

# ON A CLEAR DAY

TWO VISIONARIES TAKE THEIR CUES FROM MIAMI BEACH'S AQUA SKY

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Volakas marble floors and pale walls create a dreamy backdrop for furnishings by some of the greatest names in design: Mies Van der Rohe (Barcelona chairs and daybed), Gio Ponti (floor lamp), Warren Platner (side tables) and Le Corbusier (coffee table). Rug by Gene Meyer.

## SOMETIMES having

your head in the clouds has enormous advantages, which is exactly the case for Nesti Mendoza and Adam Singer, who nabbed a spectacular condominium in Aqua with views that are so sweeping they border on surreal. "It's all about cloud-filled skies, sunlight and the sea," explains Mendoza. "This," he adds, indicating his creamy white surroundings, "was our dream."

The word dream has many connotations in this tale of relocation and decoration. The couple fantasized about moving from Manhattan to Miami Beach for years before they took the leap. And when they saw the unadorned shell of what is now their ethereal refuge, they knew that the interiors would have to evoke dreaminess in order to live up to the expanse of blue that levitates each room.

"Seven years ago, we were living in a rent-controlled studio in New York," says Singer. "We took a huge leap and bought an apartment in New York, the sale of which enabled us to finally buy what we wanted here." What they wanted, it turns out, was one of the first condominiums they saw when they began scouring the beach for property, though they took their time considering a number of other possibilities. "We spent six months looking at other places," he explains, "but we kept coming back to this apartment because of its enormous balconies."

Though the loft-like main living area is impressively roomy on its own, the extensive outdoor terraces that connect to it in wraparound fashion make it feel as if it extends into infinity. One reason the spaces mesh so well is the continuation of white marble flooring, which is cut in 36" x 36" squares and matched seam for seam from interior to exterior. "My cousin Julio Grabiell, who works for Spillis Candela, had the idea," explains Mendoza. "It furthered our desire to keep things incredibly minimal."

The more minimal the backdrop, they reasoned, the more the space would be oriented toward the urban landscape and the clouds floating past the windows. "We said, 'Let's keep it so minimal that if you take all of our art and furniture out, you would feel as if the apartment is not finished,'" remarks Mendoza. "We wanted the artwork, the furniture and the people we invite to parties to finish it."

Having gatherings in the space is a joy, and the atmosphere at Aqua makes connecting with other residents there, with whom they socialize often, a breeze. "Craig Robins has attracted such an amazing group of people here," says Mendoza. "Meeting them has been one of the most fantastic things about this



"We're in heaven here, and we've proven that if  
you can dream it, you can run away and do this!  
Follow us: it's really fantastic!" – NESTI MENDOZA



