





HAUTE HOUSTON

WRITTEN BY CAREN KURLANDER PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROGER DAVIES

"IT REALLY STARTED WITH THE ART," RANDY POWERS SAYS OF
THE HOUSTON GONDO HE DESIGNED FOR MANDY WILLIAMS.

"She has a first-rate collection, and that needed to be the focus." Powers and
Williams were introduced through their mutual art dealer, Robert McClain,
and the pairing couldn't have been a better fit. Aside from creating sophisticated
interiors through his Houston-based firm J. Randall Powers Interior Decoration,
and designing furniture sold through David latesta and lighting for Visual
Comfort, Powers is a passionate art collector. He understood how to approach
his client's works by artists like Helen Frankenthaler, Brice Marden and Julian
Schnabel. "The first thing we did was decide which piece would go where,"
Powers explains, "and we filled in from there. But it was also about creating an
environment that's comfortable and livable, because at the end of the day, it's
not a museum, it's a home."

Before they could place anything, the 2,800-square-foot high-rise condo needed some attention. Williams, a retired oil executive, amateur racecar driver and first-time author, knew she wanted a tailored space with clean lines, and she called on designer Wayne Braun from the architectural firm PDR Corporation in Houston and contractor Kurt Lobpries of Houston's Builders West to make this happen. "The place had yellow oak floors and crown molding," says Williams. "Everything had a Renaissance flavor to it, which is fine unless you lean toward

INTERIOR DESIGN Randy Powers, J. Randall Powers Interior Decoration

HOME BUILDER Kurt Lobpries, Builders West

BEDROOMS 1 BATHROOMS 2 SQUARE FEET 2,800

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE Wayne Braun, PDR Corporation



ART HOUSE

The Flats, a 1968 acrylic by Helen Frankenthaler, hangs above a commode from Mulholland Furniture in the living area.

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contemporary styling." Keeping the one-bedroom layout, Braun stripped the embilishments, removed walls, expanded openings and designed sleek acent walls in a grid of wenge for the main living/dining room.

Once the architecture was settled, Powers set a quiet tone for the interiors. "I didn't want to compete with the art," he says. "Plus, she has a spectacular view of lowntown Houston." He gave the floors a cool blue-gray finish throughout and decided on a palette of pale taupes for the living area. "I rarely see pattern, as I find it disruptive," he explains. "Instead, I look to create inerest through texture." A Helen Frankenthaler acrylic faces the sitting area, where Powers chose soft leathers and tactile linens to cover a sofa he lesigned after a Jean-Michel Frank original and chairs by Holly Hunt art Donghia. A flatweave Stark rug grounds the space, while the wenge will grid lends warmth.





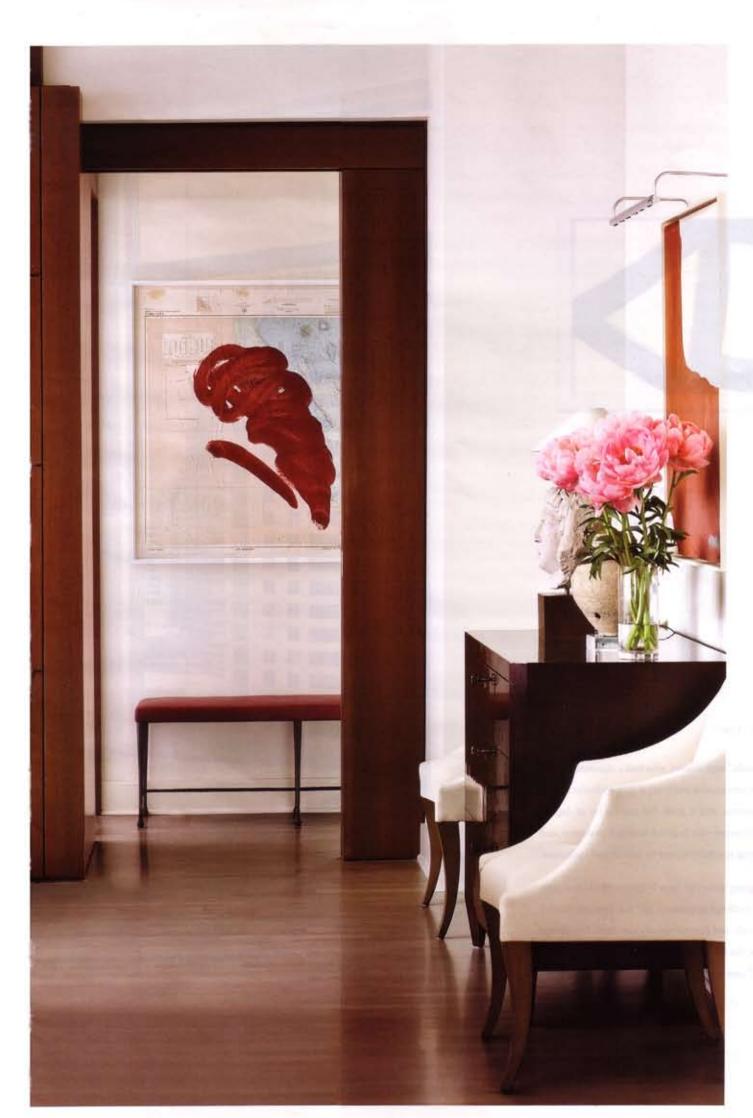
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On the opposite end of the room, a large-scale Larry Poons painting is positioned in the dining area. A wenge wall grid mirrors its counterpart in the living area, but function sets it apart. Push-button hardware opens the individual panels to reveal Williams' computer, printer and other office equipment. "You never have enough space in a high-rise, so 1 wanted to maximize every inch," she says. A custom dining table with a leather-upholstered base doubles as a desk when the grid panels are opened. Powers completed the design with Donghia's Ghost chairs and a custom Holly Hunt pendant.

To keep a cohesive feel throughout the condo, Powers wrapped the master bedroom in muted colors and decadent materials. "I took a cue from

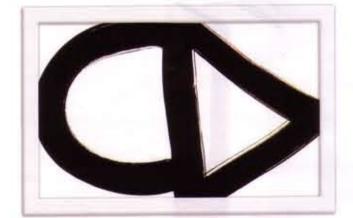
COOLING OFF

The European-style kitchen was streamlined with new cabinet doors, black honed-granite countertops and a steely blue-gray hue selected by Powers. Swaim bar chairs are upholstered with Rose Tarlow suede, and the refrigerator is by Sub-Zero.



ON DISPLAY

Julian Schnabel's 2006 Huntington Beach to Punta Sal Puedas is positioned above a Holly Hunt bench in the living area. Williams worked with New York art consultant Julie Kinzelman to develop her collection.



STYLE SELECTION

Artist AI Held created this piece in 1969 using India ink on paper. F Series IV, price available upon request; dkgallery.com

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Jean-Michel Frank for the walls," says Powers, who had a shimmery handpainted silk wall covering cut into squares and hung at perpendicular angles.
"It looks like a wall of limestone, and it gives the space a lot of depth."

A Cameron Collection bed is dressed with Rogers & Goffigon cashimere, and
Powers had a plush Stark rug specially woven in cotton and cashimere.

"A high-rise by definition is going to be cold," says Williams. "It's a lot of glass and walls. So it was truly a challenge to soften it up." But between Braun's addition of the rich wenge walls and Powers' use of clean-lined furnishings sheathed in textural fabrics, the space feels elegant and inviting, "It was a jigsaw puzzle for everybody," says Williams. "But they pulled it off."

