

# case study

Proof, if it were needed, that loft living has come of age, this New York loft is actually a reworking of a previous loft conversion, carried out 20 years ago when the movement was taking off. Situated on the top floor of the Eagle Warehouse in Brooklyn Heights, the space is dominated by a magnificent glass clockface providing sweeping views of Brooklyn Bridge and the Manhattan skyline.

The building in which the loft is located began life as the headquarters of the Brooklyn Eagle, a newspaper which was edited in the mid-nineteenth century by the celebrated American poet Walt

Whitman. At the end of the nineteenth century, the building was extensively renovated and converted into a warehouse providing storage for middle-class families moving into Brooklyn to escape Manhattan's rapidly escalating land values. Brooklyn

**RIGHT:** THE MAIN SPACE IS DOMINATED BY THE GLASS CLOCKFACE. ADDITIONAL NATURAL LIGHT IS PROVIDED BY TWO ENORMOUS SKYLIGHTS, ONE IN THIS AREA AND ONE IN THE BEDROOM. FURNITURE IS A MIXTURE OF ENGLISH, FRENCH AND AMERICAN ANTIQUES.

**BELOW:** THE BUILDING IS LOCATED AT THE BASE OF BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

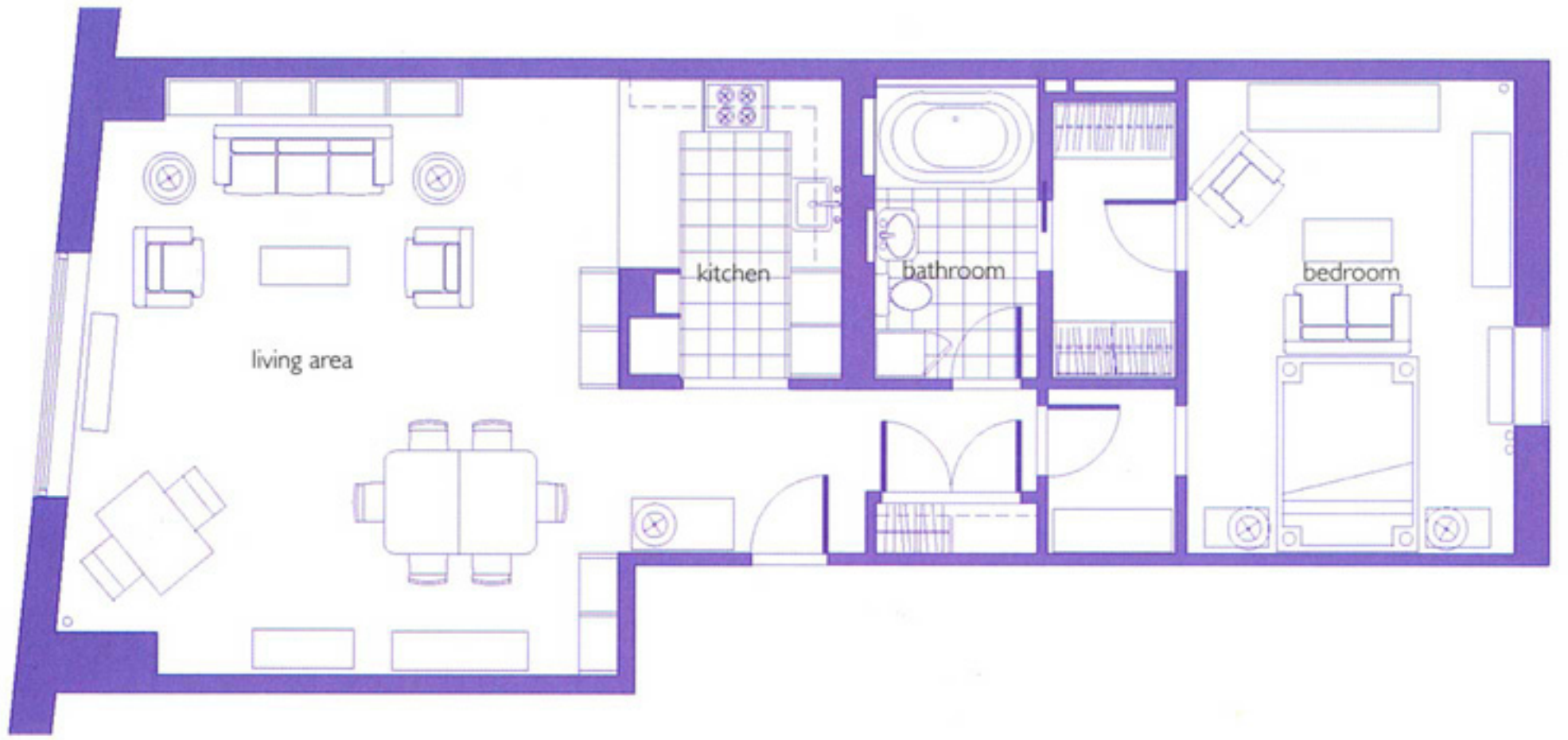








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Bridge was being constructed at the same time and when the architect of the renovation realized that the deck of the bridge would be more or less level with the top floor of the building, he added the clock, whose face advertises the company's name.

Rundown and abandoned in the 1980s, Eagle Warehouse was a prime candidate for developers cashing in on the loft boom. A condition of converting the property was that it was 'landmarked' or given heritage status. However, when the present owner, an architect and interior designer, moved in, very little of the original character had been maintained. The loft was subdivided into individual rooms, the ceiling had been lowered

by 1.5 m (5 ft), partially obscuring the clockface, and interior surfaces were concealed behind plasterboard.

The owner's response was to re-imagine the space as if the original architect had designed it for himself. He stripped away the partitions and false ceiling, took the walls back to the brick and transformed what had been a two-bedroom apartment into a one-bedroom loft. Over half the floor area is now an open space, where different functions are defined by lighting, cabinets and counters, and furniture placement. With the original scale and proportions restored, the sprinkler pipes, valves, and clockface, along with its motor and steel strapping, fully exposed, the result was a return to a true loft space.

**OPPOSITE, TOP:** THE REDESIGNED LOFT HAS AN OPEN LIVING/EATING/SLEEPING AREA, A CENTRAL BATHROOM AND A BEDROOM TO THE REAR. A LOBBY ACTS AS A TRANSITION BETWEEN THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC AREAS.

**OPPOSITE, BELOW:** 'EAGLE WAREHOUSE & STORAGE COMPANY OF BROOKLYN': THE VIEW OF THE LOFT, WITH THE CENTRAL CLOCKFACE, FROM BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

**ABOVE LEFT:** FURNISHINGS REVEAL A FASCINATION WITH TURKOMAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN CARPETS AND TEXTILES, A FASCINATION FUELLED BY REGULAR BUYING TRIPS TO TURKEY.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** THE BEDROOM HAS AN EASTERN FEEL, WITH PILES OF CUSHIONS, PILLOWS AND TEXTILES, AND A MOROCCAN-STYLE LANTERN.