



NANCY CORZINE
GLAMOUR AT HOME

U.S. \$50.00 CAN. \$62.00
ISBN 978-0-8478-3340-5
9 1780847 1833405



NANCY CORZINE

GLAMOUR AT HOME

R

RIZZOLI
NEW YORK



NANCY
CORZINE
GLAMOUR AT HOME

BY NANCY CORZINE
WITH ROBERT JANJIGIAN

BOOK DESIGN BY DOUG TURSHEN

RIZZOLI
NEW YORK

Dedication

It seems only proper that I would dedicate this book to the three people who made my life as rich as it is today: my mother, my greatest champion, who believed and convinced me that I could do anything; my father, who in his quiet and ever-direct Scandinavian way, inspired my work ethic and taught me the importance of honesty; and my wonderful Harold Stern, who loved and believed in me without reservation, and who made me believe in my talent.

And to my grandchildren, I leave this legacy, a chronicle of my work, to remind them of the beauty in the world and life's possibilities.

Coco and Lily, the "girls," are a constant source of joy in my life. Here, they perch on the Florentine, a favorite chair.



Contents

6 INTRODUCTION

I INITIAL IMPRESSIONS

10 ENTRYWAYS

22 CHOOSING LIGHTING

II VIBRANT SPACES

26 THE LIVING ROOM

64 CHOOSING FABRICS

74 LIVING WITH ART

80 CHOOSING A SOFA

III ROOMS FOR ENTERTAINING

84 DINING SPACES

102 CHOOSING A DINING CHAIR

106 PLACE SETTINGS

IV WORKING RETREATS

116 LIBRARIES AND OFFICES

138 HOMEWORK

V PRIVATE RETREATS

142 BEDROOMS AND BATHROOMS

162 THE BEST FOR GUESTS

172 CHOOSING A BED

176 MIRROR IMAGE

VI THE HUB

182 KITCHENS AND STORAGE

196 BEAUTIFUL BASICS

198 AT YOUR SERVICE

VII THE GREATER OUTDOORS

202 EXTERIOR ROOMS AND GARDENS

208 ENTERTAINING OUTDOORS

222 AFTERWORD

224 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND CREDITS





Introduction

My father and mother, Ralph and Rita Johnson, with me at the beginning. Previous page: A comfortable seating area is part of a Hamptons master-bedroom suite. Following page: The still-life composition on a pair of walnut cocktail tables in a Manhattan apartment includes Murano glass candlesticks, a mid-century alabaster vase, and a piece of natural coral mounted on an acrylic base.

There was once a little girl who wanted to be a fashion designer. Though she lived in Seattle, far from Paris, Manhattan, or Hollywood, places where elegant and beautiful women could be seen wearing the latest haute couture gowns, she had dreams of creating her own designs. She would eagerly await the latest issues of movie and fashion magazines, clipping pictures of her favorite stars and models in all their stylish glory, making scrapbooks with the images. She was obsessed with the idea of beauty and glamour. The little girl's parents were creative in their own ways. Her father was an expert woodworker who could build just about anything. Her mother was a weaver and an accomplished seamstress. She made the little girl's clothes and taught her to sew well enough to make frocks for her dolls. Not an athlete, the little girl was thus encouraged to turn her attention to creative pursuits. She loved to stay home and keep house. The little girl's father made her a dollhouse, which kept her busy for hours every day. She would never tire of rearranging the rooms to suit the life of their make-believe occupants. Her father once told her something she'd never forget: "I don't care what you do in life, just do it better than anyone else." Her mother always encouraged her, saying, "If you can think of it, you can do it." That little girl is me.

From the beginning, I grew up with an appreciation for the finer aspects of life. I have always had a curiosity about well-designed things, whether they are clothes, automobiles, chairs, or homes. My father's love of wood was passed down to me. My mother's appreciation for textiles and love of gardening and entertaining has been a part of me from the time I was asked to help her in the kitchen and set the dinner table with silver, china, crystal, and flowers. I wasn't always so interested in gardening, but I know that now, later in life, it is her influence that has brought me to appreciate the beauty of the outdoors. My mother was also an intrepid collector who took me along to flea markets and antiques shops all the time.

