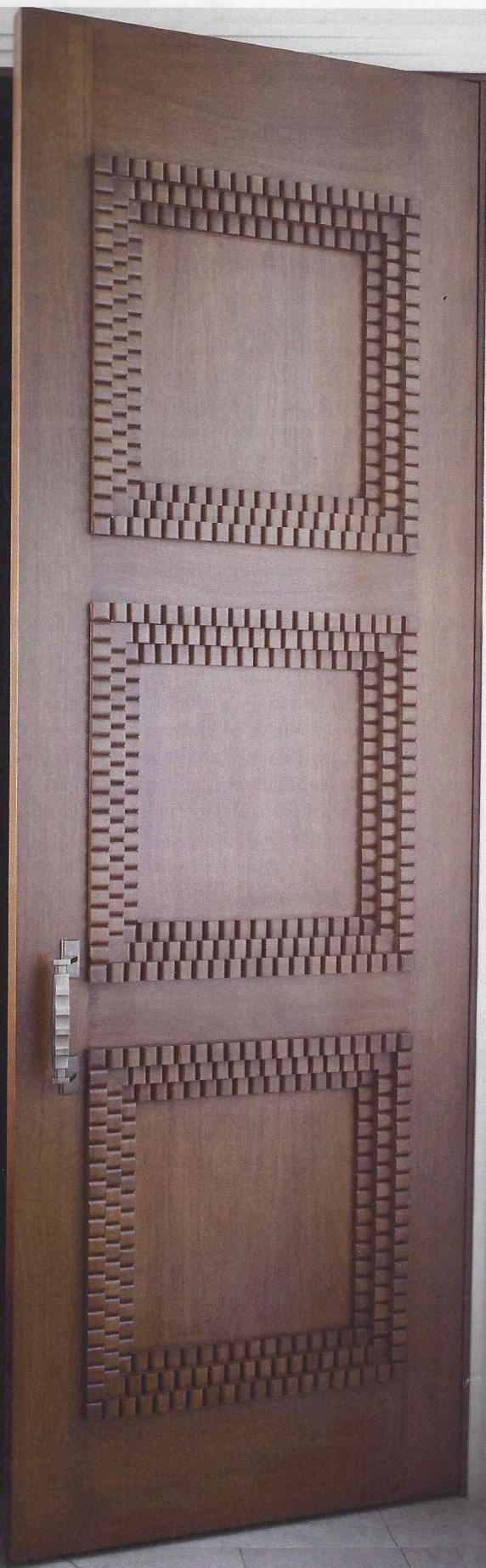


# BLUE-CHIP SPECIAL

*When a Chicago art collector and philanthropist moves into an apartment overlooking Lake Michigan, she turns to her longtime collaborator Timothy Corrigan to create sensational rooms worthy of her museum-caliber collection.*



TEXT BY JACOB A. ULLMANN  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SIMON UPTON  
PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

In the sitting room of a Chicago apartment designed by Timothy Corrigan, the custom armchairs are in a Beacon Hill chenille, the cocktail table is custom, the chandelier is by Paul Ferrante, and the antique Khorassan rug is from Mansour. The artworks are by Frank Stella. **OPPOSITE:** Custom doors in African mahogany lead into a closet in the main hallway. The custom stool is in a Keleen leather.



The table in the dining room is by Promemoria, the custom chairs are in a Great Plains fabric, and the chandelier is by Panache Designs. The artworks are by Joan Mitchell (*left*) and Jasper Johns. **OPPOSITE, FROM TOP:** Diane Heller in the living room with her English cocker spaniel, Daphne; the artworks are linocuts by Pablo Picasso. The pair of custom armchairs are in a Colefax and Fowler fabric, and the custom cocktail table is pyrite, églomisé, and bronze; the side table is by Dessin Fournir, the floor lamps are by Holzkötter, and the curtains are of a Donghia fabric.





**D**iane Heller has been a serious art collector for more than three decades. From her first Jasper Johns to a Picasso and a Frank Stella phase, her blue-chip collection—a who's who of modern masters along with some surprising new talent—has always dictated her home's aesthetic.

Born in northern Minnesota, Heller is wary of calling herself a Chicago native, but it's more than fair for her to claim the title. She grew up in the city's suburbs and studied art history at the Art Institute of Chicago before raising a family here with her late husband, David, who served for a time as governor of the Midwest Stock Exchange. Longtime philanthropists, the couple helped support the creation of the institute's Renzo Piano-designed Modern wing, which opened in 2009.

