

## SHOPPING WITH

GEORGIA TAPPERT HOWE AND CAROLINE CUMMINGS RAFFERTY

## Earning Their Space

In small apartments, tables and beds need to do double duty.



SUZANNE DeCHILLO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

**A TWOFER** Caroline Cummings Rafferty, right, and Georgia Tapert Howe at Resource Furniture with a Vela coffee table/dining table; starting at \$1,555.

**F**OR those who have vowed to put their homes in order in 2011, Georgia Tapert Howe and Caroline Cummings Rafferty may be just the ticket. In 2008 these two longtime friends founded Carolina

George, a line of furniture in which most of the pieces serve more than one purpose.

"We were designing for ourselves, really," said Ms. Howe, an interior designer who worked for David Easton and Mica Ertegun before opening a shop in SoHo (which has since closed). Ms. Rafferty finished her partner's thought: "We're two people who love to entertain but also live in small apartments, so we look for attractive items that allow a space to function in a multitude of ways."

The Carolina George coffee table with shelves, for instance, was originally designed to accommodate art books accumulated by Ms. Howe and her then-roommate. And the Sideboard Dining Table — a sideboard that converts into a dining table — was created for Ms. Rafferty's apartment.

The two friends went shopping for similarly flexible items and found a showroom full of options at Resource Furniture on the East Side. The DOC, a sofa that turns into bunk beds, was deemed "genius for a kid's

room" by Ms. Rafferty; Ms. Howe liked the Vela coffee table, which also is a dining table, because "small apartments really don't have space for a dining table."

"A coffee table that raises to dining height and is attractive is no easy feat," she added.

Shopping online at PB Teen, Ms. Rafferty chose a tall, slim multishelf storage cabinet that swivels and has a full-length mirror on one side, a cork board on another and pegs for hanging clothes and accessories on a third. She would place it "near an entry hall that is short on storage or closet space," she said. "The baskets and shelves are a great place to keep gloves, hats and dog leashes."

At Jonathan Adler, Ms. Howe found the Claude walnut gossip bench, which incorporates a tabletop and two drawers. The item "is great for a living room to give yourself some extra storage," Ms. Howe said, "and you can put a pretty lamp and some objects on it. It could also work in a bedroom. You can put your TV on it and use it for storage and have a little seat. A lot of us don't have space for a chair in tiny New York bedrooms."

Ms. Rafferty made the larger point about adaptable objects. "Your furniture should be smart," she said. "But smart-looking, too."

RIMA SUQI

Teak wall-mount magazine rack; \$199 at Frontgate, (888) 263-9850, frontgate.com.



Claude walnut gossip bench set; \$1,890 at Jonathan Adler, (800) 963-0891, jonathanadler.com.



Display-It Storage Mirror; \$599 at PB Teen, (866) 472-4001, pbteen.com.

Ikea PS clock with storage space for small items; \$29.99 at Ikea, (800) 434-4532, ikea.com.



Pivot storage bed frame; from \$799 at West Elm, (888) 922-4119, westelm.com.



DOC sofa and bunk bed; from \$4,950 at Resource Furniture.



Goliath console table and dining table; \$3,750 at Resource Furniture, (212) 753-2039, resourcefurniture.com.