

INTERIOR ARCHITYPES:
CONTEMPORARY APARTMENT INTERIOR DESIGN

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by

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May 2009

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ABSTRACT

This study identifies, classifies and names unnamed archetypical and reoccurring design traits in contemporary, professionally designed, luxury apartment interiors. Each category of traits represents an interior archetype (Intype), an ideal example of a historical and culturally determined practice of design from which similar models are derived, emulated or reiterated. For the purposes of this study, the term apartment includes all high-rise living configurations, including a condominium, a form of home ownership in which individual units of a larger complex are sold, not rented.

Apartments are an under-studied component of interior design, despite the increased role that they play in housing large numbers of people in high-density urban areas around the world. Although some historical research has been conducted, little research or critical attention has been given to professionally designed apartment interiors. There is no formalized knowledge of contemporary apartment design as part of historical or theoretical studies, despite the fact that apartments may constitute one of the most difficult design problems of habitation. A rigid compartmentalization makes the adaptation to each user's specific needs, and the personal behaviors of coexistence, difficult. Professional designers have responded to these requirements with diverse solutions to make the most of limited spaces both functionally and aesthetically.

The research model includes three approaches. The project's methodological approach is the development of a typology of published professional designs

of luxury apartment interiors. The theoretical approach draws from George Kubler's *The Shape of Time* that makes an argument for reiterative historic design traits that span time and cross cultural boundaries. The critical approach makes contemporary interior design practices of professional designers a subject of study.

Based on photographic evidence from architecture and interior design trade magazines, each Intype isolates an apartment design strategy and traces its development through time. All issues of *Interior Design* published within the last sixty years (more than 1,000) were examined, as well as more than 170 issues of *Architectural Record*, and numerous issues from international trade journals, such as *Abitare*, *AIT*, and *Interiors Korea*. Field studies to New York, Chicago and Seoul tested the categories.

From this research ten apartment Intypes emerged, six from western practices—Black Out, Ghost Hearth, Kaleidoscope, Mix Match, Naked, Showcase Stair, and four from Asian practices—Borrowed View, Korean White, Living Floor, Numera. Luxury high-rise apartments and condominiums share archetypical traits with other practice types, such as boutique hotels (Black Out, Mix Match, Naked) in their appeals to a high-end clientele and avant-garde interiors. The Intype, Mix Match, is a popular furnishing Intype in apartments, boutique hotels, resorts and spas and restaurants.

This thesis research makes a contribution to the on-going Intypes Research and Teaching Project, initiated in 1997 at Cornell University. The project creates a typology of contemporary interior design practices derived from

reiterative historical designs that span time and style and cross cultural boundaries, thereby providing designers with an interior-specific, historical and contemporary design vocabulary. The project disseminates new knowledge about design practices that have not been named, through a searchable web database—intypes.cornell.edu.

In adding to the body of knowledge produced by the Intypes Research Group, this study is the first to identify specific non-western Intypes.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Najung Kim received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in February 2000 from Korea University in Korea and a Master of Arts in September 2009 from Cornell University of Ithaca, NY. At Cornell, she studied interior design within the department of Design and Environmental Analysis.

To family and friends, with love.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Jan Jennigs, my thesis chair person. Her passion for design is truly inspiring and our conversations always left me excited and curious about the interior design in academic field. She has helped me become a more critical thinker and has sharpened my analytical skills. Without her continuous mentoring and support, this thesis would not have been completed. Professor Jennings has instilled in me the desire to understand contemporary design within an historical context; this new perspective has left me with a greater understanding of contemporary design typology and further, the possibility of solutions in practical field.

I would like to thank Professor Paula Horrigan, my minor member on the committee and Professor Kathleen Gibson. With their invaluable expertise, they offered important comments and guidance throughout the shaping of the thesis and provide diverse perspectives to my analysis on my Intypes. I would also like to extend my thanks to Intypes group researchers. With our discussion and research, I could get critical and analytical research for my thesis.

I am grateful for the College of Human Ecology and the Department of Design and Environment Analysis. For their supporting grant funding, I received allowed me to make the site visits to Chicago for the apartment interior designs.

Finally, I would like to thank my truly amazing family. Whether I am in need of some encouragement or looking to celebrate, you never disappoint. I would like to thank my friends have been helpful and supportive at all times.

