

Galerie



William T. Georgis Transforms a Miami Manse Using Collectible Design and Exuberant Art

The painting *Double Double Yent! (My Elvis)* by Deborah Kass presides over the living room of a Miami Beach home renovated by William T. Georgis.

PHOTO: RICHARD POWERS;
STYLED BY ANITA SARSIDI

Tasked by longtime clients with a speedy redo of a waterfront residence, the architect and designer delivers elevated, artful rooms infused with a spirited vibe

BY STEPHEN WALLIS

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It takes a nimble design imagination to pull off a family-home makeover that melds the Latin verve of Miami, mambo, and the lush gardens of Roberto Burle Marx with impeccable craftsmanship and ultrarefined materials, not to mention a selection of wryly subversive art. For architect and designer *William T. Georgis*, a virtuoso at integrating the offbeat and the elevated into unforgettable interiors, bringing all of those elements together “in a heady soup,” as he puts it, was right in his wheelhouse.



Paintings by Nigel Cooke (left) and Derrick Adams animate a living room seating area anchored by a Georgis & Mirgorodsky Bombola sofa from Maison Gerard with integrated end tables that host crumpled-paper lamps by Bradley Bowers from The Future Perfect. Rounding out the group are a Marcin Rusak cocktail table from Twenty First Gallery and a pair of 1960s Giovanni Travasa rattan armchairs for Bonacina, acquired from Donzella, which also provided the Lorin Silverman chandelier.

PHOTO: RICHARD POWERS; STYLED BY ANITA SARSIDI

During the height of the COVID pandemic, longtime New York–based clients of his joined the rush to Florida and bought a house in Miami Beach overlooking Biscayne Bay. The tropical modern–style residence had plenty of bedrooms and ample living spaces for the couple and their kids to spread out and, if they desired, entertain guests. Eager to move in quickly, they opted to leave the upstairs bedrooms as they were and have Georgis & Mirgorodsky, the firm Georgis heads with his partner, Ilya Mirgorodsky, focus on upgrading the ground floor.

Over the past two decades, Georgis has completed several projects for the clients and most have been intensive, some requiring years to finish. That deep engagement and the familiarity that comes with it was a major asset in this case. “There’s a shorthand when you’ve been working together for so long,” says Georgis, explaining that his directive was, essentially, “You know what to do—just do it.”



A John Procaro light sculpture twists above a custom white oak dining table with a laminated woven-paper top by Georgis & Mirgorodsky and a suite of Warren Platner chairs from Knoll. The text painting is by Deborah Kass, lamps by Jean Arriau top a François Corbeau bronze cabinet from Twenty First Gallery, and the rug is by Patterson Flynn.

PHOTO: RICHARD POWERS; STYLED BY ANITA SARSIDI



The kitchen is outfitted with white oak cabinetry, Lapitec from ABC Stone countertops, and Waterstone sink fixtures.

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Georgis definitely knows how to make an impression, and he didn't waste any time here. Just beyond the front door, a shallow entryway opens into a sprawling living room that is arrayed with a rhythmic composition of distinctive vintage and custom furnishings that seem to float across an expanse of carpet in radiant blues. "It's kind of a nod to David Hockney's paintings of swimming pools," says Georgis, who worked in tandem with Mirgorodsky and Carly Frey, one of the firm's interior designers, on the project.

Curvy, organic shapes and plush fabrics abound, from Pierre Paulin foam club chairs covered in daffodil-yellow alpaca to Giovanni Travasa rattan seats from the 1960s upholstered in furry, off-white shearling. Elegant brass, wood, and leather details enliven a variety of tables, highlighted by Jean Arriau nesting tables topped with lapis stone and one of Marcin Rusak's poetic tables inset with flowers encased in milky resin.