Until now, the setting for Heller's personal collection of artworks—which includes three Helen Frankenthalers, a Robert Motherwell, and a pair of Robert Longos—has always been a house. She has lived in a variety of homes, from a 1930s gardener's cottage in Lake Forest, Illinois, to a quasi-minimalist residence whose austerity reinforced the gravitas of her collection. But after her husband died in 2012, she was ready to downsize. She found herself drawn to a Beaux Arts-themed high-rise in the city's leafy Lincoln Park area. Designed by Lucien Lagrange, a French-born, Chicago-based architect, the building—featuring a French garden with intricate





In the sitting room of the master bedroom suite, the custom armchair and ottoman are in a Kravet fabric, the chandelier is by Panache Designs, the tray is by Hermès, the custom mantel is by François & Co., and the fireplace screen is from Reborn Antiques.

A French Art Deco table in the hallway holds a Roman bust from the second century B.C. and 19th-century Topoke tribal currency, mounted as sculpture. The artwork is Robert Longo's *Ellen*, and the ceiling is painted in Benjamin Moore's Cotton Balls.





linear allées and hedge work—is the neighborhood’s first luxury tower in half a century. She committed herself to the purchase of an apartment on one of the top floors, with 13-foot ceilings and a vast visual expanse—Lake Shore Drive to the south, Lake Michigan to the east, and O’Hare’s jets to the west. It was only then that she began to feel a twinge of trepidation, worrying that she would be engulfed by the unit’s dramatic proportions. “I was a tad skeptical of this apartment at first,” she confesses.

But she knew whom to trust: Los Angeles- and Paris-based interior designer Timothy Corrigan, her previous collaborator on three homes and the author of several design books. A self-described “château junkie,” he recently embarked on his fifth French-castle restoration. “I lose money every time,” he says with a laugh, “but the process is like bringing back a sleeping beauty.”

Corrigan’s admiration for Heller is evident, but that is not to say that they are entirely simpatico when it comes to design. “Up until the home we did together in Lake Forest, she always lived in stark, clean spaces,” he says. On this project, he persuaded her that her artworks could be displayed to their advantage in a more relaxed setting. “I am way over to the left,” she admits, referring to her modernist proclivities. “Timothy is all the way to the right. Together, we have a lot of fun.”

But paring down her collection to fit into a smaller space was not easy. “I had to ask myself, What do I *really* want to live with? I had to get rid of a lot of pieces I loved,” Heller says. One she absolutely couldn’t imagine selling: Jasper Johns’s *The Dutch*



*Wives*. It was one of the first artworks she and her husband acquired. They had noticed it hanging above their table in a restaurant. “I wonder what it’s called?” asked her husband, before buying it from a local gallery. To highlight the piece, which hangs above the bed, Corrigan created a backdrop of faux-leather paneling. “I’m somewhat fanatical about symmetry,” he says.

As they designed the space, Heller generally knew exactly which painting belonged in each room. Still, she was game for experimentation. In the dining room, for example, the original light fixture was sleek and contemporary. Yet the moment they hung Joan Mitchell’s *Sunflowers III*, the combination felt too expected. The Louis XIV-style chandelier that now hovers over the dining table both illuminates the artwork and adds a surprising, historic counterpoint.

Installing the art had to wait until all the furniture and rugs were set; it took a team of master hangers nearly three days. One of the most complex arrangements was in the sitting room, where Heller had envisioned her collection of Frank Stella artworks framing the fireplace. She wasn’t settled, however, on the exact configuration; in her previous homes, the works had never resided on a single wall. She recalls how they raised and lowered each work several times, rearranging and assessing each permutation. At last, they tried Stella’s *Double Gray Scramble* in the center and the multicolored squares on either side of the mantel—an infusion of color that gives a jolt to the largely neutral apartment. Stepping back, both she and Corrigan immediately knew it was right. “It clicked,” she says. ■

The custom bed in the master bedroom has a headboard in a Colefax and Fowler fabric and a bed skirt in a Nancy Corzine linen-silk blend. The bench in a Castel velvet with Houlès trim and the shagreen side tables are custom, the sconces are by Marian Jamieson, the curtains are of a Rogers & Goffigon voile, and the wall panels are in a Kravet faux leather. A Jasper Johns silk-screen hangs above the bed; the pen-and-ink drawing on the side table is by Picasso. **OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT:** The library's sectional in a Colefax and Fowler fabric and armchair in a Calvin velvet are both custom, the side table is from Antiquario, and the walls are sheathed in bleached mahogany; the artwork is by Jasper Johns. The powder room's vanity is custom, the sink and fittings are by THG, and the walls are covered in a Schumacher wool; the artwork is by Joan Miró. For details, see Resources.

