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REAL ESTATE | HOMES

In Tribeca, A Place to Rest and Rumba

Following a \$400,000 renovation, the living room of competitive ballroom dancer Luda Conti doubles as a dance studio



PHOTO: PAUL WARCHOL

By Adrienne Gaffney

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Luda Conti, a spa owner and ballroom dancer, wanted the 1,000-square-foot living and dining room of her Tribeca apartment to have multipurpose function. The space needed to be easy for entertaining but the design needed to allow for Mrs. Conti, 60, to be able to practice her ballroom dancing.

She enlisted architect Robert Henry, of Robert D. Henry Architects, whom she had used 12 years earlier when she was designing her New Jersey spa.

“It is a loft-type space, making it easier to craft an environment that doubled as a dance studio,” says Mr. Henry. “There are window seats and the furniture can be easily pushed aside to create surround seating while she’s practicing with her dance partner.”

The centerpiece is a white grand piano that Mrs. Conti has owned for 30 years. Mr. Henry believes it subconsciously influenced the room’s bright, white color palette.

The renovation took 14-months and cost around \$400,000, including construction, installation, millwork, lighting, painting and furniture. Here are some of the highlights.



PHOTO: TRAVIS MAGEE

1. Mr. Henry and his team created the 20-foot crystal chandelier by hand. It was designed to be a more modern spin on the traditional opera house chandelier. Price: \$28,000
2. The draperies, also by his firm, are made from a metallic sheen fabric, adding a reflective element. Price: \$20,000, Sahco fabric in Xenon, available from Donghia
3. Mrs. Conti found the two crystal candelabras at the now defunct The Pier Antiques Show in Manhattan. Price: Around \$1,000 each
4. The dining table was made from a solid piece of 10-foot long Carrara marble. Price: \$25,000, by Robert Henry Architects.
5. A dark walnut wood was selected for the flooring to offset the white walls. A half-inch rubberized under-layment lies beneath to give the floor a bit of spring for dancing. Price: \$40,000
6. Mrs. Conti and her husband, Victor Conti, love to entertain, so ample seating was a priority. The white leather L-shaped sectional sofa is 14 feet by 16 feet and can comfortably seat eight. Price: \$16,750, by Gamma International from D&D Design Center
7. Mrs. Conti chose the ebonized walnut wood coffee table for its clean lines and geometric silhouette. Price: \$3,850 by Stone International from D&D Design Center