



Holly Hunt Studio Larado cast-glass panel and walnut coffee table provides a central hub for the surrounding furniture. Holly Hunt Seven sofas, an Adriana Hoyt Bolero daybed in front of the built-in console, and Lancaster swivel chairs, Schumacher, Cowtan & Tout and Holly Hunt pillows add comfort and layered texture to the room.

Top Right: Blainey North Swanson ottoman with Holly Hunt Great Plains fabric rests under a Holly Hunt Meridian mirror. Maya Romanoff sunburst wallcoverings dress up the elevator doors.

Right: Robert Marcelli Fujian bronze console holds a Tara Lynn Winslow decorative pot. A Bright Group Jonathan Growing Chamomile trapezoid light fixture.



# A Marco Island Makeover

Mark P. Finlay Architects bring timeless sophistication and oceanic light to this Marco Island penthouse

Story by Anastasia Storer | Photography by Kim Sargent

Mark Finlay, principal of the design firm bearing his name, describes his team's approach to design as chameleon-like and evanescent. Every project is a new, creative journey starting from the client's needs and desires and leading to the final destination: finished space that exceeds the client's expectations while leaving no discernable trace of the team's "hand." When a project is complete, "you can't tell that we did it," Mark says. There is no recognizable "Finlay style"—every space is uniquely the client's own.





Emerson Bentley alligator leather-wrapped console holds two Michael Aram Butterfly Gingko lamps. A Nancy Corzine Allen Knight lamp rests on top of a Stanford Furniture Lauren round end table.

Above: Kathryn McCoy clear quartz-framed mirror reflects the view from the great room, with a Baker Villa club chair in a Swaim animal print fabric and an Arteriors floor lamp.

Custom built-in walnut bookshelves with Maya Romanoff beaded wall covering interior





Dennis Miller Altura walnut dining table is encircled by El Victor Allison Paladino Hansen chairs upholstered in a textured Zinc fabric. A Shaluff light fixture hangs above the table.

Mark founded the firm in 1984 and, by purposefully diversifying its projects and keenly focusing on providing stellar, personalized service to clients, steadily nurtured and grew the business to its now 30-person staff, which includes both architects and interior designers. With an impressive, award-winning portfolio, featuring both commercial and residential design projects, the firm sees a lot of repeat business—a testament to its focus on client satisfaction and service.

"This business model of architecture and interior design under one roof is considered new by many, but Mark explains it is in fact a return to the old model from the turn of the 20th century, when all aspects of design were handled in-house. "Our clients love that they have to go to only one place for all their design needs," says Mark. Adds Tina Anastasia, the firm's director of interior design: "We spend a lot of time together as a team, working on the design theory and concepts for each project." Both believe this collaborative team environment is one of the cornerstones of their success; often, the team has already begun preliminary discussions about what a project might need before they even meet with the client.

Many of the firm's projects have both architectural and interior design elements, and the Veracruz penthouse on Marco Island, FL, was

no exception. For this project, it was Tina and her team who did the heavy lifting, completely redoing the interior. Architectural expertise was needed, though, when it came to reshaping the floor plan and designing the many built-ins and cabinetry throughout the home. Everything is new, from the wall and floor coverings, to the furniture and built-ins, to the finer details such as the light fixtures and art. The client brought nothing to the space, placing her complete trust in the design team.

#### Letting in the Light

When the team got their first look at the penthouse, they knew immediately that they needed to open up the space. "It was too closed off," says Tina. Adds Mark: "It was a maze. There was no clear flow through the space. You weren't sure where to go."

The design team wanted to take advantage of the views provided by the penthouse's location; the Veracruz is a 26-story condominium situated on Cape Marco, the most southwestern point of the island. This gives the penthouse spectacular views on both sides; the main living space looks out over cerulean seas and sky, while the bedrooms all have views of the mangrove islets of Ten Thousand Islands and the Rookery Bay Reserve.



Custom Yorkshire walnut and Larch-tron Direct stainless-steel cabinetry. Paul's Marble Depot countertops in Calacatta Gold match the marble flooring in the foyer.





Beller Arcadia table with backlit beach glass top and custom walnut and glass bookshelves.

Finlay's team removed the interior walls of the main living area and transformed three small, cramped-feeling rooms into a single expansive space while simultaneously clarifying the movement through the home. Now the space breathes effortlessly without obstruction, yet each area—dining, living and family—is still clearly delineated through the clever, almost subliminal use of ceiling shape, light and floor coverings. Furniture also plays an important part; an intriguing aspect of the firm's space planning is that it begins laying out the furniture on paper as the architecture work is in process. "This lets us and the client begin to visualize the finished space, so we know each room will fit their needs before we actually start physically placing the furniture," Tina explains.

