

Brooklyn  
*Confidential*



# what Katie did

BY SABINE ROTHMAN  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JONNY VALIANT  
PRODUCED BY SUSAN TYREE VICTORIA

h2



A TELEVISION STAR COM



**DOWN TO EARTH** IN HER CARROLL GARDENS FAMILY HOME



Even though more than a decade has passed since Lifetime tapped her as the “next Martha Stewart,” there’s nothing blasé about Katie Brown. She’s still your best friend, not your disapproving mother, although she leaves you in awe of her boundless energy. With her current show, *Katie Brown Workshop*, and a line of home and garden products for Meijer, Katie has claimed and maintained her niche as a peppier version of the archetypal domestic goddess.

But how did this daughter of the Midwest come to Brooklyn? After a decade in Los Angeles and another in Manhattan, it wasn’t predestined. “I always thought we’d never do 718,” she recalls, referring to the borough’s area code. Instead, she was living in a big loft on Chrystie and Houston streets, in the maelstrom of downtown. “But, I fortuitously dropped an assistant off in Brooklyn one day and thought, ‘Wait a minute.’” That was four years ago, when Katie and husband William Corbin’s daughter, Prentiss, was barely 2. She’s now 6, and Meredith, their younger daughter, is pushing 2 herself.

The new neighborhood, Carroll Gardens, has proved to be the ideal spot for her growing family—and her business, which she runs out of a retail shop and workspace in the nearby Red Hook area—feeding Katie’s creativity and her sense of place. “My house is sandwiched between two points of view.

WITH EVERY WALL WE TOOK DOWN, I FELT LIKE THE HOUSE BREATHED “THANK YOU!” WE HAD A RELATIONSHIP RIGHT OFF THE BAT.

—HOMEOWNER KATIE BROWN



Top and left: Painted in Pratt & Lambert’s Chervil, the music room has a poetic charm. Homeowner Katie Brown commissioned artist Jess Ryan to draw the menagerie on the walls. Right: Curtains from Casa Fiora dress up the tall windows. The chandelier is from Circa Lighting.

Preceding pages: Katie and daughters Prentiss and Meredith cuddle on the living room’s large ottoman. Many of the room’s new pieces—the sofas, slipper chairs, and mirror—are from Drexel Heritage. The mantel is original to the house.

h2

Brooklyn  
*Confidential*





**Above:** Katie mixed a dining room table she found at the Brimfield flea market with china cabinets from Drexel Heritage. She calls the Pratt & Lambert Vintage Claret walls "fierce, but warm."

**Right:** Large-scale pineapples on the entry hall's Studio Printworks wallpaper are almost as tall as Prentiss.



On one side is a family that has been there forever—they grow tomatoes for sauce and figs in the backyard. On the other side, there's a young couple with kids who play with ours. They're discovering the neighborhood with us," she says. Their guides include such characters as Vinny, the unofficial mayor of the block, who is also an expert on alternate-side parking, a local obsession.

When Katie and William found the house, its appeal was masked by its scent. "There were so many cats and dogs living here," she remembers. Moreover, the four-story house had been split into four apartments. But Katie immediately felt a connection. "I knew it had the bones," she says. "With every wall we took down, I felt like the house breathed 'thank you.' We had a relationship right off the bat." Although she had renovated places before, she had never embarked on a total gut. "I was intimidated,

but for the first time, this was really going to be my family's home, not just mine. It meant a lot to make it comfortable." Because she's a speed demon, the job was finished in an unimaginable four months. "I was on them like a cheap suit," Katie laughs.

She wanted to put her own stamp on it but maintain a conversation with the house. She saved the original tin ceilings and added reclaimed barn-wood floors that ground the elegant space with a rustic hominess. She brought French doors from the Brimfield flea market to connect the music room to the dining room, which shares space with a small entertaining kitchen. (The main kitchen is on the ground floor, but Katie got sick of carting dirty dishes down the stairs, so she installed this satellite.) She created a retreat for her daughters on the top floor and a roomy master suite on the third. ▶

Brooklyn  
*Traditional*

KATIE  
BROWN  
WORKSHOP  
*Keep it simple.*

## KATIE'S WORKSHOP

"Red Hook still feels like a secret," says Katie Brown. And even though she has a new retail space and workshop in the neighborhood, she wouldn't mind keeping it that way just a little longer. Although IREA and Fairway Market have moved in, the neighborhood can still be tricky to reach by public transportation—there are buses but no subway—a fact that has kept the waterfront area relatively industrial, with just a smattering of smart new bars, shops, and restaurants.

