

MODERN LUXURY

Interiors

CHICAGO



THE BEST OF DESIGN ISSUE

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PRODUCTS & PROFESSIONALS

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CUBS STAR JON LESTER HOME



Art Comes Home

A treasure trove of exotic finds and curated collections, Michael Del Piero's condo showcases her penchant for the unpredictable.

By Barri Leiner

Photography by Janet Masic Mackie and Cynthia Lynn

Insatiable traveler and curator of the unexpected, designer Michael Del Piero's (michaeldelpiero.com) uncommon interiors meld layers of textural neutrals with her well-coached understanding of each of her clients' desires. You see, Del Piero is as recognized for her accomplished eye and artful interiors as her uncanny knack for getting into the psyche of a client.

Before Del Piero became known for her spare, not bare signature rooms, she spent two decades as an executive coach, consulting primarily for Fortune 500 companies. Her process of interpreting clients' wants and needs is focused, direct and service-oriented. **CONTINUED...**

VINTAGE STYLE

Michael Del Piero's living room features a fireplace with a blockheaded slate surround and millwork; the driftwood mounted above was found in the Hamptons. A vintage Sennaman floor lamp from the 1960s was a New York find, and the Marstrak sofa is upholstered in wool. Bonnet with pillows made from African Berber textiles. Vintage Fertuny fabric covers the table, while an Arts and Crafts stone bowl decorates the surface.

CURATED COLLECTIONS *Close-up* from top: The den features a horse photograph by Janet Mesic Medica and a salvaged metal sculpture by Lucy Slivinski that was a birthday gift from the artist. Seating is discovered in washable fabric-on-MDP signature; the salon wall is a mix of photos of Michael's children, nudes from flea markets in Buenos Aires and Paris, along with a piece by English artist Corinna Burton; garden tables are used as coffee tables, and pillows, from Dransfield & Rees and a Turkish cornel bag, complete the eclectic look.



...CONTINUED Del Piero's aesthetic is minimal with a modern approach, incorporating clean-lined furnishings fused with her personal collections of ethnic and handmade artifacts and textiles from across the globe. The whole place is peppered with objects found on her travels. "When it really melts my heart, it comes home with me," she says of what makes it through her own front door.

Up next, she is most excited about nine residential and commercial buildings the team is working on in Cuba. Del Piero shares this news with a note of adventure and delight. "We never know where we are going next," she says. And that is all part of her extraordinary journey. ■

...CONTINUED in addition to being aesthetically luxurious. Del Piero is told time and again by colleagues and customers alike that, while they can easily distinguish one of her projects, no two spaces are ever truly the same in any detail.

Fueled by her global finds and an appetite for all things beautiful, in 2008, she opened her eponymous shop in Bucktown, showcasing sculptural furnishings, larger-scale objects and abstract art. The venue is a playground for her one-of-a-kind finds, evolving aesthetic and inspired following.

"I had just returned from Belgium," shares Del Piero, "and I had stayed in a home with smoky toned gray walls and moldings, and wide-open living spaces." This visit ultimately informed the designer's vision for the color scheme of her 2,000-square-foot, three-bedroom condominium located in the heart of the Gold Coast. Sweeping 14-foot ceilings give the common areas of the vintage space a modern lofty feel, while private areas are more cozy and intimate. "While I tend to move and change and reimagine the store and client projects, in my home, I am a creature of habit. Once it is placed, it remains," she shares. "Renovation and change can be stressful," she adds. "I try to bring a sense of calm and serenity to my space to clear my head." CONTINUED...



TOP SHELF

From above: Del Piero on one of her antique lounge chairs which is upholstered in a sheer Schumacher fabric with seams on the outside so it appears fringed. Treasures from her travels are displayed on the open shelf: the dining room features a salvaged metal chandelier by Lucy Slavenski, paired with an antique black lacquer table and sheepskin bench from a tannery in Argentina. The original Willem de Kooning is one of two that Michael owns.



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—MICHAEL DEL PIERO

BEST OF Design

Chicago is known around the world for its architecture and design, so choosing the "best" of our city was a daunting task. How did we do it? With your help! Thank you for your submissions, nominations and, most of all, your excitement. Here they are: the top design talents in Chicago this year, as chosen by you.

BY LAURA HINE, ANDREA MILLS, ADDIE REESE, CHANDLER ROLLINS,
JESSIE SARDINA, LISA SHAMES AND DAVID ZIVAN



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1. AT HOME

A living room by Michael Del Piero, reader's choice for best interior designer

2. OUT & ABOUT

The grand marble staircase of the Chicago Athletic Association Hotel, winner of best hotel design

3. PRODUCTS & PIECES

Starlit Lattice in natural pearl, a new design from best wallcovering winner, Maya Romanoff

4. BEST IN BIZ

Summer Thornton, this year's best transitional designer

PHOTO: MICHAEL DEL PIERO; STYLING: JESSIE SARDINA; HAIR: JESSIE SARDINA; MAKEUP: JESSIE SARDINA

/ BEST BATHROOM: dSPACESTUDIO AND PROJECT INTERIORS /

With the help of Houzz, this design-focused homeowner partnered Tom Hagerty and Kevin Toukoumidis, lead architect and principal at dSPACE Studio, respectively, with Aimee Wertepny, lead designer at PROJECT Interiors, to build her dream home. The collaboration was a match made in heaven, and not just because both firms favor capital letters. The master bathroom of this new construction home, with views of the Fox River in the Green Bay area of Wisconsin, highlights the skill of each team member. Porcelain slab flooring and walls that continue up over the shower and tub onto the ceiling, and a curbless shower with integral drain, are just two impressive details. Heated flooring and the view to the river make the space feel like a vacation year-round. *dSPACE Studio, 2920 Lincoln Ave., 773.423.2920, dspacestudio.com; PROJECT Interiors, 1057 N. Honore St., 773.394.1174, projectinteriors.com*



STONE TEMPLE A vintage chair, Marano glass pendant and Moroccan wedding blanket add style to this bathroom.



/ Readers' Choice: Best Interior Designer /

With an eponymous shop and a busy design practice that's known for mixing global and luxurious elements into beautiful but livable spaces, **Michael Del Piero** is a Chicago designer with a national influence. We agree with the submissions—they included a dining room, bedroom, library and entry to name a few—and love the designer's aesthetic and spot-on taste. The real key is her ability to create an enduring design that fits clients' lifestyles. *Michael Del Piero Good Design, 1914 N. Damen Ave., 773.772.3000, michaeldepiero.com*



COLOR POP Acidic yellow and rich teal accents add character to a muted palette in this condo.

/ BEST SMALL SPACE: BRYNN OLSON DESIGN GROUP /

With a guiding philosophy coined by designer Brynn Olson—"How you shape your space will shape your day"—this small high-rise condo in downtown Chicago shows both style and function. Her clients were looking for a home base in the city that would accommodate a variety of needs, including visiting family. Olson and her team created a sophisticated space that has the function and comfort of a house, but in a small footprint that makes the most of a city skyline view. *1229 N. North Branch St., 312.915.0925, brynnolson.com*