

# NYC&G

New York Cottages and Gardens

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**HAMPTON BAYS**  
**LENOX HILL**  
**SAGAPONACK**  
**SOUTHAMPTON**  
**UPPER EAST SIDE**

**FALL FLAIR**



# FOREVER YOURS



The owner of a prewar apartment in Lenox Hill finally gets her dream come true

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
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**White On White** (THIS SPREAD) In the living room, a pair of antique bergères from John Rosselli & Associates flank the fireplace and a custom mirror from Jinpra. Other seating pieces include a pair of slipper chairs from Schneller Inc. and a custom sofa from Jonas. See *Resources*.



**Guilty Pleasures**  
 (OPPOSITE) In the dining room, chairs from Cedric Dupont Antiques surround a custom glass table by Bryant Glass & Shower Doors. The hand-painted wall covering is by Artgroove and the chandelier is from Scalamandré. (THIS PAGE LEFT) In the kitchen, a ceiling fixture from Ann-Morris Inc. hangs above an island by Vella Interiors. The barstools are from Artistic Frame. (THIS PAGE BELOW) An antique high-back chair upholstered in a Claremont fabric and a French Louis XVI ebony and brass-inlay vitrine occupy a corner of the living room. See Resources.

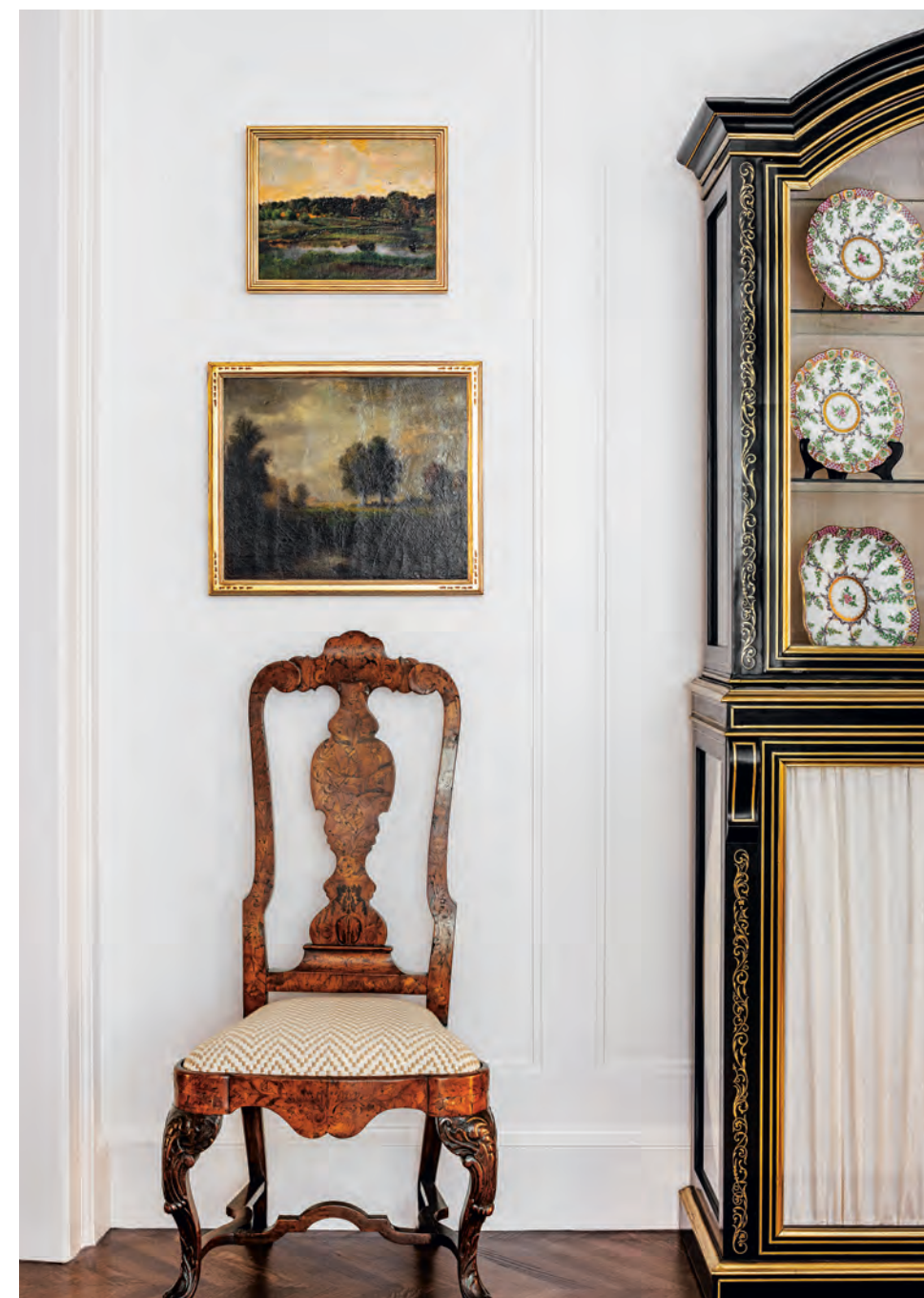
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or many years, Marsha Johnson inhabited an apartment that existed only in her mind's eye. "I dreamed of living in a Parisian apartment," she recounts, "but one that happened to be located in New York. And that's what I have now."

