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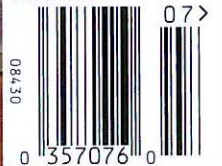
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A Place in the Clouds

CREATING AN ETHEREAL AESTHETIC FOR A MIAMI BEACH HIGH-RISE

Interior Architectural Design and Interior Design by Jennifer Post/Text by Jeff Turrentine/Photography by Ken Hayden



“Every time I take on a project, I start with pure lines,” says interior designer Jennifer Post, who conceived most of the furnishings for a family’s high-rise apartment in Miami Beach. OPPOSITE: *Twin Bird 3*, on the living room’s low table, is by Patrice Breteau. Sofa fabric, Cassina. J. Robert Scott lounge chairs. Low table, John Boone. ABOVE: Near the entrance hall, the clients’ dog, Zeek, stands in front of a steel sculpture by Bernar Venet.

Post designed the living room—separated from the master bedroom by a glass wall that can be made opaque—to be large enough for the entire family but intimate enough for one person. Of the Venet sculpture, she recalls, “We had to install it before we put in any walls or windows. It’s that heavy.”





“When a client hires you, they hire you for a reason. They want your look,” says Post (below), whose overall concept for the apartment involved “freedom of space, light, texture, proportion.” OPPOSITE: She created a water feature in the dining room. J. Robert Scott dining table. Chandeliers from Schonbek. ABOVE: Post envisioned the family/media room as a more casual seating alternative to the living room. The painting is by Chris Classen. Ligne Roset low table.

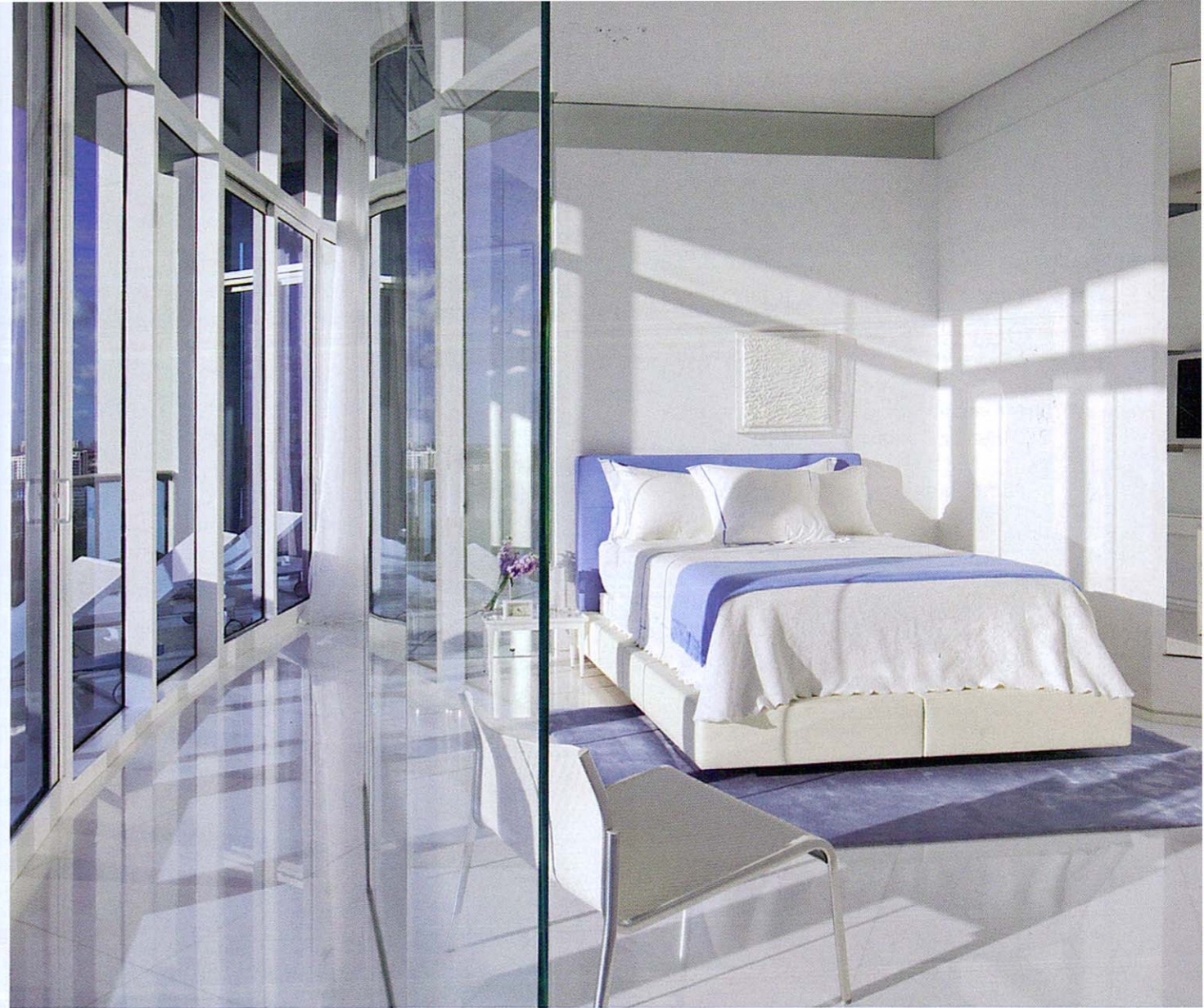


Jennifer Post has a reluctant confession to make: She can be a little ambivalent when, at the very end of one of her projects, the furniture arrives—and takes up all that beautiful, tranquil, elegant space.