But the living room's indisputable star and visual anchor is the *Double Double Yentl (My Elvis)* by Deborah Kass. In this ingenious send-up of Andy Warhol's Pop Art classic, the artist replaces Elvis with Barbra Streisand posing as a young male Talmudic scholar in the 1983 movie *Yentl*. "I just love Deb Kass's chutzpah," says Georgis of the work, which presides over one end of the space. "The idea of Barbra Streisand and *Yentl* in Miami with a kind of tropical Latin backbeat makes me very happy."



The painting *Double Double Yentl (My Elvis)* by Deborah Kass presides over the living room of a Miami Beach home renovated by William T. Georgis, whose firm, Georgis & Mirgorodsky, designed the blue alpaca sofa, the wenge end table topped by a Roberto Giulio Rida lamp, and the custom rug by ALT for Living; the yellow Pierre Paulin chair is from Ralph Pucci. In the breakfast area beyond, a midcentury Barovier & Toso chandelier hangs above an Emmanuel Babled table and Eero Saarinen chairs, and the curtains are made of Holly Hunt fabrics.

PHOTO: RICHARD POWERS; STYLED BY ANITA SARSIDI

The clients have a notable collection of feminist art, and Kass’s work, which often lampoons the white-male-dominated version of art history, plays a defining role throughout the house. In the dining room, one of her text paintings features a quote by artist Louise Bourgeois—“A woman has no place as an artist unless she proves over and over again she won’t be eliminated”—in a spiral of multihued lettering. The work adds a playful spikiness to the space, where Georgis designed the table with an exquisite top of woven handmade paper between layers of glass, surrounding it with classic modern Warren Platner wire chairs and installing a twisting John Procario Freeform light sculpture above.



A playful artwork by Borna Sammak is mounted atop a Phillip Jeffries raffia wall covering in the family room, where Georgis & Mirgorodsky designed the alpaca-clad swivel chairs that rest on a Pierre Frey rug; the furniture on the terrace is by RH.

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Georgis did his most significant architectural work in the reconfigured kitchen, installing bespoke cabinets, some with laminated woven-fabric fronts, and Lapitec counters in pure white. He also created a chic breakfast area, where a leafy midcentury Barovier & Toso chandelier cascades down over a groovy Emmanuel Babled table and Eero Saarinen Tulip chairs.

“The style is brassy and brash, very Miami. It seems real, like it belongs there”

WILLIAM T. GEORGIS

The home's main hangout spaces include a family room outfitted with a comfy, TV-watching sofa by Todd Merrill Studio and generously scaled, alpaca-clad loungers that swivel. An organically shaped Hugo França cocktail table sculpted from the trunk of a Brazilian pequi tree and a rug with a tropical-green coffee bean pattern help the room feel "very Caracas, Havana, Miami," says Georgis.



Panels of bronze-toned mirror line the game room area, which features a 1950s Stilmovo chandelier over a bamboo-wrapped bar with seating by Astele. The painting *Enough Already* by Deborah Kass hangs next to an Andrianna Shamaris reclaimed-teak table and Bonacina chairs.

PHOTO: RICHARD POWERS; STYLED BY ANITA SARSIDI

There's also an exuberantly stylish game room, highlighted by a custom carpet whose swirling fantasia of colorful biomorphic patterns was inspired by the gardens of the late Brazilian landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx. As it was intended as a space for the whole family, Georgis designed kid-friendly elements such as a pair of panda lounge chairs in cushy shearling of dark brown and taupe. For the grown-ups, he created a glamorous corner drinks area, all trimmed in bronze and lined with crackled bronze-colored mirror, while a 1950s Stilnovo Sputnik chandelier radiates above a freestanding bamboo-wrapped bar. "The style is brassy and brash, very Miami," says Georgis. "It seems real, like it belongs there."

Deborah Kass makes an appearance here, too, with a text painting that spells out "enough already" in candy-colored script. You might say the canvas also resonates with the project's relatively modest scope. Georgis had only the ground floor to work with, but in terms of making a rollicking yet refined design statement, it was, well, more than enough.

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