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SAVOIR FLAIR



WITH OPULENT FINISHES—AND ONE VERY MEMORABLE MOOSE—JAMES THOMAS INTERIORS TAKES AN UNDER-CONSTRUCTION WEST LOOP CONDO TO NEW HEIGHTS.

By J.P. Anderson
Photographed by Werner Straube



Given the intriguing directive to create a home workspace inspired by Commander Waterford's office in *The Handmaid's Tale*, James Thomas Interiors executed the vision to stunning effect with peacock-blue custom built-ins, a grass cloth ceiling and an eye-popping moose mount. Opposite page: A chandelier by The Urban Electric Co. frames the dining room table by Dan Parish at deAurora.

THE CLIENT

A pair of Brits relocating to Chicago aimed to infuse their 3,200-square-foot new-construction condo with their own eclectic design aesthetic—including a huge moose mount, a series of antique oil paintings and various collections of books and magazines—while still reflecting a clean-lined and tailored look. The pair, pharmaceutical executive Tim Garnett and husband Peter Slaymaker, who works in community philanthropy, enlisted James Thomas Interiors (jamesthomasinteriors.com) to step in and tackle the already-in-progress home-to-be.

THE PRIORITY

“The clients were moving from a large, traditional home outside Indianapolis, so they wanted the new space to represent the next chapter in their lives,” notes Tom Riker, owner and principal of James Thomas with principal James Dolenc. “While they wanted the interiors to reflect the architecture of the building—sort of industrial and loftlike—they also wanted it to feel inviting and warm and represent who they are as people, incorporating some of their existing pieces (antiques, mostly English) and more traditional artwork.”

THE CHALLENGE

Says project lead Erin Humphrey, “We were brought in after the finishes and some of the fixtures were selected, so we weren’t involved from the very beginning phases of construction, which can be challenging in that our vision has to be tempered a bit by someone else’s decisions.”



Clockwise from left: A custom sofa by Urban Craft acting as a banquette helped transform an awkward alcove in the main living area into a cozy den, accented with the portrait “Raised by Wolves” by Cassandra Complex and an untitled landscape by Nathanael Grey; stylish open shelving beckons to the bar area; in the entry corridor, visual interest is added by a Baker console, lamp by Visual Comfort, vintage chair from 1stDibs and runner by Oscar Isberian.





From left: Bold accents of gold in the kitchen pop against rich Bentwood cabinets; in the home office, a vintage desk from Christopher Anthony in California adds warmth.



THE STRATEGY

“We went to work selecting new contemporary and overscale light fixtures and furniture for the kitchen and dining areas to capitalize on the tall ceilings and vast square footage,” explains Riker. Other design moves: “A butler’s pantry was opened up with custom glass doors and reflective tile; an awkward alcove in the main living area was converted into a cozy dining or games area with a custom sofa acting as a banquette; and the primary bedroom was sheathed in rich Horsehair wallcovering from Phillip Jeffries, creating a cocooning effect.”

THE DETAIL

“We love how the pantry turned out, and we’re also really excited about the entry,” Humphrey adds, noting that what was a “lackluster elevator vestibule” now sings with added molding and chair rail, all painted black to match the existing trim. And then there’s the home office, which was converted from a bedroom with the design directive to emulate the look and feel of Commander Waterford’s office from *The Handmaid’s Tale*. The resulting space—with custom built-ins crafted and painted a deep peacock blue, grass cloth applied to the ceiling and a sisal rug layered with an antique Oriental—was “definitely a first for James Thomas” and just might be the home’s pièce de résistance.

THE OUTCOME

“The net result is a truly bespoke home that reflects the clients’ past but also takes them into the future,” notes Riker. “And the clients love it, which makes us feel so satisfied and gratified and makes us love doing what we do. In fact, they’re so happy with it, we’re working with them on their California vacation home!” ■



Clockwise from top left: Schumacher wallpaper festoons the powder room; the master bedroom is a vision in blue set off with earthy Phillip Jeffries Horsehair wallpaper in Clydesdale and a striking pair of hanging lamps by Visual Comfort; in the master bath, a pendant light by RH hangs above the sleek Tribeca tub by Hydro Systems.

DESIGN DETAILS

TYPE

Condo

LOCATION

West Loop

ARCHITECTURE

Booth Hansen
boothhansen.com

BUILDING AND PAINTING

Macon Construction
macongroup.com

INTERIOR DESIGN

James Thomas Interiors
jamesthomaschicago.com

MILLWORK (KITCHEN AND BATH)

Bentwood
bentwoodkitchens.com

MILLWORK (OFFICE AND FOYER)

Eurocraft Inc.
eurocraft-inc.com

RESOURCES

AS UPHOLSTERY

Bedroom chair and ottoman
773.804.9756

BARRON CUSTOM FURNITURE

Custom lounge chairs
barroncustomfurniture.com

NORTHERN WIDE PLANK

Flooring
northernwideplank.com

OLIVYA STONE

Nightstands
olivyastone.com

OSCAR ISBERIAN RUGS

Various rugs
isberian.com

PHILLIP JEFFRIES

Various wallcoverings
phillipjeffries.com

PRIMO INTERIORS

Window coverings
primointeriors.com

URBAN CRAFT

Various custom furniture
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THE URBAN ELECTRIC CO.

Various lighting
urbanelectric.com