I believe there was something inside me from the time I was a child that spurred me to follow the path toward a career in interior design. I don't think my experience is unique, as over the years I have met many others like me, who were in a similar place during their childhood. Whether we grew up in modest or wealthy circumstances, we eventually gravitated to design and developed into professionals. Over time, while working our way up as I did, we knew early on that we were destined to create more beautiful environments. As we played with our dolls and made scrapbooks of our favorite rooms and houses, we were practicing our future craft. While playing with my dolls in their dollhouse, I initially fantasized that someday I would make my mark in the fashion business. However, looking back on it, the dollhouse was where I was most comfortable.

I started my design career working on what I now look back on as clean, pretty bare-bones, functional commercial interiors for a Seattle office furniture company. I eventually left my hometown of Seattle to go to Los Angeles. I had wanted to live in Los Angeles since my first visit to California, at six years old. California was truly glamorous, beautiful, and most importantly, sunny—especially for a girl who had grown up in the rainy Pacific Northwest. As I gained more professional experience, I learned a great deal about construction and architecture. I also supplemented my on-the-job training by reading everything I could get my hands on about design and architecture, following the work of some of the legendary designers of the twentieth century. A few years later, I decided to focus my attention on the design and manufacturing of furniture. I started with a small showroom at the wrong end of Robertson Boulevard, the traditional center of L.A.'s design community. I did this with the help of my mentor and friend, Harold Stern.

A single call from the great hospitality designer Louis Catalfo, who proposed that my firm supply furniture for the new Century Plaza Tower Hotel that was being built in West Los Angeles, was really the start of what has grown to become the Nancy Corzine company. With this first big job, I was faced with the task of making furniture in quantities that I was not equipped to handle. I was a hands-on person then, as I am decades later, determined to learn how to make the best furniture possible, without sacrificing quality or appearance. This is what led me to opening my own factory. It was not as easy as it sounds, and there were many challenging and humorous situations that led to the success of our factory. However, things turned out well, and led to more projects, primarily from the hospitality design industry. To meet the demand, additional production facilities were acquired, and we expanded our factory to finishing and upholstery.

In the late 1980s, my focus returned to the residential side of the industry. Our company expanded its range of product offerings to include furniture for every room in the house, along with fabrics, lighting, and accessories. We worked hard to establish a national presence for the brand and opened showrooms across the country. The look I have refined, which I call “transitional,” combines elements that are classics of every era. The original piece may be an eighteenth-century French antique or a mid-twentieth-century American or European design, but what makes it successful and desirable, even glamorous, is its translation as a comfortable, practical, and useful addition to an updated interior.

Design is not just my passion; it is my life. I was once told by a very wise person that it is ideal when one's work is also what makes one happy. In my case I consider it not only ideal, but truly a gift that I am able to follow my dreams in an industry that I am so passionate about.



But, the decoration of the foyer should be looked upon as a place where exceptional, unexpected statements can be made. A particularly stunning painting or a strategically positioned piece of furniture can be the most effective means of setting the tone. So, too, a beautifully carved mirror, an unusual or oversize chandelier, a collection of photographs, or a dramatic sculpture will make the space striking.

There are several practical considerations for an entryway. Any of the following elements can add beauty as well as functionality: A coat closet or other designated spot where visitors may easily leave their outerwear upon arrival is essential. Either will ensure that the bed in the guest bedroom remains unscathed. An umbrella stand is not only useful; it can also serve as a wonderful decorative piece. There are many options available—everything from porcelain to leather. I personally prefer antique porcelain, as it tends to work with many different design styles. Not only does a console or chest add interest, it can also accommodate a variety of essentials. A glistening silver bowl on top of a console makes a great place for those keys that tend to get misplaced. It can also function as the spot to deposit the daily mail or newspaper. If space allows, a magnificent table in the center of the foyer makes an elegant focal point and pedestal for floral displays. There is no amount of art or furniture that can replace flowers arranged simply. Not only do they add great warmth, they also can be used to reflect the season.

