



THIS PAGE: *in the living room, Living Divani 'Extrasoft' sofa by PIERO LISSONI; 'Deer' chairs by AUTOBAN; patterned chairs by KNOLL; TED MUEHLING candlesticks; Branching Bubble chandeliers by LINDSEY ADELMAN. OPPOSITE PAGE: view of lower Manhattan from the apartment. Details, last pages.*

By TIFFANY BAKKER Photographed by WICHMANN + BENDTSEN

The New York apartment Lindsey Adelman shares with her family is filled with the lighting designer's signature works along with understated art and furniture that reflects her elegant simplicity.

“I LIKE HOMIES THAT ARE DESIGNED FOR LIVING”





“I’VE ALWAYS LOVED CLASSIC APARTMENT LAYOUTS AND THICK WALLS AND AN ELEVATOR MAN”

It’s fair to say that Lindsey Adelman looks at light in an entirely different way than most of us. “Working with an immaterial substance like light is super interesting, because it’s elusive and moody,” says the pioneering lighting designer, sitting back at her gallery space in downtown Manhattan. “I really think it affects people’s behaviour in a pretty real way.”

Perhaps most well known for her iconic Branching Bubble chandelier, which has become something of a design status symbol, Adelman says the right light can make or break a home even if the rest of the space is initially a shambles. Indeed, she remembers the first time she and her husband, Ian (a former director of digital design at *The New York Times*), saw the 12th-floor apartment in Brooklyn’s Park Slope that would ultimately become their home, the place was in such a state of disrepair their broker didn’t even want them to look at it.

“She didn’t want to show us the apartment at all,” says Adelman, laughing. “She was like, ‘You don’t want to see that one!’”

The pre-war apartment’s ceiling was caving in, there was “moss-like stuff” everywhere, and the kitchen hadn’t been touched since the 1940s. (Although that, ultimately, was a plus.) But the light was brilliant. “Ian and I were like, ‘It’s perfect,’” says Adelman. “I guess sometimes being able to visualise things gives you that advantage when no one else wants to touch it.”

Then there were the apartment’s panoramic views over New York Harbour and Brooklyn’s lush Prospect Park. “And I also liked that it was a very old-fashioned building,” says Adelman. “I was born in New York, so I’ve always loved classic apartment layouts and thick walls and an elevator man.”

The couple, who also own a beach house in Water Mill (a hamlet of Southampton), share the 93-square-metre apartment with their 13-year-old son, Finn. “Home means being with my husband and son, and also just feeling truly relaxed, like you can let it all hang out,” she says. “I like that it doesn’t look like a house full of to-do lists in terms of too clean or too neat or too white. I like homes that are designed for living, so you’re not doing anything wrong if you’ve got the dining table full of making Christmas cards. Where everybody can just do their thing and can feel safe and relaxed.”

As for the home’s decor, Adelman says she and her husband prefer a “pared-down palette. It’s not really Minimalist, just unfussy with things that will last forever”, she states. “I like vintage pieces — pieces that feel worn in a little bit, so it doesn’t feel overwhelming. Kind of like raw materials that don’t have any colour added to them, like leather and wood.” »

THIS PAGE, FROM TOP LEFT: wall art by JOE BRITAIN; art on cabinet by JARED RUE (left) and CATHY ADELMAN (right). Adelman in her Manhattan studio, with her hammered bronze table light and ‘Orbit’ candlestick for Roll & Hill. OPPOSITE PAGE: USM storage unit; Branching Bubble chandeliers by Lindsey Adelman; art by ROBERT RYMAN; vase by JAIME HAYON.

THIS PAGE: USM storage unit; artwork by RICHARD SERRA. OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: in the kitchen, 'BP.05.02' pendant by LINDSEY ADELMAN; prints by BROCK SHORNO. Danish wall cabinet with art by THE HAAS BROTHERS (top right) and ADAM SILVERMAN (middle, right), an octopus trap (middle, left) and DAVID WISEMAN vase (bottom, left). In the dining room, Zeitraum 'Twist' table by FORMSTELLE; 'Superleggera' chairs by GIO PONTI; art by ROBERT RYMAN (top rows) and AD REINHARDT (bottom row); Lindsey Adelman Branching Chain chandelier. In the apartment's entryway, Danish cabinet and NEISHA CROSLAND wallpaper.





THIS PAGE, FROM TOP: *in the study, EERO SAARINEN 'Womb' chair by Knoll; artworks by JOE BRITTAIN, JARED RUE and CATHY ADELMAN. In the upstairs hallway, LINDSEY ADELMAN 'Burst' chandelier; artworks by ROBERT MANGOLD, JASPER JOHNS and SOL LEWITT; BDDW 'Lake' dresser. OPPOSITE PAGE: in the main bedroom, Terrarium' pendant with 'Marina' ceiling medallion by Lindsey Adelman; 'No 203' two-arms cone wall light by DAVID WEEKS STUDIO VITSOE shelving; NONAME bed. Details, last pages.*

« Adelman says being part of New York's thriving design community has also benefitted the home's design aesthetic. "A lot of it is also becoming friends with people who are somehow working at a brand that you've always loved."

It didn't hurt that some friends worked at places such as Living Divani and USM. "There's some stuff that Ian and I have always loved and thought about for 10 years, and then all of a sudden, you're like, 'Oh, you work there? Cool, can we get this?'" Adelman laughs. "We like pieces that are never in, never out."

Changes are afoot, however; the family is soon to move into a nearby brownstone. "I've loved the apartment, and it is part of me — I lived there for 14 years," she says. "But my son is 13 and a little elbow room wouldn't be bad." Adelman says the family's new digs will undergo a major renovation first. "It's a big job, so we've got to pace ourselves."

Work, too, remains a challenge. With a staff of 30 in her New York studio and 10 in her Los Angeles office, Adelman focuses more on the bigger picture than the nuts and bolts. "Over the years, with experience, you can dream bigger and imagine form in a more ambitious way," she says. "So with experience of working with my team in-house and working with outside collaborators, you all start speaking this language and it doesn't need words anymore. It's an incredibly empowering feeling."

That includes championing new designers. Currently, Adelman is preparing to open a show at her New York gallery in May, where she'll launch the works of fellow lighting designers Karl Zahn and burgeoning Australian talent Mary Wallis. "They're incredibly talented lighting designers and when I saw their ideas coming along, I wanted to invest in them." Adelman says she'd rather talk about other people's work anyway. "You can see it more clearly, so it's really obvious to me where the sweet spot is, and where I'm pushing them. It's just a little easier than self-critiquing."

And after 20 years in the business (her eponymous brand began in 2006), Adelman is as passionate as ever about her work. "Lighting, for me, never gets old, and that's why I'm still doing it," she says, smiling. "It gets my heart racing. It's forever challenging." 11.

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