

A Designer Spin on Small-Space Living

Comfortable, sophisticated, youthful, and functional. Those are the words Jesse Carrier and Mara Miller use to describe their vision for one unique residence on New York's Upper East Side—a project vastly different from the rest of their widely published portfolio. The husband-and-wife team behind **Carrier and Company** has designed homes for some of the city's highest-profile names (*Vogue* editor-in-chief Anna Wintour and photographer Annie Leibovitz among them). Given their combined 30 years in the industry, the duo didn't blink an eye when approached to design a one-bedroom model unit in the stately Carnegie Park condominium building. Needless to say, this isn't your average model unit.

THE PROJECT

Accustomed to working with highly opinionated homeowners of city apartments, country getaways, and chic offices, Carrier and Miller collaborated with market researchers and developers to settle on an interiors scheme that would entice potential buyers while allowing them to visualize their own possessions in the space. "It's a fun challenge to work with a developer, rather than an actual homeowner," says Miller. "The key lies in finding the right vibe that represents the range of buyers they're hoping to attract." Just as they would adapt their vision to a client's personality, taste, and expectations, the couple honed their design toward an ideal equilibrium: not too mass, not too niche, with a clean, uncluttered layout and enough well-chosen pieces to feel like a lived-in home.

THE PROCESS

Carrier and Miller began their work when the unit was freshly gutted, with only windows and walls before them. They were given a handful of months to develop the apartment's aesthetic. The result is a sensibility the two identify as their own interpretation of "Bohemian Glamour": forgoing the sheepskin-and-Moroccan-pouf route for an interior composed of contemporary and vintage pieces and textural accents, including a brass Sputnik chandelier above the dining table and grasscloth wallpaper in the master bedroom. Eye-catching artworks in the living room, such as photographer Thomas Jackson's *Broken Palette*, add an enigmatic element that speaks to a contemporary-minded

buyer. But paired with a deep, neutral sectional, the space achieves an elusive balance of edginess and comfort.

THE PHILOSOPHY

While still adhering to the aesthetic goals of the other parties involved, Carrier and Miller stayed true to their time-tested design principles: always including one piece of truly comfortable seating, incorporating a variety of textures and materials, and refraining from trends without clear longevity. “We also decided to avoid custom pieces and focus on furnishing the apartment with readily available retail furnishings,” says Miller. “This felt more true to potential buyers—and showed them how beautiful and attainable this lifestyle could be.”