

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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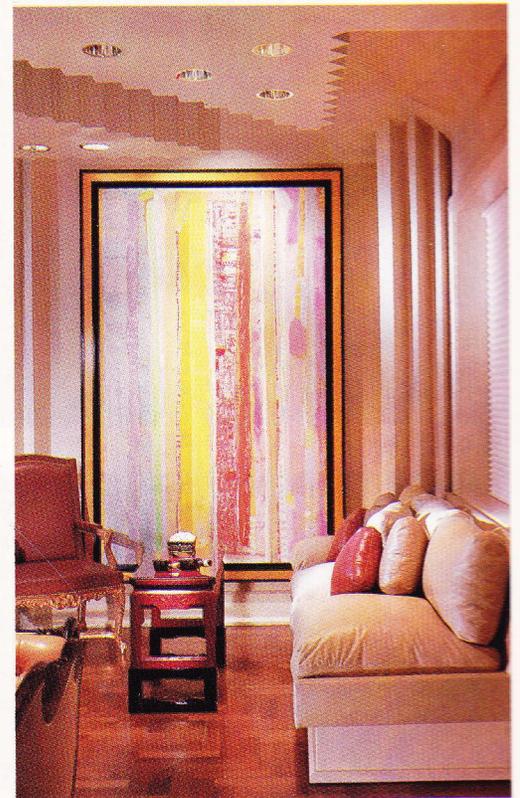
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Located in a refurbished Art Déco building, the Dallas penthouse of Juanita and Henry S. Miller, Jr., dictated an innovative design solution from the firm of Loyd-Paxton. LEFT: Pleated sheets of vinyl-covered steel define the walls and sharply angled ceilings. In the entrance hall, the gleaming finial is of stainless steel and bronze. BELOW: Robert Natkin's *Apollo* emphasizes the living room's verticality. Beside a Qing Dynasty carved lacquer table is a sofa upholstered in Hermès glove leather.

OPPOSITE: A living room vignette blends Continental furnishings and Oriental treasures. A Renaissance-style mirror overlooks three Kangxi incense burners; on the gueridon, in foreground, stands a Sino-Mongolian urn.



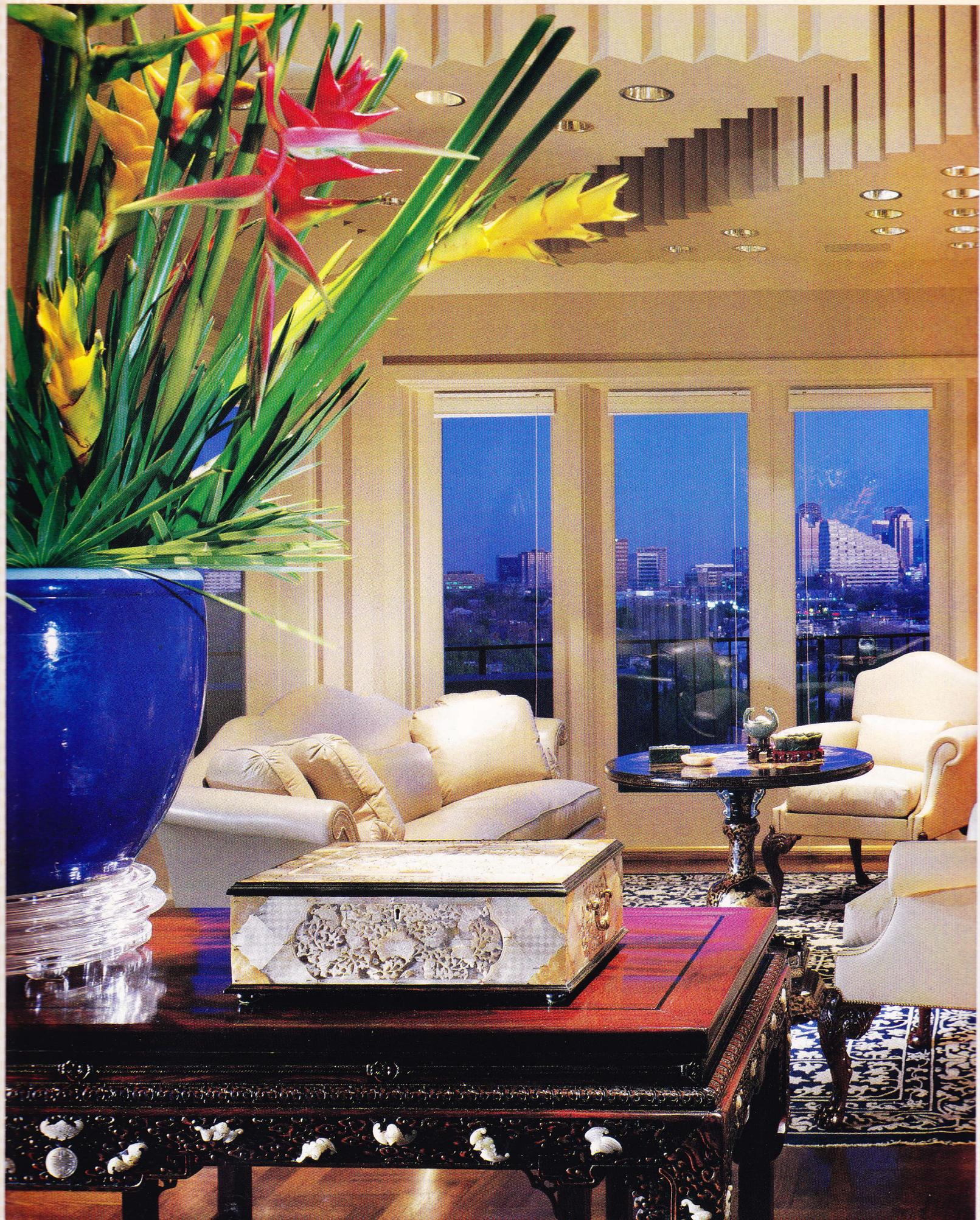
Geometric Alternatives

The Dallas Penthouse of Juanita and Henry S. Miller, Jr.

