



INTERIOR DESIGN Robert Rionda with Nina Ewing, Robert Rionda Interiors, Inc., Miami, FL  
BUILDER Greg Milopoulos and Ed Johnston, Built By Owner, Inc., Fort Lauderdale, FL  
TEXT Charlotte Safavi  
PHOTOGRAPHY Troy Campbell, Miami, FL

## AN ARTISTIC INCLINATION

One Award-Winning Interior Designer Personalizes A Modern Key Biscayne Condominium With Exquisite Artwork Curated From His Clients' Vast Collection

"ART CAN MAKE OR BREAK a room," says interior designer Robert Rionda, who designed this exquisite 3,600-square-foot Oceana condominium in Key Biscayne, Fla., around the homeowners' significant art collection. "If you love art, it's the greatest inspiration and starting point for design," he says. Rionda's longtime Central American clients, who are passionate collectors with multiple residences, taught him a great deal about Latin American Art. "Every project I do for them begins with a list of artwork, including paintings and sculptures," he says. "The art is always the foundation underlying our decisions."

To create the living room, a sophisticated open space that overlooks the Atlantic Ocean, Rionda arranged stylish low-profile furnishings keeping the walls and sightlines clear for artwork, and

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ABOVE: In the art-filled living area, a steel and concrete sofa table designed by Eric Slayton complements the space with modern styling. Resting on pedestals, *Donna in Piedi* by Fernando Botero and the red sculpture, *Deidad* by Edgar Negret, flank a stunning ocean view.



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allowing for easy passage to the balcony. Positioned beside a sleek white sectional from B&B Italia and a Christian Liaigre sofa upholstered in a Zimmer + Rohde, blueish-gray linen blend, are two round, cement-and-salt drum accent tables that add modern style effortlessly. "I created a white envelope with the walls, ceiling and floors," the designer says of the space's art gallery-like vibe. Thin bands of recessed metal in place of baseboards lend the appearance of floating walls and a flexible system of track lighting further enhances the gallery look.

The foyer opens to a dramatic, double-sided floating art wall that is framed in eight, book-matched marble slabs. It penetrates the dropped ceiling into a light

In the foyer, the large artwork *Figuras*, by Nicaraguan artist Armando Morales, graces one side of a floating marble wall from Opustone. Because lighting is paramount in showcasing art, interior designer Robert Rionda worked closely with lighting designer Greg Friedheim to get the positioning just right.



pocket to highlight both the marble and the artwork. "I don't like to walk into a home and see everything all at once, so I created this floating divider between the foyer and dining room," Rionda says. "The divider not only created an opportunity to hang large artworks on both sides, but also an opportunity to create a textured feature wall."

ABOVE: A shapely pair of yellow leather armchairs and orange accent pillows from Jim Thompson brighten one side of the living area. Art is showcased on a wall with three paintings by Nicaraguan artist Armando Morales, and a bronze and marble sculpture that rests on a glass-topped cocktail table designed by Eric Schmitt.

In the dining area, blue and tan leather chairs from Poltrona Frau provide the perfect seats to view a red and orange abstract by artist Claudio Bravo. On the same wall, a wood-and-bronze étagère displays the owners' collection of Pre-Columbian pottery.



From the foyer, the living area comes into view. Pops of vivid color are added with orange accent pillows on the sofas and a pair of vibrant yellow leather chairs from Poltrona Frau positioned in front of three large paintings by Armando Morales. "The paintings and sculpture in this space have strong color," the designer says. "I did not want all of the color focused around the perimeter — I needed to bring some into the center of the room."

The living room flows through to the dining room, where a mostly gray, blue and white palette echoes the colors of the sea and sky. "I use lots of texture and finishes when working within a primarily neutral background to keep things rich and interesting," Rionda says. The nine-foot-long wenge wood dining table from Minotti features double bronze pedestal bases and is surrounded by dining chairs upholstered in contrasting blue and tan leather. Trimless recessed lighting is strategically placed to illuminate the large still life, *Bodegon-Marañones Bicicleta* by Nicaraguan artist Armando Morales, that hangs on the floating marble wall.