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Chapter 1

RESEARCH STRATEGY

- 1.1 The Study
 - 1.1.1 Importance of the Study
- 1.2 A Brief History of Apartment Buildings
- 1.3 The Intypes Research and Teaching Project
- 1.4 Methodological Approach and Protocol
- 1.5 Literature Review
- 1.6 Summary of Apartment Intypes
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1. The Study

This study identifies, classifies and names unnamed archetypical and reoccurring design traits in contemporary, professionally designed, luxury apartment interiors. Each category of traits represents an interior archetype (intype), an ideal example of a historical and culturally determined practice of design from which similar models are derived, emulated or reiterated. For the purposes of this study, the term apartment includes all high-rise living configurations, including a condominium, a form of home ownership in which individual units of a larger complex are sold, not rented.

1.1 Importance of the Study

Apartments are an under-studied component of interior design, despite the increased role that they assume in housing large numbers of people in high-density urban areas around the world. Although some historical research has

been conducted, little research or critical attention has been given to professionally designed apartment interiors. There is no formalized knowledge of contemporary apartment design as part of historical or theoretical studies, despite the fact that apartments may constitute one of the most difficult design problems of habitation. A rigid compartmentalization makes the adaptation to each user's specific needs, and the personal behaviors of coexistence, difficult. Professional designers have responded to these requirements with diverse solutions to make the most of limited spaces both functionally and aesthetically.

In *Alone Together*, a history of New York's early apartments, Elizabeth Cromley argues that designers and developers strived to make genteel families and individuals feel as much at home in multifamily dwellings as in private residences. Historically New Yorkers recognized that multifamily apartment houses could be the best settings for modern family life. Sufficient variety was achieved within the building type to provide for luxury as well as for plain and simple needs. "By refining floor plans, internal circulation, and room adjacencies, designers of apartments achieved a well-developed modern dwelling plan that was flexible enough to be used at different scales. Apartments, in sense are becoming ingenious instruments for living."¹

Because of a premium on inhabitants' access to light, view, air and services, the high-rise apartment represents significant real estate values. In addition, these apartment buildings add character to city skylines around the world. Urban apartment living is a particularly important architectural typology,

¹ Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Alone together: A History of New York's Early Apartment* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1990), n.p.

because apartment buildings also act as symbols of power and representatives of the prestige of its residents.

1.2. A Brief History of Apartment Buildings

Pre-Industrial Development

Early apartment living dates from Roman times. Pueblo villages of North America were also constructed as apartments.² In the cities of continental Europe, apartment living was the norm for people at almost all levels of society, carrying on a practice of living on one floor that had originally developed in the shared townhouses and palaces of the Middle Ages (1100-1400).³ Its most important development came with the Industrial Revolution.

Nineteenth Century Development and Industrialization

As nineteenth century industrialization brought increased populations to cities with growth occurring along the transit corridors in Europe and the United States, the need for low-cost multiple-unit dwellings rose and progressively gave way to the demand for more luxurious apartment buildings. Important developments during the 1880s, such as the creation of fireproof steel-frame construction, the improvement of the elevator, and the introduction of electric lighting, significantly spurred the rapid evolution of apartment building type.⁴

Twentieth Century Development and Modernism

In the twentieth century, apartment blocks, designed as solutions for high-

² Ana G. Canizares, *New Apartments* (New York: Collins Design, 2005), 6-7.

³ Alan Powers, *Apartment* (New York: Ryland Peters and Samll, 2001), 10

⁴ Canizares, *New Apartments*, 6-7.

density development in urbanized areas, also reduced construction and maintenance costs. Today apartment towers have enormous influence on urban planning. The Swiss architect Le Corbusier planned cities that would be composed solely of apartment buildings.

At the beginning of the Twentieth century, there was a range of different ways of apartment buildings. During the 1920s, the apartment buildings were inspired by ideas of lightweight modern living with concrete structure and enjoy a clean new world of electronic technology. Still, there were the period style apartment buildings with classical molding and fireplaces in Europe and the United States. New York has a large number of classical and Colonial apartment buildings. Their stepped tops, many housing luxurious penthouse suites, give them the look of ziggurats from the ancient world. Also, Art Deco apartments were popular and emphasized on geometric shapes, streamlined built-in furniture and fixtures during the 1930s.⁵

