

Interior Design by Martyn Lawrence-Bullard/Text by Nancy Collins  
Photography by Tim Street-Porter

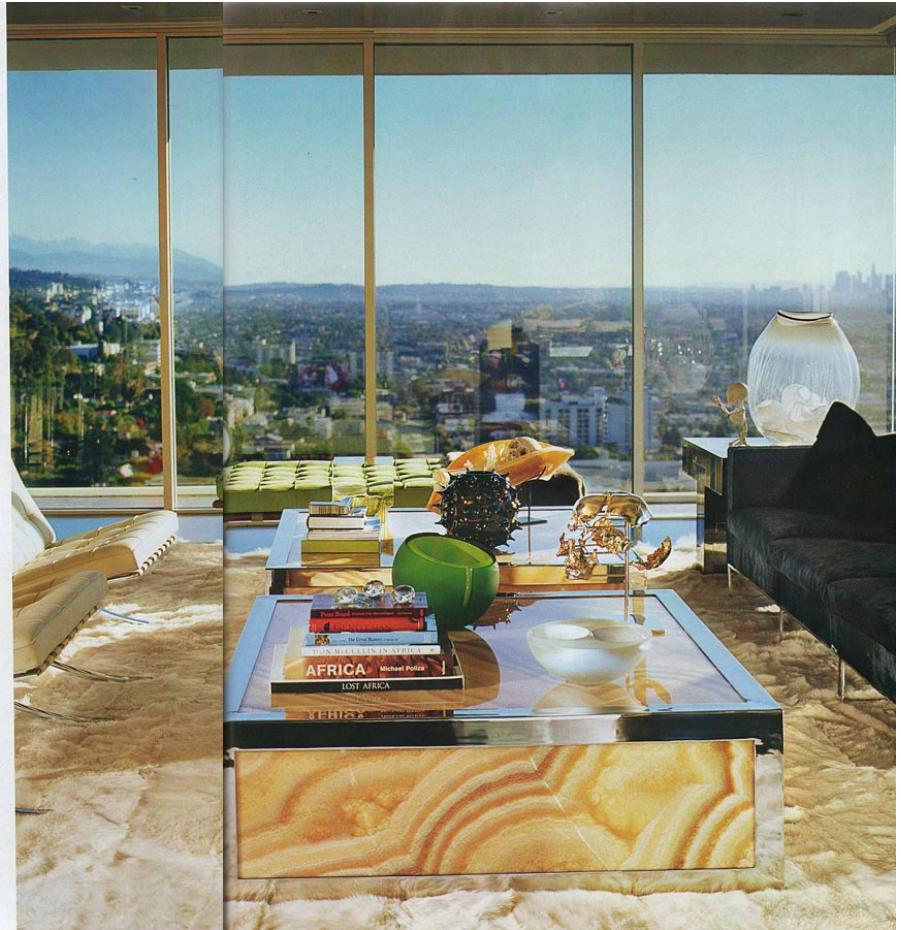
# Sir Elton John

A BOLD AERIE OVERLOOKING  
LOS ANGELES FOR THE POP STAR AND  
HIS PARTNER, DAVID FURNISH



Sir Elton John and his partner, filmmaker David Furnish (above, with a work by Damien Hirst in the entrance to their apartment), asked Martyn Lawrence-Bullard to create a 1970s-inspired design for their Los Angeles residence. **RICHT:** The living room offers sweeping city views, but pieces from the couple's art collection also command attention. A Dale Chihuly glass basket is on the table at rear; the painted bronze next to it is by Marc Quinn. Vintage Murano glass pieces mix with sculptures by Hirst and William Morris on the onyx-and-chrome low tables, designed by Lawrence-Bullard. Carpet, The Rug Company.

64 | [www.ArchitecturalDigest.com](http://www.ArchitecturalDigest.com)









It's a rock star of a Hollywood pad. And why not? It is, after all, home to a legend of the breed, Sir Elton John, and his partner, David Furnish. "We love it," exults Furnish, who dreamed up the couple's ode-to-the-'70s chrome-and-glass palace with his friend and designer Martyn Lawrence-Bullard. "Our goal for this apartment was neither entertaining nor having houseguests—it's about function, about us. As a filmmaker, I needed a base here, as did Elton, who tours a lot on the West Coast. Though Elton's definitely a maximalist, I, a more clean-line minimalist, we both wanted something very L.A., very '70s, à la the building's architecture. Immediately, I thought: *Boogie Nights*."

