

MODERN LUXURY

# Interiors

CHICAGO

**PLUS**

DESIGNERS AT HOME,  
THE ALLURE OF ART &  
A BUCKTOWN BEAUTY



**50**

PEOPLE & PLACES  
SHAPING THE DESIGN  
SCENE IN CHICAGO



# RISING HIGHER

DONNA MONDI DESIGNED THIS HOME FROM BEGINNING TO END, WHICH IS WHY EVERY DETAIL WORKS PERFECTLY TO CREATE A DRAMATIC YET COMFORTABLE WHOLE.

BY LAURA HINE  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
WERNER STRAUBE



A half-floor condo allows for an expansive open layout. The challenge for designer Donna Mondt was making distinct, usable areas for the homeowners to enjoy.





**F**rom the first step inside the condo at No. 9 Walton, you know you're in the home of someone who loves art and a bold statement. The foyer and gallery walls are covered with a swirling marbled wallpaper that perfectly sets off a black-framed convex mirror. The wall treatment envelops the adjoining gallery space with two stunning black-and-white photos by visual artist Elena Vasilieva. "We like people to know right away that they're in for something special," says designer Donna Mondì. "This entrance tells you that you're not in a typical Chicago interior."

After you pass through the gallery, you walk into the unit's main living area with its stunning views of the city. "The whole point of these homes, as you get higher, is the view, so we put in mechanized shades, but we didn't put drapes in here," Mondì says. "The view becomes an interesting architectural element to the space." And the space that Mondì is talking about could be intimidating in its openness and potential. "We wanted to have different purposes for different areas so they would be used differently," she says. "We didn't want sofa, sofa, sofa, but to tie the areas together, we bounced colors back and forth." The result is a coffee/breakfast bar, a dining area and two seating areas, one with a TV mounted in an amazing built-in unit with book-matched limestone slabs installed by GI Stone. "We started with the stone as the inspiration, since we knew it would be the perfect surround," Mondì explains. "From there, we picked out every tile, every marble, every countertop, every cabinet, every doorknob."

Once all the materials were selected, the team started on the furnishings. "Our client is bold and gorgeous, and she loves neutrals, but she told us that she also loves ugly greer," Mondì says about the wife. That "ugly green" helped



From top: The swirling marble wallpaper by Area Environments is custom-made for the space and so there's no repeat; the soft gray kitchen cabinets are by O'Brien Harris. Opposite page: The fireplace surround creates the room's focal point with its dramatic book-matched limestone slabs and waterfall bookcases.





choose the matching mohair sofas in the living room. “We went a little warmer in our color choices, and we used a lot of black because we both have a love of black.” For his part, the husband requested durable finishes and minimal seams. “We love natural materials because they have such integrity,” Mondri says. “The island top is quartz, which is beautiful but dense, so it doesn’t have the performance issues that marble has.” She had the quartz cut so the seams form a picture frame around a center piece, which looks intentional and beautiful, as the homeowner requested.

Mondri was also able to use stone in an intricate and gorgeous pattern in the master bathroom. “It’s my favorite floor I’ve ever done,” she says with a smile. “JDL [Development] told us we could have anything, so I was like, ‘They said anything.’ We chose this four-marble pattern floor. I’m not sure they said ‘anything’ after that!”

The couple also collaborated with Mondri on the art throughout the condo. “Their taste is definitely more on the modern and edgy side, so it was easy to move in that direction,” Mondri says. A great example is the powder room that features one oversized piece by Philippe Vignal, a French artist who was born in Mozambique. “It adds a lot of drama.”

The resulting home is a huge success. The couple, who still own a home in Lake Forest, have moved full-time to their abode at No. 9 Walton. “When people are looking at designers, it’s important to feel some personal connection because it’s a long process,” says the wife. “Donna went above and beyond for us; I wish I had another project for her to start tomorrow.” ■



The master bathroom’s Castile Grande by Mosaïque Surface floor is a work of art with four different inlaid marbles.

The master bedroom is a serene space that gets a punch of color from the art, “Away With the Canaries” by Miss Aniela from Surreal Fashion.

## DESIGN DETAILS

### TYPE

Condominium

### LOCATION

Gold Coast

### INTERIOR DESIGN

Donna Mondri Interior Design  
donna Mondri.com

### ARCHITECT

Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture  
hparchitecture.com

### BUILDER

JDL Development  
jdlcorp.com

### STONE INSTALLATION

GI Stone  
gistone.com

## RESOURCES

### AREA ENVIRONMENTS

Wallpaper in foyer and gallery  
rworthycollections.com

### BRABBU

Chairs in master bedroom  
brabbu.com

### BRADLEY

Bed in master bedroom  
bradleyusa.com

### EICHHOLTZ

Coffee table in living room  
eichholtz.com

### ENVIE COLLECTION

Drink table in gallery  
donna Mondri.com

### KRAVET

Sofas in living room  
kravet.com

### O'BRIEN HARRIS

Kitchen cabinetry  
obrienharris.com

### OSCAR ISBERIAN RUGS

Rug in breakfast room  
isberian.com

### THE BRIGHT GROUP

Dining room table, nightstands in master bedroom  
thebrightgroup.com

### STUDIO 41

Hardware throughout the unit  
shopstudio41.com