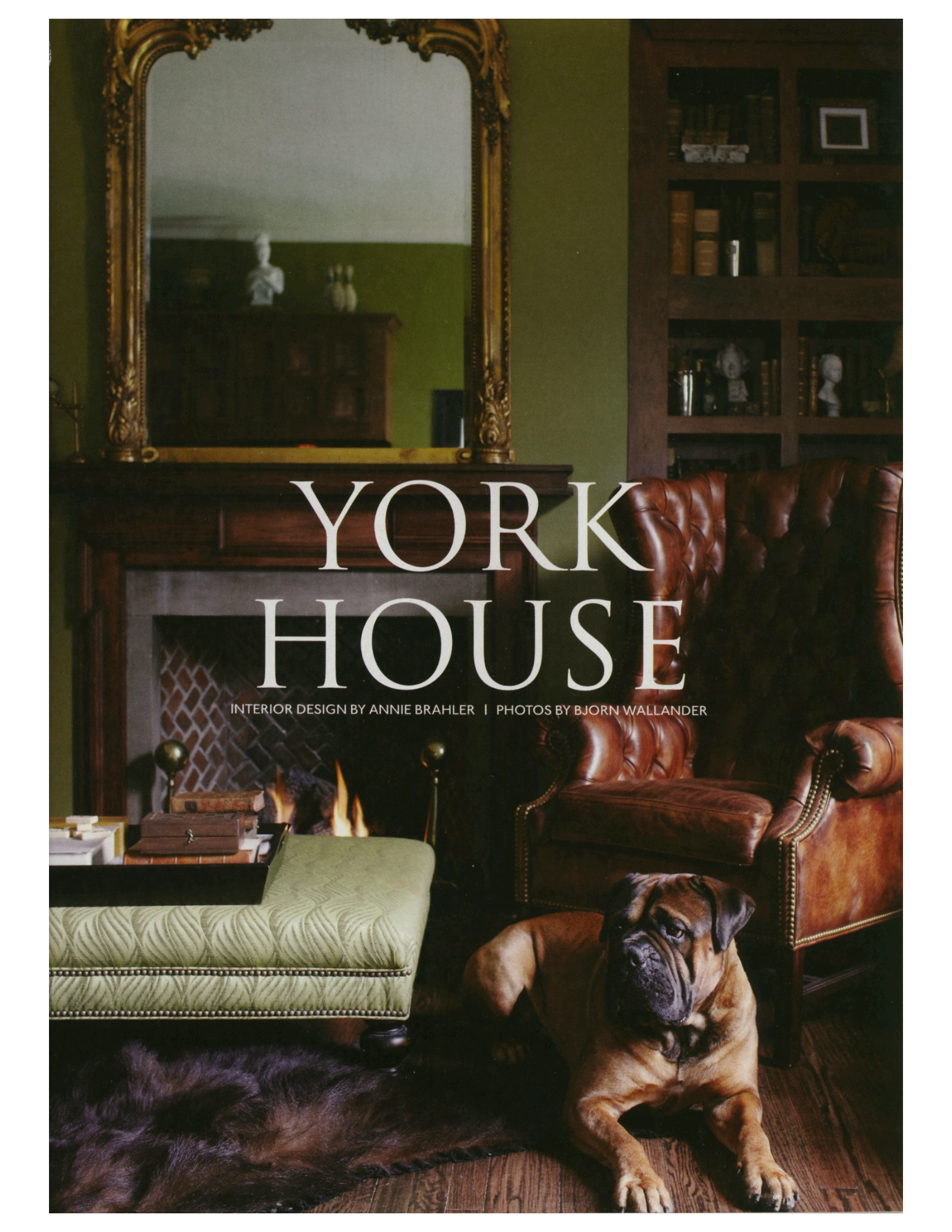


ELEGANT LIVING



A LADUE NEWS PUBLICATION

A photograph of a classic interior. In the foreground, a large, brown leather tufted chair sits on a wooden floor. A dog, possibly a Mastiff, is lying on the floor in front of the chair. To the left, a green tufted ottoman is visible. In the background, a fireplace with a brick surround has a fire burning. Above the fireplace is a large, ornate gold mirror. To the right, a dark wood bookshelf is filled with books and decorative objects. The overall atmosphere is warm and elegant.

YORK HOUSE

INTERIOR DESIGN BY ANNIE BRAHLER | PHOTOS BY BJORN WALLANDER



BLACK WALLS PROVIDE A DRAMATIC BACKDROP FOR THE COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS AND MEMORABILIA IN THE ENTRANCE TO THE BAR.

YH

BY NANCY ROBINSON

Entering the lobby of York House feels more like stepping inside a chic boutique hotel in London or Paris than an apartment building in the Central West End. But that's exactly the kind of experience and aesthetic developers Sam Koplak and Ted Gast set out to create when they transformed the St. Louis landmark building into a modern urban residence.

Located on Lindell Boulevard a few doors east of The Chase Park Plaza and Forest Park, York House is an Italian Renaissance-style building designed by Chase Ullman in 1922. More recently, it's been completely reimagined and recast to accommodate a modern lifestyle with a nod to a grand past.



