ON THE RISE

INTERIOR DESIGN: STRANG DESIGN

TEXT: ERIKA HEET

PHOTOGRAPHY: KRIS TAMBURELLO

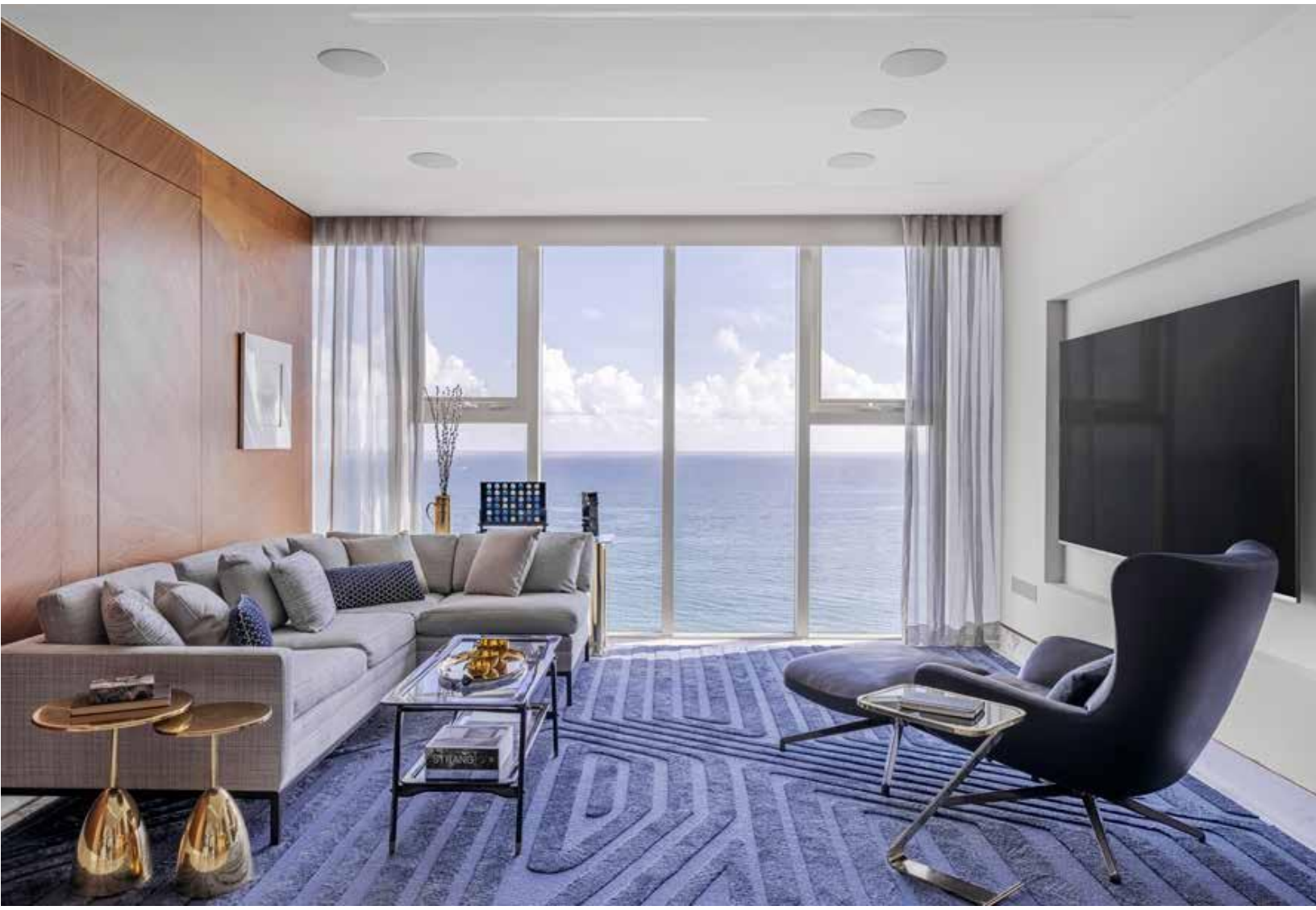
Unencumbered by typical restrictions one might face in a condo renovation, Strang Design was able to approach their plan for a second home high above the ocean in Miami with plenty of breathing room. The clients, a New York couple with four children, had purchased all three units on the 27th floor of the oceanfront Carillon Hotel, designed in the mid 1950s by Norman Giller, often referred to as the "father" of Miami Modernist (MiMo) architecture. Strang—with three offices in Florida led by FAIA architect Max Strang, whose ethos is environmental modernism—found an incredible opportunity to all but start from scratch. Thus began the intense part: the "gut" portion of the renovation. All three units were taken down beyond the studs, leaving only the building elevator vestibule, exterior walls, and the floor and ceiling slabs. They were left with a blank slate in a full-floor footprint with 360-degree views of both the city and the ocean. The expanded footprint was broken into three programmatic elements: shared family space, a primary bedroom suite and the children's bedrooms.

"The client came with energy, passion, and lots of ideas along with an open mind—a great recipe for our team to work with on the project," says managing director and partner Alexandra Mangimelli, an AIA architect. "She had a midcentury style but added shine and glam; we coupled this with our underlying modern aesthetic and comprehensive vision for the space to create a light, timeless feel." For the interiors, this meant combining the strict, classical and Grecian forms by T.H. Robsjohn-Gibbings with midcentury finds by Sergio Rodrigues and Paul McCobb, as well as artful pieces like Philip and Kelvin LaVerne's hand-painted Chan table, made up of a hexagonal base with a clear glass top reflecting the horizon outside, viewed through floor-to-ceiling glass walls.

It is works of decorative art like the Chan table that carry an ethereal quality throughout the residence. "We knew we wanted to complement the authentic midcentury appreciation the client has with her desire for glamour and our inherent modern principles," Mangimelli says. "I think the attention to detail results in this sense of lightness and floating effect." Even the more substantial elements reflect this. Mangimelli points to diagonal brass expansion joints in *palladiana* terrazzo meeting marble baseboards with flush brass reveals, and elevated walnut walls with brass inlay separating panels of wood turning at different angles to accentuate the grain. The bathrooms play with marble mosaics, *nero marquina* slabs and metallic geometrics. "This sounds like a lot," she says. "But the execution of detail, consistency of materials and subtlety of changes all lent itself to a clear intent of glamour and elegance."

The art in the home was as masterfully selected as the furniture and interior finishes. Works by Alexander Calder and Andy Warhol mingle with those by Keith Haring, including an untitled ink on paper piece from 1989 depicting a speeding airplane and exalting birdmen, their arms outstretched toward the sky. This hangs above a sleek Catlin console by Rodolfo Dordoni for Minotti in the library, creating an elevated interplay of art and design. A corner of the vast open living room is reserved for a black and white portrait of Haring in action, painting a mural in his 1980s heyday. It occupies a place where floor-to-ceiling sheers protect the space from intense light and sun while still allowing uninterrupted water views.

"One of our biggest schematic design decisions was whether the kitchen, living and dining or the primary suite faced the water versus downtown Miami—two extraordinary options," Mangimelli says. "Ultimately we decided to give the stunning cityscape at night to the primary and kids' bedrooms and the shared areas used all day to the expansive ocean views." An apt choice for the family, who, like in so many homes, gravitates toward the family room adjacent to the kitchen, where they can glide between a comfortable custom sectional and a casual kitchen table and island—a lighthearted way of enjoying a seriously luxurious perch in the sky. ■ *Strang Design, strang.design*



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