

CHICAGO | ILLINOIS

BURSTING WITH COLOR

BOLDLY HUED WALLS
ANIMATE SLEEK FURNISHINGS
IN AN ARTFUL APARTMENT

The white fireplace against periwinkle walls animates the architectural intent of Andrew Wilder and Kurt Christiansen's Chicago condo. Wilder outfitted the living room electrically, pairing a contemporary rug with furnishings from the 1920s and '30s. The Art Deco-style mirror hangs over a sofa.

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WRITTEN BY FRED ALBERT

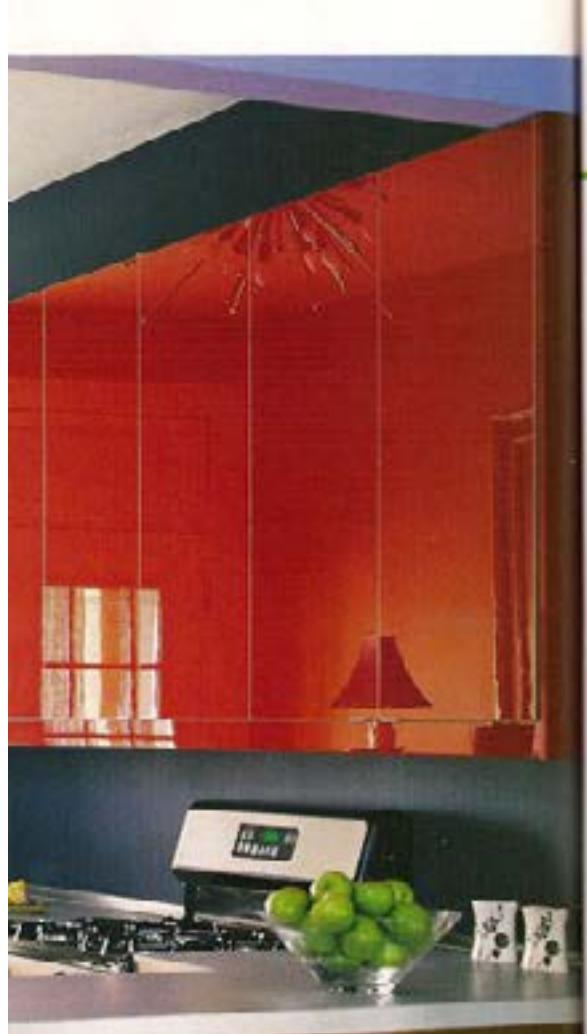




The apartment's architecture may have recalled the Jazz Age, but the color scheme was as monotonous as Murak. Beige paint anesthetized every wall, draining all trace of personality. Wilder availed colors that would help banish winter's chill while complementing the golden woods used in his furniture. "I really wanted to use a blue in the living room," he says, "but I needed to find a hue that would look both warm and modern." Though was risky, he painted the walls periwinkle—a shade containing so much red that it appears warm and cool at the same time. "It's a happy, vibrant color," observes the homeowner. "When that periwinkle went up, the space took on a whole different life."

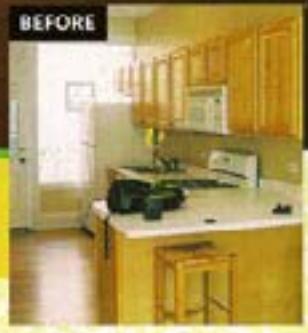


OPPOSITE A fanciful, floral-themed Tyvek light fixture illuminates the hallway off the dining area, which Wilder defined with an elaborate window treatment. ABOVE Rosewood and elm inlays decorate the Swedish Art Deco table; the base is charred birch. Black upholstery sets off the graceful lines of the 1960s Argentine chairs.



BEFORE

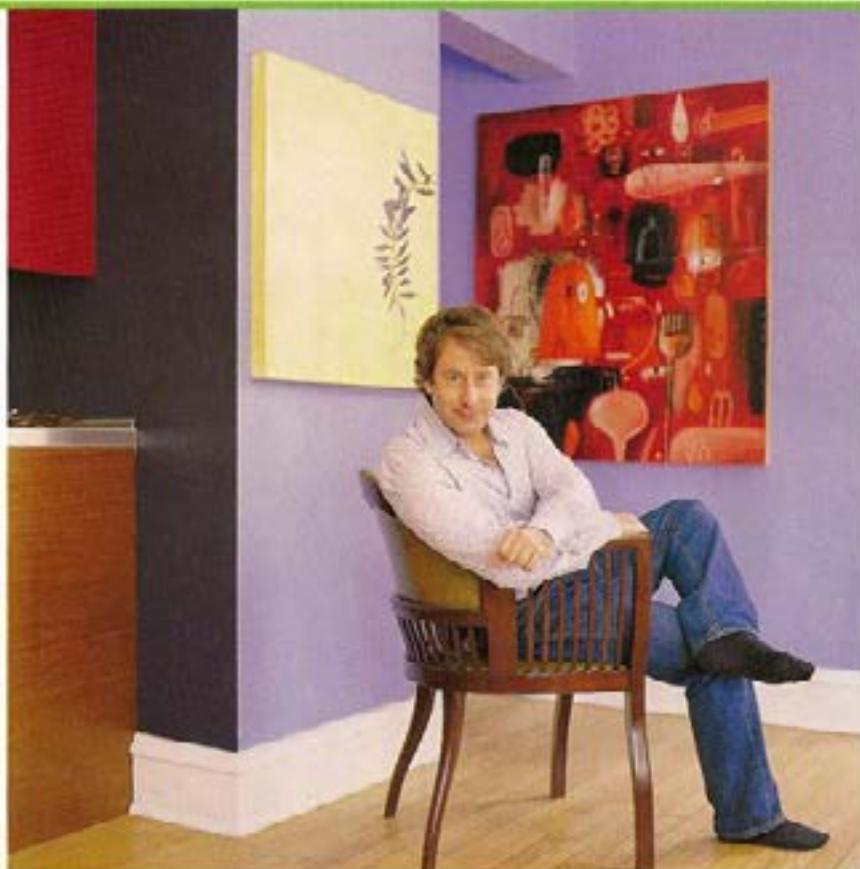
After installed plastic laminate a ceiling fixture. A wood furnishings were generic to fish mahogany chair.