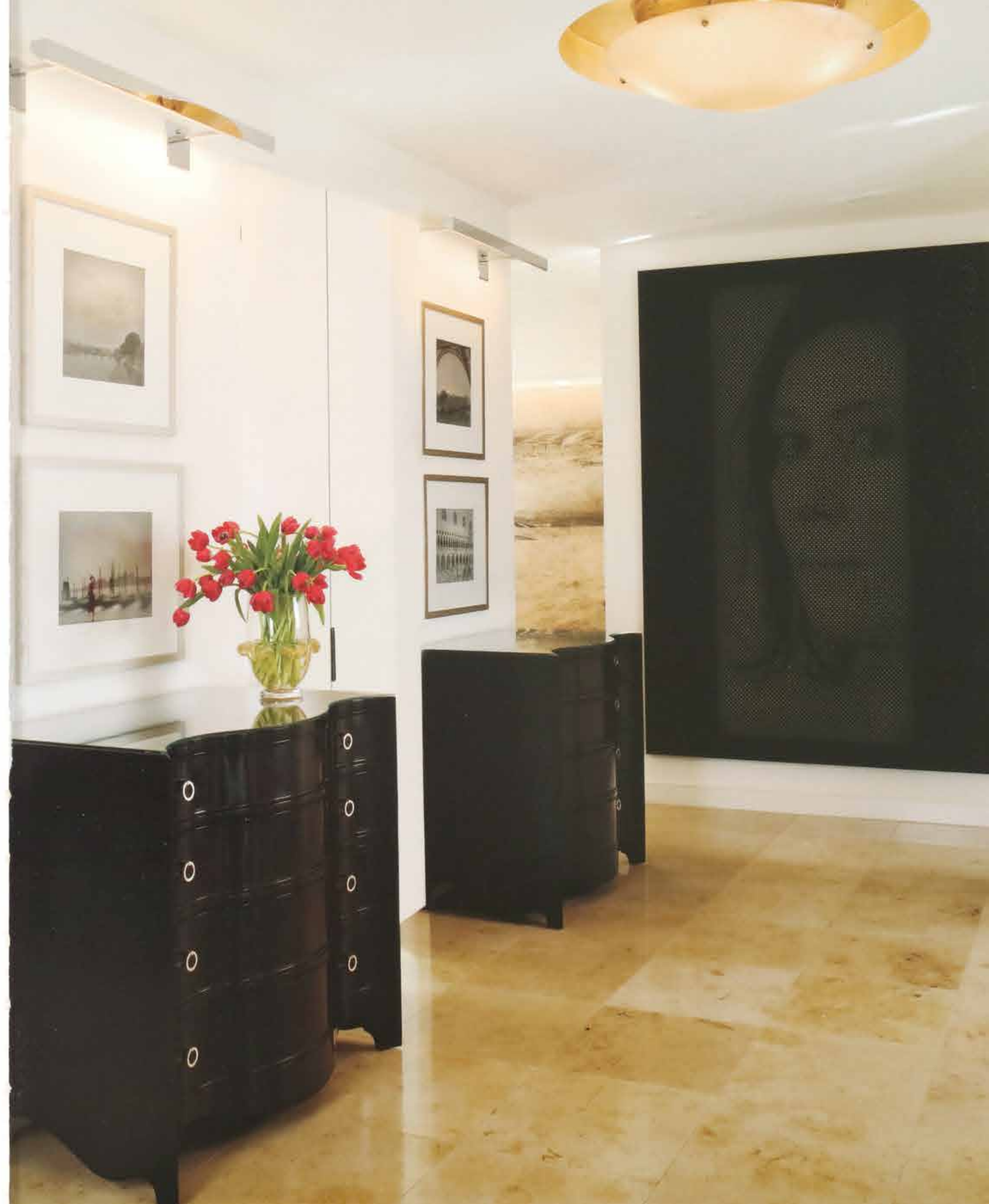
The entryway should suit its surrounding environment, whether the home is a city apartment or a country house. A clear indication of the locale should be obvious upon opening the door. This does not, however, mean to say that there cannot be an element of surprise. Entry points are not just front doorways. The experience of a house can change at every turn of a corridor, at the top of a stairway, or at the approach to another level. The key aspect is the visual enticement of the visitor. The goal is to tell a style story from start to finish.

A sculpted, curved stairway is the opening statement made in a Palm Beach town house that has been completely remodeled to appear more open, spacious, and unmistakably luxurious.



