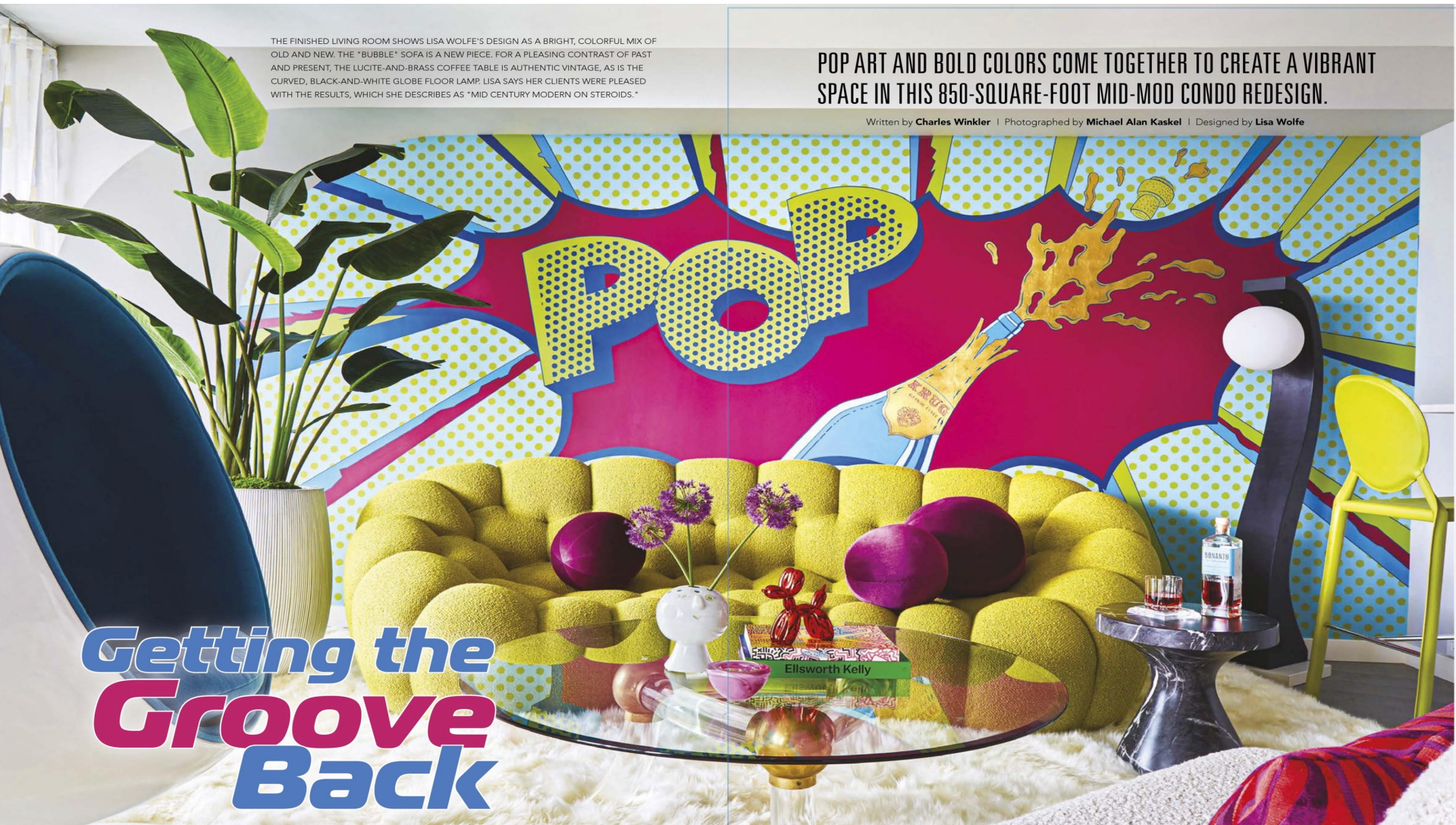


THE FINISHED LIVING ROOM SHOWS LISA WOLFE'S DESIGN AS A BRIGHT, COLORFUL MIX OF OLD AND NEW. THE "BUBBLE" SOFA IS A NEW PIECE. FOR A PLEASING CONTRAST OF PAST AND PRESENT, THE LUCITE-AND-BRASS COFFEE TABLE IS AUTHENTIC VINTAGE, AS IS THE CURVED, BLACK-AND-WHITE GLOBE FLOOR LAMP. LISA SAYS HER CLIENTS WERE PLEASSED WITH THE RESULTS, WHICH SHE DESCRIBES AS "MID CENTURY MODERN ON STEROIDS."

POP ART AND BOLD COLORS COME TOGETHER TO CREATE A VIBRANT SPACE IN THIS 850-SQUARE-FOOT MID-MOD CONDO REDESIGN.

Written by **Charles Winkler** | Photographed by **Michael Alan Kaskel** | Designed by **Lisa Wolfe**

Getting the Groove Back



Ellsworth Kelly



(ABOVE) DESIGNER LISA WOLFE CALLS THE CUSTOM WHITE SHEEPSKIN RUG IN THE LIVING ROOM THE SINGLE MOST CHALLENGING PIECE OF THE REDESIGN. AFTER THE SPACE WAS CAREFULLY MEASURED, THE VENDOR SEWED SEVERAL SHEEPSKINS TOGETHER FOR THE LARGE, UNIQUE FINAL PRODUCT. "IN DOING PROJECTS, THERE ARE PLACES TO SPLURGE AND PLACES TO PULL BACK. I SPLURGED ON THE SHEEPSKIN RUG IN THE LIVING ROOM," SHE NOTES. "IT'S THE REAL DEAL. IT'S AS SOFT AS IT LOOKS. IT FEELS AS IF YOU'RE WALKING ON A CLOUD." BY THE WAY, THIS TYPE OF RUG ISN'T VACUUMED; IT HAS TO BE RAKED.

