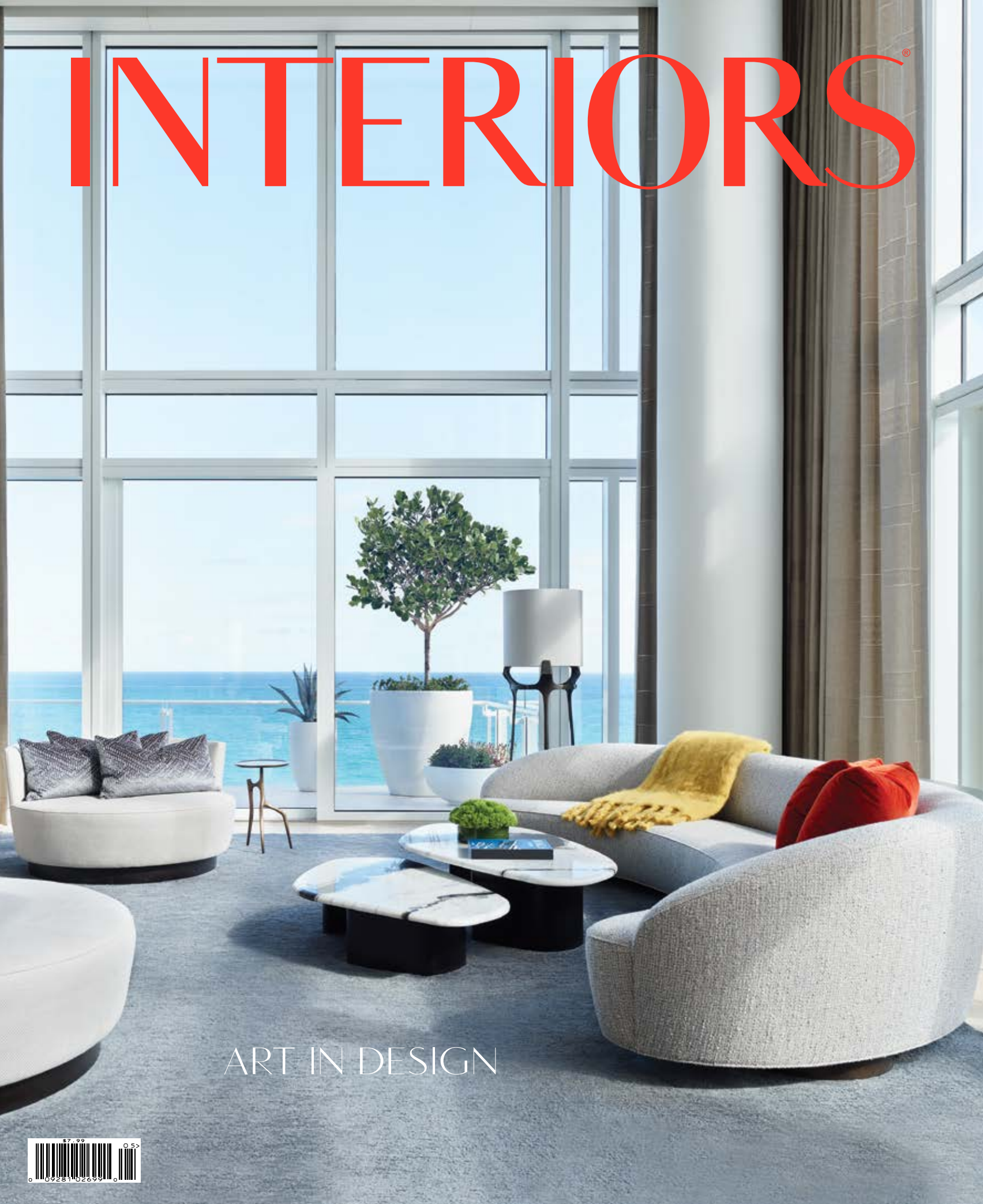


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ART IN DESIGN





PENTHOUSE VIEW

INTERIOR DESIGN: HOLLY HUNT

TEXT: ERIKA HEET

PHOTOGRAPHY: NATHAN KIRKMAN







Holly Hunt takes on very few interior design projects, making her work on a penthouse at the Surf Club in Miami that much more extraordinary. The founder and CEO of Holly Hunt Design had a (mostly) tabula rasa to work with atop one of two steel and glass residential towers by Richard Meier and Partners flanking a Four Seasons Hotel that rises behind the beloved Mediterranean-style Surf Club, designed by Russell Pancoast in 1930. “We were thrilled to be asked to do a penthouse,” says Hunt, who worked with in-house interior architect Andres Arevalo and interior designer James Dynes on the project. “Our interiors team is made up of architects as well as designers, and we felt fortunate that the project was in the construction stage, allowing for design freedom in the interior architecture and finishes. This usually makes for stronger results, especially when coordinated early on. It was a special project, and we were excited to be part of it.”

The client, Hunt says, has many interests, from business to sports to philanthropy, plus a strong focus on family. “All influenced and guided our design and delivery approach,” she says. Another driving influence—and another client request—was the central stair, a sweeping, swirling spiral cocoon that spans the main floors and connects the residence spatially and aesthetically. For this, says Hunt, the design team took a circular concept sketch by the architect and “exploded it” by introducing the steel, glass and wood materials that would allow the piece to cantilever and command the space. “The main goal was to make the staircase not only monumental but also transparent to allow the beautiful ocean view.” That view, which encompasses almost 360 degrees of city to ocean to intracoastal waterway, both inspired and humbled. “We kept the interior architecture, furniture and finishes strong in scale and proportion,” Hunt says. “This clean background with a neutral color palette blended well against the surrounding ocean views, balancing a rich materiality, but never competitive.”