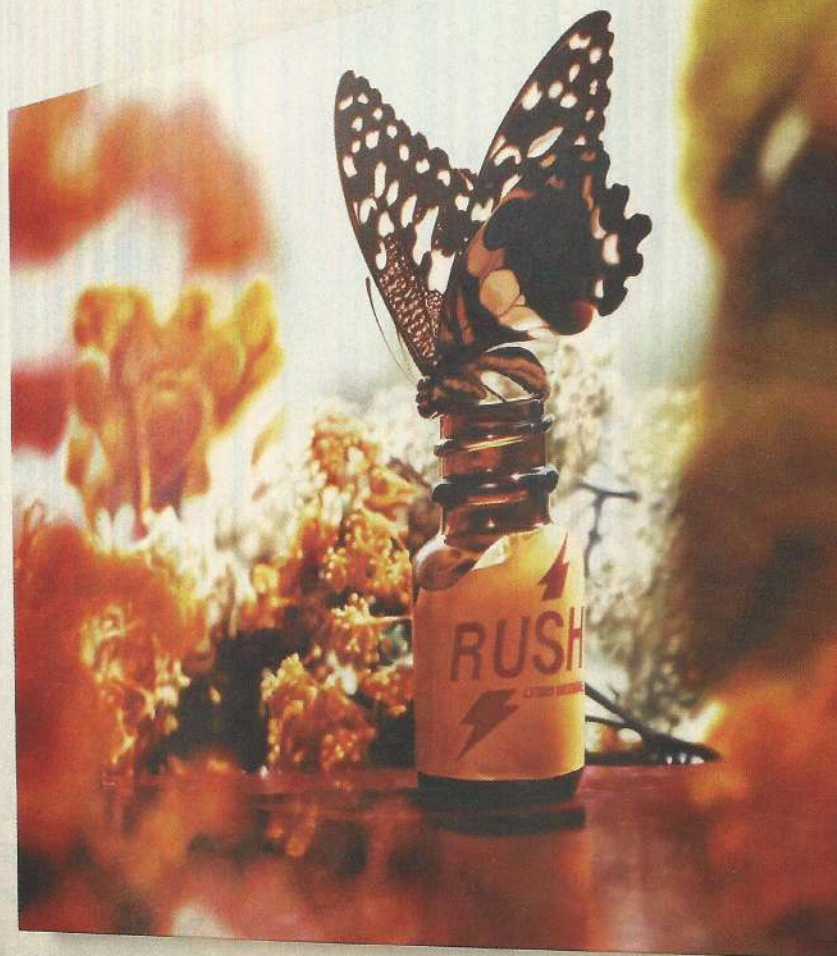




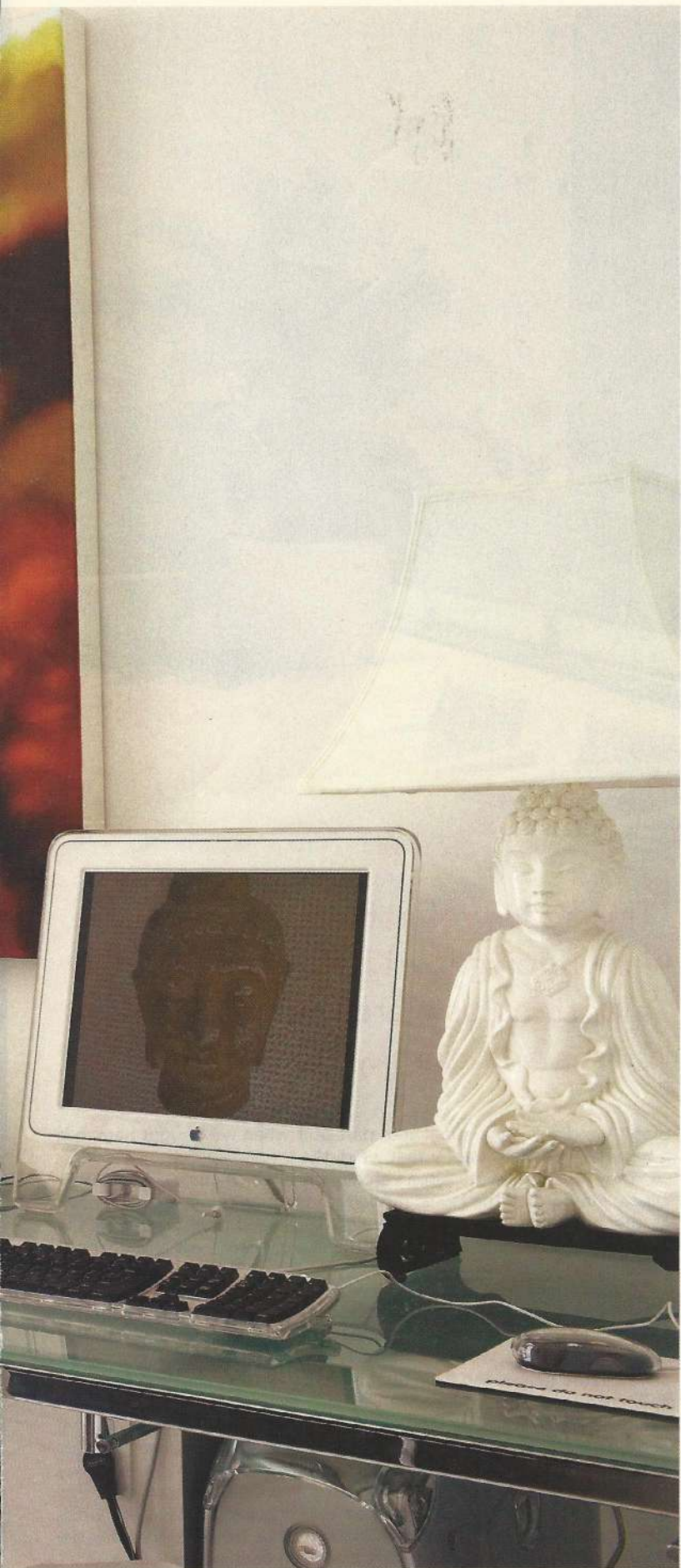
Above and on the Jorge Pensi dining table, Markus Linnenbrink's painting "Multicolortrans" and sculptures "Pupilles (II, IV, XI, XII, XIV)" are all the more dynamic given the serene setting. Opposite page: Adam (right) holds Lucy and Nesti plays with Nasdaq, who is reflected in one of the Hudson chairs by Phillippe Starck.



