

**INSIDE:** PAPER EYELASHES, PUNCHY SCARVES, AND PRETTY AWESOME MOTORCYCLES

# DESIGN BUREAU

## KARIM RASHID

*The designer we know and love, or love to hate?*

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## A COLORFUL LIFE

*A brightly hued abode perfectly suits this artistic and architectural couple*



STEP INTO THE SOHO LOFT OF CATERINA Roiatti and Robert Traboscia and it instantly feels like home. “Whenever we have people over for dinner,” Traboscia says, “they have drinks, settle down afterwards, and don’t want to leave.”

The husband-and-wife team runs architecture firm TRA Studio—he a designer and painter, she an architect. Their enviable New York loft is the result of two decades of incremental remodeling projects, which accommodated professional and personal changes, and most importantly, made room for their five-year-old son, Massimo.

Roiatti and Traboscia’s loft is a seamless fusion of life and work, and the couple attributes its distinctive style to 20 years of collaboration. Traboscia agrees: “It’s only

possible because we share the same aesthetic.” That aesthetic includes the notion that a space-conscious floor plan is fundamental. Three tall windows overlooking West Broadway carry daylight deep inside the 24-foot-wide, 80-foot-deep space. The wide-open layout, contemporary kitchen, and mid-century furnishings, including iconic pieces by Harry Bertoia, Marcel Breuer, George Nelson and Alvar Aalto, give the place a bright, contemporary energy. The older architectural elements, like the working fireplace, exposed brick walls, wood ceiling joists, and striped black-and-white bathroom tiles designed by Enzo Mari, give the place a sense of history.

Everywhere there are pieces from the couple’s stunning collection of vintage glassware from Venice, Roiatti’s hometown. And the paintings are by Traboscia himself,

BY NALINA MOSES  
PHOTOS BY MARILI  
FORASTIERI

*Above: Roiatti and Traboscia  
in the TRA Studio office*



The couple designed the golden-colored spruce dining table and display shelves from rafters and display shelves salvaged from the demolition site of another project in SoHo.



#### ALL IN THE DETAILS

Millwork, molding, and trim expert Luis A. Barreto helped TRA design its NYC studio. He's a big fan of Traboscia and Roiatti's forward-thinking firm. "Each design is one-of-a-kind," Barreto says. "Their attention to detail is like no one I've ever dealt with." Coming from someone who makes a living on details, you know Barreto's praise is legit.

Traboscia recounts how they discovered the long, brown Knoll living area sofa at a used furniture shop, and how a friend spotted the accompanying sofa, a low leather one designed by Massimo Vignelli, at another store.

In the master bedroom there's a stunning, floral-patterned rug that Roiatti, who grew up in Venice, selected as a child, at the convent in Roccatice, Italy where it was woven.

who paints with a focus and precision that's present in TRA's design work as well.

The TRA office, which is just a short walk downtown in Tribeca, has many similar design elements. Right now, the firm is completing master plans for large apartment remodels, multi-unit residential projects, the renovation of an art school, and a new restaurant at a Midtown hotel.

Both precise and eclectic, modern and warm, it's clear that Roiatti and Traboscia's style has been honed to perfection after years together on the job and at home. ✎

