

◀ Robert and Cortney prepare for the festive season in their top-storey ballroom, overlooking Greenwich Village's Washington Square Park. The vintage velvet sofa is upholstered in Candy fabric by [clarke-clarke.sandersondesigngroup.com](http://clarke-clarke.sandersondesigngroup.com). The fireplace is painted in 13-0759 TCX Solar Power by [pantone.com](http://pantone.com)

98, and was known in the neighbourhood for her eccentric verve. 'We wanted to preserve a little of that artistic licence,' says Cortney. 'When we delved into the building's history, we found that it had also played host to musicians and poets in the 1920s, so it felt fitting to pay homage.'

Abandoned for decades, it needed a back-to-bones renovation, carefully reworking all five floors, preserving fireplaces, reinstating skirtings and refurbishing original beams. The couple say they've been 'old school and classic' in their

## 'WE HUNG A CHRISTMAS TREE UPSIDE DOWN FROM THE CEILING'

approach, but there are leftfield touches including the yellow fireplace. 'Our daughter Bellamy asked, "Dad, are you sure?"' says Cortney. 'But we have a rule: if we feel strongly about something we should go for it. We offset it with the pink sofa and blush walls and love it.'

Another festive highlight is the supersize wreath Cortney hangs at the arched window each year, with a matching one on the exterior: 'I was hanging off a ladder to put it up,' Courtney says. 'But holiday décor is worth risking your life for!'

Summing up their vivid renovation, she adds: 'Bringing back a bit of zest is a lovely way to kick-start a new chapter.' → [shopthenovogratz.com](http://shopthenovogratz.com)



# A fairytale of New York

Christmas in the historic Manhattan townhouse of interior designers CORTNEY and ROBERT NOVOGRATZ is a bold and colourful affair

INTERVIEW: EMMA J PAGE PHOTOGRAPHS: WILLIAM WALDRON

Seasoned renovators Cortney and Robert Novogratz have been serving fresh takes on classic American style for nearly three decades – and the husband-and-wife design duo don't shy away from festive decorations in their Greenwich Village townhouse (five storeys, seven bedrooms, seven bathrooms). Built in 1826, spanning more than 7,200 sq ft, it has a space on the top floor

known as 'the ballroom', with a bubblegum-pink tree, a wreath the size of a dining table and a yellow mantel hung with yuletide stockings.

'We love to go bold,' says Cortney. 'Treasured ornaments and a 12-foot-long linen tablecloth make an annual appearance, but aside from that, we switch it up. One year we had a huge Christmas tree suspended upside down from our ceiling. This time we've

gone bright pink in honour of the building's original façade.' (They painted it soft ochre, adding their own stamp.)

This sense of adventure is no surprise for a couple whose interior-design projects include turning a nightclub into a family home. Before they bought it four years ago, their townhouse had only two owners in its 200-year history, including actress and Rockette Celeste Martin, who died in 2018 aged





Scan to see the renovation, before and after

▲ Decorated with forged greenery, the mustard-coloured fireplace is a photogenic focal point. The stockings – each represents one of the family members – are from Holiday Collection! (shopthenovogratz.com). The armchair is a vintage find, as are the sheep – a fun decorative touch at Christmas

► 'We wanted to keep the kitchen open, bright and welcoming,' says Cortney of this raised ground-floor space, where full-height doors overlook the garden. The range and hood, from lacornue.com, make cooking for large gatherings a cinch. The cabinetry is by idealcabinets-inc.com

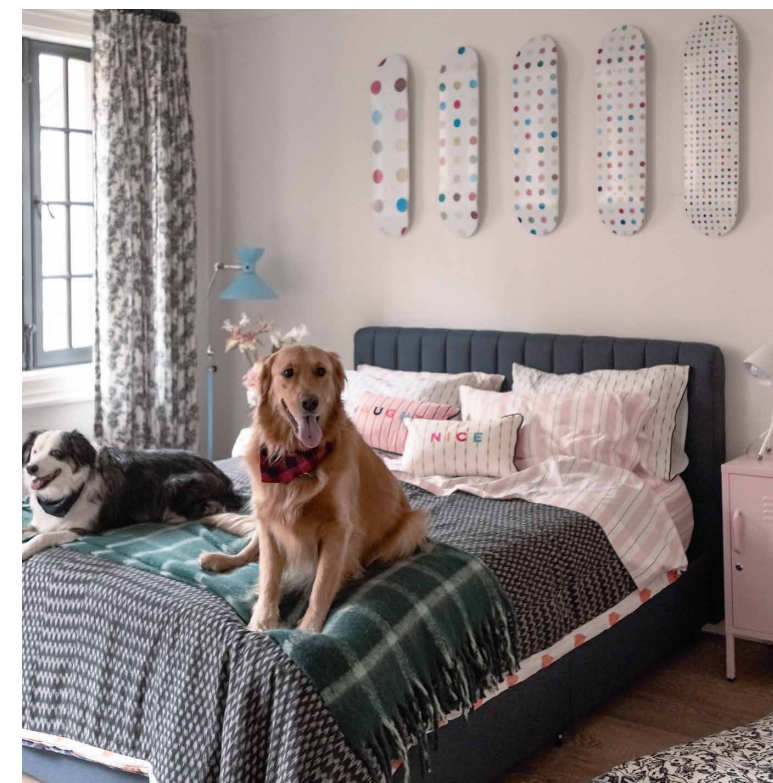




The parlour/sitting room, adjacent to the kitchen, receives a more traditional festive treatment, with verdant garlanding for the mantelpiece and a classic tree. The Nickey Kehoe sofa and armchairs, from [finchhudson.com](http://finchhudson.com), feature whimsical florals in soft contrast to the graphic window frames. For similar statement artwork try [surfaceview.co.uk](http://surfaceview.co.uk)



The guest bathroom is decorated with a vibrant floral wallpaper by [gucci.com](http://gucci.com). The marble sink and hardware, from [thewatermonopoly.com](http://thewatermonopoly.com), create a vintage feel. 'I wanted guests to be able to move through every floor and find something memorable,' says Cortney. For a similar wallpaper print try [houseofhackney.com](http://houseofhackney.com)



Family pet Winter, above left, enjoys downtime with a neighbour's dog in the bedroom of the Novogratzes' teenage son, Holleder. He designed the room himself. The skateboard artworks are by Damien Hirst