

THE NEW YORK OBSERVER

HOME

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Mr. Natural At the Ansonia

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Road to Bali

John and Cynthia Hardy are importing Indonesian style into an Upper West Side landmark.

Any way you look at it, John and Cynthia Hardy are leading extraordinary lives. They have a magnificent open-air house in Bali—built on stilts with views of the rice fields and river beyond—a huge black bamboo Sumatran-style long house designed by John next door, and they are currently collecting 18th-century Javanese wood houses. When they realized that their incredibly successful jewelry company, John Hardy, headquartered in the middle of nearby rice fields, had grown big enough for a New York base, it was clear that the couple, and their two children, were not going to settle for the usual post-war three-bedroom apartment somewhere in Midtown.

After much searching, John found a place in the landmark Upper West Side Ansonia building, which is second only to the nearby Dakota in its elaborate Beaux-Arts detailing. Its rooms had the level of craftsmanship and elements of fantasy that the Hardys' were accustomed to in Bali. It took a while before they were able to move in—which sounds familiar to most of us—but in their case the renovation was complicated by the exotic fixtures and fittings winging their way from Indonesia. With the help of sculptor Aldo Landwehr, John designed almost everything installed in the apartment and—like

A black patent leather ottoman sits in front of the living room fireplace, which is flanked by a pair of violin lamps from Grosfeld Hoe. Bottom





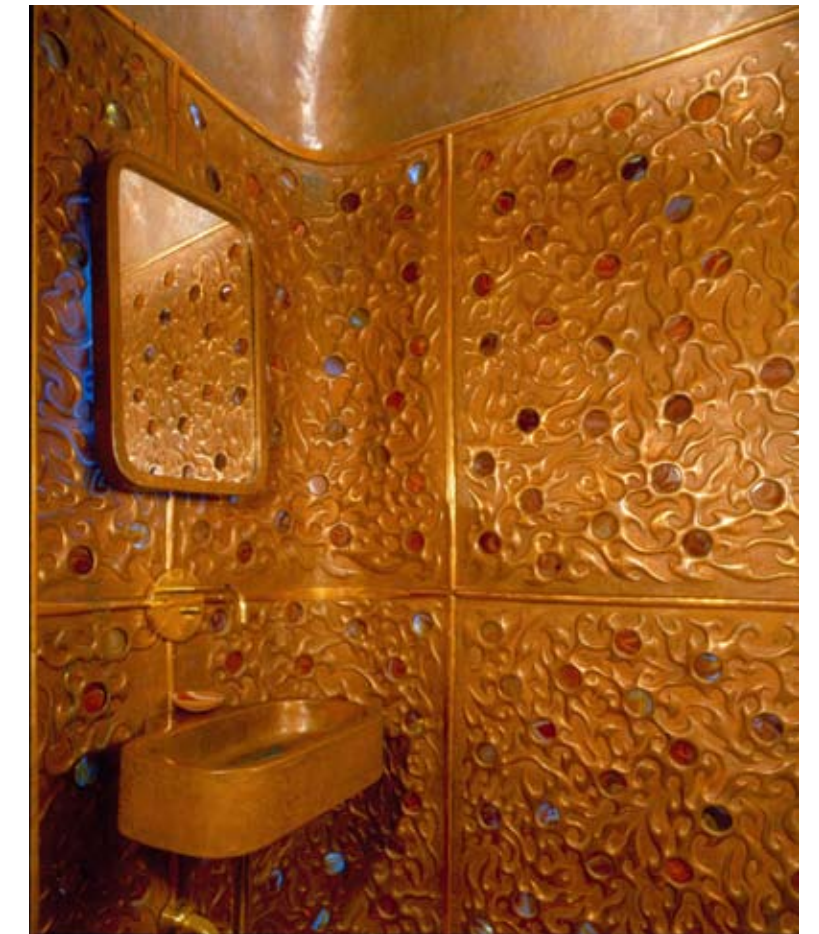
his jewelry—had it made by Balinese craftsmen. Meanwhile, local decorator Anne-Leslie Warren was brought in to take care of the more practical and basic aspects of the project.

A dramatic chandelier hangs in the circular entry area. Lit by candles, it stylistically resembles a Dayak tribesman's version of Gothic, and it links visually with a second fixture in the living room next door. Here, a pair of chairs by the Danish designer Hans Wegner adds to the eclectic mix, which includes a split bamboo rug and huge finials (or chofa) from a Thai temple. Window seats in this curved room provide a view up Broadway that looks little changed since the Ansonia was finished in 1904.

The powder room is a real showstopper. With jewel-studded copper walls and copper fixtures, it feels like a chamber for the gold daleks from *Dr. Who*. Next is an open kitchen with a rustic table and chairs beside a large photomural of Mt. Batur in Bali, taken by John in his travels across the island. (And, lest the Hardys get homesick, their Javanese cook is on hand to make spectacular Indonesian meals.)

New York completely recedes when you step into the master bathroom. Thick dark wood planks—with the joints lit from behind to resemble daylight—form the walls, floor, and ceiling. The showerhead is hidden in the ceiling so that water cascades down through small holes in the wood, then appears

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to gurgle away unseen through the planks. In an instant you are back in Indonesia, naked in a corner of a wooden Javanese bathroom.

At one end of the master bedroom sits a dramatic copper bathtub, although the real centerpiece is a large bed made of thick wood slabs and flanked by Hardy-designed wall lamps. As in the rest of the apartment, the furniture is from Asia—trunks, chests, and two large side-by-side wardrobes sporting headdresses of woven baskets.

Another dramatic light fixture hangs in the dining room, where plates, goblets, and silverware from the Hardy home-ware collection are laid out on a large wooden slab table ringed with benches. John has always been drawn to the organic quality of natural materials, which are an important part of his work. But ultimately it is the skill of Balinese craftsmen that has enabled him to carry out his fantasies—in this apartment, in his jewelry, and in his architecture (a relatively new passion). Back in Bali, the couple is building the Kul-Kul campus for an elegant new children's school, called The Green School, with Calatrava-style bamboo walls and thatched roofs. The Hardys are starting to move from the jewelry business into the larger world of design and sustainable architecture, and this apartment in the Ansonia is very much a signal of things to come.

A black patent leather ottoman sits in front of the living room fireplace, which is lit by isiolin lamps from Grosfeld House. Bottom Scarborough in their library