Tim Wilson's "Rush" animates the home office, where sleek desks and chairs carry the modern theme of the rest of the home into the room. Opposite page, top right: A silkscreen—Orchid Finger #3 by Tang Maohong—complements the oriental sculptures that adorn a dresser, which was Adam's when he was a child. Bottom right: Adam and Nesti refinished the green chest, which they found in a thrift shop. "Puppy" by Jeff Koons is adorable whether sprouting flowers or not.











Above: One corner of the wrap-around balcony faces a dappled tile mural by Richard Tuttle. "It's gorgeous to live with both interior and exterior art," proclaims Nesti. Right: Gio Ponti lamps sit atop bedside tables found at a thrift shop, while a Sputnik chandelier hangs above the custom bed.



"This space reflects all the things we were hoping for. Light was extremely important, as were the views of the sea and the sky." — ADAM SINGER

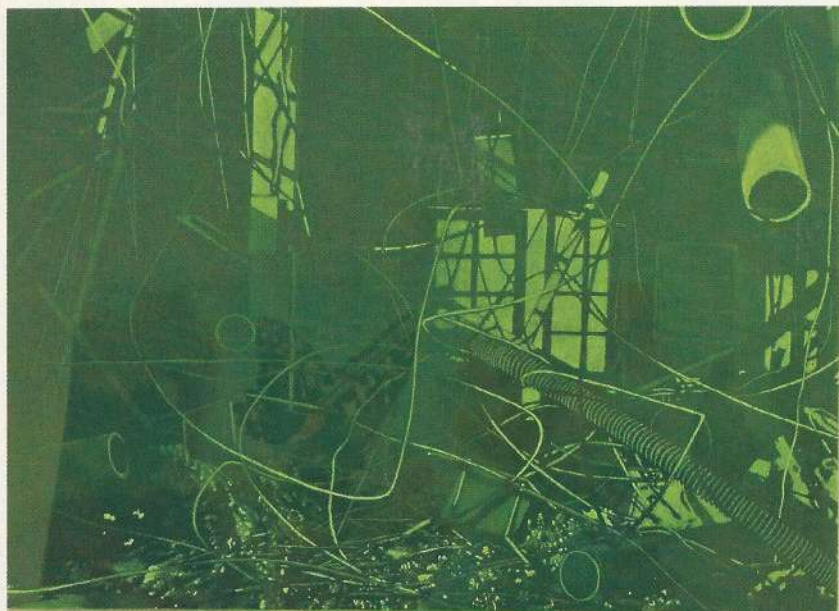
place. We didn't think about that part of it when we bought here, but it has made us really happy that we did."

They also appreciate Aqua's architecture, which complements their classic interior and the iconic modern furniture within it so well. "Look at the backdrop," he says, gesturing to a tiled wall bordering the terrace. "It's a mural by Richard Tuttle: it's gorgeous art and it's right there!"

Contemporary art dominates indoors as well. "I have an art history minor, and we're both in the fashion industry—I'm Vice President of Merchandising for Ben Sherman and Nesti is a fashion photographer—so each of us has well-defined tastes that mesh," says Singer. "We chose some pieces for their technique; others because we feel that they are simply fun and creative."

It's the whimsical—in the art and the accessories that they've chosen—that animates the home. Were it up to Mendoza, though, things might have crossed into an entirely different realm in which they would have thrown all of their treasured accoutrements to the wind. "At one point, I thought it would be amazing just to have the white stone floor and nothing else," remarks Mendoza. "It would have felt like the Parthenon in the sky! Wouldn't that have been heavenly?"





Nasdaq—always on the ready for a playful moment—perches on a Le Corbusier daybed. Steinar Jakobsen's "Factory II" hangs above. The leather and wood side table is by Jacques Adnet.