

## An elevated penthouse brings warmth and craft to Williamsburg living

In the heart of Williamsburg, designer Sara Iannicello reimagines urban luxury with a home that balances openness and intimacy, standing apart from the city's fast-paced evolution. Photographed by Richard J Weinberger and Guida Paoloni. Interior design by Makers Collective Design. Production by Karine Morlé.

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On the corner of Union Avenue in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, a new residential space has taken form. Designed by Sara Iannicello, founder and creative director of **Makers Collective Design**, the penthouse offers a study between old and new, merging openness and intimacy, and refinement and warmth.

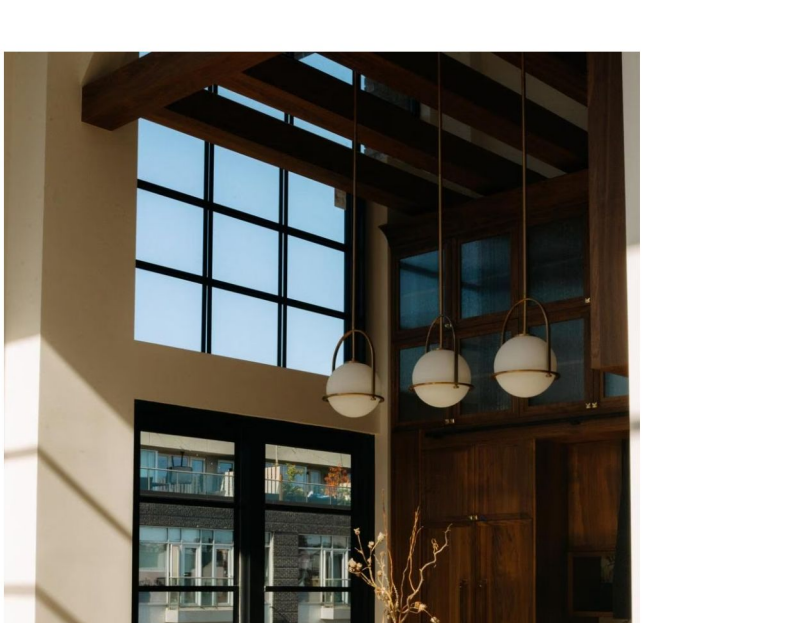
The homeowners, who have chosen to remain anonymous, were attracted to Williamsburg not for its notoriety, but for its enduring character. As Iannicello explains, "They were drawn to Williamsburg for its strong sense of neighbourhood, creative energy, and connection to Brooklyn's broader cultural landscape." It's a sentiment that feels increasingly rare in a neighbourhood often defined by its rapid transformation.

Here, however, the intention was different from the outset. "From the beginning, the building was designed to support a calm, grounded, and enduring way of living rather than a highly public lifestyle."

That ethos is immediately legible in both the architecture and interiors. Williamsburg itself provides a rich and dimensional backdrop—one that informed every design decision. "Williamsburg is one of Brooklyn's most layered and creative neighbourhoods, shaped by a mix of historic residential streets, former industrial buildings, and a strong maker culture that continues to define its identity," Iannicello notes. Yet what distinguishes this particular location is its subtle duality: "It carries Brooklyn's global creative energy, yet the immediate context feels quieter, more residential, and rooted in daily neighbourhood life."

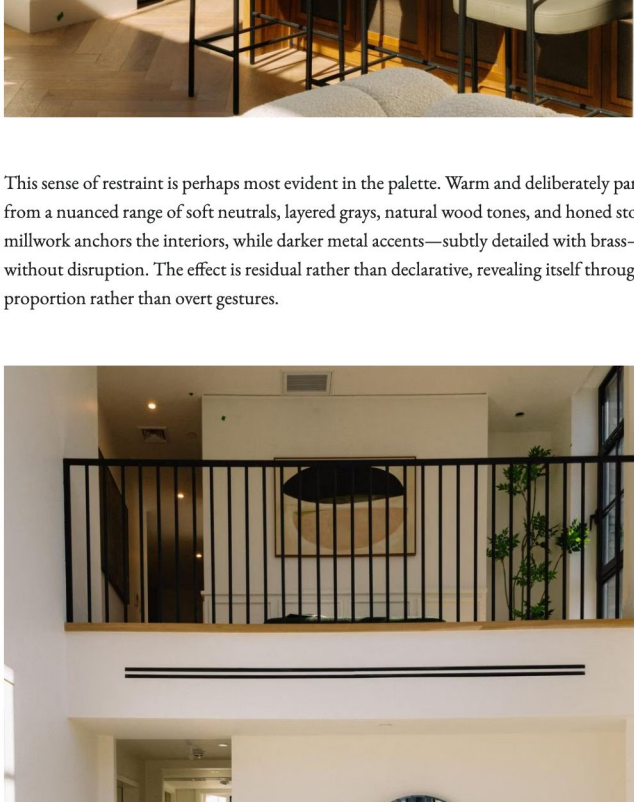
This tension between vibrancy and serenity became a guiding principle, allowing the home to remain connected to the city but also retreat from it.

