

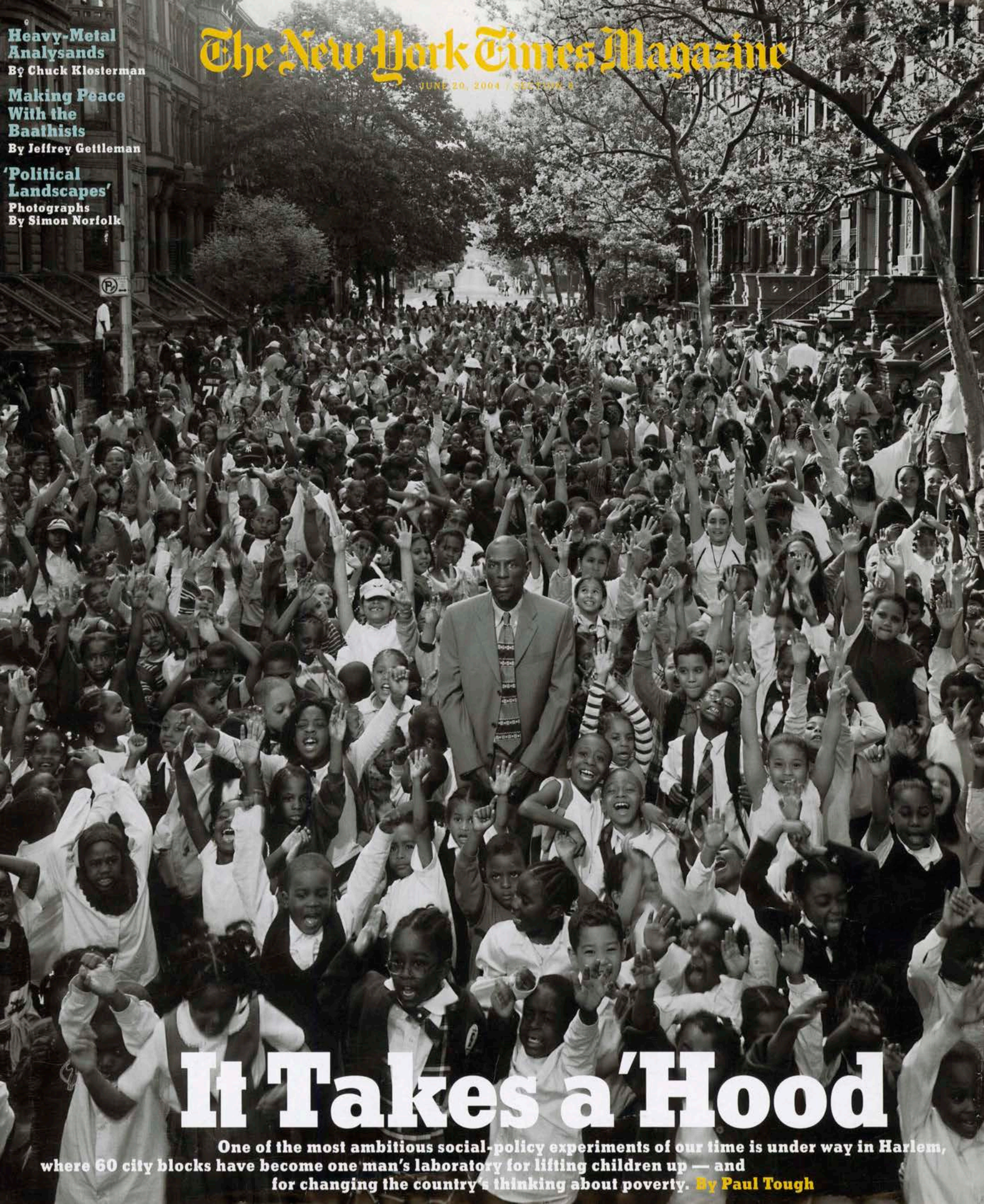
**Heavy-Metal  
Analysands**  
By Chuck Klosterman

**Making Peace  
With the  
Bathists**  
By Jeffrey Gettleman

**'Political  
Landscapes'**  
Photographs  
By Simon Norfolk

# The New York Times Magazine


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## It Takes a 'Hood

One of the most ambitious social-policy experiments of our time is under way in Harlem, where 60 city blocks have become one man's laboratory for lifting children up — and for changing the country's thinking about poverty. **By Paul Tough**





6.20.04

# Style

## Behind the Red Door

A Modernist house gets a face lift. By Pilar Viladas  
Photographs by Peter Aaron Styled by Steven Sclaroff



