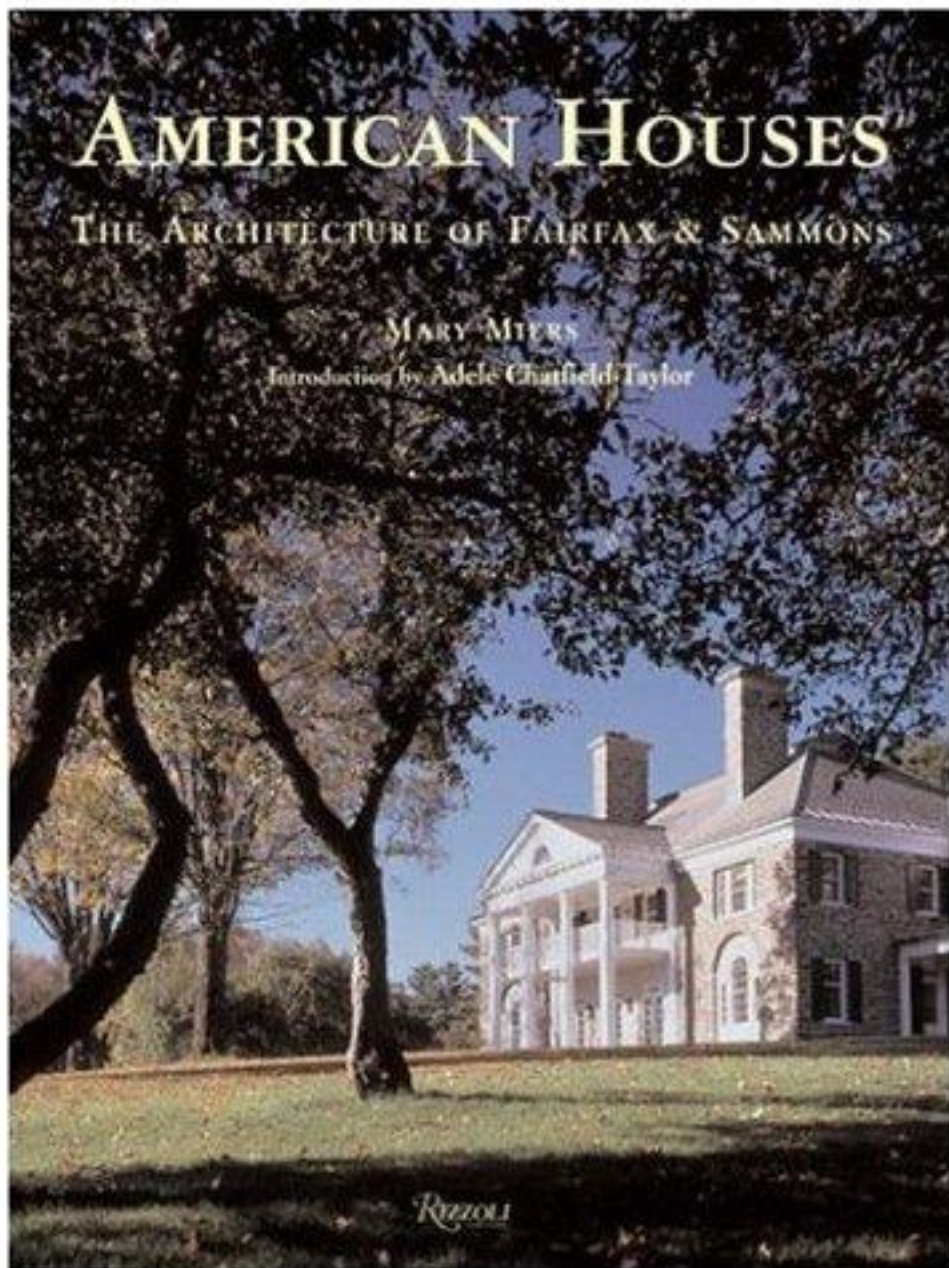


AMERICAN HOUSES

THE ARCHITECTURE OF FAIRFAX & SAMMONS

MARY MIERS

Introduction by Adele Chatfield Taylor



RIZZOLI

**AN UPPER WEST SIDE
APARTMENT**

**THE PRASADA
ON CENTRAL PARK WEST
NEW YORK, NEW YORK, 2003**



*Exterior of the Prasada Apartments
on Central Park West.*

*INTERIOR: Living room with Louis
XV style atmosphere.*





Entrance hall

1930s suite. Bed alone in office quarters

O ccupying a prime position on the west side of Central Park, the Praxels is one of the earliest apartment buildings of its type—an imposing Beaux-Arts-style building dating from 1907. This apartment had been owned and occupied by the same family for three generations when the present owner bought it, and much of its original early-20th-century character had been preserved. But the owner's modern tastes and large kitchen were essential to the new vision brought in to reconfigure and renovate the interior.

The result has a timeless modern glamour achieved through a close collaboration between the architect, their client, and the decorator Alex Papachristidis. The owner has a particular interest in the different effects that can be achieved by com-

bing the traditional and new—the incorporation of old style furniture and finishes into a modern shell, for example, or, as in this case, putting twentieth-century furniture, art work, and fabrics into a space expressed in a traditional architectural language. There is a deliberate play here between the feeling of a modern loft space and that of a more conventionally formal interior.

At the wider front of the apartment is an open-plan living-dining room, with superb views out over Central Park through newly made windows. It is entered from a large hall, which has been redesigned to be symmetrical in plan, the front door opening through one of two central corners (the other has a job door, behind which a cloak closet is neatly concealed). The architect has introduced new paneling and





Kitchen

view: The dining end of the principal room, with breakfast table in bay window. The timber fittings were designed by Fardin & Sennott.

moldings, and a floor of American white oak, which Alex Papachristidis had stenciled with a pattern of rings and squares to make a striking impact. One subtle alteration was to narrow the doorway from the hall into the main room by thickening its jambs, so that the opening now aligns with the double window opposite overlooking the park.

The architectural detail of the main intersecting living/dining room has been deliberately muted so as not to compete with the wonderful park views that fill the windows. Mr. Papachristidis has created, in a clean, understated manner, a slightly Parisian feel, keeping the decoration traditional, with a 1940s edge. This works well with the neutral palette of soft earth-based colors—grays, chocolate browns and neutrals—and with the pale silk curtains, off-white painted joinery, and mostly twentieth-century furniture bought in Paris and New York. The rug, laid over exposed oak floorboards and featuring





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