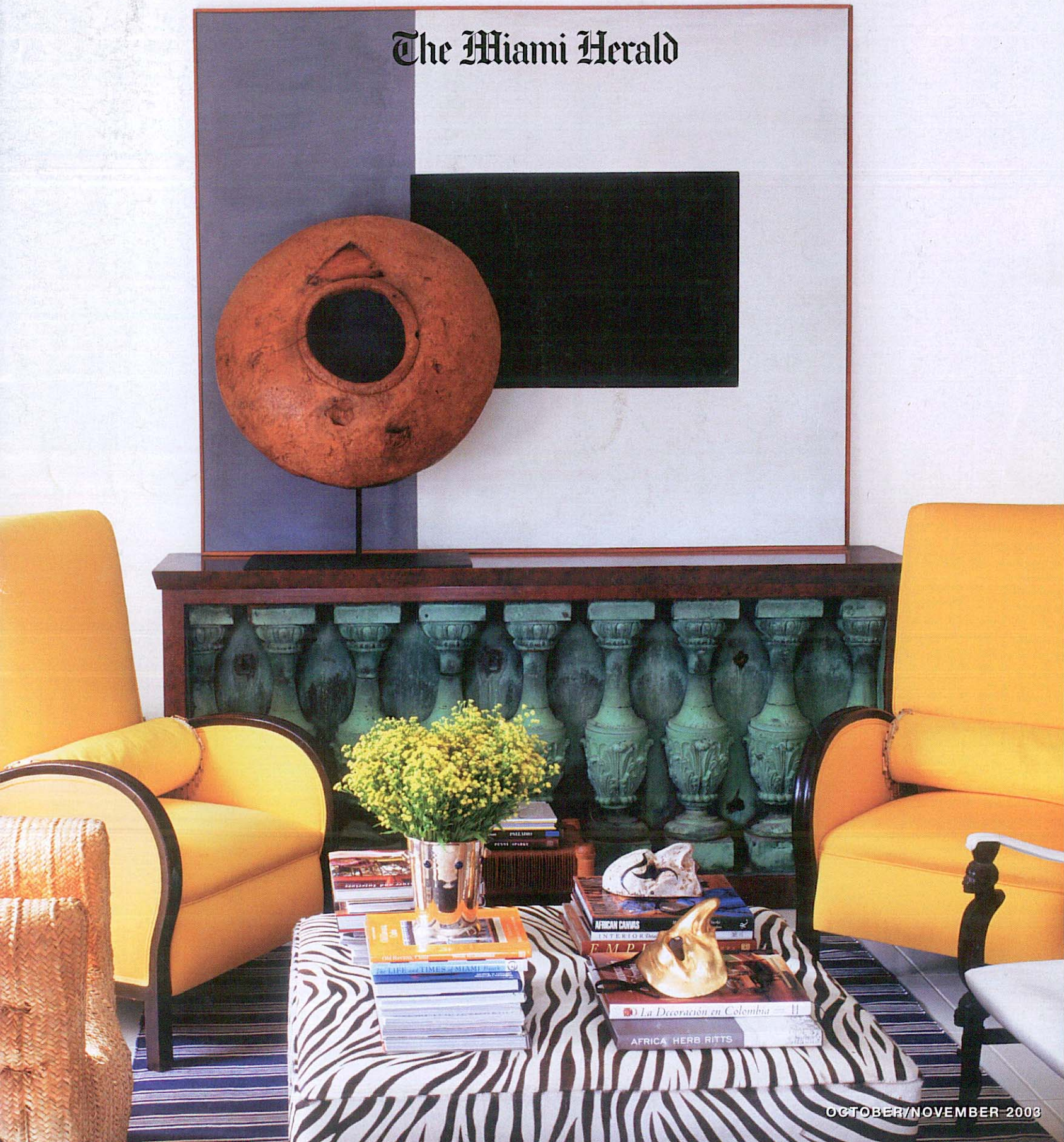


# HOME & DESIGN

DECOR | ENTERTAINING | GARDENING

The Miami Herald



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# Style

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## SETTERS

*If you build it with style, they will come.*

*The Miami innovators we celebrate this month all subscribe to that design-conscious take on the old adage, whether they're creating modern home environments, luxury corporate interiors or entire neighborhoods. Dacra's **Craig Robins**, Luminaire founder **Nasir Kassamali** and **Walid Wahab** of Wahab Construction have set a new standard for sophisticated living in Miami that values quality of life as much as outstanding international design, architecture and art. In their own homes, the Kassamalis, the Wahabs and the Robins exemplify a cosmopolitan philosophy with unique personal style. Residing in diverse Miami neighborhoods, they represent the plurality of our city, that conflux of interesting people that excites and inspires these design leaders daily. Together, our stylesetting couples set the tone for the way we live in Miami now.*

Text by Judy Cantor

Styled by Steven Massimos

Photography by Troy Campbell



Walid  
& Susie Wahab  
Wahab Construction

Making Miami a  
showcase for upscale  
international companies.

Walid Wahab's office window serves as a portfolio of sorts, offering a sweeping view of the Brickell Avenue buildings where much of Miami's most important business takes place in the multinational banks, law firms and corporate headquarters that Wahab counts among his clients.

"Typically, their office image is almost as important as the services they provide," he says, gesturing to the glass and concrete towers inside of which Wahab Construction has completed numerous office suites. Wahab's quest to overcome what he calls the "vanilla design" of the typical business space has taken him from Brickell to Coral Gables and beyond, to the offices of clients as diverse as Ferrell Schultz, Banco Santander and Del Monte.

Born into a Lebanese family in Venezuela, Wahab grew up on Margarita Island in the Caribbean. In 1980, he moved here to study architecture and civil engineering at the University of Miami.

"Since then, Miami has certainly become a city," he says. "Now multinational companies that are opening offices here understand

that Miami is a refined market, it's a demanding market."

While his association with prestigious international architects and designers such as John Keenen and Dakota Jackson has his projects on the pages of design magazines, it is Wahab's personal involvement in every job that has made his company a leading contractor for upscale commercial interiors. Businessman and art collector Carlos Cisneros, who enlisted Wahab to renovate his Miami Beach home, calls him "a true gentleman and a consummate professional."

Wahab, Susie and their two boys live in an unassuming colonial-style house in Bay Point, which the couple bought when they were married. Despite some renovations, most importantly an overhaul of the kitchen, where Susie, a celebrated cook, creates traditional dishes, it has stayed pretty much as it was. "We've had a very happy life here," Wahab, says, aware of the contrast between the upscale requirements of his premium clients and his family's own relaxed lifestyle. "The last thing I want to do after work is construction," he says with a smile. ■