After World War II, apartment buildings competed favorably with private houses. Mies van der Rohe's design for apartment towers at 860-880 South Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, built between 1949 and 1951, ushered in a new Modern model. The steel-frame structure of this apartment with floor-to-ceiling windows became the model for other modern skyscraper buildings. Le Corbusier designed Unite d'Habitation at Marseille, France in 1945 and completed in 1951 as a typical "slab" of a kind favored for public housing all over the world. The individual apartments have a double-height living room connected to a balcony, bringing open vistas and plenty of sun light and

⁵ Powers, *Apartment*, 12-15.

greenery to their inhabitants.⁶

In the United States apartments and high-rise condominium buildings have become more desirable and competitive. The Trump World Tower in New York City and the Trump tower in Chicago, are regarded as stylish, desirable and prestigious accommodations. More luxury, technological and higher apartment buildings show up every day. Also, the industrial buildings have been rehabilitated and redeveloped to loft-style apartments by extension of urban areas and reduction of industrial areas in New York City.⁷

Twenty-First Century Development & Globalization

Traditionally in Europe, apartment high-rise buildings ranged in height from 25 to 35-stories. However, tall residential or mixed-use apartments are on the rise.⁸ In 1982, the Dutch Council on Tall Buildings attempted to generate enthusiasm for tall buildings among Dutch builders, architects and managers with the motto—high-rise in the city. Rotterdam has emerged as the place where new concepts of apartment design are formulated and constructed; international architects, such Renzo Piano, Norman Foster and Rem Koolhaas have designed in the Netherlands.⁹ Rotterdam has little of its historic fabric left, because of World War II destruction.

In mainland China, Shanghai and Beijing, accommodate huge residential high-rise apartment projects. The area of the COSCO Brilliant City project in

⁶ Powers, *Apartment*, 17-18.

⁷ Georges Binder, *Sky High Living: Contemporary High-Rise Apartment and Mixed-Use Buildings* (Mulgrave, Victoria: Images, 2002), 8.

⁸ Binder, *Sky High Living*, 11-12.

⁹ Binder, *Sky High Living*, 11-12.

Shanghai is almost 1.6 million-square-meter / 17,222,400-square-foot. In the Middle-East, Dubai, Burj Dubai with sky living and various amenities is being constructed as the tallest building in the world.¹⁰ In Korea, 52.5% of the Korean population live in apartment buildings. There is an emerging super-tall residential market such as the 69-story Tower Palace in Seoul.

1.3 The Intypes Research and Teaching Project

The Intypes (Interior Archetypes) Research and Teaching Project at Cornell University creates a typology of contemporary interior design practices that are derived from reiterative historical designs that span time and style and cross cultural boundaries. The argument for the significance of a typology of historic and contemporary interior design practices is based on eleven years of experiments that has already produced approximately seventy-five archetypes developed by the principal investigators and graduate students. Intypes identify contemporary design practices that have not been named, thereby providing designers with an interior-specific, history and contemporary design vocabulary. The project also offers an innovative approach to further design criticism and design sustainability. The Intypes Project produces a new knowledge base for the creative dimension of design. It is the first project of its kind to assemble contemporary design theory in a searchable database using primary source imagery. The key deliverable is its web site—www.intypes.cornell.edu.¹¹

Intypes represent ideal examples of a historical and culturally determined

¹⁰ Binder, *Sky High Living*, 13-14.

¹¹ Jan Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design: The Interior Archetypes Project," *Journal of Interior Design* 32, no. 3 (2007): 56.

practice of design internationally; identify contemporary design practices that have not been named; provide designers with an interior-specific, history-specific, contemporary design-specific vocabulary; provide a new knowledge base for the creative dimension of design; and offer an innovative approach to further design criticism and sustainability studies.¹²

There are few research studies that examine how apartment interiors have been designed in terms of creating spatial experiences through color, display aesthetic, materials, storage and spatial composition, unit arrangement, and technology. There are no interpretive works or theoretical studies that have been written about interior design precedents for contemporary apartment design.¹³

Contemporary design should be examined in ways other than style. The premise is that contemporary interior design practices have historical underpinnings that can be examined as a series of traits, suggesting continuities and sequences within the practice of apartment design. This study will examine apartment interior environments by summarizing discourses about patterns, typologies, practices and/or paradigms in contemporary design usage and provide a comprehensive argument about various precedents in apartment design. This research is an original theoretical study for interior design. It is systematic and comprehensive and explores primary source material from trade journals. No scholar has published a critical survey of this trade literature.¹⁴

¹² Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design," 48.

¹³ Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design," 49.