From the street, the building distinguishes itself through materiality rather than scale. Where neighbouring structures lean toward cooler grey palettes, this facade adopts a warmer, more tactile approach. A rich beige brick, with subtle variation in tone and texture, provides a sense of authenticity that nods to historic precedents. Though the previous structure no longer stood, its influence remains embedded in the building's proportions and relationship to the street.

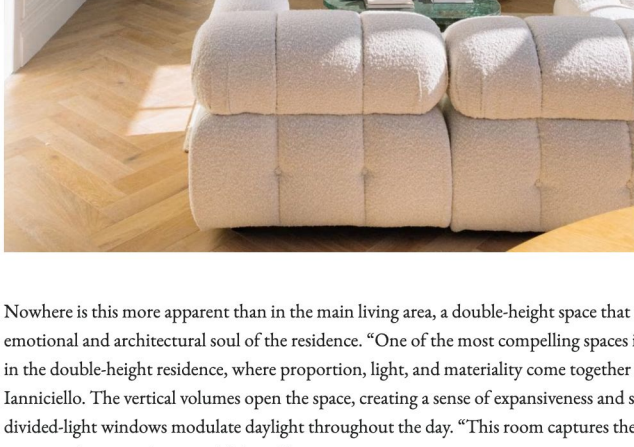


Photographed by Guida Paoloni

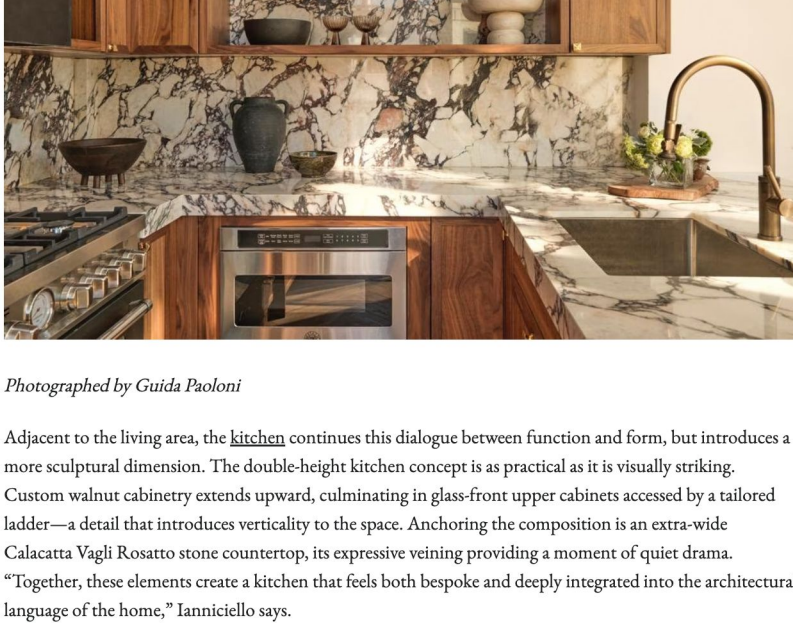
Inside, the penthouse unfolds across 1,580 square feet, comprising three bedrooms and three bathrooms. Yet it is not the footprint that defines the experience, but the way volume, light, and material interact. The design brief was clear from the beginning: "to create a home that feels deeply rooted in Brooklyn's character while offering a high level of refinement, craftsmanship, and intimacy." Importantly, the team resisted the temptation to over-design. "Rather than pursuing something overly stylised, the goal was to create homes that feel timeless, thoughtful, and quietly elevated."



This sense of restraint is perhaps most evident in the palette. Warm and deliberately pared back, it draws from a nuanced range of soft neutrals, layered grays, natural wood tones, and honest stone. Rich walnut millwork anchors the interiors, while darker metal accents—subtly detailed with brass—introduce contrast without disruption. The effect is residual rather than declarative, revealing itself through texture and proportion rather than overt gestures.



