

THE ART OF INTERIORS

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This page: After eliminating one of the entrances to the living room and adding French doors to another, Marcello Luzi went on to simplify this space with basic striped wallpaper by Cole & Sons and a creamy floral sofa from G. LoMonaco & Sons.

Right: To make this two-story-high dining room less "like the bottom of an elevator shaft," Luzi lowered the ceilings and widened the space. He chose a Christopher Norman chandelier and botanical panels by de Gournay to captivate guests.



10 DESIGNERS TO WATCH



MARCELLO LUZI

Philadelphia

After seeing the Philadelphia restaurant where he worked evolve from an empty shell into a finished product with murals and bronze sculptures, finance student Marcello Luzi decided to change his major to interior design, something he'd been drawn to since he scribbled floor plans and mansions as a child.

While a design student, Luzi worked part-time at Peterson-Weixler. Six years later, he was made a partner. Since 1995, Luzi has headed the firm, renamed Weixler, Peterson, & Luzi, and currently enjoys his stint as president of the Pennsylvania East Chapter of American Society of Interior Designers, as well as sitting on the board at the Art Institute of Philadelphia.

"It seems that everything I do somehow relates to design," says Luzi, who extends his career into hobbies such as visiting museums and galleries and accruing masterpieces for his personal collection. "I always have much more art than I have walls, and I have to pile things up and lean them."

Yet cluttered hardly describes Luzi's style. In fact, the designer himself defines it as "sophisticated and understated, regardless of whether the project I am working on is traditional or contemporary." He often blends his style with those of his greatest influences, partners Steven Weixler and Walter Peterson, who he collaborated with on the recent restoration of a National Historic Register townhouse in Philadelphia's Rittenhouse Square area.

In the future, Luzi predicts a shift in the role of interior designers toward interior consultants. "The public will realize that we not only offer great taste and style, but also function as project managers and facilitators," he says.

—S.J.T.