¹⁴ Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design," 48-50.

1.4 Methodological Approach and Protocol

The research model includes three approaches. The project's methodological approach is the development of a typology of published professional designs of luxury apartment interiors. The theoretical approach draws from George Kubler's *The Shape of Time* that makes an argument for reiterative historic design traits that span time and cross cultural boundaries. The critical approach makes contemporary interior design practices of professional designers a subject of study.

Typology is concerned with aspects of human production, which can be grouped because of some inherent characteristics that make them similar. The theory of typology is thus that of conceptualizing those categories. An Interior Archetype is an organized body of knowledge about the typology of contemporary interior space that has been designed in recent decades. This research of contemporary apartments as one of practice types in Interior Archetype examines and identifies characteristic and continuous usages in apartment interiors by tracing a series of traits as a continuum back through several historic periods and across cultures.

The Intypes Project's methodological structure produces the first typology of interior design—a grouping of design productions in which some inherent characteristics make them similar. Initially, the project derives types from the published work of designers.

To discover that body of knowledge the principal investigator and graduate student researchers undertake seven different approaches:

1. A content review and analysis of approximately 1,100 issues of trade magazines (primary sources) and secondary source materials. Research begins with tracing a series of design practices by conducting content surveys in primary sources, such as *Interior Design*, and *Architectural Record*.
2. Identifying composites of traits that typify (through time) a dominant characteristic that has been used repeatedly by designers as interior architecture or design.
3. Isolating these traits by naming and defining them and illustrating examples chronologically.
4. Preliminary development and proposal (draft stage) of specific Intypes.
5. On-site field studies to various cities to test the Intypes developed from photographs in trade magazines against built projects.
6. Revising the Intypes based on observational evidence.
7. Developing the Intypes in the web-based format.¹⁵

The methodological approach of the thesis is historical, theoretical, and critical. Thinking about design precedents as a continuum, or a series of replications, owes much to George Kubler's *The Shape of Time*. Kubler believes that every important work can be regarded both as historical event and as a hard-won solution to some problem. To him, every solution links to a problem to which there have been other solutions. As the solutions accumulate, a conception of a sequence forms. The boundaries of a sequence are marked out by the linked solutions describing early and late stages of effort upon a problem. In the long run, a sequence may serve as scaffolding for new design.¹⁶ Other

¹⁵ Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design," 53-55.

¹⁶ George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962), 31-82 in Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design," 49.

theorists, such as Robert Maxwell approach design history similarly. According to Maxwell, the dialectic of the new and old is a complex one, “for within the new there is something of the old, which precisely renders the new recognizable; and within the old the new is already pregnant.”¹⁷

The structure of Kubler and Maxwell’s methodological approach proves useful for modeling interior design precedents. Some sequences of historical or theoretical solutions may come and go over time but many become so powerful that they represent continuity. The Archetypes become the basis for understanding the relationship between contemporary design and historic precedents in interior design.¹⁸

An Intypes researcher may begin looking for design traits historically, moving to present, or examining traits from the present backwards. I used the latter approach, beginning with contemporary interiors and tracing them back in time. Initial image groupings went through many transformations throughout the process. The images collected either reinforced earlier hypotheses or led to the shifting, combining, and discarding of others. The apartment research produced several elements categories, such as circulation, color, display aesthetics, furnishing, material, space, and view.

Interior design elements such as plans, circulation, architectural walls, interior walls, furniture and its lay-outs, lighting, views, stair cases, details, color,

¹⁷ Robert Maxwell, *Polemics. The Two Way Stretch: Modernism: Tradition and Innovation* (London: Academy Editions, 1996), 12 in Jennings, “A Case for a Typology of Design,” 48-68.

¹⁸ Jan Jennings, “Dialectic of New and Old: Theory Investigations in Studio Design,” *Interiors and Sources* (March 2003): 74-77.

materials and display, were considered. Visual analysis interprets the characters by descriptive writing and explicit icons and is solidified by giving the distinct name. Timelines support the sufficient evidence to illustrate a visual and chronological summary for each archetype of apartments. Also, the apartment archetypes can share other typologies and interact with other interior design archetypes.

On-site field studies to Chicago, New York and Seoul provided new viewpoints that photographs cannot provide. Identification of composites of apartment traits can be revised and reevaluated by collaboration and discussion with thesis committee and other graduate researchers. Contemporary apartment Interior archetypes are mounted on the Cornell University Interior Archetypes web site. Therefore, this interactive and researchable project will be available to and added by professional and academic fields.

