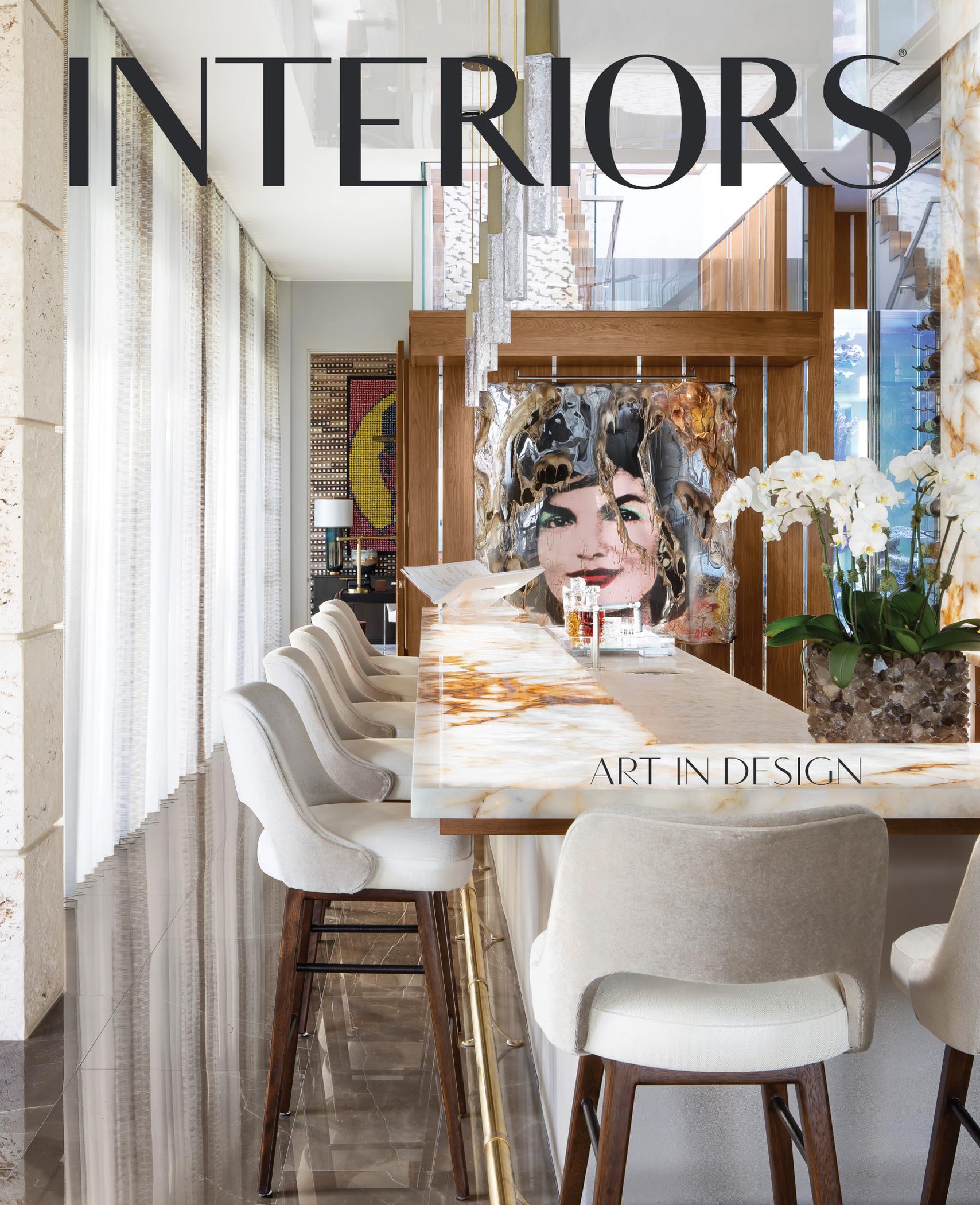


INTERIORS®



ART IN DESIGN

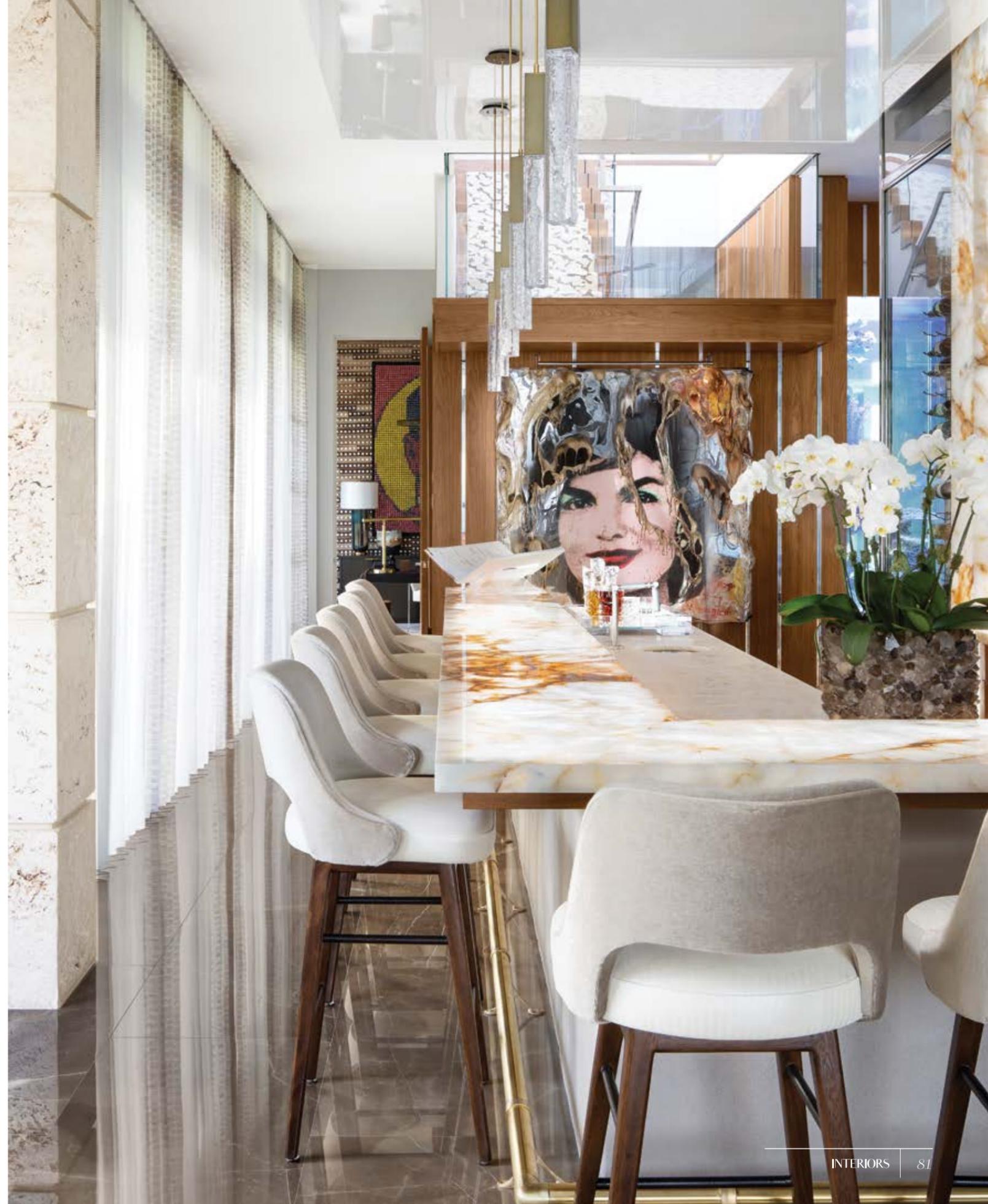


MAXIMUM IMPACT

INTERIOR DESIGN: MARC-MICHAELS

TEXT: ERIKA HEET

PHOTOGRAPHY: JESSICA GLYNN





One might assume that a spec house in Palm Beach for a top developer and an imagined client with a price that would rise into the many tens of millions would offer somewhat of a challenge for the design team from an inspiration standpoint. Yet this was not at all the case for Marc-Michaels Interior Design, who worked with builder Mark Timothy, Affiniti Architects and Boyle Architecture to create a modern oceanfront house that would prove so highly designed, it sold within a month of going on the market. (More on that later.) "To create a home in a range where a potential buyer could afford any home in the world was an amazing experience, and I'd wish it on any design professional to know what that feels like," says Marc Thee, principal and co-founder, with Michael Abbott, of the firm who has created incredible estates in their home base of Florida and beyond since they opened in 1985.

A grand dream deserves a grand team, so Thee called upon project leads Jessica Lee and Rachel Ortiz, along with Linda Hartmann and Meggie Herod, to create a story for the design. "We approached the look as something that would be universally appealing to many people," says Lee, senior project manager. "Even though there is a sophistication to the interior, we still wanted it to feel light and cheerful." In addition, says Herod, interior detailing associate, "Our initial buyer