INTERIOR DESIGN BY CHARLES PAXTON GREMILLION, JR., AND LOYD RAY TAYLOR
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"DESIGN IS A SERIES of alternatives that have to be eliminated. If you follow that process of elimination carefully, your solution has an inevitable logic," says Charles Paxton Gremillion, Jr., who with his partner, Loyd Ray Taylor, heads the Dallas firm Loyd-Paxton. But few projects have tested Loyd-Paxton's logic as seriously as the penthouse apartment they redid for Dallas real estate executive and arts patron Henry S. Miller, Jr., and his wife, Juanita.











The Millers, who have sixteen grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and a long list of civic accomplishments (among them, founding the Dallas Opera), had turned over their palatial Georgian-style home of twenty-five years to the next generation, but they were astute enough to realize that the decorative traditions of the family manor couldn't be transplanted whole to the top of a Dallas mid-rise. More importantly, they were also sufficiently courageous and open-minded to embrace a design solution that is as risky as it is ultimately successful.

When the two designers, noted for the carefully edited elegance of their interiors, first studied the apartment, they found a space as daunting as any they had ever confronted. The existing interior plan was basically a slave to the building's silhouette, which features a series of setbacks and irregular tiers of Mediterranean-style peaked roofs. The complicated exte-

PRECEDING PAGES: The salon, with its spectacular view of downtown Dallas, also abounds in Eastern touches. In left foreground, a Chinese Export box accompanies a deep-blue Qing fishbowl and an elaborately carved rosewood table, both of the Daoguang period, 1821-50. The red-lacquered chinoiserie secretary holds a pair of jewel-encrusted Mongolian silver elephants used as candleholders.

OPPOSITE: The salon's 19th-century Kesi tapestry depicts seven sages gathered in a bamboo grove. The gilt tracery of the Chinese Export table complements the carpet's lattice pattern. On the mantel a Burmese parade sword of ivory and repoussé silver is displayed on a Loyd-Paxton acrylic base. Chenets with recumbent lions are French, Consulate period.

ABOVE: A suite of Rufino Tamayo etchings distinguishes an alcove of the sitting room. Hermès leather covers the banquette and gilt chairs. The floors throughout are of oak parquet laid in a herringbone pattern.

rior imposed a choppy, almost building-block arrangement of rooms (not without the advantage of some spectacular three-sided views of the city), while creating soaring, asymmetrically placed pinnacles in the main rooms. "It was inconceivable to think of fighting the space," says Loyd. "It was like working with a mountain."

After several visits Loyd and Paxton were frankly stumped, and the solution came as a virtual epiphany. "I visualized the apartment as completely filled in," says Paxton. "I saw it as a box lined with sheets of paper, and in order to make a door or window I would have to slice that paper and pull it aside." He imagined the surface folding into pleats, almost like Japanese origami. The pleats, he realized, would provide the perfect transition between the walls and the excessively angular ceilings, while adding a distinctive detailing that could substitute for heavy cornices and moldings. The only real problem



with this startling design fiat was the difficulty in communicating it.

"We were fortunate that they trusted us enough to let us try an idea we couldn't explain," Loyd wryly comments. Adds Juanita Miller, "We did find it mind-boggling at first." But the adventuresome couple recovered quickly enough, and Mrs. Miller herself solved one of the most important design problems: using steel sheets, rather than paper, for the crisp pleats the designers had envisioned.

The result is a tour de force of interior architecture. The four-inch-wide pleats, in machine-bent cold-rolled steel (covered with a sand-colored vinyl cloth that presents a richly textured *faux*-stone effect), give continuity while at the same time allowing a remarkable variety of detailing. In the entrance hall, the pleats that flank the doorway almost suggest the massive piers of a cathedral, while in the

ABOVE: Light and shadow combine to striking effect in the dining room, directing the eye to another city view. The "pleats" of the Loyd-Paxton steel-and-glass table and buffet echo those lining the walls and ceiling. Neoclassical-style chairs are of rosewood and leather.

OPPOSITE: Among mementos behind a Louis XVI-style desk in the library are photos of Joan Sutherland and Placido Domingo, whom the Millers were instrumental in bringing to Dallas. Their work on behalf of the arts includes helping to found the Dallas Opera and supporting the symphony and theater center.

dining room they are lighted from above and give the effect of a wall draped in light; beside the windows, they offer the texture of heavy draperies without detracting from the skyline panorama.

The furnishings were selected to mesh with the Millers' passion for antiques and Oriental objects while still maintaining the powerful clarity

of the overall design. "These are strong people," says Loyd. "We wanted their objects to be strong." Emphasis is on the vivid lines of nineteenth-century Neoclassicism and Renaissance Revival, with an occasional flourish of German Rococo.

All involved view the finished project with a great deal of satisfaction. "You can't do a project like this for someone who is insecure," says Loyd. "And you really couldn't do it with a much younger couple," adds Paxton. "They would insist on something more conventionally daring." The Millers, who travel widely in support of the arts, find their innovative surroundings both a comfortable refuge and a testament to an unbounded outlook. "All our lives we've been receptive to new concepts and willing to take risks," says Henry Miller. "Neither of us found it hard to take this one." □

