INTERIORS

Penthouse in a former tailoring factory. In the heart of Old Town Philadelphia

The owner of this impressive apartment (over 500 square meters) is Dr. Matthew Beshara, an obstetrician and clinical professor of gynecology at the University of Pennsylvania. After a grueling battle with Covid, Matthew returned to life with renewed energy. In the wake of the changes, he decided to find a new place for himself. He chose a penthouse in a 19th-century tailoring factory. He entrusted the interior design to the outstanding Alisa Bloom.

Author Basia Siemianowska - Aniol

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Design: Alisa Bloom. Photo: Isabel Parra

The apartment is located in the heart of Old Town Philadelphia, steps from Betsy Ross's home and Elfreth's Alley, the oldest residential street in America.

- The client was fascinated by my characteristic design style, in which I layer vintage elements. He especially liked the exhibition of works by renowned Italian and French artists from the mid-20th century. Matthew entrusted me with the task of filling his new nest with history, character and soul - says the interior designer.
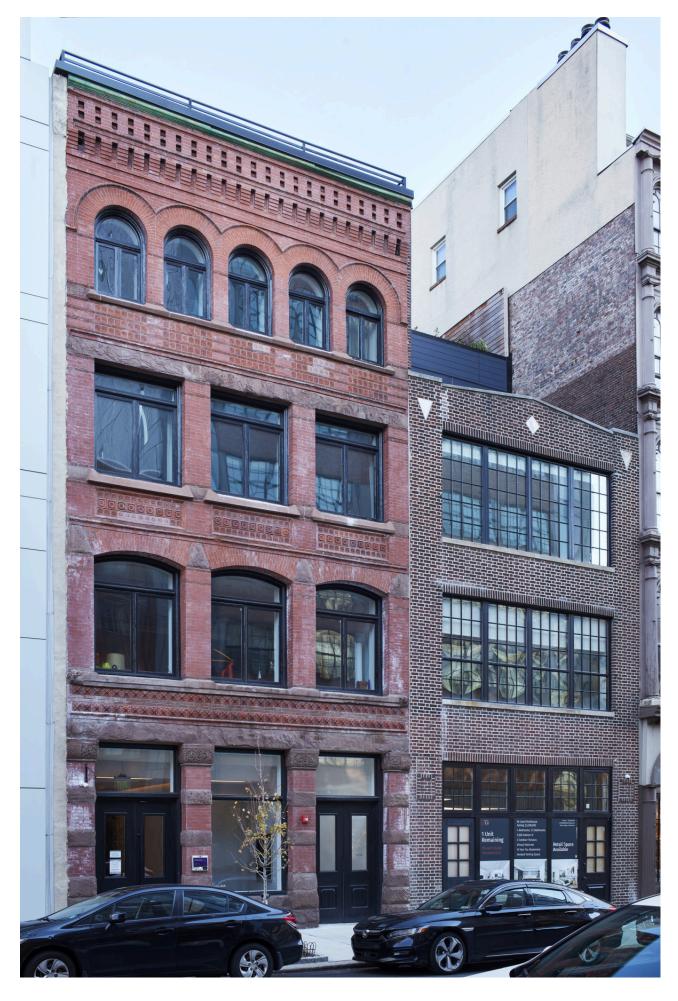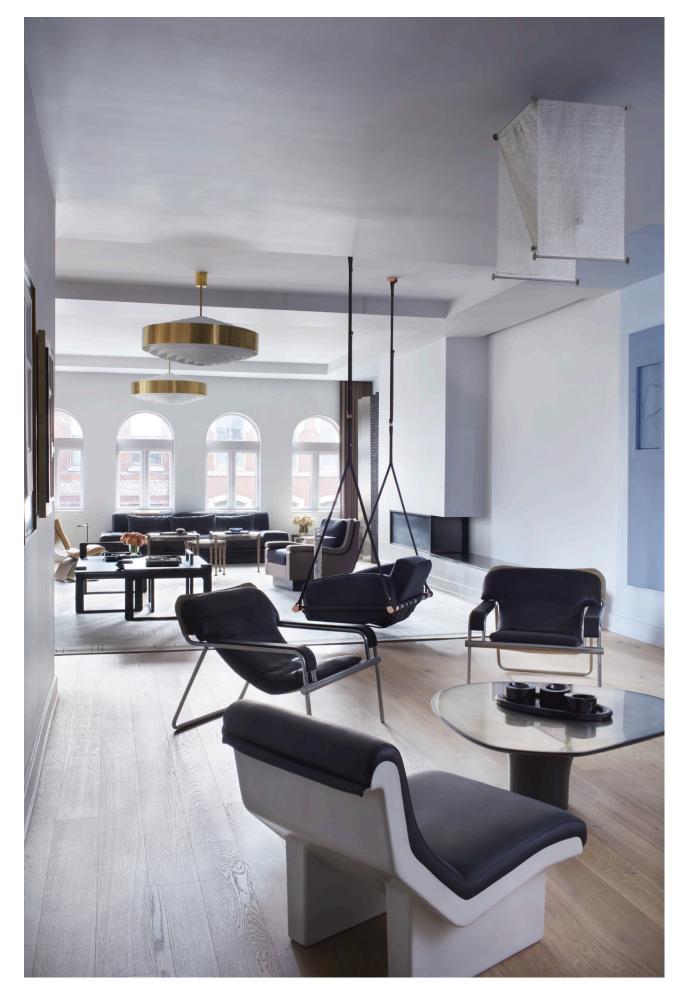
Photo: Isabel Parra

