

# Manhattan Twins

Robert Couturier uses quirky artwork and bold furniture as centerpieces for these twin *pied-à-terres* in downtown New York

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**I**n 2008, a London-based family commissioned New York based Frenchman Robert Couturier to work on their apartment in the iconic Herzog & de Meuron building in downtown Manhattan. The 2,400-square-foot, south-facing three-bedroom unit, which was completed in winter 2010 was decorated with fauvist colours and a contrasting mix of modern and vintage furniture and contemporary art. Later in 2010, the family – a couple with four children bought another unit, a 1,100-square-foot one bedroom studio one floor below in the same building. This smaller apartment would serve as a *pied-à-terre* for their existing one and would be a place where the couple could hold parties and escape from their four children when they need some space or romantic time. This second studio unit was completed in spring 2011 in a style that immediately unifies it with the first apartment.











Couturier's distinctive style involves setting up the 'scene' of each space around gorgeous pieces of artwork. You'll see this unique touch of his through how he includes pieces of famous artwork to tie up the look in each room.

## COMPLEMENTARY APARTMENTS

As there is less space in the newer apartment, Couturier made a few structural changes so this second *pied-à-terre* would complement the first one. "We took the same approach. The two apartments are like twins," says Couturier, who enlarged the doorframes of the second apartment to accentuate the drama of the floor-to-ceiling windows.

## ART CENTRAL

For both living rooms, Couturier anchored the living areas with a neutral colour palette and eye-catching pieces of art like a painting by Sol LeWitt, a black-and-white photograph series by Rachel Whiteread, a Maison Jansen coffee table and sixties Italian leather chairs in the first apartment and a vintage fifties Angelo Mangiarotti coffee table and Cassina sofa in the studio.



## MODERN BEDTIME STORIES

Raymond Loewy night tables and a photo of Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House give the bedroom in the first apartment a classy, modern casual feel. For the newer master bedroom in the studio, Couturier made some alterations to the original apartment's blue walls and white linen template and mounted a sculpture by Federico Uribe from Gallery Fumi in London on the wall.

## DINING WITH ART

Both dining rooms were fitted with bold statement features like an overhead Ingo Maurer light fixture, Ron Arad chairs and Paul Smith rug in the larger apartment and a photograph by Michael Eastman from Barry Friedman gallery and a 60's-diner-inspired Verner Panton table-chairs set in the studio. HC









“  
*The master  
bedroom is tastefully  
adorned to create  
a tranquil ambience  
for a restful place*  
”





### **DESIGNER TIP**

To recreate a similar look:

- Play with monotone colour schemes such as turquoise on one wall and pure white on another.
- Use stunning rugs in the sitting areas.
- Create space defined by art pieces.