

A photograph of a modern living room interior. In the foreground, a curved, light grey sofa is partially visible, adorned with patterned cushions. Behind it, a white console table holds a lamp with a pleated shade and a decorative candelabra. To the right, a metal-framed chair with a tufted seat is positioned near a window with sheer curtains. Further back, another armchair with a fur throw and a patterned rug are visible. The room is bright and airy, with large windows in the background.

FAMILY HEIR ROOMS

A New York City design firm and a **Boston** architect created this unique loft for the brother and father of one of the designers.

A segmented jacket deer crosses the living room, giving the media area enough privacy to function as a guest room. The alcove holds an 18th-century metal monk's bed with a faux-fur throw, a leather-and-chrome Mies van der Rohe chair from Knoll and a midcentury Dunbar sofa with its original green upholstery. The hemp-and-wool rug is from Odegard, the credenza is a custom lacquered piece and accessories are Tiffany and Murano collectibles. The gymnast on the wall is by Aya Takano; art over the bar is by the great Cuban surrealist Wilfredo Lam.





Too often, when people hear the word "modernism," they think minimalism—as if Mies van der Rohe's glass boxes were all there is to modern architecture. But the 20th century also saw the sensuous stucco of Le Corbusier and the bold bentwood of Alvar Aalto, proving that modernism is a tree with many branches. Which is lucky for the owners of this apartment, for whom minimalism was never an option.

The space is a home for Andrew Pappas, a Boston real estate developer. It is also a home-away-from-home for his father, Jim, and a gathering place for Andrew's siblings and their partners. Andrew was looking to make it "modern and cool," says his sister, Alexandra, while Jim wanted his collected artworks, which have graced his other homes, to be prominent features in this one.

If there was anyone who could satisfy both father and son, it was Alexandra—not only because of the family connection, but because Pappas Miron Design, the firm she formed with childhood friend Tatyana Miron, isn't married to any one style of modern.

The two designers feel free to improvise. When they stumbled upon the curved sofa that now dominates the living room during a shopping trip to Brooklyn, they looked past its white velour upholstery and decided its curve would help unify the L-shaped space. So they shipped it off to a Bronx upholsterer, who stripped it to its frame and re-covered it in a Rogers & Goffigon fabric. They don't know who designed the sofa and probably never will. Says Tatyana, "We're not provenance people. We're about reinventing things." Which, come to think of it, is what modernism is about.

Above: Design partners Tatyana Miron (far left) and Alexandra Pappas (on the sofa with her brother Andrew) designed the interiors of the loft; architect Nader Tehrani (standing) of Boston's Office dA created the architectural elements, including a paneling system that incorporates a kitchen pass-through and slots for electric outlets. Right: Pillows were made from antique textiles by Stephanie Miron, Tatyana's mother.

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The father-and-son apartment is on the sixth floor of an old printing plant that Andrew and Jim converted into condominiums. A wall of large windows allows light, but thanks to the depth of the formerly industrial building, their front door is 50 feet from the nearest one. And the shape of the unit is so unwieldy (picture a square abutting a triangle abutting several rectangles) that even architect Nader Tehrani has a hard time drawing its outline from memory. Tehrani and Monica Ponce de Leon, his partner in the Boston firm Office dA, were hired by the Pappas family to turn the asymmetrical space into a livable apartment.

To accomplish that, the architects, both of whom teach at Harvard, turned to a premodern technique. *Poché* (French for "pocket") refers to the art of subtracting spaces from the perimeter of a room in order to give it a desired shape. The pockets, of course, don't have to be wasted—they can become bathrooms and closets and mechanical rooms, usually behind doors designed to be unobtrusive.

Working in the *poché* mode, Tehrani created a more or less octagonal foyer (top right), which opens into the main living/dining area. That room is served by the kitchen via a pass-through (above and right). The architect created a paneling system (of a bleached zugu wood) that smooths the flow from room to room, while also making the doors that open onto the foyer literally blend into the woodwork. Still, this isn't 19th-century Paris. A thin "blade" of aluminum outlines each door. The technique may be old-fashioned, but the architectural vocabulary is cutting-edge.



ABOVE (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): The kitchen adds Poggenpohl cabinetry and Pietro Cardosa countertops to the palette; a metal channel over the tall "wainscoting" allows the owners to hang work by Miró and Giacometti; the pass-through between the kitchen and dining room can be closed from above. **OPPOSITE:** The designers ebullished a 1930s mahogany dining table, which is lit by chandeliers designed by Helen Gifford.



* Key to the Style

- Paneling—in this case a bleached anigre wood—marries masculine with modern.
- Vintage furniture and family heirlooms provide a comfortable traditional resonance.
- Hooks that slide in metal channels make it easy to rearrange the eclectic art collection.
- The interior design and key furnishings incorporate curves with the modern grid.
- A love of nature is expressed in expansive views and natural materials, from light and dark woods to river stones and wool.
- Asymmetrical pieces—like the *Sputnik* chandelier in the foyer—help make oddly shaped rooms seem less off-kilter.



When they converted the old printing plant to condos, called the Court Square Press Building, Andrew and Jim commissioned Office dA to design its lobby. And they brought in landscape architect Michael Blier of Landworks Studio to turn the old courtyard into a garden where residents hang out on weekends. The building is only one part of the Pappas plan to redevelop a long-neglected section of South Boston. The MacAllen, a neighboring 144-unit building designed from the ground up by Office dA, is scheduled to open in January 2007. According to Tehrani, the building will be made largely of materials that are either recycled or are easy to replenish, like bamboo. "They're committed to being responsible developers," observes the architect of his clients.

Like many responsible developers, they chose to live in their own building. At one end of their shared apartment is Andrew's bedroom, with a wenge bed from Flou. Alexandra and Tatyana found the small sofa, which they re-covered in tweed, at an estate sale. At the other end of the apartment is Jim's suite, which includes a shower paved in river stones with teak louvers that control the light and views. Between the bedrooms, the large living/dining area is a kind of Pappas town square. "The space has to accommodate an ever-changing population," says Tehrani. In that way, the apartment is a microcosm of the building, with its courtyard gathering place, and of the neighborhood, where the Pappases are using design to create community—a very modern notion. ☛

See Resources, last page.

Left (from top): Because it's in a new wing of the building, the Pappas apartment has large windows (shielded by dark drapes in Andrew's bedroom, which also boasts two large Miró pieces); Pappas père et fils commissioned Michael Blier of Landworks Studio to turn the courtyard into a bamboo garden. Opposite: Teak louvers in Jim's bathroom were designed by Office dA to balance privacy and light.