Katie rides her bike to the storefront, which features a mix of flea-market finds, her books, and her wares for Meijer—candies, bell jars, outdoor lights, and more. Her test kitchen and workshop are in back of the shop; they're a hive of activity, especially when the team starts pre-production for her TV show.

Although it's only 12 city blocks from her Carroll Gardens home, the shop at 254 Van Brunt Street feels like a world away to Katie. "Within six blocks of my house there are so many restaurants, you can't decide where to eat. But in Red Hook, if you need a welder, there are seven places you could go," she says. "You can find people raising live chickens, an ironwork shop, or pick up a fresh lobster for dinner. It's such a weird combination of things."

Katie likes hot colors, which she calls "shocking and delightful." No wonder she painted the outside of her Red Hook shop and workroom a cheerful orange and the inside Pratt & Lambert's Scarlett O'Hara.

The grand parlor floor, the heart of the house, is divided into three parts. The front is "what we call the pretty room," Katie explains. It is that, thanks to a neutral ground of pillowy white sofas punctuated with chic slipper chairs, handsome wood-and-metal furniture, and Oriental rugs. At the center, the lovely music room has mint-green walls with whimsical line drawings of animals on them. At the back is the dining room.

So what's the best thing about having parlor windows that stretch from the floor almost to your 11-foot ceiling? Light? Proportion? Sure. But the ultimate joy is that Hazel, Katie's standard poodle, can survey the neighborhood street life from her perch inside. And that's what delights this anti-diva most—the whole family is having as much fun living here as she is. ➤

For more information, see sources on page 154



# Reader's Resource

For more information about the stories shown in this issue, contact the professionals and sources listed here. Contact information has been verified, but we cannot guarantee the availability of items or services. No information is available about items not listed.

## Page 44

### DESIGN CONFIDENTIAL: BROOKLYN MEET THE NEIGHBORS

**Architect:** Steven Harris, Steven Harris Architects, LLP, 50 Warren St., New York, NY 10007; 212/587-1108, stevenharrisarchitects.com. **Interior designer:** Lucien Rees Roberts, Rees Roberts & Partners, 50 Warren St., New York, NY 10007; 212/587-3371, reesroberts.com. **Designer:** Francesca Connolly, Remodelista, francesca@remodelista.com, remodelista.com.

**Page 44. Dining area—Chandelier:** Vince Mulford Antiques, 518/828-5489. **Dining table top (custom):** Steven Harris Architects, 212/587-1108, stevenharrisarchitects.com. **Fabrication:** Engberg Design & Development, 718/875-1685, engberg-design.com. **Dining table base (vintage, Florence Knoll):** Metropolis Modern, 917/669-4540, metropolismodern.com. **Chairs (vintage, Saarinen):** Neven and Neven Antiques, 518/828-4214. **Chair fabric:** Maharam, 212/319-4789, maharam.com. **Chair upholstery:** Interiors by George & Martha, 718/638-4950. **Carpet (custom):** Steven Harris Architects, 212/587-1108, stevenharrisarchitects.com. **Fabrication:** Tai Ping Carpets, 212/979-2233, taipingcarpets.com. **Sofa fabric (by Larsen):** Cowtan & Tout, 212/647-6900, cowtan.com. **Sofa upholstery:** Interiors by George & Martha, 718/638-4950. **Wall paint ("Cloud White" #997):** trim paint ("Super White"); Benjamin Moore & Co., 888/236-6667, benjaminmoore.com.

## Pages 46—52

### BROOKLYN CONFIDENTIAL: WHAT KATIE DID

**Interior designer:** Katie Brown, Katie Brown Workshop, 254 Van Brunt St., Brooklyn, NY 11231; 718/243-9044, katiebrown.com.

