when you open the door?”

Cooper and his partners at ASH NYC have always brought that dramatic flair to their singular hotels—there’s a vibe of laid-back Belgian modernism at the Dean Hotel in Providence, a disco ball shimmering amid Deco-era glam at the Siren in Detroit, and a divine gingham fantasia at Hôtel Peter & Paul, a onetime church and school in New Orleans. And for the right client, they’ll dream up an equally transportive private residence too. “We paint a picture for you; we make a movie for you to live in,” says Cooper, explaining his research-heavy process. “We always write a narrative when we start these projects—What are they doing? What happens at 8 a.m. when they’re having breakfast? What happens at 5 p.m. when they want to have cocktails? It’s the same as a hotel. They need coffee, they need cocktails, they need a comfortable bed to sleep on.”



Two armchairs—one 19th-century Norwegian (left), the other 1950s Gio Ponti—flank the living room fireplace. The artwork is by Aleksandar Duravcevic.



Custom ASH NYC ceramic pendants by Episode, and Marcel breuer Chairs in the dining room.

When Cooper started conceptualizing this place roughly four years ago, the client, with whom he had worked previously on more commercial projects, imagined living in a quintessential Tribeca loft. “They really wanted everything in white,” recalls Cooper of the family—a physician assistant and an entrepreneur with two young boys. Cooper’s own apartment (*AD*, October 2020), admittedly, adheres to a similar palette. “I love living in white, but I don’t like designing in it,” he laments. Still, they started there.

The place, which hadn’t been renovated since the 1980s, needed to be gutted—walls rebuilt, kitchen moved, bathrooms overhauled, ceilings opened to reveal chunky wooden beams; even a few windows had to be covered over, as new buildings sprang up overnight. After Cooper’s team stripped things back to the essentials, the main walls were painted in Domingue’s Chalk limewash, floors were coated in slick white epoxy, and a big open kitchen (the clients love to cook) got an island, countertops, and backsplash of Calacatta Viola marble. The space was taking on the industrial cool of Cooper’s original reference: the all-white SoHo loft of Dean & DeLuca founders Jack Ceglic and Joel Dean.



In the Calacatta Viola-clad kitchen, menu stools are skirted with antique Turkish silk, and a Pierre Chappo dining table is surrounded by Marcel Breuer chairs. The custom ASH NYC pendants are by Episode, and the 1970s wicker lamp is by Heywood-Wakefield.

But as time passed, the narrative shifted. Cooper started doing what he does best: collect. A pile of textiles from Turkey, India, and France found its way into the space, as pillows, seat cushions, and even a clever disguise for the TV. With a suite of Scandinavian antiques from Manhattan purveyor Dienst + Dotter Antikviteter and a range of rugs from Heirloom in Brooklyn, Cooper layered in bursts of the unexpected. “A project needs time to evolve,” says the designer, who, after looking at Horst P. Horst’s images from *Vogue*, began to fantasize about the eclectic high-society homes of the 1960s grandes dames. “I wanted to somehow imbue that level of taste and sophistication here in a loft in a contemporary way, through textiles and layers,” he explains.

Slowly he coaxed his clients out of their all-white comfort zone. Most of the walls remained as requested, but the inside of the wet bar got a hit of aubergine lacquer. Bathrooms were clad in colorful tiles, the primary bedroom was painted a warm shade of praline and the moody media room a deep navy blue. In went the textiles, adding texture and color galore. Perhaps the biggest thrill came in the children’s room, where twin 1920s beds were dressed in D. Porthault linens and antique Turkish and Peruvian textiles, then canopied with antique ceremonial wedding-procession tents from Gujarat, India.

Lest we forget: Kids are part of this story. Cooper designed accordingly, squirreling toys away here and there—in a yellow ottoman in the living room, in generous closets in their colorful bedroom. Per the family’s request, ASH devised a modular sofa upholstered in red velvet and mohair with an integrated back, perfect for tumbling tots.



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A red velvet curtain in the foyer with a Rococo mirror by Olaf Wetterberg, a Persian rug from Heirloom, and a painting by Kenny Scharf.



Hearts of Glass, 2021, by David Austen

Across the apartment, the plot thickens as highly decorative furnishings—a fleet of Swedish Rococo pieces (a bench, a console, a pair of gilt-wood mirrors, and more), whimsical wicker and rattan from the world over—blend in with industrial classics. Marcel Breuer’s B33 chairs surround the Pierre Chapo dining table, for instance. Overhead, custom cone-shaped ceramic pendants, inspired by one from Cecil Beaton’s bedroom, hang on metal chains. Meanwhile, in the living area, a Gio Ponti lounge is covered in Scalamandré’s “Panthera” leopard-print velvet, and at the bar, simple, powder-coated-steel counter stools are dressed in frilly skirts of striped Turkish silk.

“That modernity was important—the Breuer, the black leather, the chrome, the planters in polished stainless steel,” explains Cooper, whose own contemporary furniture designs for ASH—a few Pillow Chairs, a range of simple WC tables—are also sprinkled in. “We’re not in an old-world place,” he says, after all. “This is Tribeca.”

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