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HOUSE *of the* DAY

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Brand-New Interior With Midcentury Touches

Price: \$3,150,000

Location: Upper East Side, NY

A gut renovation of an apartment in this pre-war Emery Roth-designed building on the Upper East Side was a new start for the space, with midcentury furnishings and decor to complement the building's history. -- Jackie Bischof



Texas-based couple Karen and Alan Katz purchased a two-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment in 930 Fifth Avenue in 2007 for \$1.4 million, according to public records, to use as a pied-a-terre when visiting New York. The building, pictured, is part of the Upper East Side Historic District, designated in 1981 by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. The 19-story co-operative was built in 1940 and designed by Emery Roth & Sons in a 'classicizing modern' style, according to the historic district designation report.



Mr. Roth's architectural touch can be found throughout Manhattan, and he designed several apartment buildings on Fifth Avenue between 1939 and 1949 in the same 'tone,' according to the report. The dining foyer of the Katz's apartment is shown. Mrs. Katz is the president and CEO of Nieman Marcus Group and Mr. Katz is senior vice president at Hunt Energy Enterprises. The couple has been married for 31 years.



The Katz's had spent a lot of time travelling to New York 'in our professional lives and personally' but had never owned something in the city prior to this apartment. 'We knew the city well but when it came to residential [property] we were a little bit clueless in terms of how it all worked,' Mrs. Katz said. The process of buying and renovating a co-op apartment in a landmark building was 'a good education,' she said.



The second bedroom of the apartment, pictured, is currently used as a library. Initially, the couple looked for a new, turn-key apartment, focusing their search the Upper East Side, 'an area of the city that felt like a neighborhood,' Mrs. Katz said, although now, 'what we've come to realize is there are many wonderful neighborhoods in the city.' At the recommendation of their agent, they had a look at this apartment despite it being in 'bad shape,' Mrs. Katz said. Mr. Katz was hesitant at first, but was won over by the apartment's bones and its location near Central Park and several museums, eventually becoming 'involved with a couple of key things in the renovation,' Mrs. Katz said.



Another view of the library is shown. The couple embarked on a year-long gut renovation with the goal of keeping the space 'in the spirit of a ... pre-war, midcentury building,' Mrs. Katz said. 'Although we like modern homes, we wanted to make sure it felt like an original apartment in the building felt like, with modern furnishings,' she said. 'We wanted it simple...and we wanted it to be low maintenance. I think we accomplished that.'



The library is pictured from the living room. During the renovation, the couple added new plumbing and wiring, skimcoated the walls, replaced the light fixtures, refinished the hardwood floors, redid the bathrooms and kitchen and reconfigured the library, creating a small alcove for an office space. They added pocket doors between the living room and library to make the open up the space and replaced the windows, a timely process as they had to be approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. 'Every step of the way it was so much more challenging than we expected,' said Mrs. Katz. 'We were looking at it through the lens of how you would do things in Dallas. It was way more complicated.' The renovation was completed in November 2008. Mrs. Katz declined to disclose the cost of work done to the home.



The living room, pictured, has nine-foot-tall beamed ceilings and a decorative fireplace. Almost half the furnishings in the apartment are refurbished midcentury pieces collected by Mrs. Katz over a year. Buyers have the option to purchase the apartment furnished apart from the artwork and two pieces dear to Mrs. Katz: the living room's light fixture, purchased from a flea market in Israel, and a 1960s lucite englassed table designed by Karl Springer, pictured at center. 'I really love that table,' said Mrs. Katz. 'It's very representative of that era.'



A lamp in the living room of apartment was purchased from an antique store in Dallas and calls to mind 'brutalist' design, said Mrs. Katz, an aesthetic characterized by heavy, hefty or textured pieces. 'The furniture has the great lines a midcentury building would have, and then we have more contemporary artwork in the apartment, so it has a nice balance,' said Mrs. Katz. 'It maintains a comfortable feel to it,' she said.



The master bedroom is pictured. The couple is selling because they have purchased another apartment in the building, which has a view of Central Park and will also require a gut renovation. 'We love having an apartment in New York, we've come to love the neighborhood and truly appreciate what a gem Central Park is,' said Mrs. Katz. 'We really feel that the building is a second home for us.'



The master bathroom is shown. The building has a full-time doorman, elevator operators, a gym and storage areas for the units.



A corner of the living room is pictured with a Knoll 'Barcelona Couch.' The property was listed at the beginning of May for \$3.35 million before being reduced to its current listing price of \$3.15 million. Reba Miller and Julia Cole of the RP Miller Realty Group hold the listing.