WHAT IS POP ART? According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, pop art was born in the 1950s and flourished through the '60s. It's defined as "a diverse response to the postwar era's commodity-driven values, often using commonplace objects (such as comic strips, soup cans, road signs and hamburgers) as subject matter or as part of the work." Think Andy Warhol's colorized Marilyn Monroe faces, Roy Lichtenstein's comic book panels or Peter Max's "Cosmic Runner."

You can find pop art examples online, at art shops or in your handy stack of *Atomic Ranch* back issues. But pop art doesn't have to be formal art. It can include common objects, images and even textures.

In 1968, Andy Warhol created his "Campbell's Soup Can" screen print series; Roy Lichtenstein drew Bobby Kennedy as a superhero on "Time's" cover; and architect Bertrand Goldberg saw his Marina Towers masterpiece completed in Chicago. A half-century later, designer Lisa Wolfe channeled all that together for an inspired Mid Century Modern condo renovation.

(ABOVE) MARINA TOWERS FEATURES EXTERIOR BALCONIES. IN THIS CONDO, SEPARATE DOORS FROM THE BEDROOM AND LIVING ROOM OPEN ONTO TWO WIDE, PRIVATE BALCONIES. LISA SAYS SHE WAS ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE "INCREDIBLY DEEP" BALCONY SPACE TO PUT IN BIG, NEW, "FUNKY-COLORED," CHAIRS AND COFFEE TABLES RATHER THAN "BABY-SCALE FURNITURE" FOR THE NARROW, TIGHT BALCONIES SEEN IN MANY OTHER BUILDINGS. SHE CAREFULLY SELECTED THE FURNITURE FOR A CLASSIC 1960S LOOK.