Nowhere is this more apparent than in the main living area, a double-height space that serves as the emotional and architectural soul of the residence. "One of the most compelling spaces in the main living area in the double-height residence, where proportion, light, and materiality come together most clearly," says Iannicello. The vertical volumes open the space, creating a sense of expansiveness and serenity, while tall divided-light windows modulate daylight throughout the day. "This room captures the essence of the project, calm yet architectural," she adds.

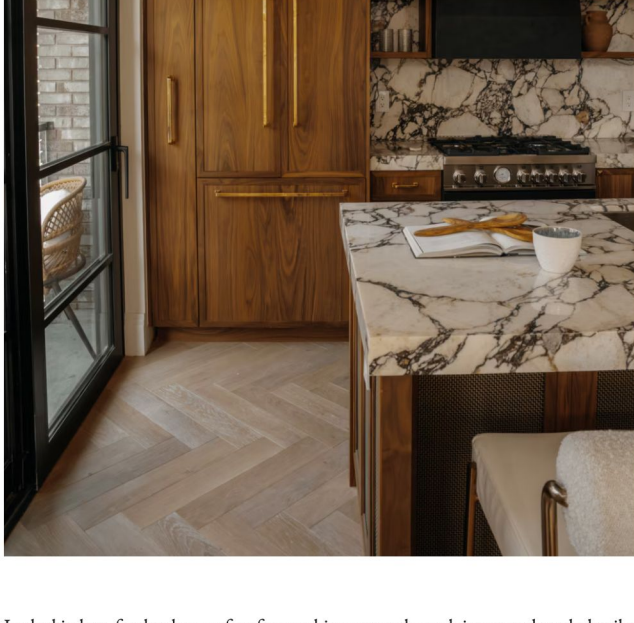


Photographed by Guida Paoloni

Adjacent to the living area, the kitchen continues this dialogue between function and form, but introduces a more sculptural dimension. The double-height kitchen concept is as practical as it is visually striking. Custom walnut cabinetry ascends upward, culminating in glass-front upper cabinets accessed by a tailored ladder—a detail that introduces verticality to the space. Anchoring the composition is an extra-wide Calacatta Vagli Rosso stone countertop, its expressive veining providing a moment of quiet drama.

"Together, these elements create a kitchen that feels both bespoke and deeply integrated into the architectural language of the home," Iannicello says.

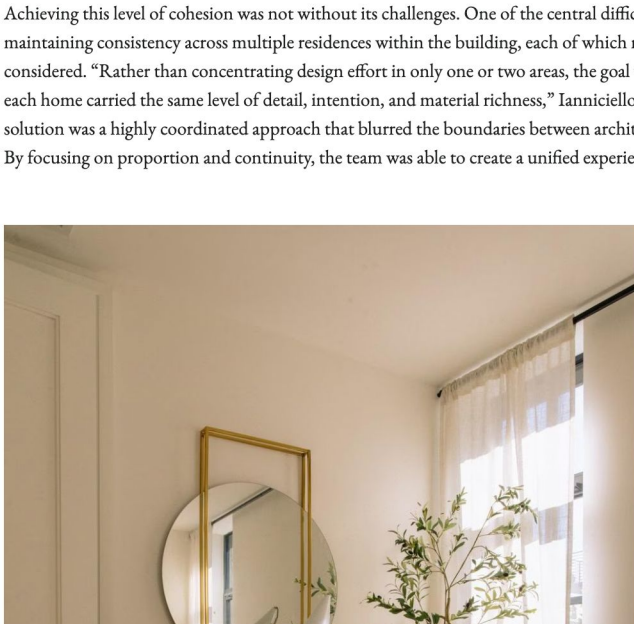
What distinguishes this project, however, is not any single focal points, but rather the accumulation of thoughtful design moves. "The project is defined by a series of thoughtful, layered design moves rather than a single focal point," she notes. Herringbone oak flooring runs throughout, lending rhythm and continuity, while custom millwork reinforces a cohesive material language. Honed stone surfaces, tailored metal accents, and carefully integrated details contribute to the welcoming environment.