1.5 Literature Review

Based on photographic evidence from architecture and interior design trade magazines, each Intype isolates an apartment design strategy and traces its development through time. All issues of *Interior Design* (more than 1,000) published within the last sixty years were examined, as well as more than 170 issues of *Architectural Record*, and numerous issues from international trade journals, such as *Abitare*, *AIT*, and *Interiors Korea*.

Primary Sources

Interior design trade magazines constitute the major source of primary sources that were examined. Of these, *Interior Design* and *Architectural Record* have

the most longevity. *Architectural Record* began publication in the 1890 decade. *Interior Design*, with over 1,000 issues, began publication in 1932. These two journals provide an extraordinarily lengthy chronological documentation with floor plan and photographic evidence of published interior design practices from the late nineteenth century to the present.

Architectural Record, the most comprehensive architectural trade journal, was somewhat less helpful than *Interior Design* in that some of the apartment projects published do not have photographs of interior spaces. Most often, *Architectural Record* featured apartments as one-unit renovations. Overall, *Architectural Record* published fewer apartments than *Interior Design*.

International trade magazines were also examined for this study, because *Interior Design* and *Architectural Record* tend to focus on the west.

International sources included *Abitare* published in Milan, Italy; *AIT* published in Stuttgart, Germany; and *Interiors Korea* published in Seoul, Korea.

Abitare is published in Italian with English summaries. The magazine focuses on residential and commercial architecture and interiors in Europe and also from around the world. Some projects in *Abitare* provide final construction photographs, as well as diagrams of the design process. This feature offered insight about how a designer developed a concept and how the concept was realized in apartment spaces. In comparison with *Interior Design* and *Architectural Record*, the magazine yielded far fewer projects.

AIT: Architektur, Innenarchitektur, Technischer Ausbau, a German design

magazine, includes numerous contemporary examples of designs that are exemplary of experimental and creative designs all over the world. In many cases, there are floor plans, elevations, construction photos, and summarized articles in English. Although *AIT* has been published from the beginning of the twentieth century, I could access issues from 1980 forward.

Interiors Korea is the most recognized interior design magazine in Korea. Although the magazine began publication in 1992, this source introduces many projects of apartment interiors; several special issues are dedicated to apartment interior design. This source also includes Chinese apartment interiors. *Interior Korea* complements the Asian apartment practices, especially in Korea. Above all, Interior Korea is regarded as a very comprehensive source to understand how traditional Korean house are interpreted to modern apartment spaces.

Secondary Sources—Building Type

As New York City is one of the representative cities composed of both a number of historical and modern apartment buildings, there are several references about the history and chronological case studies of New York apartments.

Elizabeth Collins Cromley's *Alone Together: A History of New York's Early Apartments*, is a seminal interpretive architectural and social history of the American apartment house in Manhattan. Cromley writes about the needs that inspired apartment houses, and their emergence and maturation. She describes where they were located, what they looked like, how they interacted

with the urban environment, and how their interior forms were formed.

Another history of the New York apartment is Andrew Alpern's *New York's Luxury Apartments: With Original Floor Plans from the Dakota, River House, Olympic Tower and Other Great Buildings* (1975). This reference is almost totally visual with brief descriptions of each apartment building. Although floor plans are published, there are no interior photographs, only exterior ones. Nevertheless, this book helped to see the commonalities and differences of floor plans as a part of visual analysis of a historical content.

A number of recently published picture books with minimal text provided insight into current apartment designs. Alan Powers' *Apartment* (2001) is an informative source for understanding how interior designers transform small spaces and box-like forms into comfortable and adaptable spaces, particularly with the use of partitions, storage, display and color choices. Montse Borrás' *The New Apartment: Smart Living in Small Spaces* (2007) is divided into chapters that are solution-based for open space and multiple levels. Both books offer a large number of photographs that were visually informative to my study. Robyn Beaver's, *50 of the World's Best Apartments* (2004) also used the picture format for internationally featured apartments from in New York, London, Melbourne, Sydney, Sao Pulo, Hong Kong and Rio de Janeiro.

Ana G, Canizares, in *New Apartments* (2005), uses a case study approach that includes the technology of high-rise apartment buildings, details, and unit plans. Most cases includes technical content as well as exterior views and photographs of general interiors of apartment units. The photographs, however,

provided little information about display, furnishing or interior finishes.