**Pages 46—49. Living room—Love seats (discontinued):** love-seat fabric; ottoman; ottoman fabric; mirror over mantel; table to left of mantel (discontinued); pair of chairs in front of mantel (discontinued); chair fabric; table beside love seat (with dog figurines): Drexel Heritage, 866/450-3434, drexelheritage.com. **Pillows on love seat:** Calypso Home, 866/422-5977, calypso-celle.com. **White throw on ottoman:** IKEA, 800/434-4532, ikea.com. **Area rug under love seats:** Blue Door Antiques, 616/456-7888. **Mantel:** original to house. **Sculpture on mantel; lamp on table to left of mantel; wall hanging over table (box spring, vintage):** black candelabra; dog figurines: owner's collection. **Floor lamp beside mantel ("Studio Adjustable Floor Lamp" #TOB1010):** Circa Lighting, 877/762-2323, ciricalighting.com. **Drapery ("Khaki Linen" #060):** drapery hardware ("Bellagio Final" 28 inch, Wood Collection): Casa Fiora, 866/399-7869, casafiora.com. **Table lamp by love seat:** Jamie Young, 866/295-2677, jamieyoung.com. **Chandelier ("Eight Light Crystal Petal Chandelier" #CHC1470):** Circa Lighting, 877/762-2323, ciricalighting.com. **Wall paint ("Moon Goddess" #16-32):** ceiling and trim paint ("Designer White" #33-1): Pratt & Lambert Paints, 800/289-7728, prattandlambert.com. **Living-room area with sofa and red chairs—Sofa ("Le Dolce Sofa" #D601):** sofa fabric; red leather chairs; leather-chair fabric; coffee table; round table beside red leather chair: Drexel Heritage, 866/450-3434, drexelheritage.com. **Pillow on sofa:** Jonathan Adler, 877/287-1910, jonathanadler.com. **Area rug:** Blue Door Antiques, 616/456-7888. **Music room—Wall paint ("Cherish" #22-30):** ceiling and trim paint ("Designer White" #33-1): Pratt & Lambert Paints, 800/289-7728, prattandlambert.com. **Molding (custom):** Hyde Park Molding, 631/752-7837, hyde-park.com. **Animal drawings on wall:** Jess Ryan, jess.k.ryan@gmail.com. **Chandelier ("Margot 6-Light Chandelier with wood beads" #CHC1415):** Circa Lighting, 877/762-2323, ciricalighting.com. **Large round center table ("Montego"):** Drexel Heritage, 866/450-3434, drexelheritage.com. **Area rug:** Blue Door Antiques, 616/456-7888. **Floor lamp; lampshade:** Jamie Young, 866/295-2677, jamieyoung.com. **Figurine on piano; candlesticks on center table:** Calypso Home, 866/422-5977, calypso-celle.com. **Sconces on wall by**

piano (vintage); piano: owner's collection.

**Page 50. Dining room—Table:** owner's collection. **Dining chairs; chair fabric; china cabinets:** Drexel Heritage, 866/450-3434, drexelheritage.com. **Three hanging lights ("Large Eugene Hanging Light" #TOB5000):** hanging light over table ("Pencil Street Lamp with Shade" #CH5160): Circa Lighting, 877/762-2323, ciricalighting.com. **Wall paint ("Vintage Claret" #3-13):** ceiling and trim paint ("Designer White" #33-1): Pratt & Lambert Paints, 800/289-7728, prattandlambert.com. **Foyer—Wallpaper ("Pineapple"/Aubergine Yellow #SPW-W1004-05):** Studio Printworks, 212/633-6727, studioprintworks.com. **Stair runner:** ABC Carpet & Home, 212/473-3000, abc-home.com. **Page 52. Workshop—Paint ("Scarlet O'Hara" #5-16):** Pratt & Lambert Paints, 800/289-7728, prattandlambert.com.