Stepping out of the elevator into the vestibule, you're enticed to pass through the leather-inset double doors by the sight of the shimmering blue-green vase ahead—its organic shape reminiscent of sea coral—centered atop a bronze console whose simple, strong lines offer a counterpoint to the delicate curves of the vase. The woven walnut wood wall behind provides additional visual interest without overwhelming the eye. The visitor doesn't know it yet, but the color of the vase gives the eye a hint of what's to come.

The moment you step into the foyer, your eye cannot help but be drawn to the light and then captivated by the view, which draws you forward into the home's dining area and main living space. It is breathtaking, more so in the late afternoon, when the western skies are ablaze in the intoxicating colors of a Florida sunset. For a moment, the walls vanish and the illusion is complete; it feels as though there is no wall or glass, and the entire space is open to the outside. Once the awe of the view dissipates, you're then able to pull your attention back to the interior and appreciate the exquisiteness of the home itself.

#### Neutral Sophistication

The client's primary request when she came to the firm was for a neutral palette. Neutrals can be daunting to work with—they're seen by many as the equivalent of visual pabulum—but in the capable hands of Tina and her team, they instead become a soothing, layered tonal canvas that allows the views to take center stage, particularly in the main living area.

Between the now-open expanse of the space and the neutral palette, Mark and Tina knew there was a risk of the space feeling cavernous and





A pair of Holly Hunt Ralph Pucci walnut rib chairs flank the Robb & Stuckey wing stool, and a Rudin John Pomp console holds a Baker tree branch lamp.

A Fennel Mitman sectional upholstered with a Holly Hunt patterned fabric on the frame and solid fabric on the cushions is matched with a Baker ottoman and Swaim lounge chairs. Left Bank painting embraces the neutral palette and golden browns of the walnut wood.

cold. It was essential to find ways of bringing a sense of pleasant coziness to the room, in addition to creating the visual separation of the three different living areas within the single space.

To achieve this, the team selected all the fabrics to create a rich, visual smorgasbord of subtle, beautiful patterns and sumptuous textures, softening the space and making it welcoming and comfortable to sight

and touch. The textural landscape extends to the wall and floor coverings as well; bamboo, silk and wool rugs, and beaded wallpaper, leather and plaster are all used to add visual and tactile texture to the home.

Holly Hunt's Great Plains fabric collection in a variety of cream, beige and taupe hues are the workhorses of the color scheme, being utilized in the sheer draperies that frame the picture windows as well

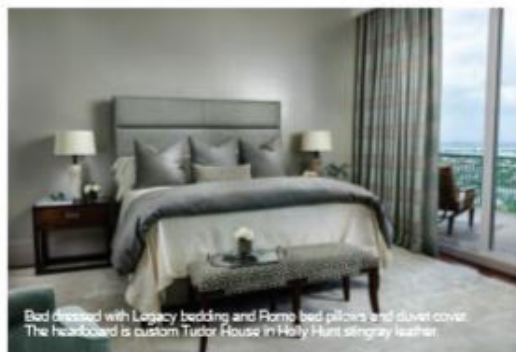
as in the large sofa and sectional furniture pieces in the main living area. The collection's textures and patterns add depth and interest without becoming a distraction. Pillows and additional furniture pieces in complementary fabrics are layered in to soften and add to the plush, sumptuous look and feel of the space.

Golden-brown walnut wood was chosen to complement the palette

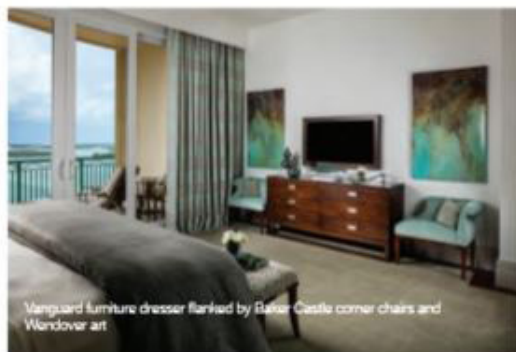
and bring warmth to every room in the home. In the open kitchen, the wood gives an intriguing, upscale "farmhouse" aesthetic, and in the office, it adds a masculine touch, while its polished surface refracts and reflects the light, brightening the sole room in the home without an external window.

The master suite—one of Mark's favorite rooms in the home—un-





Bed dressed with Legacy bedding and Rome bed pillows and duvet cover. The headboard is custom Tudor House in Holly Hunt slingray leather.



Vanguard furniture dresser flanked by Baker Castle corner chairs and Wendover art.

derwent a transformation into a secluded, serene refuge. The neutral palette shifts away from the predominantly warmer hues seen in the main living space to an ever so slightly cooler palette. Here, the design team brought out cooler taupes and greiges to mix with creams, imparting the room with a feeling of tranquility. That same restfulness is extended into the master bath, where the team's mechanical ingenuity truly shines. Centered in their respective spaces within the room, the tub and shower are designed in such a way that both have views looking out over the bathroom's balcony. The curved walls around the tub were custom-built to capture water spray from the overhead shower head, but also to focus the gaze from the bathroom entrance through to the view outside. The shower is particularly ingenious, with all-glass walls and hidden plumbing so it appears to float in the room.