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Design from flea markets and auction houses

The space, as expected by the owner, was filled with ancient elements obtained from European flea markets and auction houses.

There were also carefully selected works of art by renowned Italian and French artists from the mid-20th century, as well as young artists and designers who enlivened the interior with their works. These include several new works of art, sofas in the living room: one by Brooklyn artist JM Szymanski, another by Australian artist Grazia & Co, and a game table by Andrea Tognon.

A lamp by Hannes Peer hung in the dining room, paired with a table created by Samuel Accoceberry. The living room has two impressive ceiling fixtures from the 1960s, casting mesmerizing light that envelops the space with timeless elegance.
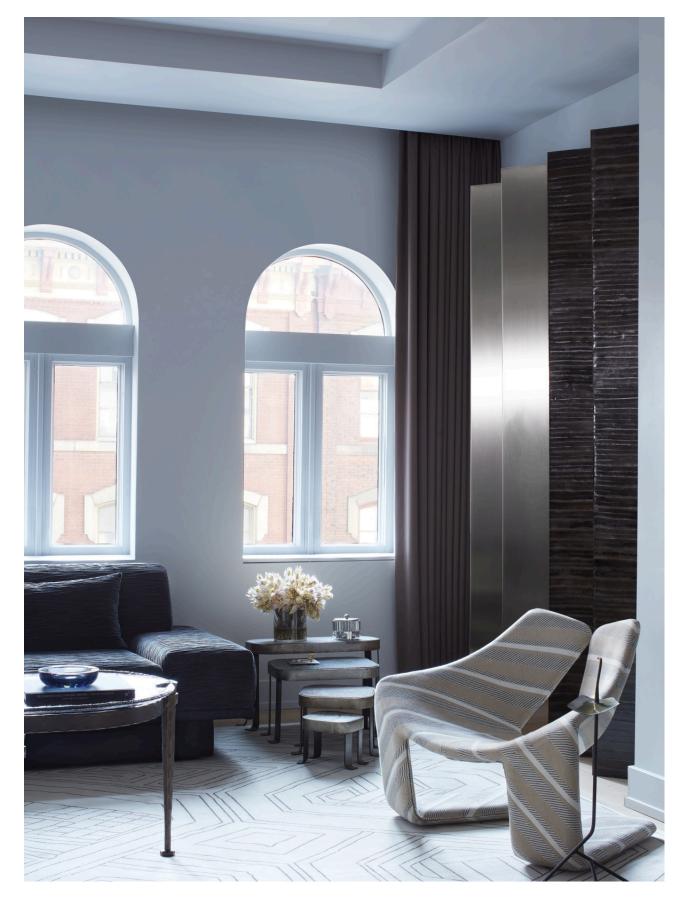
- These are all elements that became important in the project. However, it was the discovery of tall Florentine stainless steel panels and eel skin that captured the essence of the room one hundred percent. Initially, the panels were used in a nightclub. In the home space, these unusual artifacts not only added a pinch of sophistication to the interior, but also set the tone for the entire space.
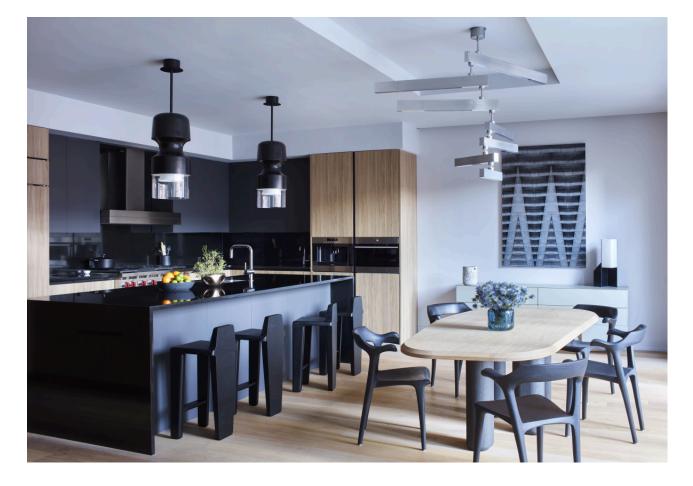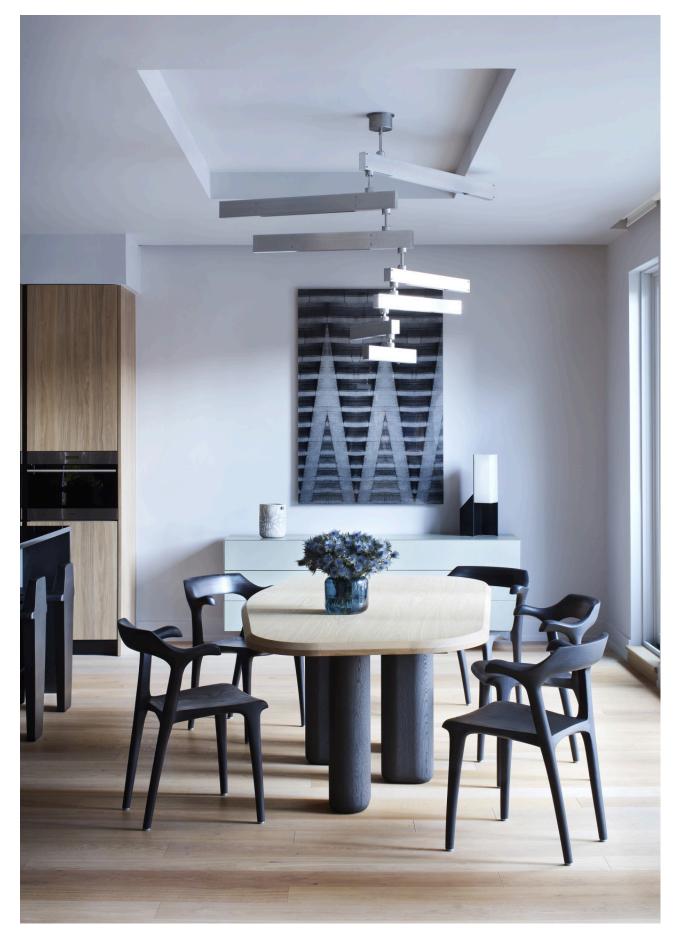
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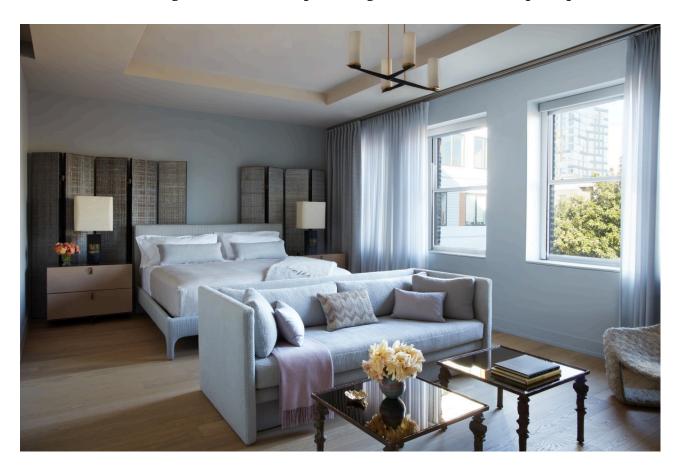
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A hospitable refuge for beloved sisters