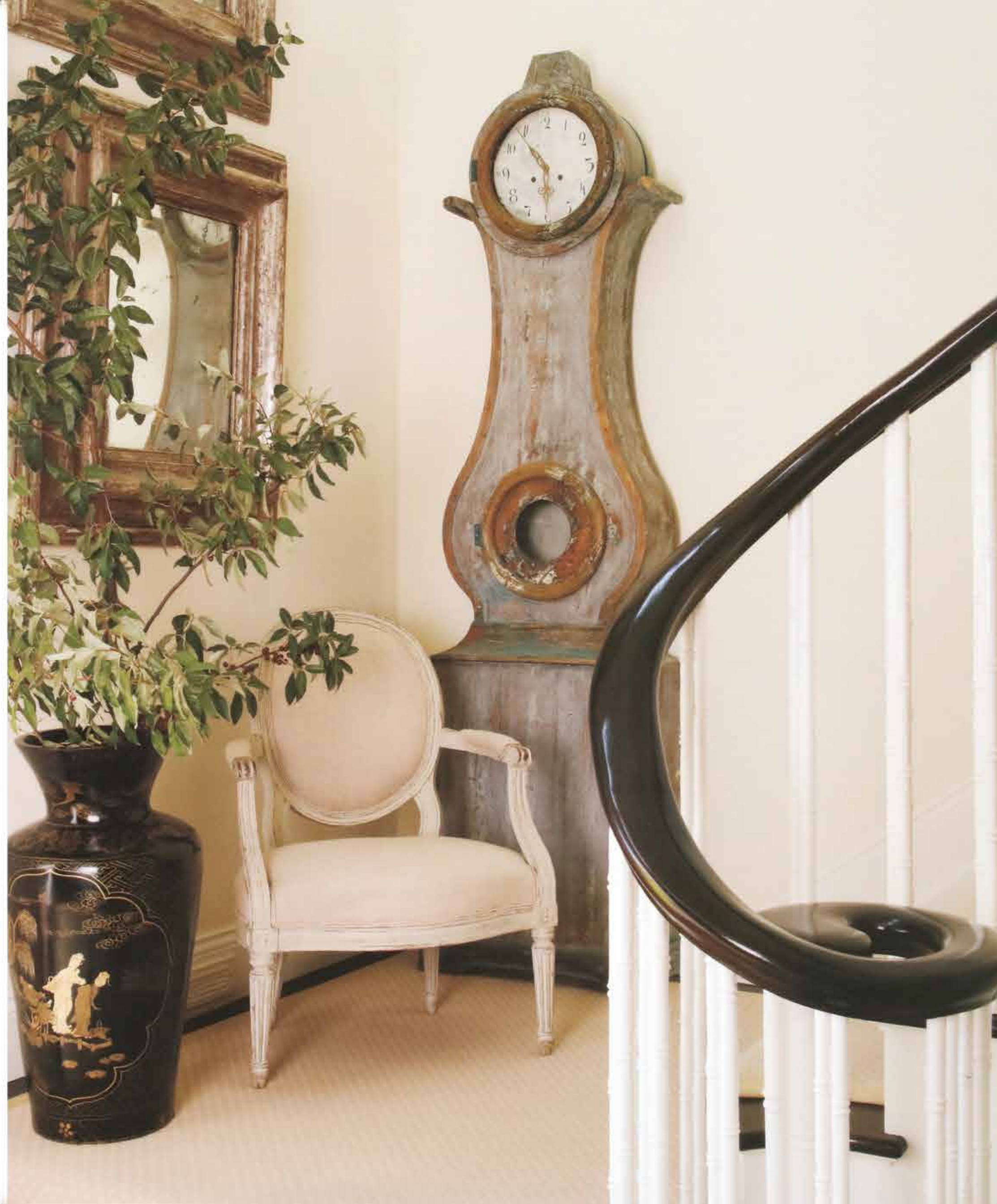


Above: A third-floor landing in a Los Angeles residence featuring a series of photographs of geisha is accented by a Ming dynasty chair. Right: Matching chests in a dark, walnut finish are placed on either side of a kitchen doorway in the gallery-style foyer of a midtown Manhattan apartment. Photographs of Venice and Paris by Alexey Titarenko add a romantic touch. A large painted and perforated canvas by Anne-Karin Furunes introduces a mysterious quality to the space.





In the double-height entryway of a Hamptons residence, a selection of antique pieces, including an eighteenth-century Aubusson tapestry, a nineteenth-century French refectory table, a circa-1780 Gustavian long-case clock, and a circa-1880 hand-painted papier-mâché jardiniere, set the stage for a traditionally inspired design. The recently built home was devised to have the appearance of a centuries-old shingle-style manor house.





Left: At the end of a central passage that provides access to several rooms, a mirrored niche was created for the display of a late eighteenth-century Portuguese porcelain stove. *Above:* At the end of an upstairs hallway, a pair of hand-painted chinoiserie-style panels offers the look of a mounted folding screen, but they are in fact doors to a linen closet that serves adjacent bedrooms.



