

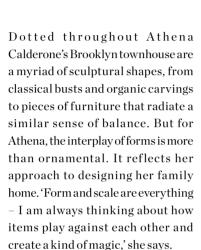
the attraction of opposites

Interior designer Athena Calderone's Brooklyn home is a triumph of cool contrasts – a place where curves meet sharp angles, dark balances light and solidity finds its sense of flow

PHOTOGRAPHY Matthew Williams STYLING Colin Samuel King/Edge Reps WORDS Jo Leevers





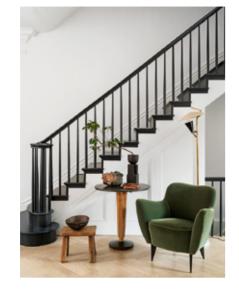


Athena relishes a challenge: she is the woman behind the lifestyle site eye-swoon.com, a stylist, a cook and a writer (her latest book is Live Beautiful) and the opportunity to push herself as an interior designer came in the shape of this brownstone townhouse. 'I was itching to work on a home that scared me a bit, where I had the scope to juxtapose traditional architecture with my kind of modernity,' she explains.

She moved here from a contemporary condo in New York (Livingetc visited in March 2014) with her husband Victor Calderone, a music producer and DJ, and their son Jivan, 17. Athena was drawn to the house's combination of 'grandeur and grit' and she couldn't wait to meld together her favourite architectural influence s-plus a good dose of Brooklyn attitude.

But first, to manage the architectural side of the house's renovation, Athena called upon Elizabeth Roberts Architects - dubbed 'the townhouse queen' by New Yorkers in the know. Athena wanted to open up the entire upper ground floor, also removing the wall between the staircase and the living room.

Now, the house's architectural elements – fireplaces, the staircase, window frames and an arched doorway - stand out in crisp, uncompromising black against walls in palest grey



home profile

THE OWNERS

Interior designer and writer Athena Calderone, her husband Victor Calderone, a music producer and DJ, their son Jivan, 17, and rescue puppy Tuco.

THE PROPERTY

A 1900s brownstone in Cobble Hill. Brooklyn. The upper ground floor has an open-plan living room with dining area. the kitchen and a work nook, plus a WC. The first floor has the master suite and Victor's recording studio. The top floor has Jivan's bedroom and bathroom, a family room, Athena's office, a guest bedroom and a laundry.

(Wevet by Farrow & Ball). But for Athena, such architectural features are less a centrepiece and more a starting point for her own arrangements. 'When I think about composition, I always try to break symmetry,' she says. Yes, seating is drawn together loosely around the fireplace, but the more powerful dynamic comes from the way in which furniture shapes interact – the curves of the Bellini sofa set against the sharp angles of the Apparatus coffee table, for example. 'When you juxtapose something feminine, soft and curvaceous against something more masculine, hard-lined and bold, you create a certain voltage. Put together, the opposition ends in harmony,' she says.

Athena's near-monochrome palette also helps bring out the quiet dramaofherinteriors. The contrast of whites and creams against harsher

blacks always engages the eye,' she says. 'If there's too much colour or pattern, your eye doesn't know where to land.'

When Athena and Victor left their previous home, they sold all their furniture: 'Yes, everything - I wanted to start afresh,' she laughs. Buther version of starting an ewin volved the best of vintage and antique furniture. 'I was like an animal on the hunt for the right pieces - voracious, calculating and precise, 'she jokes.

This is a serene, balanced home, but the ultimate test of how practical it is recently arrived in the shape of Tuco the rescue puppy. So far, he has a healthy respect for his surroundings. 'Much as I love him, if Tuco started gnawing on the Adnet $side board, it would not be \, OK, 'A then a \, says \, with \, a \, smile.$

Athena is the creator of lifestyle site eye-swoon.com. Her latest book, Live Beautiful (Abrams), is out now

WORK NOOK A built-in soapstone desk sits neatly in one corner of the kitchen - and has a classic Brooklyn view to boot. Chair, vintage Jean Prouvé. Upholstered stool, Green River STAIRCASE The hallway wall was removed to maximise the feeling of space. A bonus is that it makes a feature of the original staircase. The chair and table are vintage finds.

OFFICE Athena is drawn to furniture forms that feel rooted and sturdy. 'I look at how something connects to the floor and how chunkier pieces can ground a grouping,' she says. **Table**, vintage Angelo Mangiarotti. **Chair**, Perspective Studio 52 livingetc.com

MASTER BEDROOM Markets and auctions were Athena's first port of call to find pieces that struck a chord. She loves the voltage that's created when you juxtapose curves with hard lines. Chandelier, vintage Angelo Lelli. Bed and curtains, all Restoration Hardware. Wrought-iron bench, vintage 1950s French. Artwork by Struan Teague



home truths

DESIGN OBJECT ON YOUR WISH LIST?

A Rogan Gregory light sculpture.

GO-TO SUPPER AT THE END OF A BUSY DAY?

I will always make a whole roasted chicken with a ton of veggies.

LIPSTICK YOU SWEAR BY?

Dragon Girl by NARS.

OUTFIT FOR WALKING THE DOG?

Jeans and a tee.

AND FOR A NIGHT OUT? A silky slip dress.

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLAYLIST AT HOME?

Cigarettes After Sex's Radio on Spotify.

PLANS

