

# *Bohemian* RHAPSODY

A COUPLE DOWNSIZES TO  
A LINCOLN PARK CONDO  
BUT TURNS UP THE VOLUME  
WITH A STYLE RESET.

WRITTEN BY MARY JO BOWLING  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY WERNER STRAUBE



INTERIOR DESIGN / SUMMER THORNTON AND JENNY HOLLADAY,  
SUMMER THORNTON DESIGN

Designer Summer Thornton says the Slim Aarons photograph *Giacomo Montegazza* provides a “window with a view” in this Chicago condo’s foyer. It hangs above a Bette ottoman purchased at Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams. An Hourglass table by Bunny Williams takes center stage atop a rug purchased at the Nomadic Trading Company in Durham, North Carolina, and beneath a vintage Scandinavian light pendant.



Patty Fox has a rock-and-roll heart. She grew up attending Rolling Stones concerts and met her husband while Van Morrison’s “Brown Eyed Girl” played. Once the children were grown, she and her husband, Jim, decided to downsize to a Chicago condo—and that’s where she decided to let her love of music shine. “We wanted to live in a condo because I wasn’t into preserving a large, single-family house that was only full during the holidays,” she explains. “We found one in a great Lincoln Park location with a large terrace, and I wanted it remodeled with a rock-and-roll spirit. While we were raising our children, our home was more traditional and calm, but with the kids gone it was time to do something different.” The family hired Summer Thornton because Patty sensed the designer’s fearless use of color and pattern could help make her dream a reality. Thornton

recalls that when she first saw it, “The condo was done in dark colors and, frankly, kind of depressing,” she says. “We wanted to make the space lighter and happy.”

Thornton and her associate, designer Jenny Holladay, decided to manipulate the spirit and proportions of the home with color and new moldings. Throughout, walls were given a fresh coat of white paint. “In addition to reflecting the natural light around the rooms, the color made the space feel chic and young,” she says. Narrow applied molding panels were added to the unadorned walls, and the designers say the resulting lines lift the eye and make the rooms feel taller. This strategy is perhaps most evident in the entry, where the rectangular molding pattern sends one’s gaze toward a ceiling covered with a hand-marbled black, gray and gold wallcovering. Before the remodel, the designers describe the space as “a dim gray box.” With the

In homeowner Jim Fox’s office, a photograph of the Atlantic Ocean by MAE Curates purchased at Modern Art Etc in Los Angeles is flanked by a pair of Dorchester swing-arm sconces from Circa Lighting above a tufted Chesterfield sofa. The stained-oak Langham desk is by Bungalow 5. Thornton designed the octagonal ottoman, which was crafted by Eli-Wyn Upholstery.

The Metrology hexagon-shaped backsplash tile from Home Carpet One provides the kitchen's rock-and-roll note. The Bertazzoni Heritage Series range was purchased at Grand Appliance. The Darlana light fixtures hanging above the island are from Circa Lighting. A vintage Turkish rug provides a splash of color.



A glamorous tufted banquette designed by Thornton and crafted by Eli-Wyn Upholstery takes the place of a formal dining room in this home. It's anchored by a table sporting a vintage Pierre Cardin chrome-and-brass base. The black Farrah chairs from Dwell Studio have gold-leaf legs. A 1970s-era Murano glass fixture adds another glittering note. The artwork hanging atop the mirror is *Fresh on my Mind* by Casey Matthews.

**Below, left:** Next to the dining area, an abstract painting by Bettina Mauel, *The Green Cloth 1*, is displayed above an iron side table by Arteriors. Beyond it, *Cloud 9* by Nicole Yates hangs beside a Strada sconce from Visual Comfort.

**Below, right:** Homeowner Patty Fox's office—a special retreat for her—is outfitted with her own fringed velvet sofa upholstered by Eli-Wyn Upholstery with Fabricut fabric and Samuel & Sons trim. The wallcovering is by Phillip Jeffries and serves as a backdrop for a black-and-white photograph of Versailles.



In the guest bedroom, the Schumacher wallcovering with a bird-and-butterfly pattern is a tribute to the wife's late mother, who loved butterflies. The metal bed is from Anthropologie and the bed linens are from Serena & Lily. The grass-cloth-covered Isadora side table is from Bungalow 5 and the drapes were crafted by Urban Workroom.

The couple brought this beloved bed with them to their new home. Thornton dressed it in Leontine Linens and pillow shams crafted from the same Schumacher fabric that was used for the curtains. She also designed the sofa at the foot of the bed. Mia nightstands from Made Goods hold a pair of Hopkins lamps by Alexa Hampton for Visual Comfort.



addition of the patterned ceiling, a Slim Aarons photograph of Italy's Lake Como and a bright-green rug, the new vibe is more surprise and delight than dark and dreary.

Given that the couple's furniture collection was primarily country French, the designers decided a stylistic reset was in order. They jettisoned much of it in favor of colorful pieces, abstract modern art and, in some cases, striking patterns. "Every room has its rock-and-roll moment," says Holladay, citing the cheetah-print upholstery on a pair of armchairs in the living room. "They definitely provide the Mick Jagger vibe there." The back-up musicians in the space are also applause-worthy, including an acid-green sofa, a black-marble mantel with curvy lines, cobalt-blue sconces and an art print depicting none other than Jagger himself.

The adjacent kitchen and dining area's star attraction is the oversize hexagon-shaped marble tile on the backsplash, whose dark lines evoke a honeycomb. There's no formal dining room, as the designers and clients opted instead for a large L-shaped tufted banquette. "This used to be a dismal little corner," remembers Thornton. "But when we added the chic banquette and installed mirrors in the paneled insets, it became cool. And we made sure it's big enough for the whole family." A table with a smoked-glass top and a brass base and modern chairs with black-leather seats and brass legs are edgy accents.



For Patty, her personal office is particularly special. The walls are covered with apricot-colored grass cloth, and a coral velvet sofa with a tassel trim is a bold focal point. “The black-and-white photograph shows Versailles,” says Holladay. “It’s fitting, as Patty is the queen of this room.” That title was a long time coming. “I grew up in a large family, and this is the first time in my life I’ve had my own space,” says Patty. “Orange is one of my favorite colors, and the warm tones here make the office feel comfortable and cozy. This is where I come to listen to music, watch Netflix and meditate. I call it my ‘boudoir,’ and I love it.”

The spirit of personal joie de vivre extends to the outdoors as well, where the designers installed a long

dining table and a more private, fabric-draped seating area they refer to as the “cabana” on the sizable terrace. “This is a special feature for a condo in an urban area,” notes Thornton. “The winters in Chicago are long, so we wanted them to be able to make the most of their outdoor space during the warm weather.” Patty says they can be found there reading, dining or enjoying a cup of coffee most days during the spring and summer.

For the designers, the satisfaction comes from creating a home that mirrors their clients’ personalities. “Patty and Jim have lively spirits and positive outlooks on life, and we wanted their home to reflect that,” says Thornton. “This home is vibrant, happy and fun—it’s the perfect environment for them.”

The outdoor spaces were a big draw for the clients as they considered purchasing the home. To make this small area feel like a cabana, Thornton arranged the family’s own sofa, chairs and tables in a seating vignette on the corner of the terrace and hung outdoor curtains made with Pindler fabric.

Thornton placed the couple’s teak table and chairs on a larger section of the terrace to create an outdoor dining room. During the warm-weather months, the couple and their family can often be found here. But even on the coldest days of winter, Patty says, “Psychologically, it makes a difference just to be able to gaze out over the space, even if it’s covered in snow.”