ABOVE: The vibrant yellow sculpture, *Flor* by Edgar Negret, holds court on a tall pedestal in a corner of the library behind a leather armchair from Minotti. A nesting cocktail table from Poltrona Frau lends a geometric touch.



The library is a multipurpose space that also functions as an office and TV room. The vibrant canary yellow sculpture, *Flor* by Edgar Negret, adds contrast against a neutral taupe sofa from Luminaire and a Rionda Interiors' custom-designed bleached white-oak bookcase. To lend further definition, the designer arranged the furnishings around a braided two-tone area rug from Stark Carpet.

A private elevator opens to the entry, where Rionda paired a silver-gray travertine-topped console with a Lucite base. A bronze sculpture rests upon it echoing the console's cantilevered lines to create the perfect still life — just a hint at the treasure trove of art that waits in the living and dining rooms.

ABOVE: A painting by Armando Morales, framed in black with a gilt finish, hangs in the private elevator entry above a sculptural custom-designed travertine-topped console from Alan Knight.

RIGHT: The custom-designed Snaidero kitchen features a breakfast bar with leather and steel barstools by Powell and Bonell from Dennis Miller. In the breakfast area, red upholstered chairs edge a wood table from De La Espada.



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ABOVE: Unlike the home's other pieces, the black-and-white artwork by Mexican artist Eduardo Terrazas, above the leather-tufted headboard in the master bedroom, was acquired during the design process. Bedside tables and a desk from B&B Italia are created in a light oak to convey a beach vibe.

The custom-designed Snaidero kitchen is created with clean-lined gray oak cabinetry and an L-shaped linear light feature that incorporates both functional and aesthetic design. "The central area of the condo, especially the kitchen and breakfast area, gets little natural light, so I added some bright pops of color," the designer says. Red Mid-century-inspired dining chairs and a red metal light fixture from Poul Henningsen help to achieve the look.

By contrast, the master bedroom faces the Atlantic Ocean and is bathed in natural light. The tranquil space, with its color palette of soft sea-foam greens and powdery blues,



Purple rope chairs add a splash of color on the oceanfront balcony. "The Owners and I wanted the balcony furnishings to be completely fun, so we created A bold seating arrangement with lots of purples and yellows," Rionda says.

"is all about seeing — and being integrated into — the ocean outside," Rionda says. Lianne Gold hand-blown glass bedside lamps from Ralph Pucci flank a leather bed and headboard with large-scale tufting, while a vintage Milo Baughman bench nestles at the foot of the bed. In the corner, the whimsical "Peacock" chair designed by Dror Benshetrit for Cappellini, with its seat of crumpled sheets of felt, connects with the ocean in a pop of sea-green color.

Just outside the master bedroom, the spacious oceanfront balcony offers ample seating for entertaining. Purple rope chairs from Paola Lenti and a sofa adorned with yellow accent pillows add vibrancy to the space. The Carlos Gonzalez sculpture in yellow complements the furnishings and adds interest to nesting cocktail tables designed by Francesco Rota for Paola Lenti.

The designer created a personalized space that his clients could not help but love by incorporating pieces of their art collection into the design. "The joy of working with an established art collection is that you learn so much about the owners and what they like," Rionda says. "Not only is the art the inspiration for your design, color and furnishings ... it ends up creating a much more personal space."

**SOURCES**

Living Room

Sectional sofa - B&B Italia, New York, NY  
Small sofa - Christian Liaigre, New York, NY  
Small sofa fabric - Zimmer + Rohde, Ammon Hickson, Inc., DCOTA, Dania Beach, FL  
Armchairs - Poltrona Frau Group Miami, Miami, FL  
Cocktail table - Ralph Pucci Miami, Miami, FL  
Console table - Eric Slayton, Holly Hunt Miami, Miami, FL

Round accent table - Holly Hunt Miami, Miami, FL  
Cantilever nesting table - Caste Design, Holly Hunt Miami, Miami, FL  
Round cement accent tables - MMaterial by Fernando Mastrangelo, Flushing, NY  
Botero statue - Gary Nader Fine Art, Miami, FL  
Blue ball sculpture - Sotheby's, New York, NY  
Area rug - JD Staron, Brunswick & Fils, New York, NY

