

For the much-decorated duo **Baz Luhrmann** and **Catherine Martin**, their New York townhouse is another notch in their expansive oeuvre.

BY VANESSA LAWRENCE

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In the second-floor White Room of their downtown-Manhattan townhouse, Baz Luhrmann wears a Gosha Rubchinskiy suit with a turtleneck and sneakers by Prada, and Catherine Martin is in an Isabel Marant dress and Vanessa Bruno boots. A pair of West Elm sofas are covered in a fabric from Martin's collection for Mokum. The chandelier is original to the house, and the wall photograph (right) is by Rex Dupain. **OPPOSITE:** The house's grand staircase. The walls are painted in Benjamin Moore's Simply White.

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TOWNHOUSE



“They are just so innately artistic that the way they live their life is art itself,” says Nicole Kidman.

BAZ LUHRMANN AND CATHERINE MARTIN are known for their dazzling and meticulously researched work on films like *Moulin Rouge* and *Romeo + Juliet* and a daring 2002 Broadway staging of the opera *La Bohème*. It’s little surprise, then, that their New York City townhouse entailed a high-scale production value. There is the background check that Martin, a costume and set designer, did on both the house—built in 1852 by a Brooklyn-based merchant—and the surrounding Stuyvesant Park neighborhood—she can quote statistics about the college education level, racial diversity, linguistic skills, and single-sex parentage of the demographic. There are the four months it took for the couple to move from their Greenwich Village rental into their new home (during which time Luhrmann, a director and writer, would regularly invoke *Waiting for Godot*). And then there are the Photoshop mock-ups, 3D drawings, sample boards, and interiors presentations that Martin and her team assembled for her husband’s sign-off.

“I have to be able to communicate it to Baz in a way that he understands as a director,” says Martin of her creative partner of 30 years.

The award-winning Australian couple—who jointly run a production company, Bazmark—moved to New York City from Sydney while working on their 2013 blockbuster *The Great Gatsby*. After losing out on a bid to purchase their Greenwich Village rental and outgrowing another home—they have a teenage daughter, Lillian, and son, William—they sought to plant firm roots in the city by purchasing this Anglo-Italianate-style house.

“I have a bit of a philosophy: Dream in Paris, have fun in London, work in Los Angeles, Sydney is home, but live in New York,” says Luhrmann.

And despite Martin’s vast experience overseeing expanses far larger than a 28-foot-wide

The 1940s chairs in the White Room are in Martin’s Bengal Tiger fabric for Mokum, the cocktail table is by West Elm, the rug is by Designer Rugs, and the home’s original windows are fitted with Hunter Douglas honeycomb blinds. The Annie Leibovitz book *Sumo* and its stand are from Taschen.

