



The dining room features a custom oval table with a Fenix top designed by PROjECT, and an asymmetrical floating light fixture from FLOS.

# FEMININE MYSTIQUE

dSPACE Studio and PROjECT. Interiors team up to transform a raw Lincoln Park unit into a bold yet minimalist modernist home brimming with sensuality.

BY ERIN KAIN

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TONY SOLURI

Clockwise from top: Studio BK covered the walls of the primary bedroom in a custom textured plaster finish, giving them a gritty texture and a slight sheen; the kitchen cabinetry was executed by Luca Lanzetta of Poliform; every element of the home has a tactile quality.

## THE CLIENT

Jolita Leonas-Arzbaeher defines herself by S's: smart, strong and sensual, all offered with a smile. Her fourth-floor condo, part of a development project converting a 1930s art deco parking garage into luxury apartments, is the perfect space for her modern art collection and also boasts stunning views of Lincoln Park and Lake Michigan. She says, "I wanted a blank slate as a starting point, so I set out to find a raw space in a comparable boutique building to bring my vision to reality."



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—JOLITA LEONAS-ARZBAECHER

## THE PROJECT

Because she purchased her property raw, Leonas-Arzbaeher commissioned dSPACE Studio to redesign and reinvent the floor plan. Kevin Toukoumidis, dSPACE founder and principal, led the initial architecture design and build, eventually bringing on PROjECT. Interiors, specifically founder Aimee Wertepny and former design director Jennifer Kranitz, to lead the interior design.

## THE PRIORITIES

The client asked for sleek, sexy spaces to entertain in and an open floor plan with transitional spaces focused on movement and flow. The overall aesthetic? Maximal,

daring design that appears minimal, creating a home that expresses both elegance and drama. Leonas-Arzbaeher explains, "My home has to be as unique, dramatic and one of a kind as I am; dramatic in the sense of being fascinating, unexpected and powerful." Toukoumidis adds, "We approached the design with clarity and strength of concept: well-proportioned spaces, balancing scale and movement, and adding beautiful layers with subtle restraint."

## THE CHALLENGE

Creating a one-of-a-kind home that is artful and elegant yet comfortable is no easy feat. Plus, as a primary residence, it needs to balance both style and function. "It was a challenge to interpret and distill down her very specific vision and vibe for the bedroom, but the fun part is putting

From top: Expertly curated art adds a chic pop of color to the otherwise monochromatic office design; according to PROJECT's Aimee Wertepny, this is "a powder room you could hang out and have a drink in."



our heads together to conceptualize unique solutions and see them through," notes Wertepny. Another challenge? "Filling the space to make it purposeful," she says.

**THE DETAILS**

Minus the primary bedroom, the entire space is finished in a neutral tone-on-tone palette with myriad textures sprinkled throughout—think crushed velvet, animal skins and mixed metals. Every element has a tactile quality, adding layers of rich texture without competing with the client's art. Experiential lighting abounds with pinpoint lights over the artwork, layers of ambient lighting and a recessed light box installation designed by dSPACE that artfully illuminates a custom aubergine wall-to-wall headboard by JAB in the primary bedroom. Also by dSPACE, a gas fireplace with open sides sits in the center of the home and is visible from the family room, dining room and kitchen. Other items of note? A whopping 26-foot sectional sofa designed by PROJECT. and upholstered in a sultry taupe fabric by Osborne & Little is accented by a custom sculptural installation by local artist Beth Kamhi that hangs on the wall above.



**THE OUTCOME**

Wertepny remarks, "At PROJECT., an interior is a biography—you right now; and you, the compilation album murmured in objects, belted out in colors and textures. Jolita's home feels right for her." What does the client think? Declares Leonas-Arzbaecher, "I love the entirety of my home—it's like it was pulled from my subconscious. And I love seeing the reactions of everyone who sees the space and simply says 'wow.' That says it all." ◻

Curvature in the 26-foot custom sofa presents a deeper section for lounging on one side and a shallower curve for guests to gather more intimately on the other; a custom sculptural installation made of bronze-toned beads, chains and Lucite blocks by Beth Kamhi (@beth\_kamhi\_artist) hangs above the sectional; a leather fringed chair from Ngala Trading completes the sultry living room look.

