

*This sleek Manhattan penthouse is a prime example of how artwork can elevate an interior*

Words AMY BRADFORD

# ART HOUSE

It's difficult to know what to admire first in this New York penthouse – the magnificent views of Manhattan's skyscrapers or the dazzling contemporary art collection, which blends effortlessly with iconic Italian brand Flexform's understated furniture. Then there's the experience of lofty views from the heights of 432 Park Avenue, the tallest residential tower in the Western hemisphere, designed by Uruguayan architect Rafael Viñoly. Here on the 48th floor, the four-metre-high ceilings and vast picture windows come into their own; you really do feel on top of the world.

The apartment is owned by an international businessman and avid art collector, who uses the space as a *pied-à-terre* for work trips and so wanted it to feel like a luxurious and comfortable hotel. With an already extensive art collection, he chose to relish the challenge of starting from scratch with new pieces hand-picked for this home. To help him curate them – and create a style that would work in harmony – he commissioned London interior designer Nebiye Cihan. A former New York resident herself (she trained at the city's prestigious Parsons design school), Cihan specialises in merging fine art with relaxed interiors. 'I work closely with clients to integrate artworks seamlessly into their homes, in a way that reflects their character and sets a mood,' she says. 'As I'm designing a space, I usually have a strong idea of where paintings and sculptures will go. Once that's decided, I put together a list of the right artists.'

In this case, though, it was the other way around, because the owner's strong tastes in art shaped the project from the start. 'We curated all the artworks first, before sourcing the furniture,' explains Cihan, who acquired works from major dealers such as the Lisson Gallery, White Cube and Galerie Perrotin. 'The works set the tone of the interior and added character, with touches of vivid colour. The challenge, then, was to marry them with the furnishings.' With the owner being a fan of Flexform, whose furniture he'd used in previous homes, Cihan selected a range of pieces in its signature sophisticated neutrals. 'I customised them with cashmere and butter-soft leather upholstery' she says. 'The colours allow the focus to remain on the art and the view.'

Cihan's skill goes beyond making art look great, though – it's also about transforming the way a home feels to live in. Welsh sculptor Cerith Wyn Evans' white neon sign displayed in the entrance hall creates a feeling of calm from the moment you step inside the apartment. 'It reads "Just play me two bars of stardust" and glows in the evenings,' says Cihan. A colourful painting by Korean artist Kyungah Ham acts as an energising punctuation point between the hallway and the lounge and, in the dining area, an abstract work by British artist Idris Khan is hung over a glass table, creating sensuous, atmospheric reflections. 'I wanted to evoke a sense of tranquillity in a busy city,' says Cihan. 'I've always been drawn to timeless design, but really it's comfort that makes a house a home.' [nebiyecihan.com](http://nebiyecihan.com); [flexform.it](http://flexform.it)

**Living room** Tony Cragg's cast-iron *Seno*, 2013 sculpture, displayed on a bespoke Calacatta Oro marble plinth, complements the living room's neutral tones. The furniture, designed by Antonio Citterio for Flexform, includes a 'Magi' daybed, 'Thomas' and 'Guscioalto Soft' armchairs and a 'Zefiro' coffee table. The silk rug is from Holly Hunt ▶



NOW



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**Hallway** The gallery-like feel of this home is apparent as soon as you step through the door, with a colourful painting by Korean artist Kyungah Ham (above) and the neon light sculpture by Welsh artist Cerith Wyn Evans (below). The bench is by architect Vincenzo De Cotiis. **Dining room** Flexform's 'Gipsy' table and 'Morgan' leather chairs, designed by Antonio Citterio, form an understated setting beneath the dramatic chandelier by French designer Damien Langlois-Meurinne. The table's glass top subtly reflects the abstract print on the wall, by British artist Idris Khan ▶







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**Entrance** Setting a joyful tone, the balloon sculpture by Korean artist Gimhongsok and painting by American-Iranian artist Nicky Nodjoui welcome you into the apartment. **Guest bedroom** Flexform's 'Eden Plus' bed and 'Feel Good' ottoman, both designed by Antonio Citterio, bring comfort to the room, while Richard Deacon's blue geometric sculpture highlights the dramatic New York skyline. **Main bedroom** The warm tan and chocolate tones make for a soothing change, with the 'Grandmere' bed, 'Guscio' armchair and 'Gipsy' dark wood side tables – all by Antonio Citterio for Flexform – and neutral Frette bedding. **LD**

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