(OPPOSITE, BOTTOM) IN THIS RELATIVELY SMALL CONDO OF ABOUT 850 SQUARE FEET, YOU CAN STAND IN THE MIDDLE OF IT AND SEE EVERY PART OF THE RESIDENCE





(LEFT) ALTHOUGH THE LIVING ROOM "POP WALL" MURAL MARKED THE START OF THE ACTUAL REDESIGN, LISA SAYS THE VERY FIRST THING SHE BOUGHT FOR THE CONDO PROJECT WAS THE PRINTMAKERS TRAY THAT NOW GRACES THE WALL ABOVE THE BED. ALTHOUGH SHE USUALLY PREFERS TO GET A SIGN-OFF FROM HER CLIENTS BEFORE BUYING HIGH-PROFILE PIECES, THIS TIME, SHE SAW THE TRAY, FELL IN LOVE WITH IT AND ASKED THE CONDO OWNERS TO TAKE A LEAP OF FAITH. "I TOLD THEM, 'YOU'RE GOING TO JUST HAVE TO TRUST ME.' WHEN I DO A DESIGN, I'M LOOKING FOR THAT ONE OR TWO THINGS THAT WILL SET ME IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION."

(BOTTOM, FAR LEFT) MIXING COLOR, LIGHT AND TEXTURE WAS VITAL IN CREATING THIS MID-MOD "MASHUP," AS SHOWN BY THESE ATTENTION-GRABBING, VINTAGE, WHITE PEDESTAL FOOT STOOLS. "I'M INTO BOLDNESS, GRAPHIC ELEMENTS AND COLOR," LISA SAYS. "LIGHT FIXTURES, FABRICS AND COLORS. THAT'S MY THING."

(BOTTOM, NEAR LEFT) MANY "BABY BOOMERS" GOT THEIR FIRST LOOK AT AN EGG CHAIR IN THE FUTURISTIC 1960S SPY SHOW, "THE PRISONER." THIS EGG CHAIR, BY ETERNITY MODERN, WAS PURCHASED NEW. LISA FELL IN LOVE WITH THE CHAIR BUT COULD ONLY HOPE THAT HER CLIENTS FELT THE SAME WAY. "THEY TOOK ONE LOOK AT IT AND SAID, 'YES!'" SHE SAYS. THE EGG CHAIR ALSO SWIVELS. "IT'S A BIG PIECE; YOU CAN CURL UP IN THAT THING AND BE ON YOUR TABLET OR YOUR PHONE AND LOOK OUT OVER THE CITY," SHE SAYS. "IT'S LIKE BEING IN A CAVE. IT HAS A SOUNDPROOF WALL, TOO. IT'S A COCOON."



(ABOVE) LISA SAYS THAT BEFORE THE OWNERS HIRED HER, THEY HAD A CONTRACTOR PLACE A CALM, NEUTRAL SUBWAY TILE BACKSPLASH IN THE KITCHEN. HOWEVER, SHE WANTED BRIGHT, VIBRANT COLORS TO MATCH THE MID-MOD VIBE OF HER REDESIGN. HER CLIENTS HAD JUST INSTALLED THE TILE, BUT LISA WANTED THEM TO BE COMPLETELY REDONE. "I FINALLY LOOKED AT THEM AND ASKED IF THEY WOULD CONSIDER DOING IT DIFFERENTLY. THEY SAID, 'SURE!' I WAS THRILLED THEY WOULD TRUST ME WITH THAT DECISION." (RIGHT) THE BATHROOM PICKS UP BLUE ACCENTS FROM THE REST OF THE CONDO. THE MURAL, WHICH LISA SAYS WAS "A PIECE OF CAKE," FEATURES LINES AND CURVICUES TO ATTRACT AND RELAX THE EYE.

"The owners want something Andy Warhol inspired," Lisa says.

Marina Towers comprise two 587-foot, 65-story towers with scalloped balconies. The condos on each circular floor radiate from a central core.

"In Marina Towers, there are no 90-degree corners. If you picture a pizza, every condo is a slice," Lisa says.

The project suited her perfectly: "Andy Warhol, bold colors and Marina Towers—that's just the trifecta of 'super-cool!'"

Redesigning the Condo

Before the nine-month project, the owners cleaned out college furniture and then called Lisa. The redesign started with the living room wall. Lisa's research led to Roy Lichtenstein, whose pop art features comic book panel motifs.





