



RIGHT A BATHROOM SHELF FEATURES MEMENTOS FROM GLORIA STEINEM'S LIFE, INCLUDING A COLLECTION OF PINS AND POLITICAL BADGES. OPPOSITE STEINEM (WEARING A VALENTINO BLOUSE, NILI LOTAN CORDUROY TROUSERS, CHANEL BOOTS, WITH A JOSEFF OF HOLLYWOOD SILVER NECKLACE AND KARL LAGERFELD PROTOTYPE BRACELETS) IN THE SECOND-FLOOR LIVING ROOM OF HER NEW YORK CITY RESIDENCE. BLOUSE AND JEWELRY FROM LILY ET CIE; FASHION STYLING BY NINA AND CLARE HALLWORTH.



HOME TRUTHS

Settling down after a life on the road, legendary feminist *Gloria Steinem* finds contentment and a new mission in her Manhattan brownstone, with help from designer *Jane Hallworth*

MAKEUP BY BOBBI BROWN FOR JONES ROAD BEAUTY

TEXT BY SARAH MEDFORD PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM ABRANOWICZ STYLED BY MIEKE TEN HAVE



OPPOSITE A PAIR OF CHAIRS UPHOLSTERED IN AN ETHAN ALLEN FABRIC STANDS IN FRONT OF THE FIREPLACE OF THE FIRST-FLOOR LIVING ROOM. A SHIRT FROM INDIA HANGS ABOVE THE MANTEL, AND A VINTAGE TOOL CHEST SERVES AS THE COFFEE TABLE.



RIGHT SCALAMANDRÉ'S BECKFORD WALL COVERING DEFINES THE HALL WHERE A SELECTION OF IMAGERY IS DISPLAYED, INCLUDING A *MS* MAGAZINE WAY SIGN FROM A 2017 STREET-NAMING CEREMONY IN NEW YORK CITY. BELOW A SELECTION OF STEINEM'S SIGNATURE AVIATOR GLASSES ON A TABLE.

After moving to New York City in her mid-20s, Gloria Steinem

made a list of the things about it that scared her. One of those things was dining—specifically, the fact that people in New York tended to sit down for meals rather than stand in front of an open refrigerator. Now 90, Steinem still prefers grazing to cooking. And given the length of her overstuffed CV, the tireless feminist, journalist, activist, and advocate for all manner of disenfranchised people makes a solid case for skipping out on seated dinners. Still, she keeps a colorful cache of kitchen magnets in her longtime apartment on the Upper East Side, from Frida Kahlo and Susan B. Anthony to Wonder Woman and the Mona Lisa.

A few years ago, it fell to the interior designer Jane Hallworth to freshen up a home for these magnets and the rest of Steinem's possessions after a mutual acquaintance introduced them. Hallworth was intrigued, and found her new client to be delightfully easygoing. "There's something so utterly

approachable about Gloria," says the designer, who has spent much of her career working with A-list actors and other creatives in Los Angeles. "But it's an approachable moment on Mount Olympus."

As Hallworth surveyed Steinem's duplex in an 1880s brownstone—warmly lit spaces ruffled by a sirocco wind of near-Eastern textiles, kilims, jewel-colored crystals, and leopard-print pillows—she realized that this was, in fact, said Olympus. It was here, during the summer of 1971, that Steinem had convened a handful of women in politics and the media on the living room's cossetting sofas, giving rise to *Ms.* magazine. And it was here, in the years following, that she often hosted such magnetic public figures as Wilma Mankiller, the first female chief of the Cherokee Nation, and Bella Abzug, the outspoken lawyer and politician.

By this point in her life, Steinem was something of an ensorcelling public figure herself. Her breakout moment had come in 1963, with the publication of "A Bunny's Tale," her exposé of life as a Playboy Club employee—she'd gone "undercover" in a strapless, high-cut costume and rabbit ears to report on the dire treatment of women inside the hutch. The flurry of writing assignments that followed allowed her to move into the brownstone's parlor floor with an artist friend in 1968, and the loft space they built out of a discarded porch salvaged from a Connecticut dumpster is still here, overlooking the living room.

ART: © DAN WYNN, 1971



"I made a home for myself," says Gloria Steinem. "But it took a while to learn that I didn't have to live out of boxes and suitcases."



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT A VINTAGE RALPH LAUREN HOME FABRIC ENVELOPS THE PRIMARY BEDROOM, AND AN ANTIQUE SILK UZBEK SUZANI FROM NAZMIYAL COLLECTION COVERS THE BED. A SELECTION OF CLOISSONNÉ EGGS, GEMSTONES, AND OTHER OBJECTS DISPLAYED IN THE SECOND-FLOOR LIVING ROOM. AN AUBERGINE HUE BY THE SYDNEY HARBOUR PAINT CO. COLORS THE CABINETRY IN THE RECENTLY REFRESHED KITCHEN.

RIGHT THE BACK GARDEN, DESIGNED BY LIZ PULVER AND MAINTAINED BY WILL SEGA, FEATURES A BRONZE STATUE BY DEBORAH BELL, A GIFT FROM FRIENDS IN HONOR OF STEINEM'S 90TH BIRTHDAY LAST MARCH.