Above: A second-level landing features a round antique Italian country table and a selection of elements from a variety of places and periods. Right: A glimpse of the entrance to the master suite is afforded through the doorway. In this transition space, a series of framed prints backs up a vignette composed of English and continental antique furniture and objects.



Choosing Lighting

Naturally light and sunny spaces are my preference. However, when the evening hours approach, it is important to ensure an adequate, balanced level of artificial light. Dimmers are essential to control the lighting effect you desire and deem appropriate for the moment. They also allow for variance when you want to set a particular mood, especially when you are entertaining guests for the evening.

I have always loved Murano glass. There is something fascinating about it, its Venetian heritage, and the expertise required to fabricate each beautiful piece. My appreciation of its artisan quality is reflective of my artistic side. Murano lamps and chandeliers are especially effective when positioned in contrast to heavier geometric pieces. Carved, wooden table lamps with metal-leaf finishes are also particular favorites of mine, as are strong, sculpted bases of any material. Again, it is the juxtaposition of materials that adds interest when a lamp is placed on a table, desk, or bureau with a differing texture. And certainly large-scale chandeliers used in foyers and dining rooms provide a wonderful sense of drama.

I prefer designs that have a strong, substantial presence to those that are more delicate. Make sure, however, never to install light fixtures or lamps that overwhelm—or underwhelm—the other elements in the room. While mixing period fixtures with more contemporary light sources can work, it is often a safer bet, especially when a room has original architectural details, to locate authentic pieces that are in keeping with the age and style of the house.

An appropriate shade is an important part of a lamp. I prefer plain linen, silk, or lacquered varieties. Scale and proportion are the most crucial considerations in choosing the correct shade. With lamps and fixtures, it is all about scale and about finding elements that work in harmony to create a more finished environment.

In the entryway to a Palm Beach high-rise apartment, a pair of bamboo candlestick lamps in a Venetian-sterling finish has been placed atop a highly polished *demilune* chest. The Murano glass mirror, centered above it, reflects the vista beyond the main room of the residence.





Whether constructed of wood, metal, or glass, a table lamp, floor lamp, or chandelier should have a strong silhouette. These designs reflect a range of influences—from sleek mid-twentieth-century modern to interpretations of classic Murano glass creations by Seguso to traditional carved-wood styles.

Vibrant Spaces

The Living Room

Before designing any room, it is important to consider its purpose: how the space will be used and what role it plays in the life of the house or the apartment. When I am invited into someone's home, either as a guest or in a professional capacity, and see that the living room is a relative no-man's-land without an ounce of personality, I find myself thinking, what a shame. An inherently practical person, I believe that a room should be used to its best advantage. Traditionally the most generously scaled room in a home, the living room should be comfortable yet gracious, and also reflect the personality and lifestyle of the residents.

A principal room in most residences, the living room should be an attractive and inviting environment in which to be. It is also the most public space in a dwelling, where visitors are taken first and residents pass through or by on a regular basis. This is especially important to remember when dealing with a more modestly sized home, where there may be limited areas for relaxing, reading, entertaining, or just sitting down by yourself to watch television. When this is the case, then the room cannot be treated like a field that lies fallow until the next family gathering or holiday party.

If there is another common space, such as a family or media room, a den, or a library, so that the living room doesn't by necessity have to be a multipurpose room, then it still should not be presented in an untouchable, precious, or uncomfortable fashion. Even the most unused living room shouldn't look unlived in. A living room should never be so formal, so spare, or so sumptuously fussy that one hesitates to enter it. I always recommend keeping the decorating scheme clean and relatively simple, even when integrating antiques, art, and traditional and contemporary furnishings and accessories. In an overly decorated room, the hope for any semblance of graciousness being communicated goes right out the overly dressed window.

Regardless of the dimensions of the space you're working with, you should try to create at least one conversation area. More than one is ideal—if you've got the space. There is nothing worse than the inappropriate positioning of a chair out of the sight lines of others in the room, in which somebody may feel slighted or isolated. One of the reasons sectional sofas are such a successful part of many living-room scenarios is that they create instant and natural conversation areas.