Secondary Sources—General Histories

For an interpretive historical perspective about interior design and decoration of apartment interiors in Europe, the Netherlands, and America, Peter Thornton's *Authentic Décor: The Domestic Interior 1620-1920*, is one of the best sources. Thornton's sources include an antiquarian-based collection of portfolios and early design periodicals. Thornton sees the design of rooms and period contexts as central to architectural and social history. After the apartment Interior Archetypes were identified, I used this source to help trace historical developments.

For the history of interior designs in the twentieth century refer to Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (1988). Stephen Calloway believes that attitudes toward interior design are partly determined by style; he posits that the styles reoccur and give influence to the next period. Calloway provides analytical writing, photos of the representative interior practices and drawings for every decade. This source is useful as a reference guide, and as an illustrated and annotated bibliography of interior design and decoration in the twentieth century.

For interpretations about traditional Korean architecture and design, one of the best sources is *Hanoak: Traditional Korean Homes* (1999). This book provided information about the historical and social contexts of interior spaces, as well as original meanings, functions and shapes of Korean design elements.

Hanoak also included a wide range of topics, such as architecture, interior

design, furniture, materials, color and patterns. Likewise, *Interior Space and Furniture of Joseon Upper-Class Houses* (2007), served as a rich reference for understanding the interior space of historical Korean houses with descriptions of the spaces and good photographic images. *Hanoak* focuses on general Korean traditional vernacular houses, while *Interior Space and Furniture of Joseon* focuses on upper-class houses.

Secondary Sources—Elements and Intypes

Some of the archetypical practices that I identified in apartment interiors already exist as Intypes. For example, the Showcase Stair, a practice in retail design, also occurs in luxury apartment interiors. Regarding stairs, I also examined John Templer's excellent study in the history and theory of stairs—*The Staircase: History and Theories* (1992). Stairs, as an interior element, have also been documented in photographic books, such as Eva Jiricna's, *Staircases* (2001), Michael Spens' *Staircases* (1995) and Silvio San Pietro and Paola Gallo's, *Stairs: Scale* (2002).

After I identified Ghost Hearth as an Intype, I read Jan Jennings, *Cheap and Tasteful Dwellings: Architectural Competitions and the Convenient Interior, 1879-1909* (2005) for the history of fireplace design in American single-family houses. Also informative were: Encarna Castillo, *Fireplaces: Architecture and Design* (2004) and Castillo and Henry J. Kauffman, *The American Fireplace: Chimneys, Mantelpieces, Fireplaces and Accessories* (1972).

1.6 Summary of Apartment Intypes

From this research ten apartment Intypes emerged, six from western practices—Black Out, Ghost Hearth, Kaleidoscope, Mix Match, Naked, Showcase Stair, and four from Asian practices—Borrowed View, Korean White, Living Floor, Numera.

Six Intypes with western usages were identified:

- 1) Black Out is a black room or interior space consisting of black shades for walls, floors, ceilings and furnishings.
- 2) Ghost Hearth describes a faux fireplace which makes visually interior spaces cozy and comfortable without thermal function.
- 3) Kaleidoscope describes a space in which a mirror comprises wholly or partially the entire wall or ceiling; the two mirrored planes cause reflections similar to a kaleidoscope effect.
- 4) Mix Match describes the appropriation and mixing together of cultural artifacts, aesthetic styles and/or time periods without regard for original meanings.
- 5) Naked describes a space in which one or more bathroom fixtures are visible through transparent partitions or located out of the context of a private space, such as a bathtub located in a bedroom.
- 6) Showcase Stair is an extravagantly designed interior architectural feature in which functionality is secondary to the spatial drama created by a stair's structure, form, materiality and lighting.

As a native Korean, I also researched traditional Korean interior practices, identifying and naming four apartment Intypes that are derived from Asian

origins:

- 1) Borrowed View originates from a traditional Japanese practice of visually incorporating an extraordinary adjacent or distant exterior view into the interior.
- 2) Korean White describes the traditional practice of combining a natural white (not a bright or bleached white) with texture that often results in textured plaster walls or rice paper for windows and doors.
- 3) Numara is a traditional Korean room used to entertain guests. It is found in contemporary Korean apartments as a smaller living room within a larger living room. The numarus is separated from the living room by a plinth, partial enclosure (such as shades) and low-to-the-floor furniture.
- 4) Living Floor describes the Korean cultural practice of sitting on the floor, or close to the floor, and the tactile experiences of specific floor finishes, as well as the use of low-level furniture and *bangsuk* (cushion for sitting).

