

AD

TALENT
SHOW
The Middle
East's top 50
designers
revealed

ROYAL VISIT
INSIDE THE SPLENDID COASTAL PALACE OF
H.E. SHEIKH MOHAMED BIN FAHED AL-THANI

In the heart of
Manhattan,
Palestinian-Lebanese
designer Ahmad
AbouZanat has
created a serene,
curated haven filled
with thoughtful details

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ALL THE SMALL THINGS

Brass sculptures by
Tom Corbin stand
next to a dining
table flanked by
Gabriel Scott
chairs. The
contemporary
chandelier is by
Lindsey Adelman.



HIS PROJECT'S OUTCOME SHOWCASES HOW TRUSTING THE DESIGN PROCESS can yield successful results and wonderful relationships," says Ahmad AbouZanat. Since the first meeting with the owners of this Manhattan apartment – a couple in their 50s who are in total sync with each other – the interior designer knew that everything would run smoothly. And there is no doubt that his instinct was correct.

Located in the lively NoMad neighbourhood (north of Madison Square Park and close to the Flatiron District, two areas known for their vibrant culinary scene), the 200-sq/m, two-bedroom apartment occupies a historic pre-war building. "The project brief was that this primary residence needed to feel comfortable and cosy," AbouZanat explains. "The aesthetic was important, but the main focus was how the space would be used and how it would feel. I was very inspired by how the clients envisioned living in their new home and we talked a lot about the small day-to-day things: how they like to sit and watch TV, how they like to entertain, how often they would have guests staying over in the home office. All this information helped me to find pieces and craft a space that perfectly suited them."

Thanks to the east and south facing windows overlooking the New York City skyline, the apartment is bathed in natural light. The warm grey-based palette helps to highlight the pops of colour in the artworks and accessories. "The idea was to keep the space looking timeless and modern," says AbouZanat. "All the materials chosen had to add to the warmth of the home, while keeping it understated rather than being overly luxurious." Nonetheless, they have a quiet opulence: walnut, grey-veined arabescato and chocolatey emperador marble, antique brass, cashmere and linen create depth and tactility.

With Palestinian and Lebanese origins, the Doha-born, Beirut-raised interior designer lived both in the city and in the mountains,



ABOVE: The kitchen is fitted with cabinetry by Blum, Nero Marquina worktops and a Dornbracht sink and taps. The stools are from DWR.

OPPOSITE PAGE FROM TOP: Ceramic discs by Mathieu Lehanneur (part of his 50 Seas series representing various seas at noon) hang in the master bedroom above a Holly Hunt bed. The bedside lamps are by Liaigre.

A Holly Hunt sofa anchors the living area, which also features an Apparatus Studio coffee table, AlexAllen Studio floor lamp and a Liagre rug.

TOP RIGHT: The clean-lined entryway sets the tone for the apartment.

“ I WANTED TO CREATE A HOME WITH THE UTMOST COMFORT AND SERENITY ”



which gave him the opportunity to observe how different lifestyles relate to – and often define – architecture and urban design. Abou-Zanat’s background constantly informs his own visual signature. It is characterised by the fusion of French and Middle Eastern aesthetics that pervades Lebanon, as well as his appreciation for the contemporary architecture rising out of the desert in Dubai, a city he frequently visits. He continues to hone his style in New York, where he has been at the helm of his studio, Project AZ, since 2017. This mix of rich references led the designer to source every piece for this apartment with care, as if it were for himself – with one notable exception.

“The dining table is the first purchase my clients made together, so it had sentimental value and it was the only piece of furniture we all agreed to keep,” says AbouZanat. “I wanted that space to be the focal point. Every item was carefully chosen to draw the eye to that part of the apartment. The minimalist and impactful design of the Drop chandelier by Lindsey Adelman gets the initial attention and leads to discovering the furnishings.”

At the heart of the project, the dining area really drives home the wow factor, aided by an artwork by Michael Angel. “I spotted it online, fell in love with it and bookmarked the link for a little over a year until I found the perfect wall for it,” AbouZanat recalls. “When the clients visited Michael’s studio, they fell in love with the piece at first sight. Adding it to a space that I designed felt very special.”

Sitting above the bespoke master bed, *50 Seas* by Mathieu Lehanneur – which is the French designer’s first body of work in ceramic – was discovered by the owners at a design fair in New York, following AbouZanat’s recommendation. Elsewhere, an artwork by Cuban artist Luis Alvarez, a light fixture by Apparatus, and furniture by Holly Hunt, Liagre and Molteni adorn different areas. “We sourced pieces that have generous dimensions and impact, but still add a feeling of calm,” says AbouZanat. “I really wanted to create a home with the utmost comfort and serenity.” Mission accomplished. projectaz.design