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SENSE & SENSIBILITY

BALANCING HIGH WITH LOW, SOFT WITH HARD, AND POLISHED WITH MATTE, SARA STORY CREATES A TACTILE AND VISUAL NARRATIVE IN A CENTRAL PARK WEST APARTMENT

INTERIOR DESIGN **SARA STORY** · TEXT **JORGE S. ARANGO** · PHOTOGRAPHY **MARCO RICCA**

The complex layering of this deceptively simple living room offers myriad tactile and visual contrasts: white lacquer cabinetry with ebony wood display niches; polished materials such as the legs of 1970s cantilevered Milo Baughman armchairs from Oliver Modern set against soft Romo linen upholstery; and a plush silver fox throw from Dualoy complementing a settee in supple Moore & Giles leather.



THIS PAGE: Holly Hunt cotton velvet on the custom sectional juxtaposed with Jiun Ho's bleached oak-and-steel coffee table. The grouping sits on a custom silk-wool rug from Holland & Sherry near a Christian Chaize photo of Praia Piquinia in Portugal. **BELOW:** Porta Romana sconces, a Mecox Gardens "puzzle" table, and a Dualoy fox throw add lavish touches to a leather sofa fabricated by Furniture Masters. The 1940s side table is from Arlene Angard Designs.

GREAT THINKERS from Aristotle to Nietzsche championed sensualism, a philosophy postulating that sensations, not the mind, were the most important mode of cognition. Though designer Sara Story doesn't get bogged down with its headier implications, sensualism's central tenet—if it feels good it is good—is a credo by which she apparently lives.

Witness this 4,000-square-foot apartment on the 17th floor of a Central Park West tower, which she designed for a thirty-something couple with a newborn. "It focuses on different textures that balance each other and create a timeless feel that's also casual and approachable," says Story. "Materials have a tension between them. If I use velvet, it has metal near it, and a leather sofa gets a little fur."

These moments occur in the sprawling living room (larger still before architect Stephen Wang appropriated some of it for a bedroom). A custom sectional swathed in cotton velvet wraps around a wood and steel Jiun Ho coffee table and, at the room's other end, a Dualoy red fox throw tumbles over a custom settee in Moore & Giles leather. The former seating area also boasts 1970s metal side tables, while the latter adds a cluster of hexagonal marble-topped tables from Mecox Gardens into the mix. Yet another contrast—white lacquer custom cabinets and a shimmering 18-by-10-foot Nepalese rug—embraces both vignettes.

Tactility is everywhere. But sight is also rewarded. The simple palette—grays, beiges, and discreet touches of color—keeps the spectacular views dominant. And because those panoramas are of a modern New York, silhouettes are crisp and elegantly tailored. The only space sans vista is the dining **CONTINUED ►**





TOP: Story mitigated the lack of view with glamour, starting with an Austrian chandelier from Young Blood and 1950s Kalmar sconces from Thomas Hayes Gallery. Bronzy Claremont drapes and custom hardware by Darren Vigilant on the Draperesque lacquer buffet add more sparkle. **ABOVE:** Leather and Jean de Merry fabric mix on the family room sectional, while an Elko table provides a sense of fun. **LEFT:** Darren Vigilant's steel doors lead to a powder room papered in Elitis wallcovering.