Table 1. Summary of Archetypical Interior Design Practices in Luxury Apartments by Cultural Origin


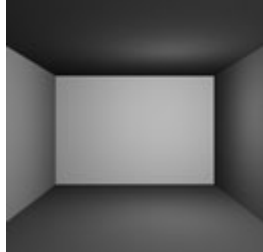







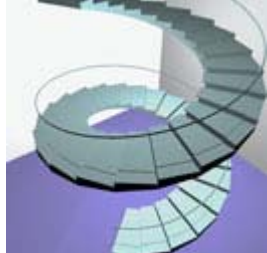
intype	icon	western	eastern
<p>borrowed view originates from a traditional Japanese practice of visually incorporating an extraordinary adjacent or distant exterior view into the interior.</p>			<p>Japanese</p>
<p>black out is an interior space or room entirely consisting of black shades for walls, floors, ceilings and furnishings.</p>			
<p>ghost hearth in a luxury apartment consists of a non-functioning fireplace with a mantel and surround that serve as a decorative wall element. The "hearth" may be original, historic, faux or new.</p>			
<p>kaleidoscope describes an interior space in which two reflective planar surfaces are placed perpendicularly to each other, such as a mirror wall and a window wall, or a mirror ceiling and a mirror wall. The planes create a kaleidoscope of reflections.</p>			
<p>Korean white describes the traditional practice of combining a natural white (not a bright or bleached white) with texture that often results in textured plaster walls or rice paper for windows and doors.</p>			<p>Korean</p>
<p>living floor describes the Korean cultural practice of sitting on the floor, or close to the floor, and the tactile experiences of specific floor finishes, as well as the use of low-level furniture and bangsuk (cushion for sitting).</p>			<p>Korean</p>

Table 1. (Continued)

intype	icon	western	eastern
<p>mix match describes the appropriation and mixing together of cultural artifacts, aesthetic styles, and/or time periods without regard for original meanings. Mix Match is subject to theming.</p>			
<p>naked is a space in which one or more bathroom fixtures are visible through transparent partitions, or located out of the context of a private space, such as a bathtub located in a bedroom.</p>			
<p>Numara is a traditional Korean wood-floored room to entertain guests and a space for the occupants' relaxation and contemplation. <i>Numaru</i> is often distinguished from a larger living room by a plinth, a partial enclosure (such as shades), and low-to-the-floor furniture.</p>			<p>Korean</p>
<p>showcase stair is an extravagantly designed architectural feature in which the stair itself becomes a prominent display element. Its functionality is often secondary to the spatial drama created by the stair's structure, form, materials and lighting.</p>			

The research evidence also led me to categorize five additional Intypes that were not developed, because of a lack of sufficient historical evidence:

- 1) Mirror Mirror denotes the presence of two or more mirror walls in a space. Reflective qualities of the various mirrors repeat the image of the space and its objects multiple times. Mirror Mirror was incorporated into Kaleidoscope.
- 2) Icy describes metallic materials, finishes and details, such as stainless steel.
- 3) Black White is an interior space that is limited to a black and white palette for the floor, wall and ceiling planes, and for furnishings. This Intype is found in

restaurants and resorts and spas.

4) Double Stuffed is a double wall-width partition or wall for storage. One reiteration of a thick wall is a puzzle box, a movable thick wall with concealed hardware and flat smooth surfaces, often with openings on all four sides.

5) Modesty describes the traditional Korean philosophy of using natural materials in their original finishes and textures, the use of subdued colors and color schemes, and the organic integration of simple and clean lines. This practice was not developed, because it was too abstract, more akin to a philosophy than a practice.

Table 2. Archetypical Interior Design Practices in Luxury Apartments by Element

element	intype	intype	intype	intype
circulation	showcase stair			
color	black out	Korean white		
furnishing	ghost hearth	living floor	mix match	
material	Korean white			
space	kaleidoscope	living floor	naked	<i>numara</i>
view	borrowed view	kaleidoscope		

Circulation. The Showcase Stair in apartment design occurs in two locations, in the lobby as a grand stair, and space permitting, in an individual apartment as a sculptural and/or dematerialized stair.

