In the entrance area of a New York loft ren-
ovated and decorated by David Kleinberg, a root bowl from Amy Perlin Antiques is dis.
played below a bronze balustrade by David
Kein played below a bronze balustrade by David
Kleinberg Design Assoc. with Bill sulivan.
Facing page: The living roum's fireolace Facing page: The living room's fireplace
and wenge-paneled wall were custom made
by David Kleinherg by David Kleinberg Dosign Assoc...the vin-
tage low chairs are from Amy Perlin Antage low chairs are trom Amy Perlin An-
tiques, and the cotton-and-sisal rug is by
Patterson, Flynn \& Martin. See Resources.


## POLISHED PERFORMANCE

INTERIOR DESIGNER DAVID KLEINBERG RECASTS A MINIMALIST MANHATTAN LOFT INTO A LUXURIOUS PIED-À-TERRE FOR A FILM DIRECTOR AND HIS YOUNG FAMILY TEXT BY SHAX RIEGLER • PHOTOGRAPHY BY PIETER ESTERSOHN • STYLED BY LILI ABIR REGEN

Orson Welles once said, "A film is never really good unless the camera is an eye in the head of a poet." Decorating requires its practitioners to think just as lyrically as they conjure emotions and associadimensional settings. It's a sentiment boldly fulfilled by David Kleinberg when he was enlisted by a top Hollywood director to create a family home "from scratch, from absolute empty," he says.
The space the director and his wife handed over was a large but banal duplex loft in a 19th-century building in Tribeca, Kleinberg notes, "chopped arbitrarily into rooms and fitted with stock materials and standard hardware." He had to make it warm and inviting, though it is not the family's main residence "ts almost a reverse weekend house," the designer explains, "because they live in a very rural enviplace to feel like Manhattan."

Besides that directive and a request for a couple f knock-your-socks-offdetails, the lients pretty much got out of the way so Kleinberg and his team ould gut the place and work their magic in first decisions was to build an imposing fireplace near the entrance to the apartment in lieu of one tha near the entrance to the apartment in lieu of one that white wall. Kleinberg installed a monumental con struction inspired by Paul Dupré-Lafon, a 1940s French interior architect and Hermès product designer. The backlit monolith of contrasting polished and chiseled limestone sparkling with inlaid bronze seems to float against a field of wenge paneling One wow moment down.)
While the fireplace makes an immediate impact on visitors, close by is another breathtaking ges ture: an open staircase composed of a cascade of cantilevered limestone blocks nestled into a twostory wall paneled with satiny wenge. Its sinuous


cast-bronze balustrade, conceived by Kleinberg's team and artist Bill Sullivan, depicts twining branches, pinecones, and seedpods. "I wanted it to be es, pinecones, and seedpods. Twanted it to be rest of the space," Kleinberg says. "We looked at ironwork by the early-20th-century French designer Edgar Brandt and came up with this naturalistic fantasy that seems to grow out of the steps. 1 think it's wildly successful." To add a touch of the grittier New York sensibility the clients desired, Kleinberg installed the kind of cast-iron columns one expects to find in a downwith spindly things, and when you realized they weren't cast iron, you felt cheated," the designer explains. "So we ended up getting antique columns from a salvage company down South. They had been stripped, so we actually had to age them, but the space sort of demanded their presence."

As for the furnishings, the focus was on a subtle lay ering of warm colors and enticing textures. "Thecl ents didn't want it to feel like an art all which many lofts do," Kleinberg says. As a result, nothing here is stark or hard Instead the decoration is sometimes surprising mix of midcentury -modern clarity and country-house eclecticism united by luxe material sand an understated palette In the upstair amily room, a marquetry screen à lean-Michel Frank stands alongside a quartet of '30s-style chairs Fank stands alongside a quartet of ' 30 s -style chairs athered around, in Kleinberg's words, "the sort of drawing room." An Indian inlaid table and an overscale suede ottoman complete the intimate group. When it cameto furniture, we didn't want it to be too modern," the designer says. "I veered away from the kind of low-slung, square things you would expect. Perfect lighting was another part of the equa fion. Though lofts may have a reputation for being
bright and sunny they actually present a challenge. "You're always trying to fight against the dark center of the space, because the windows are way at the front or back," Kleinberg says. Lighting expert ininghammer came up with a solution well as pinpoints fortask is cracel behind frosted-glass ceiling pane "It was the only way to avoid having 2,000 spotlights," asserts Kleinberg who installed asklight above the stair Kleinberg, who installed a skylight above the stair-
case for additional glow, case for additional glow.
To imagine it looking any other way "The that it's hard to imagine it looking any other way. "The goal was to
give this place a sense of permanence," Kleinberg says. "The first thing the wife did when they moved in was to organize the kitchen and fill the cabinets with food. Some people would put their clothes awayshe stocked the kitchen. That's when I knew they were in it for the long haul." -

In the master bedroom, a vintage French
armchair trom Maison Gerard and a
 by David Klainberong Desirign Alace: theo is bed
holstered in $\begin{aligned} & \text { Nancy Corzine fabric }\end{aligned}$ holstered in a Nancy Corrine fabric.
Facing page, clockwise from top left:
The master bath faatures bleached. The e master batht features bleached-
anigre cabinetry. Glass ties from Wall anigre cabinetry. Glass tiles from Walker
Zanger surround d custom-made wenge
vanity with vanity with a Vitratorm sink and Water--
works fiftings in the powder room. The works fittings in the powder room. The
walls of the guest room are covered in
a Rubellil inen from Bergame Fabrics: the a Rubelli linen from Bergamo Fabrics; the
bedis $\begin{aligned} & \text { b David Kleinberg Design Assoc., }\end{aligned}$
th il be is by Davia Keinberg Design Ass
the klismos chair is vintage, the desk
is 1660 s. and the is 1960 s, and the rug is by pattes
Flynn $\&$ Martin. See Resources.