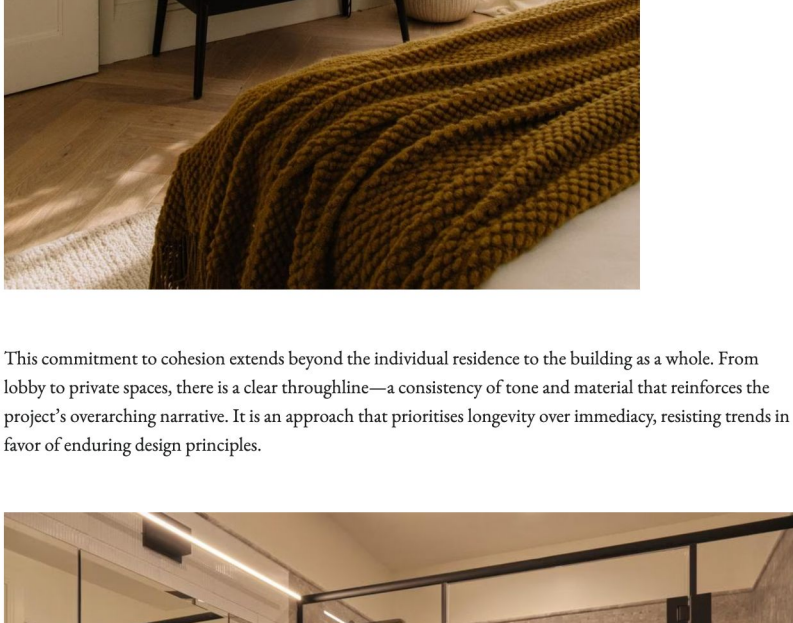
In the kitchen, further layers of craftsmanship emerge through integrated mesh details and sculpted hood elements, while bespoke cabinetry compositions reinforce the project's emphasis on material integrity. Bathrooms, by contrast, offer softer moments. Backlit niches introduce a gentle glow, while carefully balanced material contrasts create a sense of calm retreat.



Achieving this level of cohesion was not without its challenges. One of the central difficulties lay in maintaining consistency across multiple residences within the building, each of which needed to feel equally considered. "Rather than concentrating design effort in only one or two areas, the goal was to ensure that each home carried the same level of detail, intention, and material richness," Iannicello explains. The solution was a highly coordinated approach that blurred the boundaries between architecture and interiors. By focusing on proportion and continuity, the team was able to create a unified experience of each element.

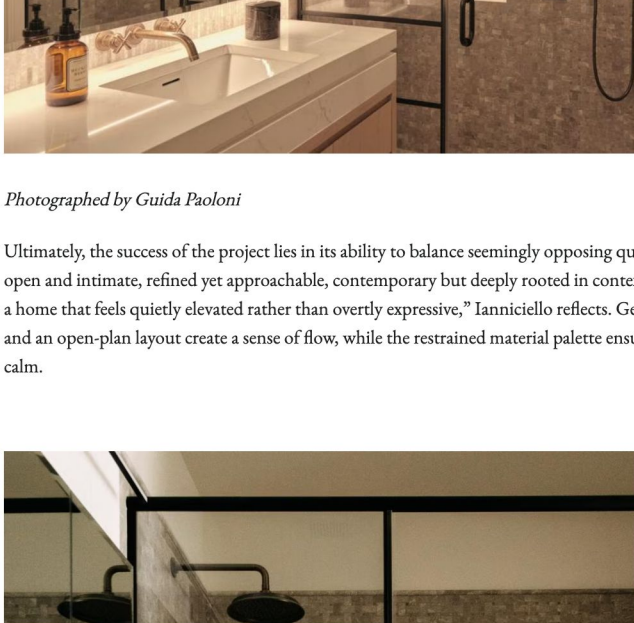


This commitment to cohesion extends beyond the individual residence to the building as a whole. From lobby to private spaces, there is a clear throughline—a consistency of tone and material that reinforces the project's overarching narrative. It is an approach that prioritises longevity over imitation, resisting trends in favor of enduring design principles.



Photographed by Guida Paoloni

Ultimately, the success of the project lies in its ability to balance seemingly opposing qualities. It is at once open and intimate, refined yet approachable, contemporary but deeply rooted in context. "The final result is a home that feels quietly elevated rather than overtly expressive," Iannicello reflects. Generous proportions and an open-plan layout create a sense of flow, while the restrained material palette ensures a lasting sense of calm.