"Elton's only directive," adds Lawrence-Bullard, "was a period vibe as backdrop for his art and color photographs," a dazzling array of which sparkle like the rare jewels they are against the David Hicks-inspired, brilliantly hued lacquer walls. (The couple's extensive photo collection puts them among the world's largest pri-

vate collectors.) "Beyond that, Elton just said, 'Color. I want color.'"

And did he ever get it. "Martyn takes your taste and gives the most gorgeous, sexiest version of it," says Furnish. "Not having a template style, he's a true collaborator."

"Hearing '70s, automatically thinking Halston and Courrèges," says the designer, "I told the boys: 'What I'd really love to do is chrome and lacquer juxtaposed with Hermès-handbag kelly-green walls.'"

"Initially when you hear kelly green, you recoil in horror," laughs Furnish. "Can I even imagine that on the walls?" But then Martyn shows up with 10 color samples and you get it. "Not that it didn't give even its initiator pause. "When the green first went up," admits Lawrence-Bullard, "I thought, Oh my God, I hope the boys like it. But once we added the art, everything got grounded."

Long before that point, he adds, the 3,000-square-foot space had to be "brought back to its raw guts." "The original layout, with three small bedrooms, was so



OPPOSITE: An oil by Wang Guangyi anchors the sitting area. Silk bouclé on sofa, B&B Italia. Edelman chair and pillow leathers. TOP: The kitchen's circa 1969 chandelier is from the Grand Hotel in Milan. A William Claxton photograph of Peggy Moffitt in a Rudi Gernreich outfit hangs on the wall—it ran on a 1966 cover of the British society magazine *Queen*. A 2nd-century torso stands near the window. Venini vases add color. Poliform cabinetry. ABOVE: A Lee Friedlander photograph of Miles Davis is displayed above the desk in John's office.





claustrophobic, it took some very modern thinking," says Furnish, "knocking down walls, raising ceilings, extending and opening up windows to realize the potential of the view—a dazzling, one-of-a-kind panorama stretching from the beach to downtown Los Angeles."

"After the initial walk-through, Elton never sees a project again until it's finished," explains Furnish, "which, of course, puts pressure on everybody. The first time we visited this apartment, he didn't like much of anything. So when he finally saw the finished product, he couldn't believe it was the same apartment. His jaw hit the floor."

As well it should. Shades of *Boogie Nights* indeed! Shimmering emerald walls! Platinum-leaf ceilings! Baseboards inset with polished steel! Baths with glass-bead wallpaper, white-gold tiles! A kitchen whose crystal chandelier formerly dangled over the concierge desk in Milan's Grand Hotel! A grand, chocolate-lacquered master suite with closets the size of small New York apartments!

And infused throughout, tying everything together—from exquisite twists of exotic glass to the Jasper Johns nipped by Lawrence-Bullard from the couple's Atlanta gym—are the curiosity and excitement of the passionate collector. "When you're

as famous as Elton, your homes have to be your sanctuaries," notes Furnish. (The couple have residences in Atlanta, France, Italy and England; see *Architectural Digest*, January 1993 and May 2000.) "You can't go out in the real world, sit in cafés, go to museums. Consequently, the mantra behind all our homes is bringing the outside in...through things we love."

"Elton loves life; his collections celebrate that. Objects have emotion for him. As an only child with working parents, he spent lots of time alone with his records and books, all of which are now lined up, pristine, his name written on the first page, in our Windsor library. The same for the record collection that he protected with plastic over the album sleeves and that inspired him to become the artist he is. These things gave him love."

"And our homes, including now this beautiful new one, are our way of curating those things that we love. We take care of them, take time in deciding where and how to place each piece, because, in the end, you want everything to feel right, harmonious, appreciated." He pauses. "You want it to feel celebrated." □

To see the previously published homes of Elton John, visit [ArchitecturalDigest.com](http://ArchitecturalDigest.com).

The couple wanted to "keep the vibe" of their building, which dates to 1965. LEFT: Lawrence-Bullard placed a Tracey Emin neon installation in the master bedroom. A work by Gary Hume is nearby. Hermes clock. Platinum leaf on ceiling from David Sutherland. B&B Italia side tables and bed, with Edelman leather. ABOVE: The bed faces a Paul Evans cabinet and photographs by Guido Mocafico. The Ribbon chair is a Pierre Paulin design.