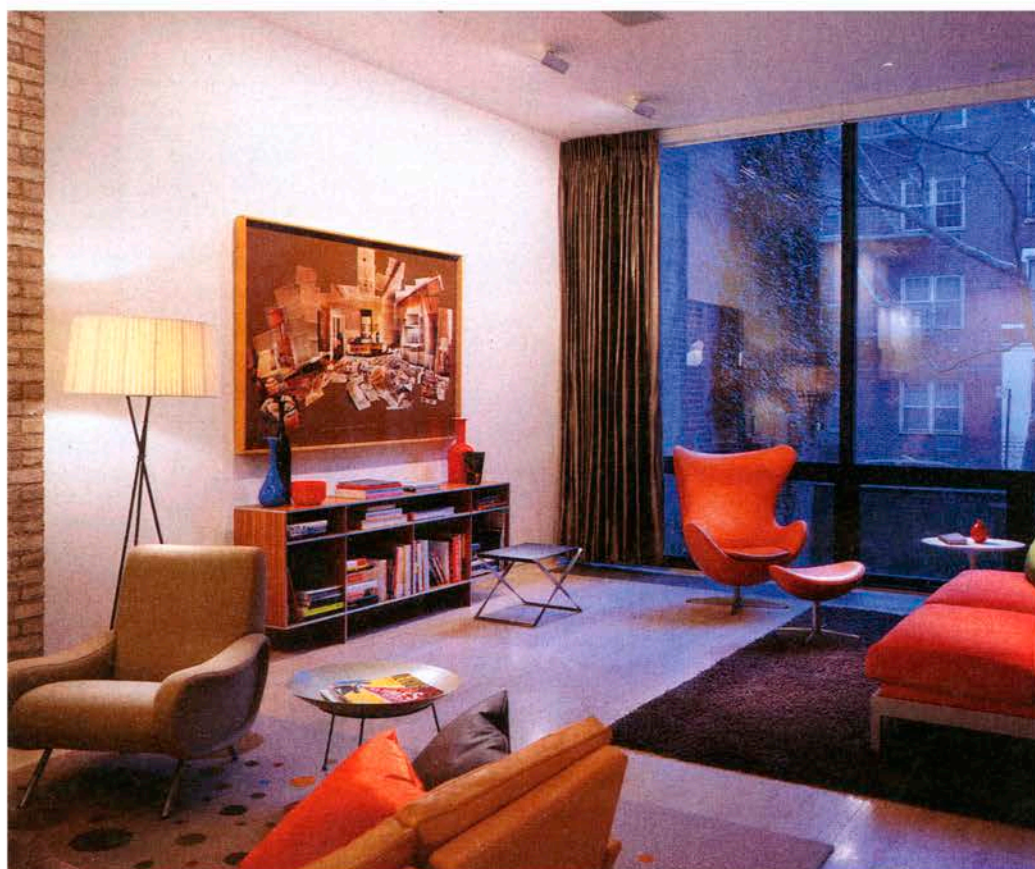


**A view from the living room** — with its mixture of classic modern and custom furniture — back through the dining area to the kitchen. Dark brown armchair from Steven Sclaroff. Coffee table from Regeneration.

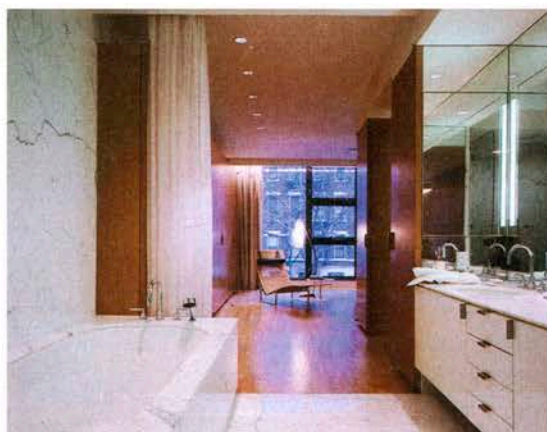


**Right:** The architect Alexander Gorlin added a third floor to the house but left the first-floor facade largely intact.

The front door was painted red for good luck, in a nod to feng shui. The planter is from R20th Century. **Below:** A seating area off the main living room, with a Vico Magistretti sofa for De Padova and Arne Jacobsen's iconic Egg chair. Rug from Karkula. Poul Kjaerholm stool from Troy.



**Opposite page:** Gorlin designed the kitchen cabinets with translucent glass fronts and plastic backs to admit daylight from the window wall behind. **Right:** The master bathroom, separated from the bedroom by only a curtain, is lined in white marble. Towels from Waterworks.



Much like the baby boomers who grew up in them, Modern houses of the postwar era are now at the point where they could use a little work — not an extreme makeover, just an update. This was the case when the architect Alexander Gorlin was asked to renovate a 1956 Upper East Side town house by a couple for whom he had previously designed a TriBeCa loft.