#### Visual Vignettes

Also important in making the home warm and cozy are the small areas within the larger spaces that the design team put together to add more visual interest. "The vignettes are a way to stop the eye and allow it to linger in a particular place," says Tina. "We wanted these areas to impart a feeling of intimacy in the space."

Some of the vignettes—such as the one that greets you in the foyer—are meant solely for the eyes. But others have a function beyond being a pleasure to look at; they help to break up and define the space around them, or they offer a chair in which to sit and rest.



Guest bathroom with custom walnut vanity and Ming green marble.



Foyer lavatory with Philip Jeffries Japanese Rice Paper wallcovering, floating Theodora counter with a Kohler glass vessel and THG faucet, Dennis Miller Fuse lighting lamp, London sconce from the Glisco/Reiter Park Avenue mirror.



Jerry Parr Irons Sinclair blue resin and silver metal bed dressed with a Donghia Sahoo duvet cover and James Hani and Donghia Sahoo pillows. Century furniture Samantha nightstand in mirrored silver leaf is complemented by the Swain chair in Pollock checked velvet.



Vanguard furniture Skyler nightstand with Visual Comfort lamp and Emerson Bentley club chair.



Century Furniture Omni bed and Garrett Leather paneled headboard

At the back of the great room is one such space: A single luxurious Baker Villa Club chair invites you to curl up with a good book and cup of tea, gaze out at the sky, or simply spend time in quiet contemplation. A nook nearby holds a built-in bookcase with a glimmering Maya Romanoff bedazzled wallcovering that is as pleasing to the eye as the objets d'art displayed.

The home's main living area is a shining example of the Finlay team's expert ability to layer spaces-within-space. This expansive room that could feel cold and empty is instead homey and inviting, with each of the three functional areas discernible while remaining seamlessly part of the whole.

For the dining area, it's the octagonal ceiling—mirrored in the custom-cut shape of the Palace bamboo silk rug beneath it, and in the shape of the chair backs—and the burnished sheen of the custom Joseph Jeup Evans buffet that demarcates the dining area from the great room. To the left, the ceiling shape is again reflected in the multi-hued patchwork-style octagonal shapes of the small rug that defines the conversation area breaking up the space between the dining area and the family room.

The great room is given a formal air via the glowing golden light from the ceiling's backlit rectangles, the precise furniture formation around the Holly Hunt Studio glass and walnut coffee table, and the straight lines and structure of the built-in bookcases on the room's primary wall. On the opposite end of the space, the family room is much more relaxed,





Baker Patricia sofa done in Holly Hunt Great Plains Matador fabric, paired with Lancaster club chair and Sonford Furniture Liam chairs

the furniture arranged to be casual and intimate. The curved wall embraces another vignette—a sitting area created to provide a space for private conversation.

#### Echoes of the Sea

The views are always front and center in the home, but the design team found a beautifully subtle way to bring the outside in. There is an exquisite attention to detail in every room, and in the details you often glimpse the colors and shapes of the sea—appropriate for a property located on a Floridian island with a view of the water. From the custom plaster wall in the family room with its ribbed undulations that evoke ocean waves, to the splashes of blue and green in the glass and ceramic objects d'art and artwork on the walls, hints of the ocean are everywhere.

A more subtle nod to the beach and ocean can be seen in the lavatory off the foyer; here, a pale-green glass vessel rests on the vanity, which was purposely floated to better show off the custom water-jet cut marble on the floor. And while the pattern is ostensibly a zebra stripe, it cannot help but also call to mind the gentle ripple of clear water over sand.

The wave motif makes another appearance in one of the guest bedrooms, where the blue-green resin headboard ripples and shines like ocean waves. Indeed, each of the three guest bedrooms has additional oceanic color



WS Bath Collection vessel sink with a Waterworks Formwork Faucet



Onyx tub is embraced by Oceanic's headboard



Central all-glass enclosure with Holly Hunt dragonfly fabric and Nestle marble imported from Greece

added to its neutral palette: silvery sea-green, shimmering blue and creamy seafoam.

It is no exaggeration to say that the team at Mark E Finlay Architects are true masters of the art of design. "Tina took the client on a journey she wasn't expecting, but she was ecstatic with the results," Mark says. Adds Tina: "As we understand the client better during the process, we're able to make suggestions that can lead the client in new directions. It's a very unique experience."

Indeed. The end result of this journey is a home whose design may best be called "elegant comfort." Every room has a refined, sophisticated style that still feels relaxed and intimate—a home to be lived in, not simply displayed.

#### Resources:

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