The Samba of the Sea
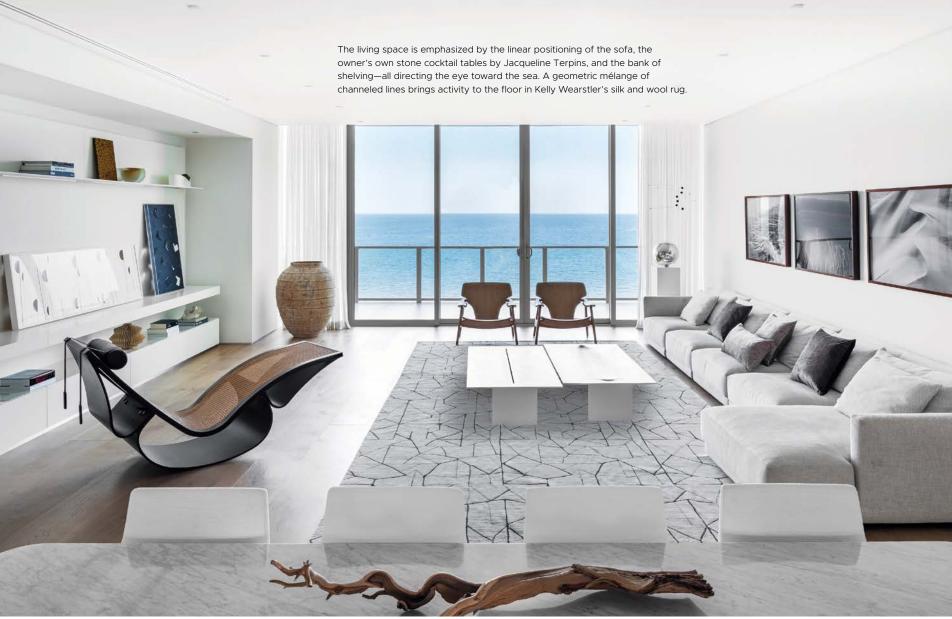
A KEY BISCAYNE CONDO GETS AN
ART-FRIENDLY—AND EARTH-FRIENDLY—
MAKEOVER WITH A SOUTH AMERICAN VIBE

JESSICA JAEGGER

"I pride myself in the unique touch that I bring to Brazilian modernism. My inspiration comes from nature—and living in Miami has allowed me to pull from the lush vegetation and the beautiful shades of the sunsets."

AS IF THE SENSIBILITIES of two continents came together with a Brazilian vibe, designer Jessica Jaegger and her South American clients were in total synchrony as they began to reimagining a 5,020-square-foot condo serenely positioned high above the beaches of Key Biscayne.

Dedicated to a kind of "organic minimalism" that would best show off their art collection and stay true to their environmentalist approach to living, the owners preferred a pared-down design—but one that would also create a warm home for their four children.

Jaegger notes her own commitment to natural woods and stone. She says she found delight in introducing the natural texture of wide-plank French oak flooring, of positioning a massive carved-marble James Irving dining table, and designing a paneled entry of three-inch French oak.

Because the owners specified that their new home's walls be the white, expansive canvas upon which their many works of art would be showcased, other necessities that traditionally go on walls were spare. Unadorned cabinets and shelving crafted from white lacquered wood are found in the living room, dining room, and media

RIGHT: The homeowners left Brazil to make Miami their permanent home. Like their designer, Jessica Jaegger, also Brazil-born, they say the air, the water, the colors, and the attitude toward living feels familiar here. Yet their thoroughly Brazilian aesthetic remains strong.

The dining area flows toward the living space, pared down to the essentials and the watchful gaze of Beethoven. But little things take on importance when showcased against museum white: a ceramic vase by Gilles Casier and a delicate pedestal from Jaime Hayon reside tranquilly on an unadorned shelf.
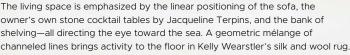

The living space is emphasized by the linear positioning of the sofa, the owner's own stone cocktail tables by Jacqueline Terpins, and the bank of shelving—all directing the eye toward the sea. A geometric mélange of channeled lines brings activity to the floor in Kelly Wearstler's silk and wool rug.