York House features 33 gorgeous apartments, including a penthouse with a spiral staircase leading to a private rooftop terrace. As beautiful as the individual dwellings are; however,



TOP RIGHT: QUIRKY DETAILS ENHANCE THE VINTAGE-CHIC ATMOSPHERE.
BOTTOM RIGHT: A GREAT PLACE FOR A DRINK AND A GAME OF CARDS.



BOOKS, GAMES AND LIBATIONS ARE STAPLES IN THE LIBRARY BAR.



A RUSTIC, CUSTOM-MADE TABLE WITH A RECLAIMED-WOOD TOP IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO GATHER AROUND FOR A DRINK WHEN FRIENDS COME TO CALL. EACH RESIDENT HAS HIS OR HER OWN MINIATURE LIQUOR CABINET COMPLETE WITH BRASS NAMEPLATE.

they only are part of what makes this \$12-million development so remarkable. It is the common areas, notably the lobby, drawing room and library bar, which set York House apart and impart the chic European ambience that is so palpable.

“The design direction of the lobby, drawing room, and library bar was inspired by European boutique hotels, specifically the Hotel Sacher Wien in Vienna,” Koplár explains. “Ted and I commissioned LID Design Collaborative in New York to produce the concept design package from these inspirations.”

Working off LID’s detailed architectural renderings, the York House common areas were brought to life with accents, fixtures and furnishings sourced by interior designer Annie Brahler, stylist and owner of Euro Trash. Brahler’s own home in Jacksonville, Ill., is extensively featured in a 10-page story in the May 2012 issue of *House Beautiful*.

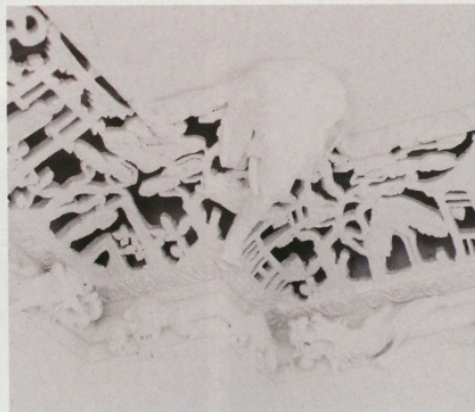
“Sam Koplár had a clear vision of shedding the stuffy

image of luxury living and wanted to give the historic building a cool, modern vibe,” Brahler explains. “In designing the common areas of York House, it was important that the spaces didn’t feel impersonal. We wanted

to avoid what happens so often in luxury apartments—a pretty still life in the lobby, serving no function and offering no sense of arriving home. When working on the common rooms, we were intent on offering the residents rooms that could be a real extension of their personal living space—rooms that they would find themselves using and enjoying often. The common spaces at York House are a part of home to the residents.”

Indeed, the large, sun-drenched drawing room off the lobby on the first floor is a wonderful place for residents to start the day. Swathed

in soft, ethereal, light-reflecting colors and fabrics, the room is a cheerful and serene setting in which to enjoy a cup of morning coffee by the fireplace, watch the news



THE EXOTIC, PIERCED-METAL CORNICE IN THE PENTHOUSE CONSERVATORY IS AN ORIGINAL FEATURE OF THE BUILDING, WHICH WAS BUILT IN 1922.



THE PENTHOUSE RETAINS IMPORTANT ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES, INCLUDING WOOD FLOORS, WAINSCOT WALLS AND ARTISTIC PLASTER CEILING.



ABOVE: THE CREAMY COLOR PALETTE AND LIGHT-REFLECTING SURFACES MAKE THE YORK HOUSE DRAWING ROOM AN ESPECIALLY CHEERFUL SPOT DURING THE DAYLIGHT HOURS.

NEXT PAGE: A PRIVATE RESIDENCE IN YORK HOUSE WAS DESIGNED BY ANNIE BRAHLER, WHO ALSO DESIGNED THE COMMON AREAS IN THE APARTMENT BUILDING.



“ Sam Koplak had a clear vision of shedding the stuffy image of luxury living and wanted to give the historic building a cool, modern vibe. ”

or read the newspaper. It also is an elegant meeting place to greet visitors.

Conversely, in the evening, the dark, old-school library bar is the residents' hands-down favorite place to gather. "The library bar is the place to go to sit by the fire, enjoy a cocktail, play a game of chess, entertain friends or just unwind," Brahler says. "Each resident has a personal, monogrammed liquor cabinet, and the room is stocked with barware and everything needed to have an impromptu cocktail party. The library bar is filled with sumptuous leather and high-pile velvet and brimming with collected vintage and antique pieces from France, Holland and Belgium, offering residents an interesting, cozy, thought-provoking experience."

And in the end, that's precisely what Koplar and Gast hoped to create: a beautiful, inspiring, boutique-like apartment experience that provides residents with a sense of place, community and life well-lived.



(Editor's note: At press time, all but two of the apartment units at York House have been rented. Also still available: the 3,100-square-foot penthouse, which has been totally renovated and improved for a sophisticated 21st century lifestyle while retaining much of its original grandeur, including hardwood floors, wood-paneled walls, ornate plaster ceilings, clerestory with stained glass windows and exotic pierced-metal moldings.) ♦

CUSTOM-MADE WALLPAPER IS DISTINGUISHED BY THE YORK HOUSE MONOGRAM.



PHOTO BY NATHAN AMBUS

THE YORK HOUSE PATIO IS ANOTHER PLEASANT GATHERING SPOT WHEN THE WEATHER IS FAIR.