

Lela Rose in her living room, next to a blood-red chair designed by Maurizio Galante. OPPOSITE PAGE: An Ed Wormley for Dunbar sofa, upholstered in fabrics Rose has used in past collections, anchors the living room. A pair of regal wing-back chairs sit opposite. The coffee table was found at Aero, and the old tree sculpture is by Tony Cragg.



# DESIGNER LIVING

Fashion designer Lela Rose's Tribeca storefront home—complete with tequila nook—is as quirky, glamorous and gracious as she is.  
*by Sue Hostetler photographs by Costa Picadas*



Designer Lela Rose knows what she likes. When it comes to her lines of intricately detailed clothing, shoes and bridal gowns, it's the ultrafeminine, the fluid, the whimsically embellished. When it comes to her home life, it's Tribeca, and more specifically, the neighborhood's street-level apartments that consistently attract her. "We lived on a ground-floor apartment on Leonard Street, and I fell in love with its homelike feel. When we started looking for a new space, we asked to be shown ground-floor spaces only. I love the industrial, loft feel of the area," Rose says. "Tribeca has changed a lot, but so has the way I live there, now that I have two kids."

Rose—whose pieces are sold at Bergdorf Goodman, Bloomingdale's and Neiman Marcus, among other stores, and are objects of desire for celebrities like Anne Hathaway, Chloë Sevigny, Cameron Diaz, Eva Mendes, Mariska Hargitay and Molly Sims—has lived in Tribeca for 19 of her 20 years in New York. She arrived in 1991 as a graduate of the University of Colorado, enrolled at Parsons to study fashion and went on to assist designers Christian Roth and Richard Tyler before starting her own company out of her apartment in 1998. She later expanded her business to include shoes (through a collaboration with Payless) and brides' and bridesmaids' dresses.



A vintage Eames chair was given a funky makeover with colorful rubber bands. The scissors sculpture was found in a flea market in Texas.

Three years ago, needing more room for their two growing children, Rose and her husband, hedge fund financier Brandon Jones, found a loft that met with their specifications and commissioned WORKac to renovate the nearly 6,000-square-foot space, creating five bedrooms (including a nanny's room) and four and a half baths. "We worked on the design of the apartment with them for over a year," Rose says. "We knew it would take a long time to get permits to start building."

While her home is not as overtly feminine as her clothing line, both exude a sense of discipline and practicality that also allows for creative expression and play. This combination is apparent in the apartment with Roses' mix of black-and-white photographs, which she has collected since high school. Framed and hung in one large grouping, the collection of prints resembles a biomorphic organism dominating the living room. Rose also collects contemporary sculpture. "I would describe myself as a secondary collector," she says. "My mother has long been a lover of contemporary art and architecture, and I have always been exposed to it and learned much through her. That being said, I much prefer to beg pieces from her."

With many of her furnishings accumulated over the years, Rose has built her home décor the way she has her business—strategically, imaginatively and successfully. "I followed advice to buy a few good-quality pieces," Rose says, "and it has served me well." Many of these pieces were purchased at Wright Out of Chicago, Rago Arts and other auction houses. Rose says that she owned her living room sofa, by the great Midwestern midcentury designer Edward Wormley, two apartments ago, before being married. A '60s Pierre Paulin circular sectional, purchased for this apartment, fits cleanly into the living room plan, as the sectional is arranged around a structural column, turning a potential obstacle of the room into a focal point for togetherness.

In addition to being a fashion mogul and mother of Grey, 9, and Rosey, 4, Rose is a homebody who bikes to the green market and cooks four evening meals a week. Cookies baked in this kitchen were placed in gift bags for her Fall 2011 collection—and both the collection, inspired by paintings by Gerhard Richter, and the cookies got rave reviews. "The clothes were just as mouthwatering as the sugary treats," wrote Sarah Ferguson on



Mesquite wood chips set in resin create a unique floor pattern. Paintings on the far wall are by Glen Baxter.



The kitchen is outfitted with a custom wood table and dining chairs by Arne Jacobsen.



You know there's a Texan in the house with a dedicated tequila nook. The honeycomb wall pattern was created from terra-cotta pipes.



In the playroom, Rose updated an old coffee table with citrine lacquer. The flags are made of fabric scraps from her studio. Benjamin Moore chalkboard paint and beanbags are from Urban Outfitters.

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Black and silver wallpaper from Flavorpaper shines in the powder room, accented by a portrait bought at the Drawing Center Gala.



In Rosey's room, bedside tables built by Rose's grandfather in the 1950s were lacquered in dark gray and accented with floral drawer pulls from Anthropology. The painting, by Delia Brown, was a gift from the artist.



In son Grey's bedroom, a pair of headboards bought at Steven Sclaroff complement quilts Rose made out of old fabric scraps.



Vivid wallpaper decked with cars pops in the master bathroom.



fashionista.com. Rose and her husband entertain frequently but wanted to keep their home intimate and family-centric. Much of the entertaining apparatus—furnishings, dishware—is either stored or cleverly built in. “I have always loved to entertain and throw dinner parties but didn’t want to dedicate so much of our apartment just to entertaining,” she says. “We talked a lot about components appearing and disappearing as needed, and that is how we ended up with all of the moving tables we now have.”

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A set of bamboo tables connects with the wood kitchen table to accommodate as many as 68 dinner guests. A continuous table by BDDW is a favorite of Rose’s: “When I saw it 12 years ago, I fell in love with the feel of it—all of the different materials and styles.” Even more dramatically, a glass table suspended from the ceiling is the dessert cart. Rose says that cleaning up after a bash brings out the kid in her guests, because those spare tables inspire a dancing frenzy. “Once all the dishes are cleared,” she says, “it is somewhat irresistible to dance on the tables, even using the glass ceiling table to swing on—it’s kind of like an overgrown kids playground!”

When it’s just Rose, husband and kids at home, the family gravitates to a cozy dining space they’ve created in this sprawling loft, where ceilings soar to 15 feet in the main living room and to 11 feet in sleeping areas. “The biggest surprise of living here so far has been how often we eat at the bamboo table that comes just up from the floor,” Rose says. “We love eating Japanese-style. I did not expect that we would use that table as much as we do when it’s just the four of us. We just love the serenity of it.” **G**

Rose’s game room includes Knoll Saarinen executive chairs covered in Maharam cobalt wool, surrounding a custom David Ellison table. The walls and ceiling are covered in neutral felt.



Bedding from India gives a Room & Board bed frame a feminine, whimsical touch in daughter Rosey’s room.

An airy guest room features bedding from India and bright yellow midcentury chairs purchased at auction.