A key element of the design work was to create a hospitable refuge for the owner's beloved sisters. Heavy stone panels by French artist Wilfred Rouissi rise behind the custom-made bed upholstery at the back. This contrasting mix of materials gives the space depth and character, creating a layering effect where hard and soft structures meet side by side.

The guest sanctuary is decorated with carefully selected Italian lamps from the 1960s. They add a nostalgic charm to the space. Next to it is a chair by Kwok Hoi Chan from the 1970s, re-upholstered in luxurious Casamance fabric. There is also a tall mirrored rotating panel from the 1960s, which the architect found at a flea market in Bologna. The mirror part is aged and has a warm pink patina.

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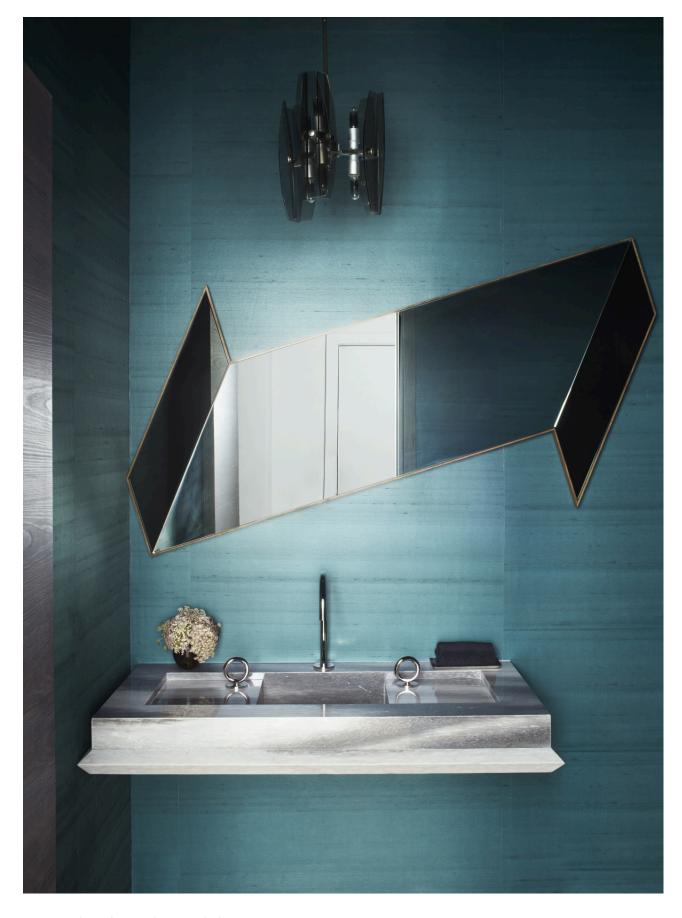
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Intimate charm despite the huge space

The result of the architect's work is an interior with a warm atmosphere in which each element tells its own story. - Despite its vastness, the house exudes an intimate charm, offering relief from the hustle and bustle of the outside world - says Alisa Bloom.

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