The house, designed by Paul J. Mitarachi and John Brownrigg, was a two-story glass-and-wood box. Its first owners — Arne Ekstrom, a founder of the art gallery Cordier & Ekstrom, and Parmenia Migel Ekstrom, active in the ballet world — wanted a modern house and insisted, over Mitarachi's protests, on a glass front. So he set the house back from the street, behind a low brick wall, to provide some privacy.

To accommodate its new owners' wish for more space, Gorlin added a third floor to the house (which now measures 6,000 square feet). He largely preserved the cool 1950's facade on the first floor, but on the floors above, he redesigned it in a symmetrical, geometric arrangement of small and large windows. It is Gorlin's boldest move in an otherwise intentionally low-key renovation; with its newly painted black trim and scarlet front door, the facade has a syncopated energy that recalls a Mondrian painting.

At first glance, the interior of the house is so glamorous that it almost looks more like a bachelor pad than a family home. Gorlin moved the kitchen and dining area from the ground floor to the open, loftlike main floor. He designed a new staircase and added a skylight at the top of the stairwell to brighten the interior. "We enhanced its inherent possibilities," he says. Gorlin's concern for maximizing natural light even extended to his cleverly designed kitchen cabinets, whose translucent fronts and backs let light in from the window wall behind them. The owners asked Emanuela Frattini Magnusson of EFM Design to select the house's furnishings. Frattini Magnusson, an architect, doesn't usually take on decorating jobs, but "this was an interesting project," she recalls.

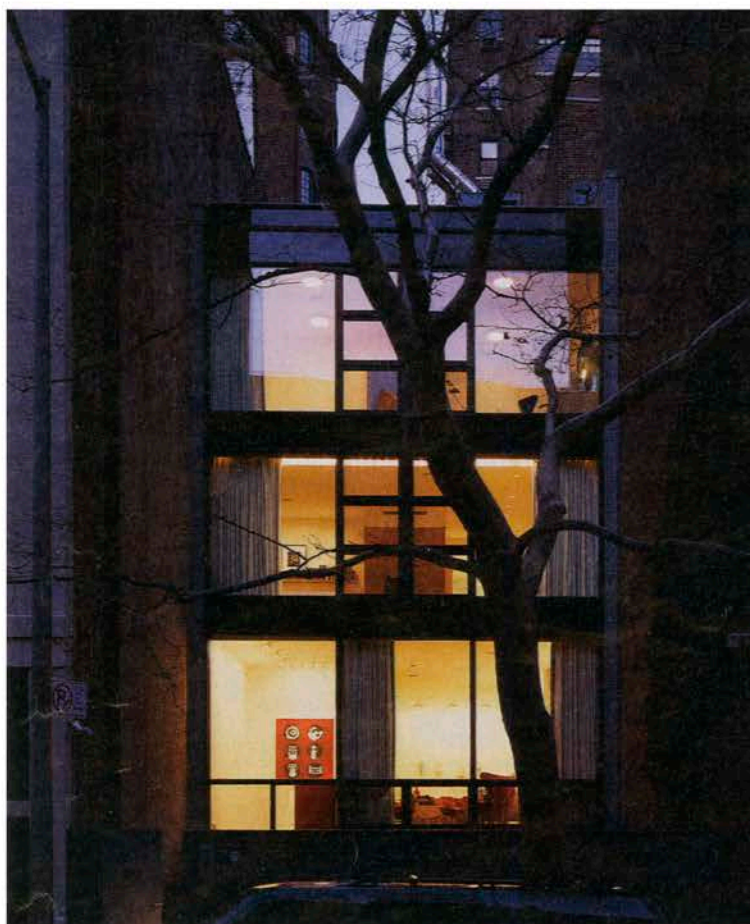
She gave the owners, who collect contemporary art and wanted furnishings that harmonized with the architecture, a mixture of vintage, new and custom-designed pieces — or, as she explains, "the vintage of the future." In the living room, for example, a classic Poul Kjaerholm sofa and a curvaceous armchair by Marco Zanuso sit on a colorful rug by Frattini Magnusson herself. She also designed the wood-veneer aluminum bookcase, the dining table and wall-mounted credenza. These pieces use zebrawood, "a contemporary surrogate," she says, for materials like rosewood, which was popular in the 50's and 60's, but which is scarce today.

At this juncture, the house recalls the easy, open feeling that it had in 1958, but with a more effusive sensibility. "I think it's very glamorous," Gorlin says proudly. "One day, I was leaving the house after a meeting, and a FedEx man said, 'Do you live here?' I said, 'No, but I wish I did.'"









**Above:** Set back from the street, the house glows at night. The architect's newly designed windows on the second and third floors give the facade a syncopated feeling. **Right:** A view from the third-floor library-media room into the skylighted stairwell with its glass block floor; the guest room is visible down the hall. Beechwood bookcases line the east and west walls of the room. Jean Prouve round table from Vitra.





