

# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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## LARRY KING

in Beverly Hills



# The Rebirth of Cool

SMOOTH LINES AND BRIGHT NOTES FOR THE WINDY CITY



Designer Leslie Jones and the architectural firm Wheeler Kearns devised a loftlike apartment for clients in Chicago. In a corner of the family room, a pair of Gio Ponti chairs rest on a shag carpet from Stark.

The views soar over Chicago, but the eight-foot ceilings hunker down low. For the owners, a young couple who had occupied a smaller space in the same tower, the building's unobstructed vistas and ideal location on the Gold Coast more than compensated for the generic 1970s architecture. When

They also wanted to facilitate the flow. Shaped like a doughnut around the building's service core, the space is marked by a repetition of vertical columns and bay windows. After the walls were removed, the floors seemed to stretch as far as the prairie. The designers emphasized the horizontal expanse by using wide-plank maple flooring

and of Lake Michigan can be glimpsed.

Once the open plan had been established, the design challenge was determining how to mark off discrete areas. "Usually there are corridors leading to rooms or there are vestibules to define the space," Jones says. Here, there were not even moldings or doorways. Because the ceilings (like the floors) are



the opportunity arose to combine two units and occupy the entire 41st floor, the husband, a partner in a hedge fund, pounced. "It was the best thing we've ever done," says the wife, who had studied fashion design before starting a family. "There's no other apartment with 360-degree views like this in Chicago."

To design the 6,000-square-foot space, the couple called on the same team that had created their previous, lower-floor apartment: the architectural firm Wheeler Kearns and interior designer Leslie Jones. "We wanted it to feel very minimal," the wife says.

throughout. Where they needed to provide privacy, as in the bedrooms and baths, they installed pocket doors, which disappear seamlessly. A seat of painted millwork that runs beneath the windows and conceals the heating and air-conditioning units also accentuates the horizontal sweep of the view-blessed perimeter wall.

"You feel as though you're in one continuous floor space," says project architect Mark Weber, "always being able to see around corners and through windows to the outside." Even when the cast-glass entrance door is closed, the blues of the sky

ABOVE: The living room. Cowtan & Tout sand fabric on metal chair and ottoman; Edelman leather on armchair; Jack Lenor Larsen sandstone fabric on window seat and chaise cushions; Schumacher dark red pillow silk; Old World Weavers light red pillow silk; Osborne & Little tan pillow silk. Holly Hunt Great Plains camel sofa and chaise fabric and Christian Liaigre slat-back chairs.

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Jones designed massive pieces—"Donald Judd kinds of forms"—that were "strong enough to hold down corners in this huge space."



"The little rabbit-warren rooms that were originally here were just oppressive," says Jones. "Creating areas that flowed made the eight-foot ceilings seem higher." The dining

tables and benches were custom-made. The armchairs, by Christian Liaigre for Holly Hunt, are covered in Edelman leather; the cast-glass counter is also from Holly Hunt.