## Pages 54—60

### BROOKLYN CONFIDENTIAL: IT TAKES A VILLAGE

**Architect:** Warren Meister, Warren Meister Architects, 22 Kendall Dr., New City, NY 10956; 845/639-7321, wmeisarch.com. **Interior designer:** William McIntosh, William McIntosh Design, 54 West 21st St., Suite 1210, New York, NY 10011; 212/807-8030, williammcintoshdesign.com.

**Pages 54—55. Living room—Sofa, bolster pillow, large floor lamp (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030. **Sofa fabric (by Great Plains):** Holly Hunt, 312/661-1900, hollyhunt.com. **Pillow fabric:** Coraggio Textiles, 800/624-2420, coraggio.com. **Pillow trim:** Samuel & Son, 212/704-8000, samuelandson.com. **Small floor lamp (by Holtkotter):** owner's collection. **Drapery ("Varese" #F1190, by Designers Guild):** Osborne & Little, 877/322-7420, osborneandlittle.com. **Drapery and valance trim ("Aristotle Greek Key"):** Samuel & Son, 212/704-8000, samuelandson.com. **Suede chair to left of sofa; beige chair (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030, williammcintoshdesign.com. **Suede chair fabric ("Royal Suede"):** Edelman Leather, 800/886-8339, edelmanleather.com. **Beige chair fabric ("Folio"):** by Larsen, discontinued). **Cowtan & Tout, 212/647-6900, cowtan.com. Beige chair trim (by Great Plains):** Holly Hunt, 312/661-1900, hollyhunt.com. **Coffee table:** Matthews & Parker Ltd., 914/723-8887. **Vase on coffee table:** Lost City Art, 212/375-0500, 2.lostcityarts.com. **Bowl on coffee table:** owner's collection. **Table beside beige chair:** Jonathan Adler, 877/287-1910, jonathanadler.com. **Chandelier ("Contemporary Plaster Ceiling Fixture" by Marc Bankowsky):** Manson Gerard, 212/674-7611, mansongerard.tidbits.com. **Chair in right foreground (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030, williammcintoshdesign.com. **Chair fabric ("Glacé" #8900):** Donghia, 914/662-2377, donghia.com. **Wall paint ("Stony Ground" #211):** ceiling paint ("Pointing" #2003); trim paint ("Off-White" #3): Farrow & Ball, 888/511-1121, farrow-ball.com.

**Pages 56—57. Living room with banquettes—Tufted banquette; mirror; coffee table; armchair (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030. **Banquette fabric ("Fama," discontinued):** Bergamo Fabrics, 914/665-0800, bergamofabrics.com. **Trim ("Belgian Linen Bullion," discontinued):** Samuel & Son, 212/704-8000, samuelandson.com. **Geometric-patterned pillows:** Holland & Sherry, 212/355-6241, hollandandsherry.com. **Chair fabric ("Glacé" #8900):** Donghia, 914/662-2377, donghia.com. **Wall sconces:** Nicholas Antiques, 212/688-3312, nicholasantiques.org. **Chair to left of banquette:** antique. **Chair-seat fabric ("Marrakesh," by Great Plains):** Holly Hunt, 312/661-1900, hollyhunt.com. **Area rug:** Beauvais Carpets, 212/688-2265, beauvaiscarpets.com. **Table in foreground with marble insert:** Matthews & Parker Ltd., 914/723-8887, matthewsandparker.com. **Entry hall—Hanging lantern:** Roman Thomas, 212/473-6774, romanthomas.com. **Flooring:** Paris Ceramic, 888/845-3487, parisceramic.com. **Carpet; carpet runner:** ABC Carpet & Home, 212/473-3000, abc-home.com. **Drapery ("Butterfly," discontinued):** Bergamo Fabrics,

914/665-0800, bergamofabrics.com. **Brown leather chair (antique, by Erik Gunner Asplund):** art behind chair (by Rodney Graham): owner's collection. **Vase on round table (Chinese ceramic):** plaster art (in style of Serge Roche, c. 1940): Duane Antiques, 212/625-8066, duaneantiques.com. **Wall finish:** custom polished plaster. **Dining room—Dining table; dining chairs (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030, williammcintoshdesign.com. **Chair leather ("Royal Hide"):** Edelman Leather, 800/886-8339, edelmanleather.com. **Chandelier ("Venetian Chandelier"):** Jean Karajan Collection, 212/751-6728, jeankarajancollection.com. **Art on back wall (by Pat Steir):** sconces; dinnerware: owner's collection. **Wall and ceiling finishes:** custom color lacquer.

