



A Glance At A Sculptured High-Rise

We're proud to bring you one last look at the beautiful design Dallas legends Loyd Taylor and Paxton Gremillion created for Henry S. Miller and Juanita Miller in an elegant Highland Aprk high-rise.

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ARTFULLY DONE: Designers Loyd Taylor and Paxton Gremillion chose a suite of Ruffino Tamayo engravings from an extensive portfolio owned by the Millers to decorate an enclave off the sitting room. The Hermès glove-leather banquettes were designed by Loyd-Paxton and made by Kisabeth.

Ripple Effect

At first glance, the corrugated-steel walls and ceilings in Henry and Juanita

Miller's apartment look like beautiful sculpture. You'd never know they were a practical answer to a complex architectural problem.

With ceilings of wildly varying heights and walls jutting out at peculiar angles, Henry and Juanita Miller's apartment was a fun house of design challenges. The ceilings were unalterable. The walls were immovable. In less capable hands, the redesign might have become a circus of confusion. In the hands of Loyd-Paxton principals Loyd Taylor and Paxton Gremillion, it became a work of art.

The perfect design solution to these wacky rooms came in the form of pleated steel panels. To be precise, 1/2-inch, cold-rolled, bent steel, which was covered in vinyl cloth and finished with a sand texture. The two designers had never used this medium before, but it worked like a charm. "We were faced with unbelievable variations in ceiling heights," Paxton says. "But the pleating makes it all coherent, providing verticality and marrying the walls to the ceiling."

The look was unconventional—maybe even *avant-garde*—but the Millers loved it. Already of a certain age in 1986 when the apartment was redesigned, the couple nonetheless didn't flinch. Anyone who knows them wouldn't have been surprised. "They are risk-takers," Paxton says. "And I knew the design had to be something terribly smart-looking because they are very smart people."

FACE TO FACE: A pair of English Regency rosewood sofas covered in Hermès leather are the center of attention in the Millers' drawing room. Loyd and Paxton designed stainless-steel bases for a pair of 18th-century Chinese lacquer boxes inlaid with mother-of-pearl. A pair of art deco carved-marble lamps flank the French 19th-century Levanto marble mantel. Atop the mantel are a trio of chinoiserie vases and an English neo-Renaissance-style mirror framed in wood and reticulated brass.

GREAT LINES: Although it wasn't planned, the angular lines of this antique Ko'ssu textile play off the pleated walls. The tapestry hangs above a 19th-century French carved-marble mantle mounted in gilt bronze. The chenets inside the fireplace are 18th-century French gilt bronze. The pedestal table is 18th-century Chinese tête de negre lacquer. The 19th-century English Georgian armchair is one of a pair.

Local real estate magnates, the Millers are ideal Loyd-Paxton clients. Confident. Intelligent. Perfectionists. "Our work is so dramatic, that to live in our spaces you've got to have the kind of personality that's very strong, that rises above the décor," Paxton says. Rooms with force of style are like great theater, and nothing makes a party sizzle more than when guests feel like they're in the middle of a lively stage. "The Millers are the most social people. They lead very public lives, actually," he says. "Just as soon as we finished the apartment, they started having parties."

The residence is divided into areas, but it's really one big space with smaller ones opening off it. You're not aware of leaving one room and going to another. "By treating the space as a singular thought, it's perfect for

entertaining,” Paxton says. “You’re always in the place where everything seems to be happening.”

Pleating the walls also created a dramatic side effect: shadows. “What’s wonderful is the way light moves over it,” he says. “You get these shadows and projections that you’d never get otherwise. The pleating picks up shadows and moves them around the room with you. It’s a very alive environment.” This architectural device also helps to make the Millers apartment a singular design, but don’t bother trying to put a decorating label on it: “Honey, it’s just pure Loyd-Paxton. It doesn’t have a time or stylistic identification,” Paxton says.

What it does have is a sense of solidarity and permanence. “I’m not big on anything that is going to deteriorate or get dirty,” he explains. “If it’s going to wear out, it’s not for me.”

That’s why every piece of upholstered antique furniture the Millers owned was re-covered in Hermès leather. There’s not a stitch of fabric upholstery in the place. “With leather, you don’t have to recover the piece but once,” he says.

“And you notice the design of the furniture, not the fabric.” There are shades on the windows, but no draperies to get dirty (if Paxton had his way, the windows would have remained bare) and very few rugs (and if Paxton had his way, there would be no rugs at all). “Hardwoods, marble, and tile floors make a house feel more solid,” he says. Even the finish on the pleated panels makes the walls look as if they’re made of stone. Chinese black-lacquer chests, rock-crystal objects, chrome-and-glass tables, and polished antique wooden furniture creates an evenness of sheen, he says. It all looks as if it might last forever. But it won’t.

DINNER: In the dining room, the base of the Loyd-Paxton-designed glass table, which seats 10, is a stainless-steel lightning bolt. The chairs are English William IV mahogany upholstered in Hermès leather. The glass-topped buffet’s base was done in pleated steel, to mimic the walls.

By the time you read this story, the Millers will have moved into a smaller, more manageable apartment. The pleated walls will have been dismantled and the furniture and art moved out. Time marches on, but who can ever forget rooms like these?

Get the Loyd-Paxton Look

Bare floors: don't use carpets of any kind.

Clean surfaces: it's very hard for people not to put things on an empty surface. If you've got a great looking mantel, leave it bare.

Bare windows: if the architecture is good, keep them bare. If not, use blinds. "We rarely, if ever, use draperies," Paxton says.

Make it pop: important, special pieces in a room should be seen, not covered up. If you have a beautiful painting over a mantel, don't put a vase of flowers in front of it.

Get real: fireplaces are for burning wood. Don't put a pot of geraniums or a statue in it during the summer. Let it be.

Keep things crisp: the best rooms look like a perfectly tailored linen suit. Crisp, free of wrinkles, neat, and functional.

Make it last: upholster furniture in leather. Use marble, stone, tile, glass, wood, and metal.

Create vistas: no matter where you stand in a room, you should have a great "view." Don't put all your efforts into one or two spots and ignore the rest; your rooms won't look finished.

It all boils down to editing: rooms look smart when only the things that need to be in them are there. Put out only the most special objects and furniture.

MUSEUM QUALITY: A large-scale oil by Robert Natkin, Apollo, is another example of how the Miller existing art collection works so well with the pleated walls. It was complete serendipity, Paxton says. The French Regence-style gilt armchair is one of a suite of four. Loyd and Paxton designed the sleek leather sofa and black acrylic base for this low, carved, cinnabar-lacquer table.