profile included people who would want to entertain and perhaps be collectors of fine art." This became a bit of an understatement, as the firm turned to a private collector to borrow pieces by some of the most recognizable names—Basquiat, Haring, Warhol, Picasso—to fill out the gallery space leading to the bedrooms, the primary suite, and the club room. It was a sort of pop-up art gallery of what the artistic future of the home could look like. "We felt it was important that the caliber of the artwork was on par with the grand scale of the house," says Lee. The scale and value of the project and lack of a client-driven budget did not mean an unlimited budget; quite the contrary, notes Lee. "There are some limitations to not having a client, like budget, because with private clients, sometimes the budget can take a back seat when it comes to getting what they want," she says. "There are also quite a few freedoms that come with not having a client. You can really design to your own taste in many ways, which can be very gratifying."

Central to the flow of the design is the club room, where Hammerton Glacier pendants hover above Adriana Hoyos barstools perched at a Brazilian crystal quartz bar, watched over by a portrait of Jackie O by Enrico Dico. Nearby, the family room loggia has a light Edgewood table and a trio of custom globes from Diospri, surrounded by wispy Below Deck sheer draperies in Oyster from the Great Outdoors collection by Holly Hunt. A king platform bed from Baker holds court in the primary suite, where vinyl panels from Holly Hunt add texture and solve a design conundrum. "We wanted to make sure the materials that went in to the house reflected the price tag, although there was a practicality to many of them," says designer Hartmann. "The Holly Hunt vinyl, for instance, enabled us to execute the design of the vertical panels without seaming." Adds senior interior detailer Ortiz, "The materials used, like high-gloss lacquered cabinetry, natural stone throughout, and the Kyle Bunting piece all reflect unbridled luxury."

About that Bunting hide rug in Her office: It's a collaboration with Thee called Bloom, technically a monochrome in whites that naturally range from a light cream to a hint of silver. Thee says it was created during a challenging time in his life, designed by "two men alike, but so different, who used our art to reflect and find meaning," Thee says. "Designing this collection helped both of us discover deeper relevance, and reminded us how powerful living in hope could be." Bloom's lush, overlapping blossoms are "harnessed only by the border that surrounds them, appropriately symbolizing rebirth through the coming of a new season." This house reflects that philosophy, having been purchased by a family of six with young children who are already making the house their own. Though some of the high-profile curated art has been returned to its lender, the residents are building their base here and, as a testament to the integrity of the interior design, making only the smallest modifications and adding to their own art collection to suit their future here. ■ *Marc-Michaels Interior Design, marc-michaels.com*

