

**Lofty Notions**  
The open living area (1,145 sq ft) comprises two separate seating areas, a dining room and kitchen, and a library nook (opposite), which features a custom tufted sofa covered in Schumacher's Zanzibar linen in Cerulean. See Resources.



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# COLOR THEORY

Tilton Fenwick puts a fresh spin on a traditional downtown artist's loft in SoHo—exposed brick walls and all

BY ALEXA STEVENSON | PHOTOGRAPHS BY TREVOR TONDRO





**X Marks The Spot**  
 Custom "Intersection" chandeliers from Downtown hang above a vintage T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings Klismos-style table and chairs in the dining area (opposite). A Schumacher blue velvet covers both a custom tufted sofa and a New Traditionalists chair in the seating areas (THIS PAGE TOP AND BOTTOM RIGHT); the cocktail table is by Oscar de la Renta for Century Furniture. The library walls (THIS PAGE BOTTOM LEFT) are lacquered in a custom color from Agustin Hurtado. See Resources.



**L**eaps of faith are not for the faint of heart. For decorators Suysel dePedro Cunningham and Anne Maxwell Foster, it took not one, but two, leaps to start their boutique interior design firm, Tilton Fenwick. Cunningham and Foster both graduated from colleges in Boston (Cunningham: Tufts, freshman year dorm Tilton; Foster: Boston College, freshman year dorm Fenwick) and landed jobs in advertising. Realizing that the field was not for them, they each moved to New York City to pursue careers in interior design, though they didn't meet until they were introduced by decorator Ashley Whittaker, for whom Foster once worked. The pair hit it off instantly, and when Foster became engaged, Cunningham helped plan the wedding. "Things just sparked," recalls Cunningham. "We work well together and have the same taste. So we said, 'Let's do it.'" In summer 2010 they launched Tilton Fenwick and quickly grew, as many young firms now do, thanks in part to social media, which "brought on a lot of clients quickly," says Foster. With their trademark being





a fresh, contemporary take on traditional design, they made their name by employing bold colors and patterns in even the most mundane spaces. Then came a third leap of faith: a client who had just purchased an artist's loft downtown and wanted to turn it into a warm, kid-friendly environment for her young family. "We'd had only one project published," says Cunningham, "but she discovered our blog and loved our style. She had interviewed some heavy hitters, but went with us in the end." The raw, open space presented a challenge to the designers. "We had to balance what we do with the integrity of the loft," adds Cunningham, and so the duo ended up collaborating with David

Bootsman of New York's Freyer Collaborative Architects. "We got the best of both worlds," says Foster. "Usually meeting in the middle doesn't go well because people end up compromising, but in this case everything worked out perfectly." The first thing the design team did was to center the fireplace in the main living area, thereby changing the room's flow. The original brick was left exposed and the rest of the walls painted ivory. Two Moroccan Beni Ourain rugs anchor separate seating areas awash in shades of brown and blue with pops of yellow. "We didn't go too crazy in this part of the loft—at least for us," says Foster, though a vibrant

**Pattern Play**  
 (THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT) A Karl Springer game table anchors one corner of a seating area; the chairs are covered in fabrics from Studio Four and Carolina Living Textiles, and the rug is from Shyam Ahuja. A Quadrille print covers both the walls and a tufted headboard in a guest bedroom. The pomegranate and grapevine wallpaper in the powder room is from Osborne & Little. In the boys' room (opposite), Ralph Lauren's Brompton table lamps from Circa Lighting and custom roman shades by Luther Quintana flank a built-in bookshelf. See Resources.





## A club chair in neutral linen simply did not work. “You’ve got to go full throttle or nothing”



blue library nook off to the side reveals the firm's magic hand when it comes to mixing patterns and bright colors. “We had the club chair done in a neutral linen at first, and it simply did not work,” says Cunningham. The women decided to cover it in an electric purple wool, a hue found in the floral print on the tufted sofa. “You’ve got to go full throttle or nothing,” says Foster.

The animated aesthetic continues in the bedrooms at the back of the loft, where boldly printed wallpapers are liberally incorporated. In the master, a Pierre Frey floral covers the walls as well as the nook for the bed and even built-in cabinetry and drawers. In a guest bedroom, a green and yellow floral covers

not just the walls, but also the tufted headboard, all accented with a bright yellow night table. “We took something that could go very Upper East Side and brought it right downtown,” says Foster. Not surprisingly, the kids’ rooms are full of whimsy, with green florals and hot pink in the girl’s sleeping area and green, blue, and bright orange in the boys’ room.

The loft presents a “nice balance between sophisticated downtown life and an urban playfulness,” says Foster. “Our design approach is formal, but our ultimate goal is to have fun.” Adds Cunningham, “Working with a client who was adventurous and willing to take risks made everything that much better. We feel lucky that she took the chance on us.” ●

**Pile It On**  
The master bedroom (above) is done to the hilt with Pierre Frey’s Le Grand Corail wallcovering. The Lee Jofa fabric on the shade is trimmed in Robert Allen’s Ultima in Cedarberry. Linens are from Matouk. In the girl’s bedroom (opposite), a custom bed is nestled between curtains and a window shade made from a Designers Guild fabric from Osborne & Little, trimmed in a fuchsia grosgrain ribbon from Samuel & Sons. See Resources.