"Andy Warhol, bold colors and Marina Towers—that's just the trifecta of 'super-cool!'"



(LEFT) LOOKING FROM THE NARROW KITCHEN OUT PAST THE LIVING ROOM TOWARD THE WIDER BALCONY ILLUSTRATES THE UNUSUAL TRIANGULAR SHAPE OF THE CONDO. THAT SHAPE WAS A CHALLENGE TO DESIGN AROUND AND WAS THE REASON LISA SAYS SHE STARTED WITH THE WALL MURALS. THE CONDO FLOORS ARE SERVED BY CENTRAL ELEVATORS THAT RUN UP THE CORE OF THE TOWERS.

"That ended up being the inspiration for our mural," she explains.

The condo owners had a favorite champagne, so Lisa used that label for the mural, made by artist Danya Elbaridi of Studio Lunaris, who helped create all three murals in the condo. The redesign called for harmonizing everything in a small space.

"If you stand in the middle of the condo and spin around, you can see every, single thing, so we had to make sure these murals balanced each other out," Lisa says.

Bright, Funky and Bold

Next came the bedroom. For that mural, Lisa selected a softer mood. The result is a series of delicately traced faces inspired by Henri Matisse. Filling out the room are an MCM-style chair, funky vintage mushroom lamps and a new, three-tiered marble table. Above everything is a mounted wooden printmakers tray—the very first project piece Lisa purchased.

The bathroom design features a mural with a pleasing mix of lines and curls, like a blue grotto. Then followed the kitchen with an unusual challenge: The owners had installed neutral subway tile backsplash. Lisa convinced them to completely redo it. The same contractor who had installed the tiles came back, ripped them out and installed polka dots. In addition to the murals and backsplash, Lisa slowly filled the condo with old and new pieces with materials that range from leather, wood and marble to sheepskin wool, plastic and Lucite.

THE LIVING ROOM FEATURES A NEW AND VERY "GROOVY" JONATHAN ADLER CABINET. THE PIECE WAS AN EASY SELL WHEN LISA SHOWED IT TO HER CLIENTS. "YOU DON'T COME ACROSS MANY CABINETS LIKE THAT. NOW, IT'S DOUBLING AS A BAR CABINET," SHE SAYS. "IT JUST SCREAMS, 'FUNKY MID CENTURY MODERN!'"



THE SECOND MAJOR PART OF THE REDESIGN WAS THE BEDROOM, WHICH LISA CALLS HER MOST SATISFYING AND REPRESENTATIVE PART OF THE PROJECT. THE MURAL ON THIS WALL TAKES ITS CUE FROM MODERNIST ART. "THE POP MURAL WALL WAS SO PRECISE AND PRISTINE, SO I WANTED THIS TO BE A LITTLE LOOSER," LISA SAYS. "WE USED A MATISSE-INSPIRED FACE WITH LIPS. THE LIPS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE A LITTLE SEXY."

Finally, there was the balcony. Marina Towers' wide, deep balconies gave Lisa the room to purchase large, mid-century-style outdoor pieces.

"That's what this whole project was all about—bright colors, funky, bright and bold," she says. ☼

Picking Out a Pop Art Accent

In a mid-mod mood? You don't have to own a luxury condo to add mid-century dash to your living room, office or favorite corner. Just think ... pop art. All you need are a knowledge of popular media, products and celebrities, some boldness and sense of fun. Get adventurous!

Here are some ideas:

- **Shop local.** Visit your local antique shops and thrift stores for mid-century pieces from back in the day.
- **Support the artist community** at local co-ops and online at sites such as Etsy. You never know what you'll find. Enjoy the journey!
- **Check your bookshelves and attic.** You might find old snapshots, comic books, paperbacks or magazines for creative framing.
- **Remember those "groovy" LP record covers** that ranged from psychedelic to surreal? They make fine wall art, as do the black vinyl records they contain.