Emboldened by his success, Wilder proceeded to tackle the rest of the apartment, relying on intuition and instinct more than any preconceived plan. The living room's contemporary area rug, discovered at a local department store, provided a road map, suggesting the red, gold, green, and blue tones used in the other rooms. Still, Wilder tested some 80 quarts of eggshell latex until he got exactly the shades he wanted for the remaining spaces. (In this home, color choices are especially crucial because the relatively open plan means that many of the areas are visible from adjacent ones.) A chartreuse foyer now coexists happily with a pumpkin master bedroom and a canary yellow guest room that was inspired by a scene in the camp classic

Valley of the Dolls. "It was all about process—about just going a little wacky with it," Wilder says. The color experiment became a running joke between Wilder and his partner, Kurt Christiansen, a Los Angeles city planner. Every time Wilder called their West Coast home, Christiansen would ask if he was painting. "And I always was," Wilder recalls with a laugh.

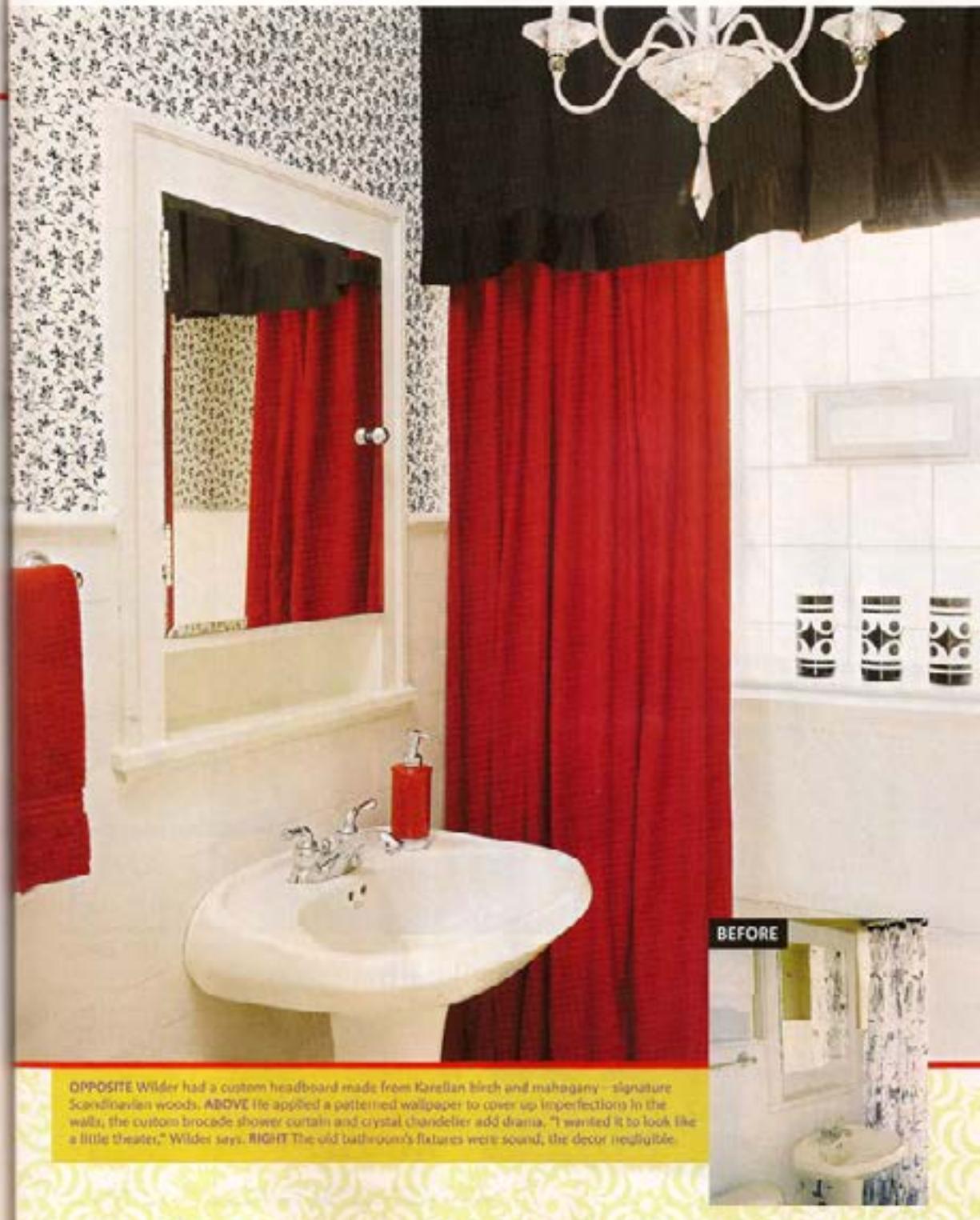
By the time the homeowner got to the kitchen, its maple cabinets and white counters looked like they belonged in a different apartment. To remake the space but keep costs low, Wilder adorned silver laminate counters with sleek aluminum edging and installed gleaming red-lacquer cabinets from IKEA. Finding complementary wall colors proved problematic, but





