

The Stripper & the Con Man

When Diane Passage met financier Ken Starr, love wasn't the only thing in the air. By Jessica Pressler p.44

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Six Books Per Square Foot

How does a minimalist architect deal with a client's truckload of printed matter? By building a very long bookshelf, for starters.

BY WENDY GOODMAN

Photographs by Floto + Warner

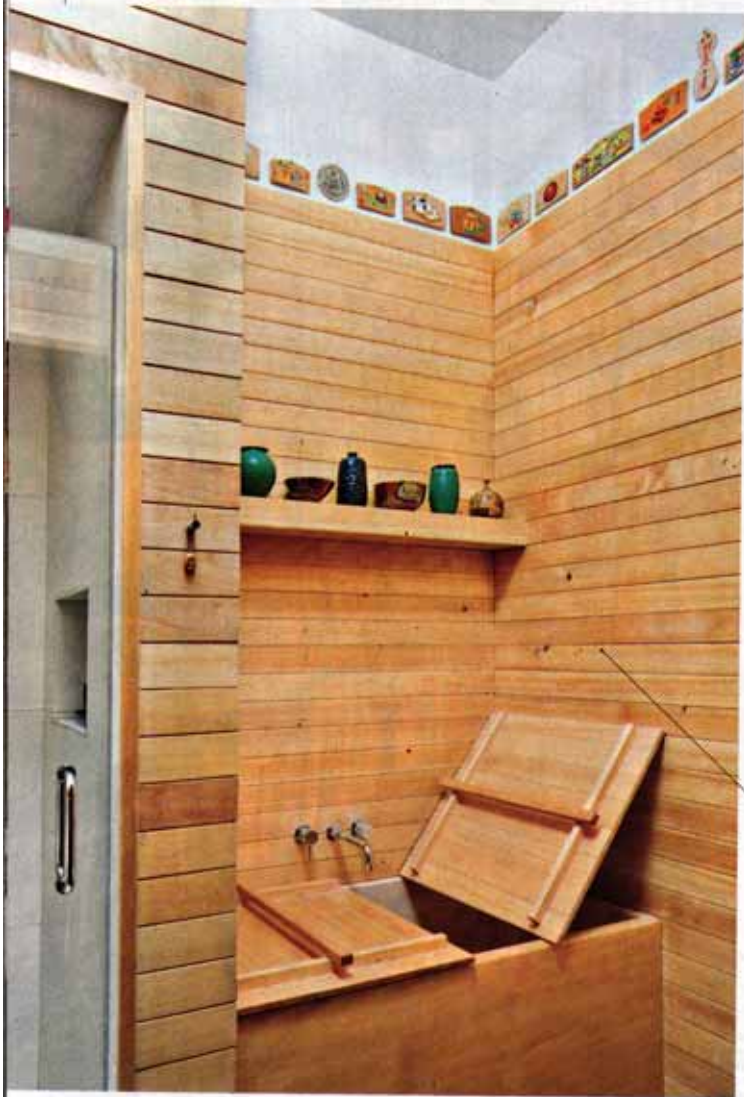
GREAT ROOM



War of the Walls
A loft-bisecting bookcase faces an entire gallery's worth of art, as well as furniture by Florence Knoll, Saarinen, and Hans Wegner.

GREAT ROOM

"IT WAS A VERY unattractive space," architect Steve Blatz says of the original 1,200-square-foot Soho loft bought by his client two years ago. A dropped ceiling above the kitchen, a loft bed, a bad paint job—"oppressive" was the operative word. But the client, who works in publishing, came bearing her own enlivening décor: twin collections of books (around 7,500 of them) and art (a whopping 250 pieces, including works by Diane Arbus and Hiroshi Sugimoto). "I had a client who is a maximalist," he says. "I am a minimalist." And yet it was a good marriage. In Blatz's hands, the book collection became an architectural element that would divide and conquer the vastness of the loft. The great wall of books was constructed using prefab industrial-steel shelving with custom-made metal covers for a sleeker look. Despite its bulk, the bookshelves allow natural light and fresh air to stream into the bedroom, located just behind the wall like a snug alcove in a personal library.



The Bath
The Japanese soaking tub is made from hinoki, an aromatic and virtually mold- and leakproof wood. "It feels like you are in a giant humidior," the owner says.



It's Not a Window
A Sze Tsung Leong photo of Hong Kong tricks visitors (and a pink KAWS statuette) into peering out the living room, while a Japanese mask and Jonathan Adler lamp complete the ruse.



Behind the Bookcase
The American tester bed, circa 1820, is the same one the owner slept in as a child. Her mother hand-stitched the quilt.

The Dressing Area
The fiberglass Eames chair was found on the street, and the picture above is part of Tomoko Sawada's "ID 400" series.