It’s not that the New York-based designer doesn’t like furniture. She does—really, she insists. It’s just that Post loves nothing more than “pure space,” her term for the serene, clean-lined volumes that she painstakingly creates for her clients. They’re beautiful when furnished, of course; but, walking into one of her completed yet unfurnished rooms, one can’t help but sympathize with her mild regret. An empty Jennifer Post-designed space is simultaneously dramatic and soothing, like ocean waves lapping at a rocky beach. Its surfaces seem to vibrate at a low frequency, one that makes you want to stand still for just a little while and take it all in.

For her part, Post always comes back to certain words when describing what’s most important to her about an interior: “pure,” “soulful,” “ethereal.” Hers is an aesthetic that clearly prizes the room every bit as much as what goes inside it. It’s also one that has attracted a long roster of famous clients, from business titans to celebrities, some of whom have impossibly busy daily lives and respond to the unique feeling of airiness and peacefulness elicited by her designs.

Not long ago, one such prospective client called Post and asked to meet her. She didn’t know anything about him. When she went to his office, she learned that he was married, had three teenagers and wanted a place in Miami Beach where he and his family could get away for quick vacations. After asking her a few questions and explaining in great detail the way he wanted to feel when he walked through



OPPOSITE: "There is nothing to look at except ocean waves and the blue turquoise water," Post notes of the master bedroom. She designed the Lucite bed for the space and centered it to give it the appearance of floating. Holly Hunt floor lamp. ABOVE: A glass-walled catwalk running along a section of the residence allows views from a guest room. The beeswax *White Brick* by LeRone Wilson hangs above the bed. Linens from ABC Carpet & Home.

the door, he shook her hand and asked her how soon they could sign a contract. "That was it. It was a 45-minute interview. I brought a portfolio with all my work in it; he never even wanted to see it. I never had to show him a picture. He had been following my work in magazines."

The client gave Post carte blanche to do whatever she wanted with the space—the 5,000-square-foot penthouse of a South Beach high-rise with a 180-degree view that takes in the ocean, the Intracoastal Waterway and downtown Miami—with only one demand: that she promise to hew to her

signature style of clean lines, cloudlike palettes and uncluttered, light-filled spaces.

That degree of creative freedom meant that Post was able to indulge her passions: for glass (not just in windows but seemingly everywhere: tabletops, doors, even walls); for white surfaces that brilliantly reflect an abundance of natural light; for tiny explosions of color that positively stun amid the sea of white around them; and for open, large-scale spaces that are allowed to breathe, thanks to streamlined interior architecture and a minimal program of furnishings. Her personal goal for

the apartment, she says, was "to express solidity and gentleness at the same time and to make sure that the final result had an inviting quality."

As one of Art Déco's holiest sites, Miami Beach holds a unique position in the world of style. Designers must always be wary of letting homage venture carelessly into the realm of pink-coral cliché. With her characteristic subtlety, Post found a way to express the idea of "Miami-ness" minimally, using an alternate vocabulary that scrupulously avoids the shopworn.

continued on page 115

A PLACE IN THE CLOUDS

continued from page 43

The white—of the lacquered walls, the marble-slab floors, the fabrics, even the artworks—is the white of the sand on the famed strand of beach. A pair of custom-designed silk rugs are the exact shade of turquoise to be found in the shallows near the shore; the blue of a headboard, the color of the deeper water just beyond.

Stepping off the elevator, one is treated to the visual equivalent of an *amuse bouche*, the tiny morsel served before a special meal that suggests the gustatory pleasures to come. Inside the lacquered wall, Post has embedded a narrow sliver of glass that affords a tantalizingly limited ocean view; with its promise of more, it pulls the visitor through 11-foot glass doors to the spectacle of a Bernar Venet sculpture whose curved strands echo the circumference of the apartment's floor plan. Peering through the piece's negative space from the adjacent open kitchen and dining area gives a view of the living room, whose oversize furnishings—including a 13-foot sofa and an 11-foot low table—are made possible,

Openness is a key element of Post's definition of "pure space."

proportionally speaking, by the soaring ceiling height and the absence of anything even remotely resembling clutter.

Openness is a key element of Post's definition of "pure space," and she struggled briefly with how to create separate bedrooms for the couple's children without closing the spaces off. The solution: a "catwalk" of full-height, curved glass that follows the bend of the building's architecture and functions as window or wall, changing from clear to opaque at the touch of a button. The master bedroom, at the opposite end of the apartment, achieves its goal of ethereality with a custom-designed Lucite bed that Post opted to "float" in the middle of the room rather than set against a wall.

Jennifer Post's goal, in this project and in all her projects, is to make rooms that "are open and seamless but still maintain their own identity and personality." In Miami Beach, she's proven once again what sort of pure, distilled design can result when space is revered for its own sake. □