

# FLORIDA DESIGN

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## HOMES IN HARMONY WITH NATURE



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## FRANK GEHRY IN SPAIN



# AN ARTFUL

A Museum-Quality Collection Fuels The

A neutral palette and textured area rug from Saxony ground two conversation groupings in the living room. To one side, a Louis XIII antique armchair covered in Donghia fabric rests near a Philippine wood and travertine bench from Profiles that serves as a cocktail table.





# INSPIRATION

Design Of An Ocean-View South Florida Condominium

DESIGN Eric Cohler with project managers  
Catherine Kiel and Marlon Montes,  
Eric Cohler Design, New York, NY  
BUILDER Mark Mutchnik, Mutchnik  
Construction Group, Inc., Hallandale, FL  
TEXT Roberta Klein  
PHOTOGRAPHY Steven Brooke, Miami, FL







EVEN BEFORE NEW YORK DESIGNER Eric Cohler set eyes on this 3,300-square-foot unit in Miami with wraparound ocean-view terraces, he knew that art would fuel the interior design. "Their world is all about their passion for art," Cohler says about the owners, for whom he has designed the interiors of their Long Island and Manhattan homes, and, most recently, this South Florida winter retreat.

To suit the couple's lifestyle and showcase their impressive collection, Cohler enlisted builder Mark Mutchnik to reconfigure the raw residence, allowing for the perfect blend of exhibit space and livability.

ABOVE: Like art itself, the ocean and skyscraper view provides a handsome backdrop for the owners' fine art collection and art furnishings, including Joel Shapiro's "Yellow Figure 3," as well as the Holly Hunt bench of cast bronze and leather, patinated with burnished highlights. Jean-Michel Basquiat's complex painting, "Luna Park," right, is featured in the book on the cocktail table.







Robert Rauschenberg's 'Bus Burlesque' and John Chamberlain's wire sculpture, 'Grass Skirt,' form an artistic vignette in the living room.



"We put UV on the windows and used solar shades to protect the paintings from the light," designer Eric Cohler says.



Mutchnik worked closely with Cohler and his project managers Catherine Kiel and Marlon Montes to execute the changes, which included borrowing space from a second master bedroom to create a separate dining room, enlarging the library, and transforming a his and her master bath into one grand entity.

Once the interior layout was in place, the design team created a textural background rendered in a neutral color palette of sandy hues that allows the breathtaking views and museum-quality art to dominate and make a dramatic statement. Upon stepping into the living room, intoxicating ocean panoramas set an inspiring scene that is punctuated with irrepressible art — a whimsical Alexander Calder mobile suspending bold splashes of color from the ceiling to start. "We let the art be the expression," Kiel says. "It created a palette of color."

Proving her point, Jean-Michel Basquiat's oversized painting, emblazoned with a black background and playful yellow ducks, commands attention above a grouping of the owners' sofa and a glass-topped cocktail table.

ABOVE: The foyer hallway leading to the dining room features "Leiah," a signature Alex Katz portrait. Paul Evans' wall-mounted metal and slate console becomes a perfect setting for the small Alexander Calder sculpture, untitled, 1953.

RIGHT: A curved black granite console supports Fernando Botero's plump "Woman on a Horse" under George Condo's painting in the dining room. Here, klismos chairs with Edelman's embossed ostrich leather pull up to a Knowlton Brothers table. An antique Tabriz area rug anchors the setting.







A TEXTURAL BACKGROUND  
RENDERED IN SANDY HUES  
AND NEUTRAL TONES  
ALLOWS SWEEPING VIEWS  
AND MUSEUM-QUALITY  
ART TO IMPART DRAMA.

Robert Rauschenberg's mixed media overlooks a second sofa on the other side of the space.

The living room is accessed through a foyer that in the opposite direction also leads to the dining room. This hallway presented one of the most challenging projects for the home: installing the custom-designed copper and slate console, weighing in at 300 pounds. "We had to put stainless-steel backing from the ground up to the ceiling and cantilever steel rods beneath that can't be seen," Mutchnik says.

Equally challenging was the floating granite console in the dining room, which required a radiused granite bullnose when mounted on the wall. The top provides a base for a Fernando Botero sculpture and George Condo's surrealistic animal painting — both visual treats for diners.





The serene master bedroom sustains the calming neutral palette, which is reflected in Cohler's custom-designed, oversized platform bed covered in J. Robert Scott's super-kidskin fabric and Michael Devine's draperies.



The home's neutral scheme continues into the master bedroom with Cohler's custom-designed, tufted-leather bed. The ocean view serves as the artwork, reinforcing the drama while maintaining a serene sanctuary for the owners. "We took advantage of the views," Cohler says. "We put UV on the windows and used solar shades to protect the paintings from the light. That is important in Florida; if you are not careful, in a month or two, fabrics, paper and art can fade out."

In the end, the design team created a masterpiece themselves — the quintessential winter retreat for a northeastern couple who have a love for the ocean and all things art.

LEFT: Among the numerous elements that went into this travertine-sheathed master bath was the raising of the floor, an oversized tub, and Cohler's custom-designed, two-tier glass and ebony-finished wood vanity crafted by builder Mark Mutchnik that supports sinks from Kohler.