

SHOPPING WITH
DONNA HANOVER



Philip Greenberg for The New York Times

**GONNA WASH
THAT MAN
RIGHT OUTTA
MY ROOMS**

With a \$6.8 million divorce settlement, Donna Hanover, at Ethan Allen with the architect Paul Gleicher, is renovating for a new life.

Brass Tacks and Second Acts

By WILLIAM L. HAMILTON

IT'S good to get home at the end of a long day. Not to mention five years of insinuation and accusation about marital infidelities, a protracted battle over your house (Gracie Mansion, New York's mayoral residence) and your job (as the city's first lady), an unexpected divorce suit, then a countersuit, an 18-month staredown between lawyers and an 11th-hour \$6.8 million settlement — all played out daily on an international public stage.

Donna Hanover, 52, the television host and actress and as of last month the former wife of the former mayor of New York, Rudolph W. Giuliani, got home in January. Ms. Hanover moved back into the four-bedroom apartment on East 86th

Street where she lived for 10 years with Mr. Giuliani and their children, Andrew, 16, and Caroline, 13, before leaving for eight years to live in Gracie Mansion. Ms. Hanover, not surprisingly, is renovating — although she hasn't yet set a budget.

"Some of the redoing was simply necessary," she said on Monday, sitting in the Upper West Side living room of Lisa and Paul Gleicher. Mr. Gleicher, the president of the Gleicher Design Group, is Ms. Hanover's architect. Ms. Gleicher was her production assistant 20 years ago at WPIX.

"It needed to be updated," Ms. Hanover said of her apartment. "It needed to be freshened. Another family had lived there for eight years."

"But," she said, "it is a new start. I wanted to create a

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IN PURSUIT Donna Hanover, from left, at Ethan Allen on West End Avenue; taking the measure of a sofa and having a test sit; at Baker, inspecting a side chair; at the Frederick Williams showroom.

Talking Brass Tacks And Second Acts

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warm, happy environment for my children. A place that's me — where I've made a lot of the choices, in conjunction with my children."

The workout machines, and the vanity and dresser that belonged to her grandmother, and which her daughter now uses, will stay. The New York young-family standard-issue wall units will go.

"It was a nice workaday apartment, just trying to fit everything in and have livable space," Ms. Hanover said last week while shopping for furniture and finishings with Mr. Gleicher. "Left to my own devices, I will almost make student choices — a 'white cabinets and butcher block' kind of thing."

With the help of Mr. Gleicher, she is creating her first home as a single working mother, with an adult style of her own, comfort for her family and the capacity to entertain as she did at Gracie Mansion, with dinners for accomplished women. The apartment is her only residence. She said she had no plans for a second home.

Wearing a short black dress, a small diamond pendant, an acid-

—
Post-collegiate
followed by post-
mansion.
—

green hacking jacket with a gold Race for the Cure ribbon pin on its lapel and black high heels, Ms. Hanover looked at marble and other materials at Stone Source, a showroom on Park Avenue South.

"I want a modern look," she said. "Not exactly minimal, but not a lot of tchotchkes. I want clean lines." The apartment, in a post-World War II building on a high floor, has good views and light, which she wants to encourage with the new design.

"I wanted to continue being bright and airy and to have a very optimistic kind of attitude," Ms. Hanover said. "Sleek, but nice and comfy."

Mr. Gleicher, a genial, friendly-faced man, whose clients include Kyra Sedgwick and Kevin Bacon, the actors, and Michele Marsh, an NBC anchor, specializes in contemporary,

rich-looking work, which emphasizes comfort and deftly calibrates its ostentation to its clients. Mr. Gleicher, wearing the designer's dress code, casual black, showed Ms. Hanover samples of onyx, white marble and composite stones for an entry hall, the kitchen and a terrace.

The kitchen will be completed by September.

"My parents are coming to visit," she said. "Standard motivation, right? We just want the apartment a little more finished. My mom said, 'Don't worry about it.'"

Ms. Hanover is not without resource or background in renovation and decoration. She is the host of "Famous Homes and Hideaways," a syndicated television program now in its third year. For this season's shows, she visited Ivana Trump and Fabio, the model. She has, she said, walked away with good ideas from Sally Kellerman's Frank Gehry house, Linda Gray's kitchen and Linda Lavin's bathroom.

"She's already been exposed to the things that are out there," Mr. Gleicher said. "It's much easier in that respect for her to make her decisions."

At Stone Source, Ms. Hanover



Photographs by Philip Greenberg for The New York Times

chose a blue-pearl stone for the kitchen countertops.

"It looks a little like jewelry," she said. "Like it has mother-of-pearl in it. I have a white kitchen, and I thought, what a beautiful classy kind of combo to have the white with that." Ms. Hanover stuck the long pointed heel of one shoe to the ground hard and pivoted her leg away like a dancer, a gesture she made frequently, as though staking a claim to territory she is still surveying and defining. The choices, though they related to her new home, were pragmatic, clear and understandable.

She was alternately at ease and uneasy with being the subject of attention and was professional as quickly as personal. She is, by her own description, "a listener," tilting her head in conversation engagingly and with variety from years of experience as a broadcast journalist, a politician's wife and a public figure.

At stops that included ICF, Frederick Williams, Baker and Ethan Allen, furniture showrooms where they shopped for dining chairs, bar stools and a sofa, Ms. Hanover said "No" as firmly, as frequently and as politely as she asked Mr. Gleicher what he would do, and why, with the posture

of a novice who understands that the learning curve will also be a lift in spirit.

"It's a bit of a metamorphosis for her, and catharsis, as it is for many people," Mr. Gleicher said. "To let go of certain things and start over. There are pieces she's owned for years, and gradually the conversation comes around to 'Well, I really like these, but it's time to let go and start fresh.'"

Ms. Gleicher, a senior producer at "Good Morning America" on ABC, characterized it as Ms. Hanover's wanting something grown-up after the sobering, unwanted wisdom of the last few years.

"When you're building things, like a home, that gives you a sense of stability," Ms. Gleicher said. "Because you're making a commitment — aesthetically, emotionally and financially — to your future."

Ms. Hanover's preferences and priorities crystallized slowly during the afternoon of shopping: favorite colors, blue and green; glossy surfaces, not matte; a substantial sofa for her son; return visits so that her daughter could join in crucial decisions.

Ms. Hanover looked at black leath-

er bar stools. She looked at stacking chairs for her dining room. She asked everywhere about maintenance and wear on furniture that she sat in or stone that she drew her hand across. Despite the field day the news media had over her \$6.8 million divorce settlement with Mr. Giuliani, Mr. Gleicher said that compared with other clients', Ms. Hanover's was a small job, and that they were working on an "intelligent budget."

"She knows, too, that she's got a certain image with this house," he said. "That she's going to be interpreted by the way her home looks."

Ms. Hanover addressed the issue interestingly in a different context earlier that day, when asked about celebrities she has interviewed for her show and the assumed affluence of their homes.

"A lot live in very modest circumstances," she said without surprise. "Ed Begley Jr. lives in a small little two-bedroom, because that's his theory." After years of open compromise, Ms. Hanover seemed as if she might be preparing herself to put Mr. Begley's theory into practice. "You live in a place like that so that you don't need to take the job that you don't want to take."