

# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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## DESIGNERS' OWN HOMES





# The Creative Impulse

Members of the AD 100 Reveal Everything from the Challenges of Designing for Themselves to What They Collect and Why

## Q&A

### Charles Allem

#### WHAT DOES YOUR HOME REVEAL ABOUT YOU?

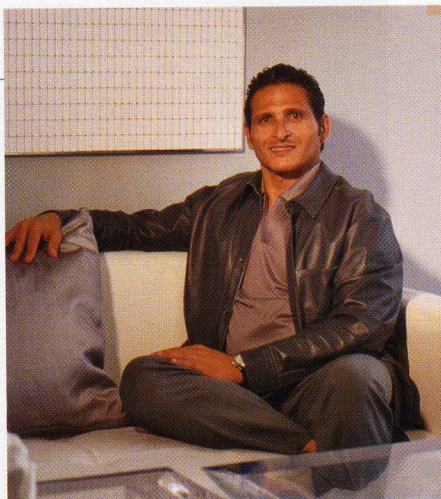
My home is all clean lines, with no clutter and an absence of color—a place of simplicity and calm. I like contemporary, abstract, Minimalist art, works that let my mind wander. My work is so diverse, embracing all styles of design, and my days are so crazy. I need a clean space to recharge and to feed my soul.

#### WHAT ROOM HAVE YOU SEEN IN SOMEONE ELSE'S HOME THAT REVEALED SOMETHING ABOUT THAT PERSON?

Although one would expect that a person's bedroom would be the most telling about their personalities, it is often in their living rooms that their interests and values are revealed. The living room is an expression of a client's self-concept of his strength, power and status in the world. For instance, the grand scale and luxurious comfort of the living room in a Manhattan penthouse I designed [right] expresses the client's affinity for entertaining lavishly.

#### WHAT HAVE YOU DONE (OR WOULD LIKE TO DO) IN DESIGNING YOUR HOME THAT YOU WOULD NOT DO FOR A CLIENT?

I prefer to refrain from installing baseboards, but the maintenance is not easy. I would not commit my clients to this type of maintenance obligation. I attempt to



design homes that are more user-friendly for my clients, even when the design is contemporary and inspired by Minimalism.

#### GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF A ROOM/SPACE THAT WAS PROBLEMATIC AND HOW YOU OVERCAME THE DIFFICULTY. WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

Often the existing layout of the walls can be problematic when designing. I try to

change the position of walls to create the space I'm looking for, but when a wall can't be changed, it needs to be turned into a work of art to be incorporated into the design of the room.

#### WHAT KIND OF CLIENT WOULD YOU BE?

Open-minded, allowing the design process to evolve.

#### IF YOU WANT TO ESCAPE FOR A WHILE, WHERE DO YOU GO?

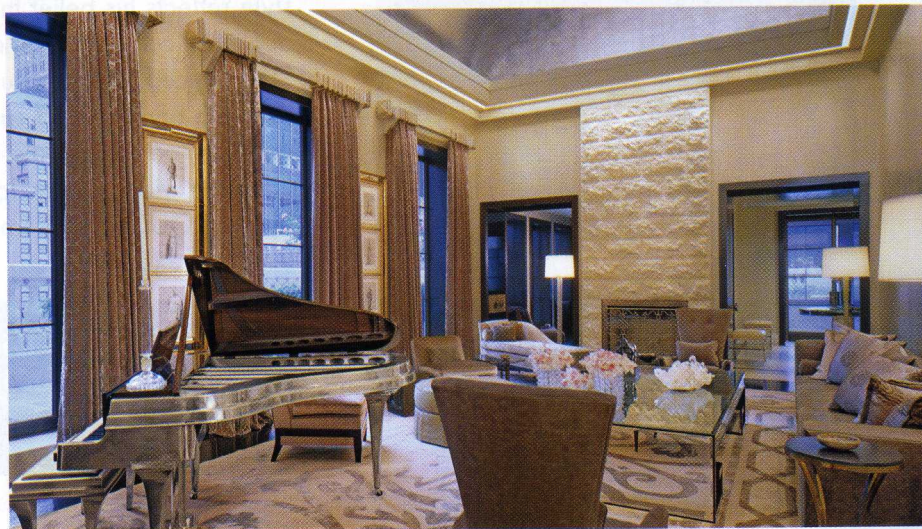
I enjoy going to a remote island where I can get away from the busyness of life. St. Bart's is one of my favorites.

#### WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRAVEL TO NEXT?

I've always wanted to travel to India. There's so much rich culture to experience there.

#### WHAT'S EXCITING IN DESIGN RIGHT NOW?

The global fusion is exciting. So many facets of different cultures are being brought together and utilized in design today.



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