Room Divider

Marble wall - Custom designed by Robert Rionda Interiors, Inc., Miami, FL  
Marble - Opustone, Miami, FL  
Fabricated by S & T Marble and Granite, Miami, FL  
Painting - Sotheby's, New York, NY

Dining Room

Table - Minotti, Domus Design Center, New York, NY  
Chairs - Poltrona Frau Group Miami, Miami, FL  
Bookcase - Holly Hunt Miami, Miami, FL

Artwork - Sotheby's, New York, NY  
Red and orange painting - Marlborough Gallery, New York, NY

Library

Sofa - Luminaire, MDD, Miami, FL  
Armchair - Minotti, Domus Design Center, New York, NY  
Cocktail table - Poltrona Frau Group Miami, Miami, FL  
Bookcase - Custom designed by Robert Rionda Interiors, Inc., Miami, FL  
Fabricated by Alfredo Custom Furniture, Miami, FL

Art - Gary Nader Fine Art, Miami, FL  
Lamp - Christian Liaigre, Miami, FL  
Area rug - Stark Carpet, DCOTA, Dania Beach, FL

Entry Hall

Console table - Allan Knight and Assoc., William Switzer Collection, DCOTA, Dania Beach, FL

Kitchen

Cabinetry, countertops, sink and backsplash - Snaidero, Coral Gables, FL  
Barstools - Powell & Bonell, Dennis Miller Assoc., New York, NY  
Table - De La Espada, New York, NY  
Chairs - B&B Italia NYC, New York, NY  
Fixture - Hive Modern, Portland, OR

Master Bedroom

Bed and headboard - Poltrona Frau, Group Miami, Miami, FL  
Chest - Cassina, Poltrona Frau Group Miami, Miami, FL  
Bedside tables, desk and desk chair - B&B Italia, New York, NY  
Green chair and lamp - Capellini, Poltrona Frau Group Miami, Miami, FL  
Small accent table - Caste, Holly Hunt Miami, Miami, FL  
Bench - Visiona 20th Century Modern, Miami, FL

Drapery fabric - Holland & Sherry, DCOTA, Dania Beach, FL  
Beside lamps - Lianne Gold, Ralph Pucci Miami, Miami, FL  
Paintings - Sotheby's, New York, NY  
Area rug - Amir Rug Gallery, Miami, FL

Balcony

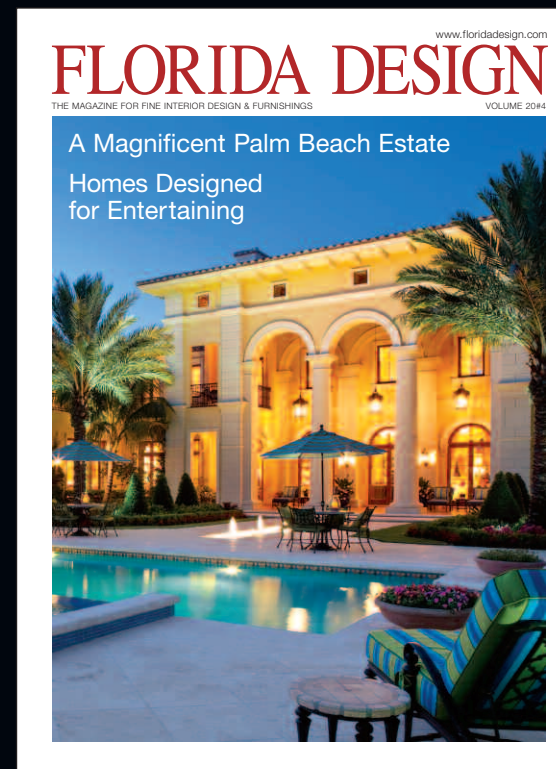
Sofa, fabric and rope chairs - Paola Lenti, Luminaire, Miami, FL  
Cocktail and accent tables - Francesco Rota, Luminaire, Miami, FL

Throughout

Lighting - Radiance Lighting, Miami, FL  
Framing - Oñate Framing, Miami, FL  
Flooring fabricated by Opustone, Miami, FL  
Flooring installation - S & T Marble and Granite, Inc., Miami, FL ♦

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