BELOW: Hallways are opportunities. From the elevator entry into the living area, between which designer Jaegger installed a wall-size, pivoting oak door, guests find an invitation into a world of art. Johannes Beccer's pedestal-perched bust bids initial welcome. Inside, two round, white stone sculptures from Henry Moore stand guard.

room. Furniture is low and sleek. "The living room's Poliform linen-covered sofa and the Sergio Rodrigues wood chairs never obscure the view of the water—or the walls," says Jaegger. But what does turn all eyes is a dramatic chaise by Oscar Niemeyer: part caned rocker, part free-form sculpture.

Overlooking the dining area and its 9-foot-long Carrara marble table from Luminaire, a monolithic art photo by Vik Muniz shows "Beethoven" created from pieces of refuse—another nod to the environment.
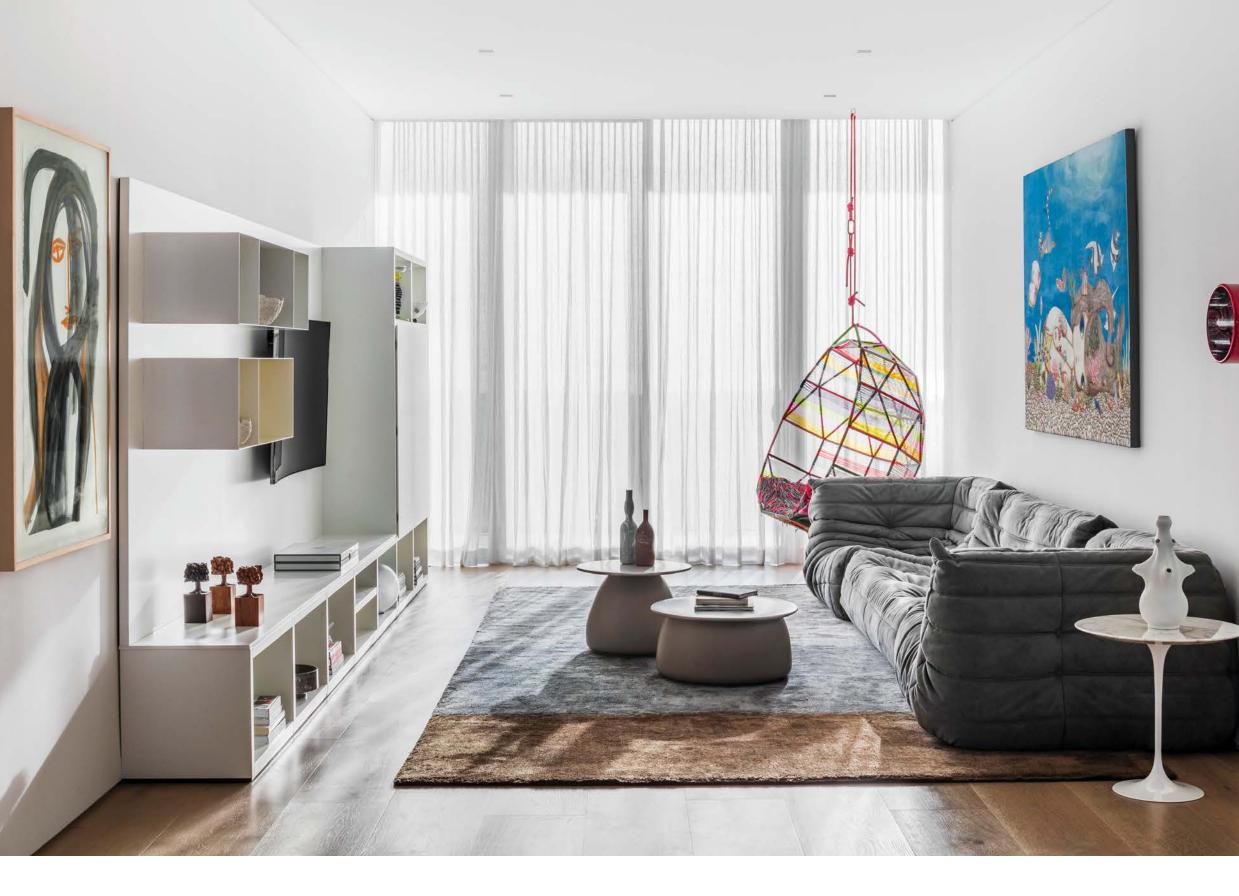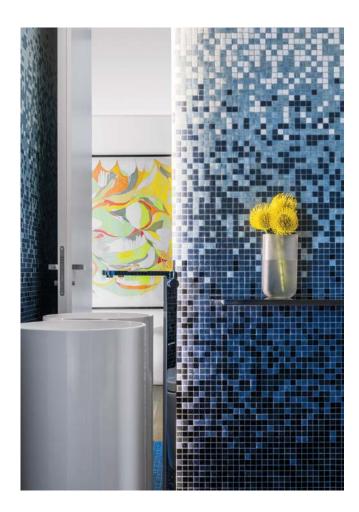
From the dining room, a short trip down a hall to the media room allows the family to gather and play. Here, a hanging basket chair of woven polymer cord by Patricia Urquiola and an ultra-soft frameless sofa by Ligne Roset ensure comfort and informality.

