



## Eleven TVs. A White Lacquered Ceiling. No Bookshelves.

**THE RESIDENCE:** Midtown two-bedroom  
**MISSION STATEMENT:** "Everything was about not obstructing the view. The clients almost didn't want a dining-room table, but I was able to persuade them."

By David Colman Published May 11, 2008

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**The Full Expanse:** Every surface in the south-facing apartment, with the exception of the DDC couch and chairs, is reflective. "At night you can see the taxicabs in the ceiling," says Christopher Coleman. "On the 39th floor!"  
 (Photo: Photo + Warner)

**N** times out of ten, the decorator-client pairing turns into a tango in which each struggles to lead. This is particularly common in modernism: designers who worship at the altar of the Glass House want essentially empty spaces. No family photos! No knickknacks! The clients, meanwhile, hope for a place to put the mail, the spices, and the toilet paper. So the all-white Alice-in-Modernland apartment here is obviously the result of yet another charismatic decorator steamrolling his weak-willed clients.

Or not. In this case, decorator Christopher Coleman and architect Wayne Turett found themselves on the other side, urging their clients—a pair of high-powered lawyers—to consider comfort, price, practicality, a bookshelf.

The clients weren't interested. Their sole interest was uncluttered access to the views.

Which are spectacular: The apartment is on the 39th floor of the Olympic Tower, and the panorama stretches clear down to the Statue of Liberty. But the almost-all-white interior is arguably just as striking, the result of more than three years of construction and back-and-forth perfectionism. The clients bought two apartments, each a warren of low-ceilinged rooms, to combine into a very grand 3,400-square-foot one-bedroom (the office, seen here, converts to a guest room). Then they found Turett, a modernist by nature, through design matchmaker Karen Fisher. Turett ripped out every wall and got to work, but a year later, still unsure about exactly what they wanted, the clients brought in Coleman, known primarily for his bold use of color.

Together they hashed out a solution that addressed the ways the apartment would be used: first, as a crash pied-à-terre for the couple, whose primary residence is in New Jersey, and second, as a space for throwing great parties.

In keeping with the open-plan party idea, Turett put in a massive, sliding white glass wall that could open (or close) the bedroom to the apartment. Coleman kept the amount of furniture to the bare minimum—there's not much beyond the long curved white leather sofa and a quartet of white leather chairs, both from DDC. "Everything was about not obstructing the view," says Coleman. "They almost didn't want a dining-room table, but I was able to persuade them."

He also persuaded them into a handful of high-intensity color blasts—red at either end and an aqua kitchen in the middle—instead of the white space they'd envisioned.

"All-white would be so sterile," Coleman says. "The color adds punch, and a human touch, and some visual flow." The high-gloss white ceiling was his idea as well; it reflects the apartment's vertical lines and lends more dimension. Ditto the white quartz floor.

The clients did have a few more-mundane needs. They're news junkies, so "there are, I think, eleven televisions. They disappear into slots all over the apartment," says Turett, who even installed them in the bathrooms and the husband's closet.

The showstopper, if this space really needs one, is the glassed-in office—cum—guest room. It's like a tiny Glass House within the apartment; the vermillion box, covered in a laminate by Kinon, hides a home office. The Poltrona Frau lounge converts to a queen-size bed.

"There are a lot of people who love clean but don't want to put away the clutter," says Turett. "But [this couple] is really almost religious about it. I've never done anything so pared down.

"I remember asking them, 'Don't you want a bookcase somewhere?' And they said, 'We don't need to have books out. We know that we know how to read.'"

Spoken like true decorators.

Next: The bar and kitchen.



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**The Bar and Kitchen:** One of the home's primary directives was to be a functional entertaining space; the glass-topped circular bar is about five feet in front of the recessed kitchen, rear.  
*(Photo: Floto + Warner)*

[Next: The guest room/office.](#)



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**The Guest Room/Office:** A glass box inside the apartment encloses the office, which converts to a guest room when the Poltrona Frau lounge becomes a bed. The red box, center, holds the elements of a home office. It's sheathed in a high-end laminate by Kinon.  
(Photo: Floto + Warner)

[Next: The master bedroom.](#)

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**The Master Bedroom:** Window shades are recessed into the ceiling and descend at the touch of a button. The red lacquer wall conceals a closet.

(Photo: Floto + Warner)

[Next: The bathroom.](#)



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**The Bathroom:** The glass wall looks into the master bedroom. A metal curtain, right, pulls across the wall for privacy.  
(Photo: Floto + Warner)

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