**Pages 58—59. Master bedroom—Bas relief fireplace surround with lights (custom, by artist Malcolm Hill):** Malcolm Hill, 917/453-9341, malcolmhilly.com. **Black fireplace insert (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030. **Marble in front of fireplace:** Arabescato Ono. **Fireplace tools and andirons (antique):** Century Design Ltd., 314/495-3719. **Roman-shade fabric ("Silk Cocoon," by Liaigre):** Holly Hunt, 312/661-1900, hollyhunt.com. **Wood chaise (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030. **Chaise cushion fabric ("Velvet Illusion" #3386, Far Pavlovskii Collection):** Jim Thompson, 800/262-0336, jimthompsonfabrics.com. **Throw pillows on chaise:** Ankara, 212/575-1994, anka.com. **Bed (custom, polished stainless steel):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030. **Bed cover (by Signora di Firenze):** owner's collection. **Wall color:** custom. **Living room, portrait photo—Mantel, fireplace surround, bar, bar stools (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030, williammcintoshdesign.com. **Art (by Louise Crandall):** owner's collection. **Leather on bar stools (by Liaigre):** Holly Hunt, 312/661-1900, hollyhunt.com. **Wicker fire basket:** Mexco Gardens, 800/487-4854, mexcogardens.com. **Master dressing room—Dressing table (custom):** table lamps (custom): William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030. **Dressing-table pulls (custom):** Carl Martiner Hardware, 212/941-8142, carlmartinerhardware.com. **Lampshades (custom):** Blanche P. Field, 617/423-0713, blanchefield.com. **Chair:** Duane Antiques, 212/625-8066. **Chandelier (antique):** Steven Scharoff, 212/691-7814. **Wall fabric (by Great Plains):** Holly Hunt, 312/661-1900, hollyhunt.com. **Paint:** custom.

**Page 60. Pink bedroom—Bed (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030. **Bed upholstery and Roman shade fabric; bed trim; decorative pillow:** Osborne & Little, 877/322-7420, osborneandlittle.com. **Mauve bed cover (by Mansel Canovar):** Cowtan & Tout, 212/647-6900, cowtan.com. **Desk:** owner's collection. **Bedside table; desk chair:** Jonathan Adler, 877/287-1910, jonathanadler.com. **Area rug:** Pateros, Flynn & Martin, 212/688-7700. **Paint ("Misty Lilac" #2071-70):** Benjamin Moore & Co., 888/236-6667, benjaminmoore.com. **Bathroom—Marble flooring and tub surround:** Arabescato Ono. **Vanity, mirror (custom):** William McIntosh Design, 212/807-8030, williammcintoshdesign.com. **Hardware:** Rajack Design, 888/233-1009, rajack.com. **Stool:** Waterworks, 800/899-6757, waterworks.com. **Wall finish:** custom polished plaster.

## Pages 62—66

### BROOKLYN CONFIDENTIAL: FOR LOVE OF A HOUSE

**Architect:** Barton Myers, Barton Myers Associates Inc., 1025 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90024, 310/208-2227, bartonmyers.com. **Contractor:** Inogen Interim, LLC, 148 Hindale St., Brooklyn, NY 11207, 718/369-9587.

**Page 62. Living room—Armchairs (vintage 1960s, Corbusier):** pillows on armchairs; sofa (Chippendale reproduction): owner's collection. **Sofa fabric:** Brunschwig & Filz, 800/538-1880, brunschwig.com. **Drapery ("Mantada"):** Anthropologie, 800/309-2500, anthropologie.com. **Apple and pear prints on wall (by Enzo Mari):** Nova 68 Modern Design, 800/420-4137, nova68.com. **Hanging pendant light:** The Conran >