Encircling the entire condominium, some of the 1,145 feet of broad balcony is seen from the expansive master bedroom. Here, a diminutive

RIGHT: A powder room captures in miniature the aesthetic "glitz" of glass tile that is repeated in each of the other baths. For an "ombre" feel, Jaegger designed the Bisazza tiles to be installed from dark to light. A slim pedestal sink and swan-like stainless faucet are reflected in a narrow mirror.
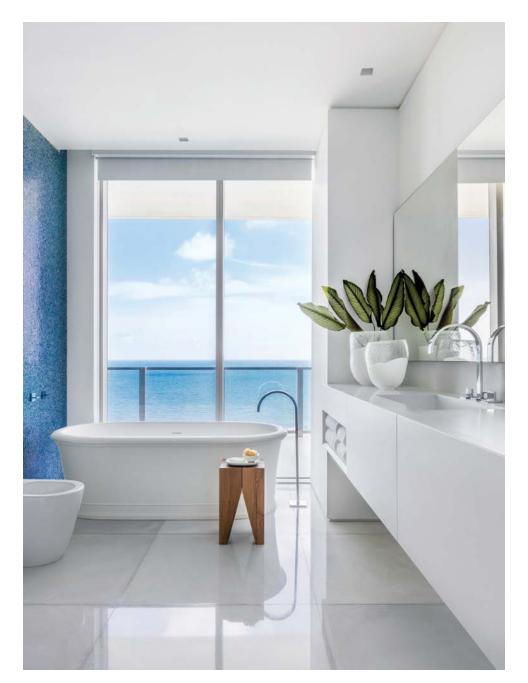
BELOW: Built for imagination, the children's bedroom doesn't need a mountain of toys for little dreams to stir. With tiny, hip facades, the overhead playhouse holds two rooms. As elsewhere, the ceilings have been floated to provide soft, concealed LED lighting.

Nelson Swag desk and photographic art by Brazilian photographer Maritza Caneca complement the blues and greys found in the rug—and the reflections of the sea beyond. In the two master baths, bespoke glass mosaics cover the walls. The sense of serenity and space is heightened with the use of flooring in massive 36 by 36 inch marble slabs from Opustone.

While the master suite occupies one end of the apartment, the other three bedrooms and additional three and a half baths are at the other end. There, as with many young children, "bunking" with a sibling is better than sleeping alone. And in the case of a bedroom that comes with its own playhouse, Jessica Jaegger made a masterpiece. In pinks and greens and whites, each child finds a private space, with what appear to be under-bunk drawers that convert into beds for rollicking sleepovers. Even the overhead playhouse has a view.

ABOVE: The media room's informality is instantly apparent in the "body-friendly" sofa. But shape and form are important, as seen in small sculptures, shelf design, ova-form tables, and Minotti's silk geometric rug. Wall art in blue from Nina Pandolfo and Heloisa Maia's portrait resonate with the brilliant hanging chair nearby.

And there are no worries if it's not a "beach day." The city-sea panorama can be enjoyed every day from wide outdoor galleries that expand the apartment's living area. Nestled on the balcony and backed by thick tinted-glass panels that from afar, give the building a verdigris glow, Dedon's round wicker sofa and utilitarian table and chairs seem to say, "Stay a while. And listen to the samba of the sea."

BELOW: Recipe for contentment: his and hers master baths. Made for refreshing the soul, the vessel tub (arced by an elegant water spout) is a place for contemplation.

Unafraid of white space, Jaegger and the clients embraced the museum-like expanses that allow art to star. Here, small red lamps from the Lamp Store demand attention, while vintage nightstands add a note of surprise.