BELOW STEINEM (WEARING A VINTAGE YAO JACKET FROM LILY ET CIE, FRAME JEANS, AND CHANEL BOOTS, WITH A NAVAJO BELT AND KARL LAGERFELD BRACELETS, BOTH ALSO FROM LILY ET CIE) ON THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE.



"Whoever came in first at night got the bed up on the porch, and the other got the couch," recalls Steinem, smartly dressed in a fitted black T-shirt and faded jeans. By 1987, she'd long lost the roommate and acquired the ground-floor unit, which she converted into a study and a guest room. Alice Walker visited so often that Steinem decided to make her garden-loving friend a green space on the neglected back terrace. But mastering the domestic arts has never been a life goal. Though Steinem has occupied this apartment for 58 years, many of them have been in absentia as she's flown off to rallies, speaking engagements, and, repeatedly, to Africa and to India, whose culture and homegrown protest movements fueled her early thinking about social activism.

HOW DOES THE IDEA of home resonate with her these days?

"Since I never married and had children, it may mean something different to me, I don't know," Steinem muses. "It's gained meaning over time. I made a home for myself. But it took a while to learn that I didn't have to live out of boxes and suitcases."

Steinem's childhood was an itinerant one, with summers spent at the lakeside dance hall her father owned in Michigan. A change in the weather would prod the family to load up a house trailer and move on to Florida or California. "I remember driving, looking at houses with yards and fences and

thinking, How great. I could live there and just walk to school," she recalls. "I kind of realized, too, that maybe the people who lived there wanted to live in a trailer."

To stay afloat, Steinem's father would buy and sell antiques along the way. She has always been drawn to richly colored and ornamented surfaces and the solidity of furnishings made to last.

"Obviously I'm not a modern person—" She laughs at herself and tries again. "There's a kind of antiseptic furniture look I would not love," she ventures. Hallworth is the latest in a daisy chain of capable women who have helped Steinem with her apartment, including Filippa Naess, a British interior designer who kept an eye out for colorful auction finds; Irene Kubota Neves, a writer and passionate gardener; and Laura Emrick, a decorative painter whose handiwork spans walls, cabinets, and the primary bedroom ceiling. Hallworth's mission was decidedly more boots-on-the-ground.

"To be honest, when I walked in, my first thought was, What are we doing even touching this?" she admits. "Shouldn't we just be getting out some quick-dry glue? Because it just felt so personal, and aged to perfection. But the reality was that the infrastructure needed fixing."

Hallworth's primary focus was on the bathrooms and the ground-floor kitchen, where, after replacing some plumbing, she added custom cabinetry painted aubergine, Calacatta Viola



“To be honest, when I walked in, my first thought was, What are we doing even touching this?” Jane Hallworth admits. “Because it just felt so personal, and aged to perfection.”

LEFT IN THE GROUND-FLOOR BATH, A 19TH-CENTURY WHITE MARBLE SINK FROM PITTET ARCHITECTURALS WITH WATERWORKS FITTINGS STANDS BETWEEN CUSTOM CABINETRY BY EDMUND LEWIS WITH DECORATIVE PAINTING BY LAURA EMRICK. HALLWORTH'S HAUNT LIGHT FIXTURE HANGS FROM THE CEILING, AND THE SCONCES

ARE BY VISUAL COMFORT & CO. (EMBELLISHED WITH CUSTOM BRONZE BUTTERFLIES BY HALLWORTH). CUSTOM SHOWER CURTAIN BY SIMEONA LEONA OF LEWIS & WOOD'S WILD THING. BELOW PIERRE YOVANOVITCH'S "GLORIA" CHAIR HOLDS A REPOSITORY OF ARCHIVAL CASSETTES BEING PRESERVED BY STEINEM'S FOUNDATION.

marble countertops around a farmhouse sink, and a new Fisher & Paykel range. In the master bath, peacock blue Clé tiles pave an arched bathing nook curtained in a sprigged floral from Una Malan. But the walls here and throughout are very much Steinem—a memory palace of images of family, friends, and the courageous women who have shared her beliefs in the feminist cause. Her bedroom is equally personal, with bookcases everywhere, Ralph Lauren bayadere-striped fabric on the walls, and her signature aviator glasses heaped on a bedside. Did Hallworth intervene here? “No way!” she says. “Gloria’s bedroom is so punk rock. I wouldn’t.”

Steinem has long-term plans to make her home a place where women can gather for discussion and occasional refuge. For now, she’s working on a new book here and finding it hard to narrow down her topics. There is so much to say.

“What we expect influences reality,” she maintains, explaining her unflinching optimism that one day, equality—for women and for all those denied basic human rights—will be attained. Another reason for her optimism might be congenital, she says: “It’s just the way I am.” And she’s still at it, surrounded by young women reanimating her gifts for speaking truth to power for new times.

A few nights from now, Steinem and the photographer Annie Leibovitz, a good friend, will throw a political fundraising dinner here. “I’m not cooking,” Steinem adds, just in case anyone might misconstrue.

The caterer they’ve chosen has a female CEO. **▲**



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE PRIMARY BEDROOM. A PAIR OF PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANS SILVESTER IN A CUSTOM-PAINTED FRAME BY LAURA EMRICK HANGS ABOVE THE FIREPLACE.

ART © HANS SILVESTER/GALLERY RETOUR DE VOYAGE