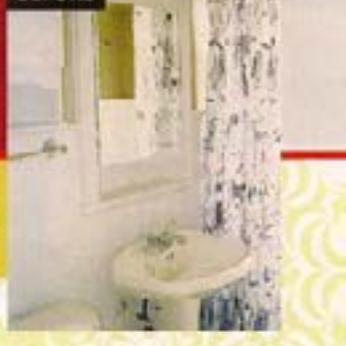
initially accumulating decorative objects, then vintage modern furniture. "I was fascinated by the design aesthetic from the first day I got there," says Wilder, who eventually quit his job as a textile designer to open his own business and sell 20th-century Swedish furniture full time. "There's a simplicity and grace to it. The woods are lustrous; the pieces are scaled beautifully for use in smaller homes." However, he finds that such sculptural pieces work best without a lot of clutter around them. "I needed to limit the number of furnishings I put in this space," he says. "If you really look carefully, there aren't a lot of things in it."

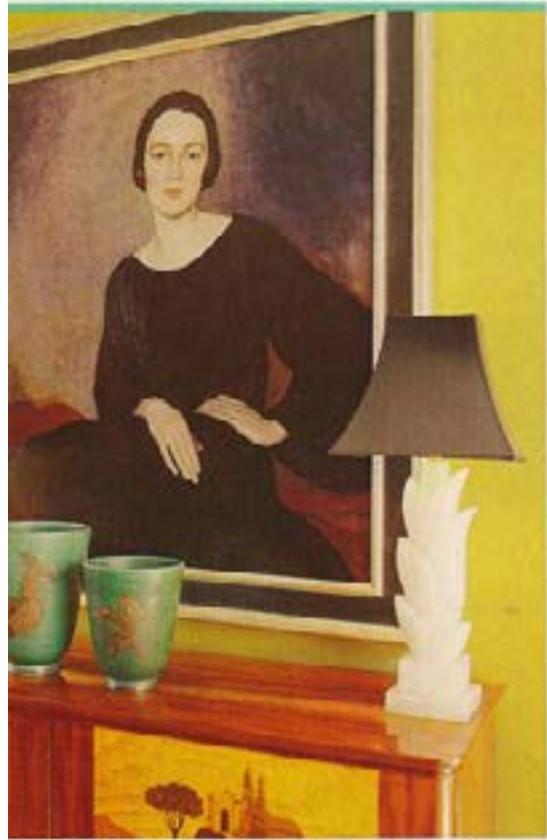
In the living room, a pair of Cubist armchairs and a 1940s wingback love seat—all Swedish—face off across an Art Deco



OPPOSITE Wilder had a custom headboard made from Karelian birch and mahogany—signature Scandinavian woods. ABOVE He applied a patterned wallpaper to cover up imperfections in the walls; the custom brocade shower curtain and crystal chandelier add drama. "I wanted it to look like a little theater," Wilder says. RIGHT The old bathroom's fixtures were sound; the decor irreplaceable.

BEFORE





All paints

1. GUEST ROOM Golden Fable 14-13. Pratt & Lambert; 800-289-7728, prattandlambert.com. 2. LIVING ROOM Bayou 5708-4. Behr; 800-854-0133, behr.com. 3. MASTER BEDROOM Pumpkin Toast 2700-G. Behr.



coffee table inlaid with a map of the world. The Venetian-style mirror hanging above the fireplace is an example of the 1930s Argentine piccas (in a style dubbed *Americano funcional*) that Wilder recently started carrying in his store. A snug dining area across the room features a Swedish Art Deco table and *Americano funcional* chairs; a window festooned with '50s-style fabric helps

anchor the space within the open plan.

It took Wilder 18 months to transform the apartment, but he savored every minute. "When it comes to decorating, there are two kinds of people," he says. "People who are afraid of it and just want it done, and people who enjoy it and are willing to take the time to go through the process. I'm definitely the latter." ■