



# design forum

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MIELE AT HOME

## design development

architect joe tanney follows a  
"stray path" from a new kitchen  
to a complete loft redesign

In the opening statement of the monograph on their work, the New York firm Resolution: 4 Architecture defines its design process as "investigations down 'stray paths' without an emphasis on a preconceived end-product." Indeed, when principal partner Joe Tanney embarked on a recent project in lower Manhattan, the client's request was simply for some new kitchen cabinetry. The final result was a completely gutted and renovated loft, with a new gourmet kitchen serving as the "entertainment hub."

When the program expanded from new cabinetry into an entirely new kitchen, accommodating serious cooking and entertaining, both the architect and his open-minded client began to

consider design implications throughout the rest of the loft. Built in the early 80's, the space was ready for an update, to better suit the client's current lifestyle. To accomplish this, Tanney created a plan with an open central zone, comprising living, dining and kitchen areas, with the smaller private areas, such as bathrooms, "carved into the space" along the loft's interior walls.

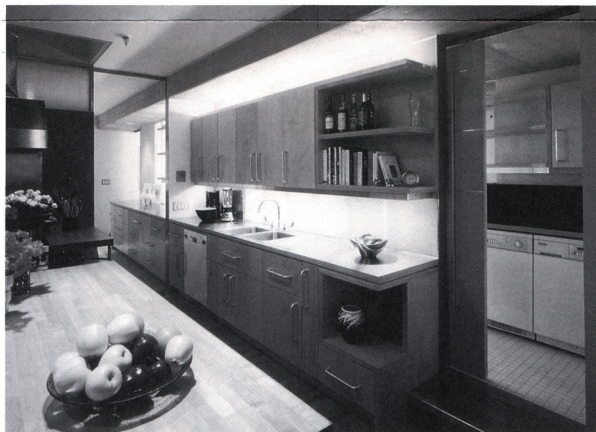
Simple, ordinary materials used in an uncharacteristically sophisticated manner are typical of Resolution: 4 designs. Tanney notes that Durock and Homasote are used inventively in this scheme, in order to "maximize the project with cut-and-place materials that reduce labor" while

maintaining a sense of elegance. Baltic birch plywood is used throughout the space and is combined with cool stainless steel in the kitchen to produce a sleek, professional look. The stove/hood and its stainless steel surround, flanked by sliding translucent Polygal panels, becomes an architectural element, dividing the open kitchen from the privacy of the bedroom beyond.

Ironically, given the rambling evolution of the project, the architect felt that "everything throughout the apartment had to be perfectly integrated," for the open plan design to work. Vigorously attentive to details, Tanney chose a Miele washer and dryer because he felt that they simply looked "perfect"

within one of the “carved out” Durock-paneled baths. He was also persuaded by the clients for whom he has previously speci-

fied Miele who “have universally raved about the laundry systems.” It was this loft’s gourmet cook-owner who demanded the Miele



*Miele’s front-loading laundry system fits perfectly into the bath adjacent to the loft kitchen (top). The open central zone of the loft creates a light filled, flexible environment for entertaining.*

dishwasher. Happy to comply, the architect chose an all stainless steel front, flush with the birch cabinetry, and consistent with the generous use of stainless steel throughout the rest of the kitchen. Perhaps the ultimate in appliance integration, a special birch cabinet was custom-designed to store the owner’s much-loved Miele vacuum cleaner.

Tanney describes Resolution: 4 Architecture, which he co-founded in 1990 with Robert L. Lutz, as, “a young office,” which is eternally “committed, dedicated and passionate” about their projects. Yet, says Tanney, “I’m more interested in producing quality work than in reflecting on it.” Prior to establishing the firm, Tanney worked at Gwathmey Siegel and Associates as well as at Peter Eisenman Architects. Luntz was with Perkins and Will, Gwathmey Siegel and Beyer Blinder Bell. Building on this background, explains Tanney, “You get a taste of how the big boys do it, then you come at it from your own point of view.” As with most energetic, young architecture firms, this viewpoint continues to develop with each new project, or “stray path,” the firm pursues.

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