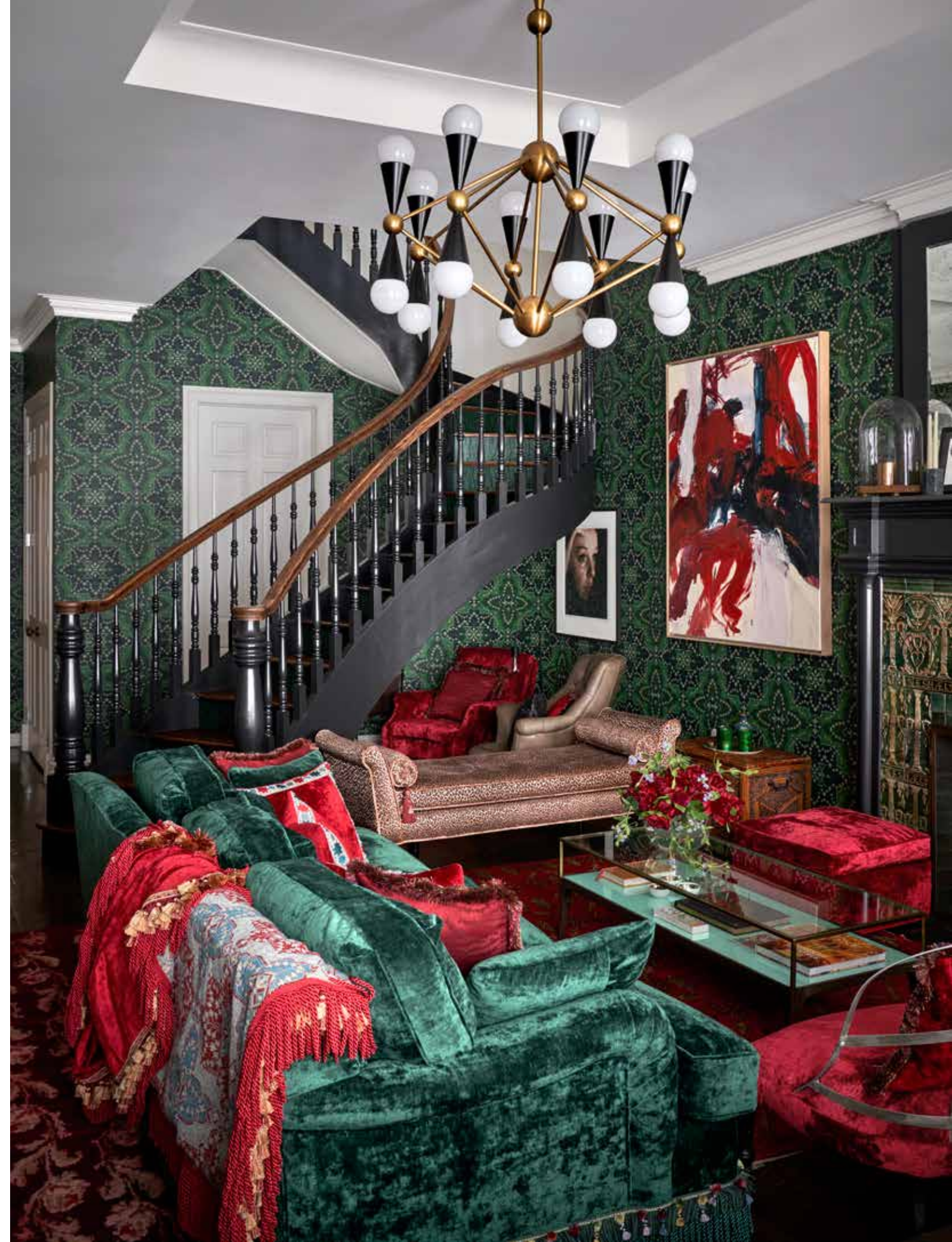


FROM TOP: A top hat from the set of *Moulin Rouge*, a Douglas Kirkland photograph, and an antique Indian sculpture are displayed on a West Elm console. Inside the cocktail table, the wood hand and matchboxes are by Jayson Home, and the vase is by CB2.



▲ The antique Thonet table in the entry came from the set of *Australia*. The wallpaper is from Martin's Mokum line, the sconces in the stairwell are by RH Modern, and the runner is by Louis de Poortere. The door, stairs, and banister are in Benjamin Moore's Space Black.

▶ In the first-floor Green Room, the RH, Restoration Hardware sofa and armchair, vintage chaise, custom ottoman, and pillows are all covered in fabrics from Martin's Mokum collection. The leather chair is by Anthropologie, the cocktail table is by Tracey Boyd, and the chandelier is by Jonathan Adler. The mantel is original, and the painting is by Anthony White.





◀ In the master bedroom, the bed is by Tracey Boyd, the bedside lamps are by Rejuvenation, and the planter is by Anthropologie. The wallpaper, bedspread, and cushions are Catherine Martin for Mokum.

brownstone, she admits that decision-making in one's own space can prove more daunting. "When I'm working on sets, it's easier to make mistakes," says Martin, known as CM, who designed the house herself. "You've got to keep perspective that it's not going to kill anyone if you make the wrong paint choice."

The couple's theatrical sensibilities are evident throughout. A darkly dramatic entry plays up the house's Victorian heritage with a red Louis de Poortere stair runner and an antique Thonet side table, nabbed from the set of their 2008 film *Australia*. The Green Room's verdant, ruby-accented decor was inspired by the original green tiles framing the fireplace. A leopard-printed vintage chaise mixes with an English-style sofa and armchair from RH, Restoration Hardware; an abstract painting by friend Anthony White grounds one wall while a brimming acacia bookcase anchors another. The emerald-patterned wallpaper and all the upholstery fabrics are Martin's own designs for the New Zealand-based textile and wallcoverings company Mokum, with whom she has collaborated since 2011.

On the second floor, Martin and Luhrmann sought a more serene setting. There, the space they call the White Room boasts 16-foot ceilings and is furnished with icy-hued vintage armchairs and curving sofas, offsetting the original antique chandelier and windows overlooking Stuyvesant Square Park. "It's where CM and I will go to sit. It's very clean and has a great deal of civility about it," notes Luhrmann. The master bedroom, meanwhile, takes its warm, tropical cues from an Indochina-style Tracey Boyd bed frame that Martin purchased while she and Luhrmann were working on the redesign of the Deco-themed Faena hotel in Miami.

"Their life is like an artwork. They are just so innately artistic that the way they live their life is art itself," says actress Nicole Kidman, who starred in *Moulin Rouge* and *Australia* and is a close friend of the couple. "I would call them both Renaissance people—they know so much about everything."

"We are very focused on trying to make life a premium experience. It's not about elitism: It's trying to find the best, most quintessentially authentic moment in everything," explains Martin. "I sit in my bed and think, Oh my God, I am a big grown-up girl in a beautiful room. This feels really good." ■



▲ Vintage chairs, a Tracey Boyd bench, and a CB2 console are offset by an antique French mirror and art by Anthony White.

◀ In a powder room, the sink is from Toledo Architectural Artifacts, the sconces are by RH, Restoration Hardware, and the pendant is by Anthropologie. The mirror is by RH Teen, and the wallpaper is Catherine Martin for Mokum. For details, see Resources.