

# Roundly Reenvisioned

A DESIGNER UPDATES HER OWN PARK AVENUE DUPLEX

Interior Architecture by John B. Murray/Interior Design by Tracey Winn Pruzan of Cullman & Kravis  
Text by Steven M. L. Aronson/Photography by Durston Saylor



Cullman & Kravis's Tracey Winn Pruzan, working with assistant Allison Russell Davis and architect John B. Murray, renovated the 4,500-square-foot Manhattan duplex that she shares with her family. ABOVE: The entrance hall. Nanz door hardware. OPPOSITE: A Joan Mitchell oil hangs in the living room. Settee damask, Rogers & Goffigon. Drapery fabric, Holland & Sherry. Roman shade sheer, Donghia. Rust pillow fabric, Cowtan & Tout. Lamp, Bernd Goeckler. Sconces, H. M. Luther. Holly Hunt fire tools and andirons.





I had thought it all through and knew how to work it all out, and I was my own client here, with no one to answer to but myself,” says Tracey Winn Pruzan in an access of exuberant solipsism. Having been associated for 17 years with Cullman & Kravis, she had indeed mastered the classic maneuvers of decorat-

ing. (The firm’s approach is famously sequential—floor plan, room-to-room flow.... That’s “the Cullman & Kravis way,” which not incidentally is the subtitle of the book *Decorating Master Class* that Pruzan recently coauthored with Elissa Cullman.)

Pruzan had decorated her apartment—a family-scale du-

plex in a prewar Park Avenue building—once before, when she moved in. But meanwhile she and her financier husband had been collecting furniture and art; her ideas had evolved; and her tastes had changed—it had gotten to the point where she felt there was no longer a clear design program in the apartment. What

she was envisioning now was formidable: nothing less than a big new family kitchen, new baths, new lighting and new moldings, doors, floors and ceilings. It would all add up to a cleaner-lined background (in the event, masterfully executed by architect John B. Murray) for the sumptuously new yet undemonstratively elegant

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decorating she had in mind. In the entrance hall, setting the tone and palette are the two subtly contrasting shades of the limestone that replaced the old wood floors, the gray-and-silver glaze of the ceiling cove and the shimmering gray of the stucco-painted walls. Pruzan could afford to indulge her predilection for colors that

make for a relatively chilly envelope because just inside is a wealth of warm-toned wood and vibrantly colored art. The couple's collection is distinguished by such artists as Robert Rauschenberg, Agnes Martin, Robert Ryman and Joan Mitchell (her refulgent *Field for Two* was, providentially, exactly the right size to

hang above the living room mantel), as well as by such later-emerging ones as John Currin and Peter Doig. And there is also Greg Colson's *Domestic Duties* in the kitchen and, on the landing, a Lowell Nesbitt painting of the apartment's own staircase, purchased from the previous owner's estate, that is moody, if not downright

ABOVE LEFT: The library. Sofa pillow fabrics, Holland & Sherry. Chair fabric, Holly Hunt. Wall light, Nicholas Antiques. Chandelier, Carlos de la Puente Antiques. Wall fabric, Cowtan & Tout. ABOVE: A pair of Italian consoles flank the dining room doorway. Dining chair fabric, Clarence House. Bernd Goeckler chandelier.

Altogether the 10-room duplex has that certain substance that is the Cullman & Kravis stamp.



**ABOVE:** Pruzan's daughter helped design her room. "If she is ever tired of the bright pink," Pruzan says, "we can always replace the rug and redo the pillows." Headboard and skirt, Ralph Lauren Home. **ABOVE RIGHT:** "The master bedroom is our sanctuary," says Pruzan. "It really feels very tucked away and quiet." Rogers & Goffigon drapery fabrics.

spooky. More festively, all the artwork in the library is of sweets, including two Wayne Thiebaud pastries and a Will Cotton oil of a trailer park built out of marshmallows, Hershey's and peppermints.

The antiques range magisterially from George IV games tables and Regency dining chairs to a Swedish Neoclassical chest and a Biedermeier

center table. For all that, Pruzan didn't hesitate to introduce contemporary furniture, such as the low table in the library and the long dresser in the master bedroom, as part of what she calls an "eclectic dialogue." The 1880 Sultanabad in the living room had been the couple's first purchase after they bought the apartment: Persimmon, denim blue, aqua

and bronze, it vibrates against the jewel tones of the art while also serving as a foil for the light upholstery (the sofas are covered in linen velvet and bronze linen damask—what Elissa Cullman has dubbed "Joe Chenille," meaning no-personality beige).

The dining room is a perfect square, which prompted Pruzan to make both the ceiling



and the table circular—"a play on the notion of shape." And because she had had the faux-ivory ceiling both articulated and hand-painted, she resorted to flat paint for the walls—"something we rarely do at Cullman & Kravis but, given everything that was going on here, the perfect nonevent." For the flooring, she specified a herringbone in a dark color

for a more contemporary look, then threw a hand-tufted Tibetan rug over it. The newly reconfigured master suite consists of a bedroom, a sitting room and his and her closets and baths. The entire space is harmonized via a palette of buttery beige and gray. "It's just like a luxurious hotel suite," Pruzan says. "We shut the door, and we feel that we're

at the Carlyle—never mind that in reality there are two teenagers right down the hall." Not every trace of the outside world has been expunged—the view from here is both arboreal (a canopy of treetops) and cultural (the Whitney Museum of American Art just up the street).

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that is the Cullman & Kravis stamp, to which Pruzan has indubitably applied her own inimitable dynamic. The beauty part is that the redecoration is not just for show. "It's formal enough that it looks like it belongs with the bones of the apartment," the designer assesses, "but not *so* fancy that I have to yell at my kids to stay out of a room." □