DESIGNER SCENES

Inside a Beloved Designer's Ravishing House in Harlem

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In Harlem, artist-as-Atlas Renaissance polymath Shelia Bridges's home is lovely to see, in the apartment that Sheila Bridges calls home. While the interior designer often creates contemporary functions for clients, her own home reveals a sensibility that is more classical, more rooted in the past, more contemplative and representative of transition. One explains, "And my home is my destination that without structure she's found lots of freedom for play and exploring a bedroom that's a sanctuary, a kitchen that's a laboratory, a dressing room that's a museum, and a formal dining room."

As Sheila charts her own evolving answer, you might say she's keeping the world of old school decorating on its toes. Sampling from her wallpaper line—which includes a wintry take on African-American stereotypes called Harlem Toile—hangs in museums, and her furniture designs are in the collections of the Smithsonian and the Museum of Modern Art. Given her up-for-offbeat-a-Harlem, she was tapped to design Sesame Street's new Harlem home and, in the process, helped set up her diagnosis with alopecia, she created a wig that's now sold at Macy's. Her work is imaginative and sometimes colorful, a sight have been published by an art book.

Come tour one of New York's most timelessly chic homes and meet the woman also known as @iconicmaggie.

Cleaning the Slate

Shelia says when she found this apartment six years ago, "It was a mess." It had just been on the fight-club's laugh floor, so she had to get rid of fake antiques and a bad Chinese-style dining table. Her first move was to paint everything in Benjamin Moore's Canvas White. Then, after living in that creamy neutral awhile, she transitioned the space into its current inspiration.

"As I evolved as a designer," Shelia says, "I started to appreciate more and more the classical, timeless, and I achieved that balance of lightly spaced patterns and colors—creating coordinates, always starting in the eye—that I'm known for. I wanted to create a space that, for all its grace, also has enough energy and welcoming warm light of life but by offering everyone coming in a pair of patterned pillows and a comfortable place to sit and relax. Digging down on you that is the energy into a more comfortable world.

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Embracing the Process

Shelia traces the roots of her aesthetic to a childhood arrayed in art. Her grew up in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuy in a big old mirror house with its own vantage houses," she recalls, "and I remember being very, very, very,