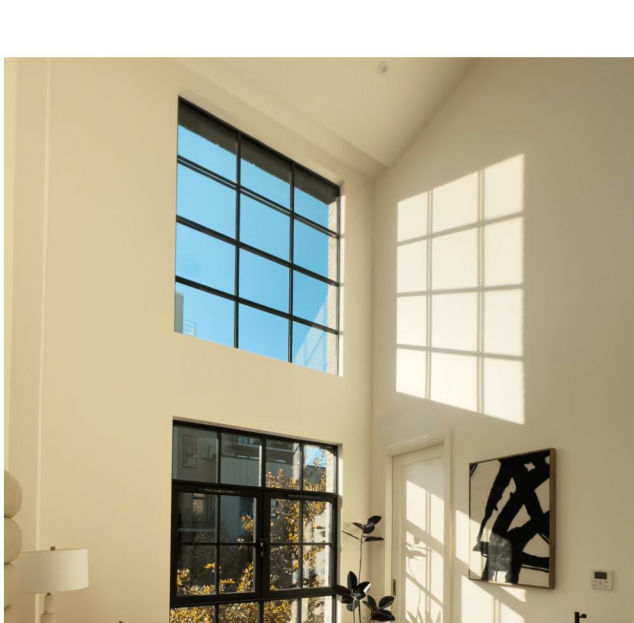


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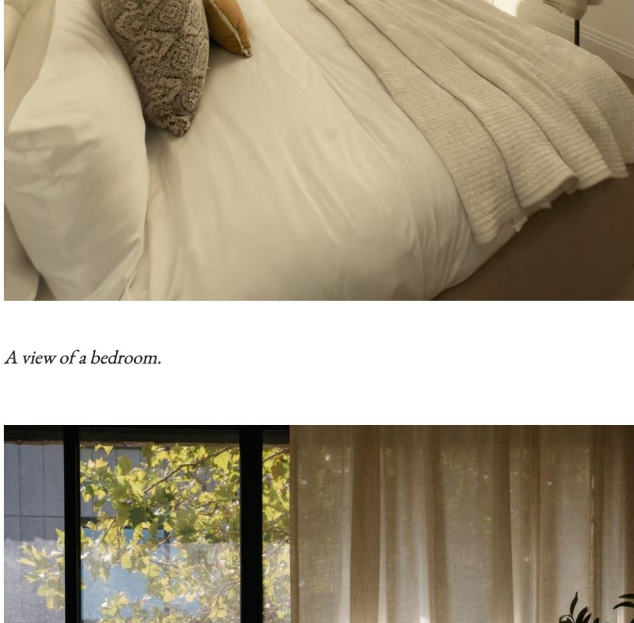
For the homeowners, this balance has proven particularly resonant. "The response has been very positive, particularly around the sense of warmth, calm, and luxurious finishes within the home," she notes. It is a testament to the project's underlying philosophy: that true luxury lies not in excess, but in thoughtful design that enhances everyday life.



A view of a bedroom.



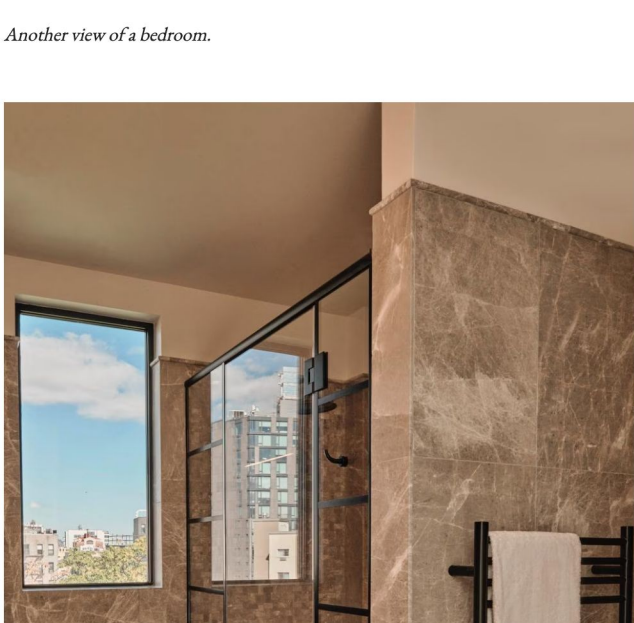
Another view of a bedroom.



A view of a bathroom.



Another view of a bathroom.



Photographed by Guida Paoloni

A view of a nursery.