Upholstery and wall colors are most attractive when they "glow" by day and have a soft, romantic appearance by night. My preference is for golden tones, neutrals, and whites, and for a lighter palette altogether. Avoid muddy or drab tones, which tend to steal any semblance of "lift" from a room. When selecting fabrics, always be mindful of their ultimate use. A beautiful silk taffeta may make lovely window treatments, but it is not suitable for heavily used sofas or sectionals. For these items, a chenille or velvet is ideal. On the same note, when considering the finish for a furniture piece, keep in mind both usage and appearance. While a painted finish on a carved chest of drawers enhances its detail, the same treatment looks lifeless when applied to a flat surface.

Collections of rare and fragile accessories should be treated with care and kept out of harm's way. A beautiful cabinet with glass doors or a bookcase, appropriately placed, is ideal for displaying those special objects that give warmth and add interest to any room. When combined, all of these elements make for an interesting living room.

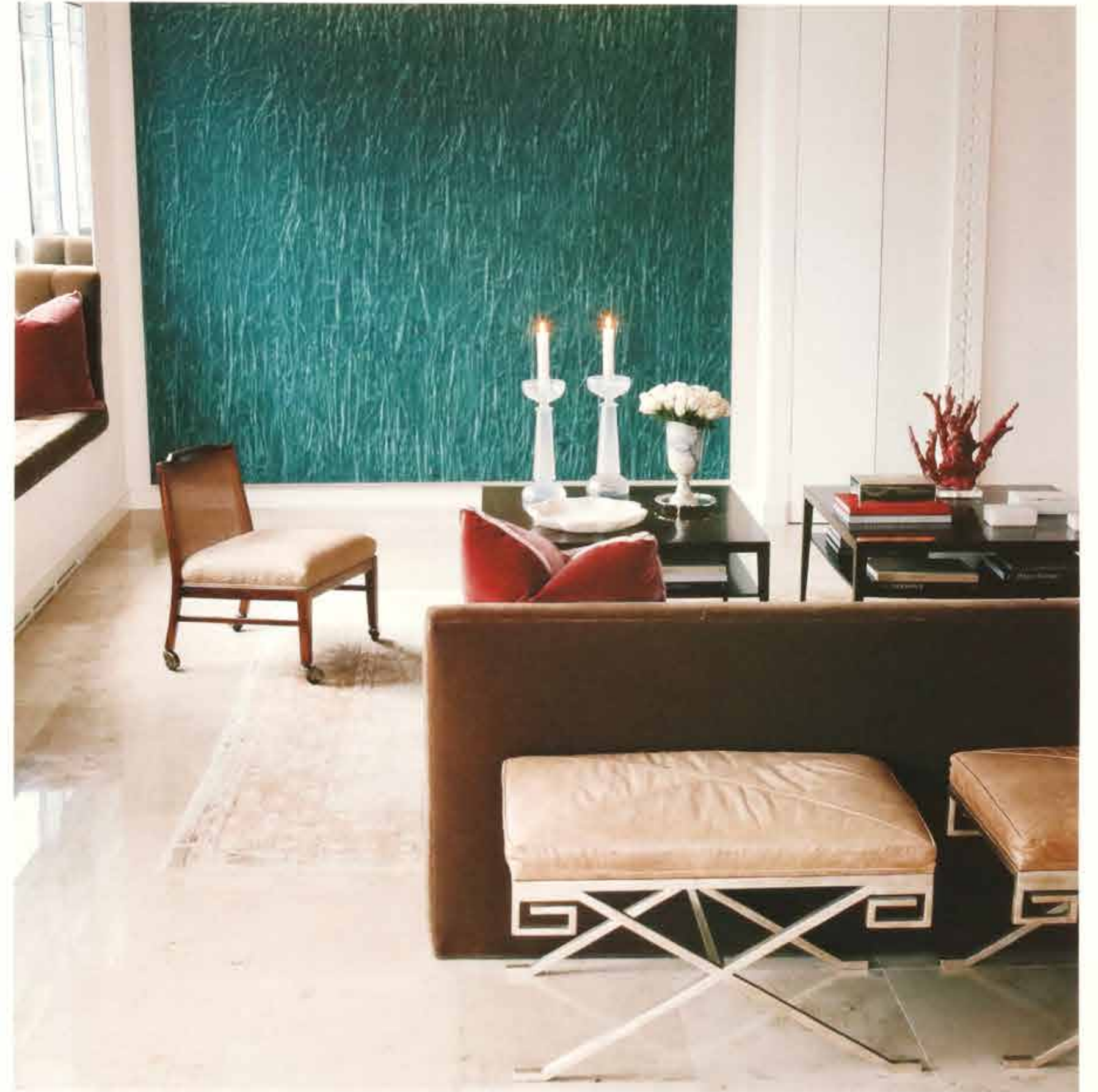
Right: In a grand Park Avenue penthouse, one section of the window-lined living room features an elegant seating group, with a mid-twentieth-century-inspired sectional sofa covered in silk velvet and two mid-twentieth-century-style slipper chairs surrounding a generously scaled Venetian silver-finished cocktail table. *Following page:* When designing a living room, no matter what its proportions, it is important to create separate but related conversation areas.