A longtime resident of a venerable prewar building on East 72nd Street, Johnson had coveted the edifice's "C-line" apartments, noted for their expanses of south-facing windows. When a three-bedroom unit came on the market, she bid quickly, even though the raw space was "a junk heap," as she describes it.

Johnson, who has been a private jewelry dealer for decades, commissioned interior designer Jessica Alex to transform the unit into a certifiable gem. "I'm used to traditional settings, and Marsha loves traditional things, so I knew right away that we were going to get along well," recalls Alex, who worked for many years with decorator Bunny Williams before establishing her own namesake practice. Knowing that her client wanted a classic white-on-white Parisian-style apartment, Alex convinced Johnson to do something a little more unexpected: Introduce multiple shades of white, along with golds and Champagnes in different patterns and textures. "An all-white room," she comments, "needs some layering in order to create depth."

The dining room, for starters, seems aglow all day long. On the walls, Ron Genereux of the Manhattan-based decorative painting studio Artgroove created a tableau of gold-leaf branches laden with fluttering birds and butterflies. Johnson was still residing in the building as her new home was coming alive, so she would frequently stop in to assess the progress. "It was such a pleasure for





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**Charming Chambers**  
(OPPOSITE) In a guest room, a bed upholstered in Holland & Sherry's Savile Row flannel is dressed with Frette sheets. The custom hand-knotted rug is from Doris Leslie Blau. (THIS PAGE LEFT) A Bunny Williams–designed Belle chandelier from Currey & Company hangs in the cozy den. The custom faux-bois rug is from Stark. (THIS PAGE BELOW) In the primary bedroom, flower prints by photographer Ron Van Dongen hang on striped walls hand-painted by Artgroove. The bed is upholstered in Montceau Ivoire from Métaphores and the chandelier is from Vaughan. See Resources.

me to see the artists on their ladders painting twigs and flowers," she says. "The room is magical."

A lifelong collector of French furniture, *objets*, and antiques, Johnson already had the makings of a handsome furnishings plan, but she and Alex frequently went shopping for fabrics, lighting, and rugs to tie everything together. Alex pinpoints an upholstered tiger-print stool—now positioned prominently between a pair of bergères in the living room—as the “jumping-off point” for the apartment’s decorating scheme. “Marsha has piles of books about noteworthy Parisian places and stacks of tear sheets for reference,” recalls Alex, “and we had a great time getting this space into shape. She likes refined things, and she’s a very refined person.”

Johnson leans toward a more classical French style, but she was open to Alex’s idea to introduce contemporary accents, such as light fixtures that Alex considers “the jewelry of the apartment, which is particularly apt given Marsha’s involvement with fine jewelry over the years.” Accordingly, a customized multi-globed chandelier dangles from the dining room ceiling, a French glass globe from Ann-Morris Inc. illuminates the kitchen island, and the rings of a Bunny Williams Belle ceiling fixture appear to hover in the den.

“Marsha kept referring to this home as her ‘forever apartment,’ and just knowing that made me want to do whatever it took to create it for her,” says Alex. “What Jessica did turned out so right,” Johnson adds, “that I said to her, ‘If I were younger, I’d want to go into business with you. I’d do anything—except the bookkeeping and the billing!’” ✨

