



# FAMILY LIVING IN BLACK AND WHITE

Architecture by Wunderground Architecture + Design

Interior Design: Sissy + Marley

Builder: Liebhaber Company

An Upper East Side remodel turns conventional wisdom on its head in more ways than one.



New Yorkers will tell you that downtown lofts and Upper East Side living are contradictions in terms. This family set out to prove that wrong.

They worked with Architect Nancy Nienberg and Sissy + Marley Interior Design to bring the loft sensibility they loved (and lived in) to the uptown location where they wanted to raise their family. The ingredients were two adjoining apartments - chopped-up and characterless - stacked one floor above the other in a converted department store. The saving grace: 14-foot-high ceilings. Ripe for re-invention.

“It was a complicated conversion,” said Nienberg. “We had to figure out how to pump up the magnitude of the rooms to match the height of the ceilings and create that loft like feel - open, flexible space - while keeping it human scale. Bringing it both up and down in size.”



The goal was accomplished not only through spatial moves - including a complex stairway in the center of the space - but also by leveraging the black and white palette the clients developed with Sissy + Marley.

In the kitchen, the white and dark volumes emphasize the height of the ceilings, break up the large space visually, and delineate the working and storing zones.



“It was nice to play the black and white against each other,” said Nienberg. “The white is flat, while the black – Henrybuilt’s dark stained walnut - has so much materiality in it. It adds a lot of texture.”

The monotone palette is anything but monotonous. The black and white lets the textures and shapes sing. Bright colors don't bury the subtle beauty – like the marble veining and the figuring in the walnut cabinet fronts that add depth and bring nature inside. A far cry from the coldness associated with a 'colorless' palette.





The subtle sheen and the thin profile of the steel shelves add to the texture. Like a small piece of abstract art.





“Behind the elegant materiality, the Henrybuilt system products make it functional for the family,” says Nienberg.

From the kitchen to...

...the small family control center.





And, the hard-working entry that corrals everything from school backpacks, kid vehicles, and other essentials to grab when going and drop when coming.





The family's private spaces are located on the upper floor that also benefits from high ceilings and gracious windows.





“The crafted details in Henrybuilt’s work lend another layer of touch and sophistication,” said Nienberg. A modern system approach blended with traditional craft and quality.



It's no wonder that the clients sought out Sissy + Marley. They're known as masters at designing interiors that weave sophisticated adult décor and kid friendly spaces in a way that enhances both. The opposite of design-by-compromise.

That meant continuing the same level of quality – in touch, function, and longevity - into the children's rooms with Henrybuilt's wardrobe system. A solution for clients big and little. A solution that can stay put as the kids and décor grow up around it.





Black for kids rooms? Absolutely. Sissy + Marley proves that black-and-white spaces are as exciting for kids as they are sophisticated for adults.





A project that turned conventional wisdom on its head. A family home in black and white. An Upper East Side location with a downtown loft feel. Sophisticated décor and playful spaces all in one.

Colorful living in black and white.