Just off the main stair is a soaring double-height great room surrounded by water views. The room's strict geometries are softened by a pair of round lounge chairs and a curved sofa by the late Vladimir Kagan, a legend who Hunt affectionately called "Vladi," and whose designs are represented in Hunt's showrooms throughout the US. "Vladimir Kagan pioneered the enduring voice of midcentury modern design," Hunt says. "A designer of not simply furniture but what he called 'vessels to hold the human body,' Kagan represents the ultimate in modern American furniture design." Among the great room's other wonderful moments is an 18-foot-high, puzzle-like custom wall made from light metal coated in a soft nickel silver finish that serves as both sculpture and concealer. Via remote control, pieces of the wall automatically recede, Transformers style, to reveal a large TV screen that extends out slightly. Hunt calls it "a magical focal point."

Occupying the space on the other side of the stair is the dining room, refreshingly sequestered and private, the antidote to the open plan. Central to the room is a long table Hunt custom designed with London art studio Based Upon, made from a proprietary material called Tramazite that resembles a distant cool-blue galaxy, both absorbing the light and complementing the pool and ocean beyond. As throughout, most of the furnishings are by Holly Hunt, from the aluminum chairs—upholstered in smooth gunmetal leather—to the bronze and glass pendants and sconces. That rich materiality, a hallmark of all Holly Hunt designs, continues as other rooms are revealed. "We used a variety of luxe materials—from textiles and leather to metals—to create a sequence of discoveries as you move through the unit," Hunt says. Glass, steel, brass and bronze enliven planes of Italian vein-cut travertine, Thassos white marble, and gray stone. In the media room, the walls are swathed in a colorful, bespoke hide pattern by Amy Lau for Kyle Bunting, a nod to Josef Albers' *Homage to the Square*. Art by Donna Huanca, Graciela Garza, Renato Freitas, Arjan Janssen, Gregg Louis, Jeff Rothstein, Ben Tinsley and Stephen Eichhorn punctuates the home.

Two generous terraces, one on the main level and one on the rooftop, accommodate slender pools and sleek, all-white Holly Hunt furniture designed for taking in the views from all possible stages of repose. "The two terraces and the bar are especially memorable when sitting as the evening sun is setting, the winds are slowing, the air is cooling, and the gardenias smell heavenly," Hunt says. It's vintage Miami, a vibrant design city that has long inspired Holly Hunt. "We love working in Miami for the energy and vibe, along with the fabulous weather," she says. "There has always been a casual elegance in Miami and an interesting mix of culture and styles." This penthouse encapsulates it all. ■
Holly Hunt, hollyhunt.com