A sectional sofa was chosen as the most interesting solution, both visually and practically, for the corner of a Manhattan high-rise living room. The large-scale cocktail table serves many purposes and is especially useful for casual buffet suppers.





Left: Lightscape, an L.E.D. work by Leo Villareal, is a focal point in a living room, where a collection of contemporary art is displayed. The seating group adjacent to Villareal's work includes a vintage Dunbar cane-back chair and an armless sofa. Above: Another large-scale artwork, Grasses, an oil painting by Antonio Murado, hangs on the wall in the same living room.

Brazilian cherry wide-plank floors provide the perfect dark base for a thoroughly white-walled Los Angeles living room, where a seating area is furnished simply with a sofa, chinoiserie-style coffee table, and vintage mid-twentieth-century chair. The area rug is Chinese wild silk.





Above: In a Los Angeles living room, an acrylic table is placed beside a vintage stainless-steel-based chaise covered in ivory leather. Right: The etched-bronze cocktail table is by Philip and Kelvin Laverne. Cane-back Edward Wormley chairs, designed for Dunbar in the 1960s, complement the clean lines of the sofa.





Left: It is all in the mix, with a high ceiling and dramatic backdrop. This Los Angeles living room features a sectional sofa as well as pairs of cocktail tables and "social" chairs, complemented by a photographic composition by Elizabeth Gill Lui. A collection of blue and green Murano glass pieces is displayed in a mirrored, shelved niche. *Above:* In the Los Angeles house, an intimate place to lounge, adjacent to the dining room, is perfect for predinner conversations. Custom-built banquettes flank a pair of sterling-silver-leafed cocktail tables, and a buffet accented with Murano lamps and a sterling-silver-finished mirror completes the setting.

In a vintage Palm Beach living room, a traditional Gustavian-era look is achieved with mostly new elements that reflect an array of period design inspirations. The existing paneling is whitewashed, and pale-blue fabrics have been introduced to create a soothing ambience.



In a Palm Beach high-rise apartment by the ocean, the sectional sofa in the combination living-and-dining room is positioned to take advantage of the spectacular vista.





A range of light-colored shapes and elements, related to the oceanfront location of the Palm Beach apartment, has been selected for the living room, including a pair of "social" chairs, a sterling-silver-finished cocktail table, a mirrored accent table, and a silver-finished side table. The sectional sofa is covered in velvet, with pillows in a linen-velvet-patterned fabric.



A pale, monochromatic palette works well in small-scale rooms, such as this Miami living room. A maximum amount of comfortable seating is provided without overcrowding the space.





Above and right: An acrylic cocktail table contributes to the creation of a sense of spaciousness. When not in use for dining, a collection of Chinese porcelains is displayed on the marble-top table positioned in the entryway. *Following pages:* A blue-and-white theme was the client's only request for the design of this country house in the Hamptons. The furniture arrangement in the living room is ideal for casual entertaining and balanced without seeming contrived. An Alexander Calder lithograph, hung above the fireplace, adds a spark of color.





Sectionals are ideal for tight spaces, as in this Miami house. Keeping wall decorations minimal and large in scale helps to make the room less cluttered in appearance. A chest, providing needed out-of-sight storage, serves as an end table.



The living room of a Los Angeles penthouse features spectacular double-height ceilings. A number of vertical elements have been incorporated or created to highlight the generous height. Bookcases line one wall of the space, which also includes a dining area. Asian, African, and European art and artifacts contribute visual interest and warm up the room significantly.





A spectacular antique Coromandel screen is a singularly dramatic element in the Los Angeles penthouse living room. The mixture of a sea-grass carpet, a contemporary bronze cocktail table, a large-scale sofa upholstered in English linen, and continental antique accents makes for an interesting composition.



Above: Tablescapes that are well edited add warmth and personality to a living room space and reflect the individual interests of the residents. Right: A collection of books integrated into a living-room scheme, especially when there is no other place to display it, adds another layer of depth to the space.



