

A pair of chairs with hide seats flanks the Macassar ebony buffet in the front foyer. The artwork by Vadim Gushchin is one of many pieces that art consultant Jennifer Norback recommended for the project.

A storyteller by profession brings in a “co-author” to help him dream up a vibrant new design for his posh Lakeview apartment.

*by Tate Gunnerson
photography by Werner Straube*

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In the dining room, brutalist sculptures by Donald Drumm from 1stdibs have been used to create a table base. The top is smoked glass with a gold-leafed edge by Armand Lee, and the chairs are by Andreu World. "They are very sturdy, lightweight and comfortable," Marshall Erb says. Terra-cotta wall sculptures, selected by Norback, create interest above the rosewood bar cabinet with stainless steel trim in the dining room.

AS

a narratologist who helps large companies tell their stories more effectively, Séamas O'Driscoll knows all too well the value of an outside perspective. So when he started a new chapter in a spacious apartment in a 1920s-era beaux-arts building on Lake Shore Drive, O'Driscoll likewise sought another point of view in the form of interior designer Marshall Erb (marshallerb.com).

"I begged Marshall to take the project on," O'Driscoll says. "I was tempted to do a very monochromatic palette, but he got me to start thinking about taking risks and going out of my comfort zone."

In the living room, Erb introduced a colorful woven silk rug and re-covered the sofa's wood frame and gray upholstery with a livelier green-and-white patterned fabric. It was a leap for O'Driscoll, but the designer brought him around. "Think of it this way," O'Driscoll recalls Erb saying. "You're walking down the street in Lakeview, and then boom, you're in Milan."

Riffing off the vintage architecture and O'Driscoll's Hungarian art deco chairs, Erb incorporated complementary pieces from different eras, including a custom 1980s-inspired chaise lounge with a sycamore veneered frame and a '50s-era glass-and-brass side



The Turkish woven silk rug is by Cinar. The custom chaise lounge with sycamore veneer was inspired by '80s design and is sturdy enough to dance on, says Erb. The oil-on-canvas work is by Michael Reid Rubenstein.

table. "The pieces span the decades, but they also speak the same language," Erb says.

A large candelabra by artist Donald Drumm makes good use of the hearth without generating as much heat as an actual blaze. Drumm also made bases for the dining table, which Erb finished with a smoked-glass top with a gilded edge. It's the "perfect foil," Erb says, for the rosewood bar cabinet. "We wanted something that faded away but was still sexy."

In the front foyer, a gallery-like space that is open to all the major rooms, a Macassar ebony-veneered French art deco credenza is flanked by a pair of midcentury armchairs with hide-covered seats. A Vadim Gushchin painting, selected by art consultant, Jennifer Norback (jennifernorbackfineart.com), featuring a bold blue book "plays off of Séamas' narrative," Erb says. In fact, there's an entire wall of books in the clubby media room. Already outfitted with a large area rug with a geometric pattern and a plush sectional sofa, Erb brought in a table with a vintage brass base and chairs with curved backs and hide seats.

A consummate entertainer who hosts frequent dinner parties and a few big soirees every year, O'Driscoll has enjoyed sharing the space with his friends and colleagues. "It's a unique combination of art deco, high modernism and brutalism," he says. "It was so much fun working with Marshall, and I think we created something new and exciting." ■