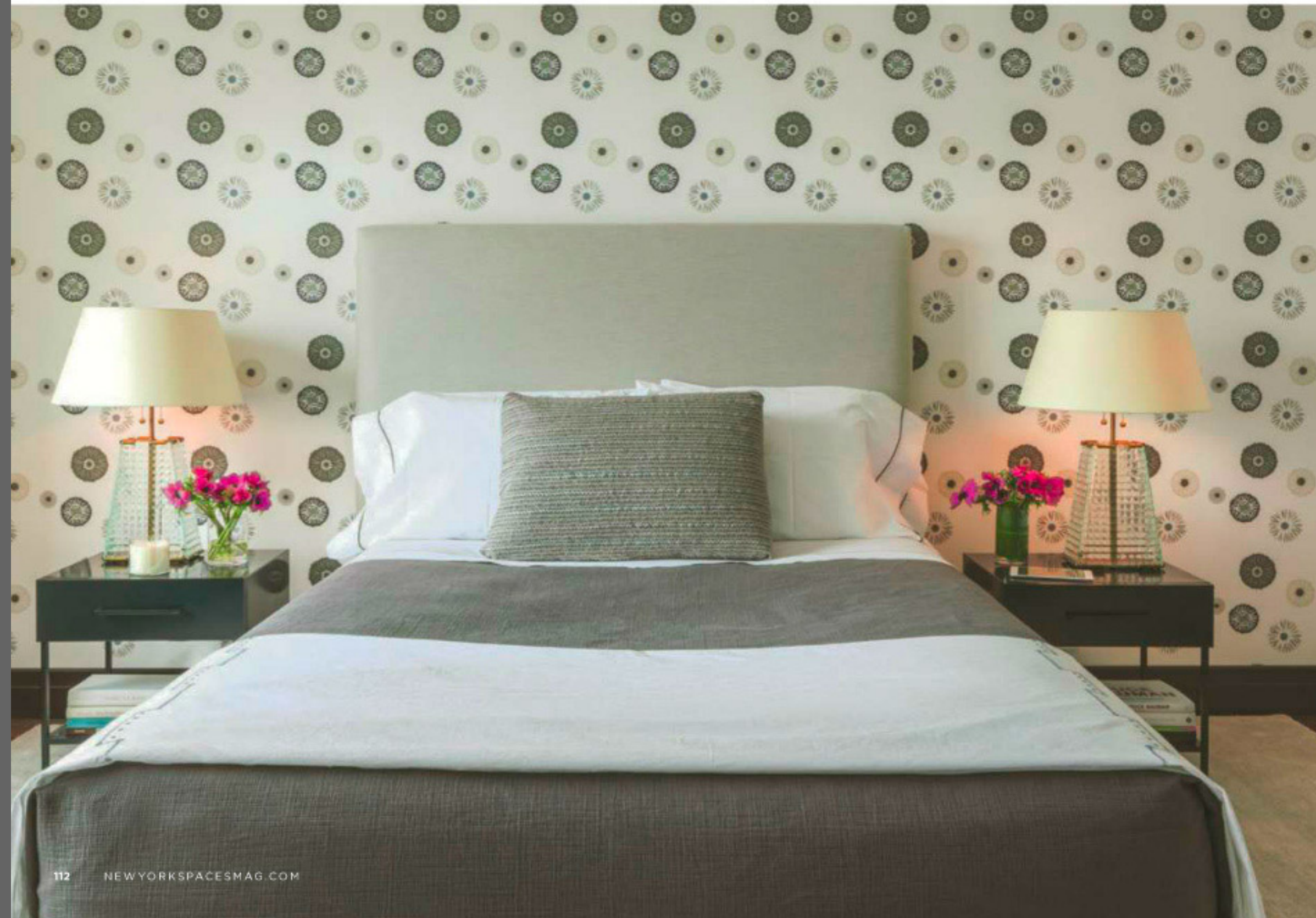
LEFT: Urban Archaeology's mosaic floor is a "grand element" that makes the master bath seem larger. Custom lacquer cabinetry with nickel pulls from Katonah Hardware and Circa sconces recall Deco's sleek style.

BELOW: Story's own Kimono wallcovering in a guest bedroom make inexpensive bedside tables from CB2 (refinished in black lacquer) pop. Robert Altman lamps and linens by Anichini and Julia B deliver the luxe elements.

room, where Story indulged a mix of glamorous finishes, including a lacquer-and-gold-leaf ceiling, shimmery Claremont drapes, and an Austrian chandelier (1970s) and sconces (1950s by Kalmar).

In the master, which Story wanted to make "serene and cocoonish," she got really touchy-feely, picking up the wife's favored purple shades on a lumbar pillow of mauve Sabina Fay Braxton fabric and a custom tufted headboard in a lilac Maharam textile with ribbon detail. The room's Elizabeth Dow raw silk wallcovering and Scala Luxury nightstands are luscious juxtapositions for a wood veneer LZP pendant.

And so it goes...soft against hard, matte versus reflective, organic materials paired with sleek ones. It's the sort of tension every good sensualist can love. **SEE RESOURCES** ■



Scala Luxury nightstands with parchment tops are the wife's favorite pieces in the apartment. Their metal-leaf façades, along with an Elizabeth Dow raw-silk wallcovering and a Sabina Fay lumbar pillow, bring muted shine to sumptuous Anichini linens and the more ethnic texture of a woven Stark carpet.

“BEDROOMS
SHOULD BE LUXURIOUS
RETREATS FROM
THE CRAZY LIFE OF
THE CITY.”

