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GRAYBARN

THE FALL
ART DIRECTORY



MATERIAL

Artist In Residence When Carol Matyia Ross moved in with architect Bruce Beinfield, she claimed part of the space to use as her studio (THIS PAGE). In the entry hall (OPPOSITE PAGE) sits a bench made from found material, while a work by artist Greg Haberny hangs above. The floors are reclaimed hemlock planks. See Resources.



IMPACT



WHEN A MINIMAL
APPROACH
MERGES WITH
A COLLECTOR'S
SENSIBILITY,
THE RESULT
IS MORE THAN
MEETS THE EYE

BY ALEXA STEVENSON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MEG MATYIA

WHEN BRUCE BEINFELD MOVED

INTO THE SEVENTH FLOOR OF THE EIGHT-FLOOR RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUMS THAT MAKE UP PART OF THE MARITIME YARDS (A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH NORWALK COMPLETED IN 2007), IT WAS SAFE TO SAY THE APARTMENT WAS NEARLY PERFECT FOR HIM—HE WAS THE ARCHITECT FOR THE ENTIRE PROJECT, AFTER ALL. THE INTERIOR WAS TRUE TO BEINFELD'S MODERN SENSIBILITIES, WHITE WALLS WITH SPARE FURNISHINGS AND SIGNATURE BEINFELD TOUCHES LIKE FULL-HEIGHT POCKET DOORS, WHILE WALLS OF GLASS WITH VIEWS OF THE NORWALK RIVER AND NORWALK HARBOR DELIVER DRAMATIC IMPACT. BEINFELD CUSTOMIZED HIS UNIT, ORIGINALLY DESIGNED FOR ANOTHER BUYER, WITH STAINLESS STEEL COUNTERTOPS AND FIRE-PLACE SURROUND. HE REPLACED THE FLOORING WITH RECLAIMED HEMLOCK FOR AN UNDERLYING CURRENT OF NATURAL WARMTH.



Hunter Gatherer The dining table and chairs (top) were found on one of Matyia Ross's flea-market hunts. Another table (right) alongside the sliding door is from Get Back Inc. **Carefully Curated** (OPPOSITE PAGE) In one of Matyia Ross's vignettes, a Louis Aiello sculpture hangs next to objects found at flea markets and yard sales. See Resources.



Object Lessons Most walls are painted black (ABOVE) to minimize the intense light that floods in through floor-to-ceiling windows; clown paintings are from Elephant's Trunk Flea Market. The hutch (OPPOSITE PAGE) is through Lillian August and holds some of Matyia Ross's various collections. "I like to have things together as a unit, as opposed to scattered around the house," she says. "It has to be displayed in such a way that is pleasing and not overwhelming." The light fixture above the island (BELOW) is from Get Back Inc. See *Resources*.



In typical Beinfeld fashion, he sheathed a wall in zinc, hiding three large doors (and very valuable storage space). "I'm interested in using materials that are a little out of the ordinary. If I have a choice of using drywall or some other material, I'll think about what the right material might be," notes the architect. "But it's all geared toward the emotional relationship between the space and the people who are perceiving it." Perhaps without realizing it, he created the perfect—sparse and architecturally-rich—backdrop for Carol Matyia Ross, an artist and collector who is Beinfeld's fiancée and moved in a couple of years ago.

"It needed a little bit of help," she says. "The first thing I did was paint the walls black because the light from the floor-length windows was so fluorescent, you needed sunglasses. The dark walls are like wrapping yourself in a warm blanket." Matyia Ross's studio took over one area of the apartment, while her collections crept into the rest of the space. "It was inevitable: If I was coming, my stuff was coming with me." Her stuff, as she lovingly calls it, is decidedly unfancy: odds and ends gathered from years hunting flea markets and antique shops. "An interesting, odd thing becomes unique when everyone doesn't have them." A beat-up chair with layers of paint and an old doll perched on top ("I have a thing for creepy dolls," she says) looks destined to be inside Beinfeld's





Mix Master (THIS SPREAD) Beinfeld added the stainless fireplace surround, while Matyia Ross's finds from Brimfield and other flea markets add a layer of warmth to the architect's modern sensibility. See *Resources*.

THE DARK WALLS ARE LIKE WRAPPING YOURSELF IN A WARM BLANKET





Art Of The Home Paintings by Greg Haberny hang on the end and side walls of the hallway, where sheets of zinc hide large closet doors. (THIS PAGE). “I often use metal surfaces to define spaces within architecture,” says Beinfield. A brightly colored cabinet (OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM, RIGHT) is a tool chest painted by Alexander Calder. “I love that it is a common object that was transformed,” says Beinfield. Matyia Ross’s studio (OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP) holds her tools and various collections. See Resources.



modern backdrop. A collection of copper pots complements the sea of stainless in the kitchen area. “As an architect, I grew up in the world of modern, but I have always been struck by how the majority of modern spaces are not particularly warm and inviting,” says Beinfield. “I’ve seen many pictures of a white room with two Barcelona chairs and a baby on the floor. It seems more like a laboratory than a place where one would want to have a family,” he says. “I mitigated that with the reclaimed flooring, but it completely changed when Carol came and layered on her own sensibilities and shared her collections within the space. Her objects and the way she weaves them together breathe life in the space.” (In fact, Matyia Ross does interior styling for Beinfield’s firm.)

A bench in the hallway is symbolic of how the

couple’s aesthetic—though at first glance distinctively different—blends remarkably well. Matyia Ross came home one day with a pair of old painted sawhorses and paired it with a plank that had been sitting around. “It was a perfect marriage. Both Bruce and I love humble materials,” says Matyia Ross. “We like taking the ordinary and turning it into something special.” Perhaps, though, more symbolic is what hangs above the bench: an impressive graffiti piece by Greg Haberny—an artist the couple have long known and admired. “There is a great deal of raw energy and intensity in all of his work and this one in particular. He layered graffiti on the canvas like language,” says Beinfield. Much like the very space the couple inhabits, he adds: “The more you look at it, the more you see.” 🌟