Choosing Fabrics

The first fabric collection that I ever put together, when bright and flowery chintzes were all the rage, went against trend. While working with an Italian mill, I decided to design a new collection inspired by historic documents that I rescaled and had woven in linen in a contemporary style. To add to the mill owner's distress, I chose to color my designs in soft and pale shades, instead of in traditional jewel tones, and to make the repeats oversize. The mill owner did not believe the collection would sell. However, he was proven to be incorrect, as it became one of my firm's most popular. I have never veered from this basic aesthetic path when it comes to color, design approach, or fabric selection.

My favorite fabrics are neutrals. I find that neutral colors are the most soothing to introduce into a room, as well as the most practical and timeless. (Along with them, I recommend painting walls in paler shades or in white, both of which lend a luxurious spaciousness to a room.) Within a space, I generally employ mostly solids and quiet patterns, some with interesting monochromatic textures or subtle variations in tone.

For dressing windows, similar fabrics are desirable. The intention is never to hide the architecture of the room or to inhibit the stream of light coming through a window with overly ornamental curtains or draperies, but rather to enhance the elegant simplicity and dimensions of the space. Light-reactive fabrics, such as satins, taffetas, and anything with metallic threads incorporated, are a means of bringing shimmer to the equation. If a spark of color is something you cannot live without, choose a complementary tone and introduce it sparingly. Fabrics selected for the home should never be so fragile or delicate that there is constant concern about their upkeep or replacement. Antique or vintage fabrics, tapestries, and embroidered textiles should only be used on pillows or accent pieces.

A pillow covered with a hand-beaded chinoiserie-style fabric and edged in silk fringe lends glamour and interest to any sofa.



In a sweepingly scaled
Hamptons living
room, dual seating
groups are established
by the positioning
of sofas back-to-back.
An antique console,
on which a pair
of Italian ceramic
balustrade lamps has
been placed, bridges
the two areas.



Seating areas should be designed for comfortable conversation and easy access, as well as to be used for afternoon tea, cocktails, or buffet-style suppers. In this Hamptons living room, antiques are mixed with contemporary pieces, and a generously scaled cocktail table is a focal point. An armoire to the left of the fireplace contains a television that is easily accessible but hidden from view when not in use.





A chinoiserie-style secretary works as a display case and functional element in the Hamptons living room. This magnificent piece holds a collection of antique leather-bound books, an antique tortoiseshell tea caddy, and a French bronze Napoleon III clock.





A corner of the living room is enriched by custom-designed bookcases with glass doors and light, decorative molding work, where collections of antique books and seashells are displayed.



Living With Art

Works of art should be part of every room. Though I do not consider myself a serious collector, I have purchased art for many years. I introduce paintings, prints, photographs, and sculptures of all shapes and sizes into my own homes and have been called upon by clients to assist them in selecting and incorporating works of art into theirs. You should acquire a particular piece because you love it. If you are considering the purchase of an artwork merely because of its provenance or potential for return on investment, or because everybody else you know likes the artist's work, then you should probably pass. I like a mixture of period and modern furniture, accessories, and art. The use of contemporary art should not be restricted to rooms that are designed in a contemporary style. Nor do spaces that have a traditional or period feel require traditional art or art of the same period.

In placing art, it is important to consider the relationship between the work and the scale and proportions of the room. A large wall requires a large-scale piece. An intimate space demands something smaller. Art needs room to breathe. I choose vibrant pieces for neutral-toned rooms to introduce color. I also find that works of art with a graphic or architectural presence provide effective contrast. I prefer to display works of art in a gallery style, making sure that pieces are hung or displayed at the proper height and appropriately lit so that each one is shown to its best advantage.

A monochromatic palette allows for works of art to be the focal point of a room. The color and texture of an oil painting by Antonio Murado brings warmth to a Palm Beach town-house living room. The custom sectional and large Venetian silver-and-marble cocktail table create a dramatic setting.



The color scheme in this contemporary living room is primarily neutral, with color and accents provided by a series of large-scale botanical prints. A chrome pendant lamp and a collection of mercury-glass accessories add sparkle to the space.



The backdrop to a simple, symmetrical living-room seating area, contemporary shell prints, framed in a variety of styles, have strong visual impact. The sofa, covered in linen damask, a Venetian silver glass-topped cocktail table, and a pair of armchairs with linen slipcovers make for an inviting and attractive grouping.



to be continued..