Color. Color emerged as an important element in luxury apartment design. The White Box, previously identified in almost all practice types (art museum, boutique hotel, house, restaurant), is certainly prevalent in apartment interiors. However, this Intype has entered the lexicon and proving its existence in apartment design did not seem warranted. However, I identified and named two color Intypes, one in western use, Black Out, and the other in Korean use,

Korean White. Black Out is an all black room or space consisting entirely of black shades, primarily suitable for evening entertaining, as a backdrop for important art collections, or as a luxurious monochromatic space. It expresses urban life style and chic urbanity in the luxury apartments. Korean White emphasizes an imperfect beauty, a natural white color and its texture from organic materials. Although the White Box and Korean White are shades of white, one is cool and the other warm, and they each have very different cultural and design origins.

Furnishing. Mix Match was identified by Mijin Juliet Yang in *Theory Studies: Contemporary Boutique Hotel Design* (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2005) as a display aesthetic. This research broadened her definition to include wall treatment and furnishing. Ghost Hearth in a luxury apartment consists of a non-functioning fireplace as a decorative wall element. There are two types of hearth. One is an existing, but not functioning fireplace in an historic apartment, and the other is a new or faux fireplace that is a decorative wall treatment. This is a design solution for giving a sense of comfort to apartment spaces. This research suggests that fire place can retain economic status, style, tradition or nostalgia, as well as historic conservation and preservation. Living Floor is a spatial Intype that also has implications about furnishings, namely low-to-floor tables and cushions for seating on the floor.

Material. Material selection in apartment spaces is very limited compared to commercial and large scale buildings. Carefully selected materials make the most of small spaces and give variety to the limited apartment spaces. Korean White, both a color and a material, has been employed in apartments

internationally as a minimal, light and slightly textured material.

Space. The majority of the Intypes identified and named for luxury apartments are spatial—Kaleidoscope, Living Floor, Naked, Numaru. Three of the categories—Living Floor, Naked, Numaru—suggest certain behaviors, a way of living. Living Floor and Numaru originated as a specific, traditional way of entertaining, that has continued in the culture historically. Naked, first identified as a boutique hotel practice, is designed for the private area of an apartment, the bathroom. Those who chose the Naked Intype must be willing to live openly, comfortably with their bodies.

View. High-rise apartments often have significant views from inside-out. The notion of a Borrowed View originates from traditional Japanese architecture. In this concept, the immediate or middle-ground views may not be interesting. Borrowing a view of a grand mountain, say, in the distant view, gives new interest to the interior. The Borrowed View in urban high-rise luxury apartments is often a dramatic city view in the distance, or a significant building, such as the Empire State Building. To mediate small space, Borrowed View, extends one's eye outside of the immediate surrounding. Another common design practice in high-rise apartments is the Kaleidoscope effect of multiple interior views in which reflections deepen and sometimes enlarge small spaces.

Luxury high-rise apartments and condominiums share interior archetypical practices with boutique hotel Intypes (Black Out, Mix Match, Naked) in their appeals to a high-end clientele and *avant-garde* interiors. The Intype, Mix Match, is a popular furnishing Intype in apartments, boutique hotels, resorts and spas and restaurants.

Table 3. Apartment Intypes That Occur in Other Practice Types

intype	practice type	practice type	practice type	practice type
black out	apartment	boutique hotel		
borrowed view	apartment			
ghost hearth	apartment			
kaleidoscope	apartment			
Korean white	apartment			
living floor	apartment			
mix match	apartment	boutique hotel	resort & spa	restaurant
naked	apartment	boutique hotel		
numera	apartment			
showcase stair	apartment	house	retail store	

1.7 Conclusion

As a result of this research, I gained an understanding about how apartments have evolved as a building type and assumed a significant role in interior design and architecture practice. Linking the design of contemporary apartments with historical research has strengthened my knowledge of interior design theory. This approach offers me many more source ideas and examples that will help me when I return to practice. Some aspects of the research were challenging, including the process of naming and creating icons that would work both verbally and visually. This research has been a collaborative effort with my thesis committee members and the Intypes Research Group, an interdisciplinary group of faculty and other graduate student researchers. All broadened my points of view.

If I were to approach this study again and given more time, I would like to broaden my research boundaries such as whole design concepts to include lay-outs, plans and circulation, as well as details. Also, I would like to do more research on social, cultural and economic conditions, technology, materials of

the representative apartment practices in each period. Recent apartment buildings include not only individual units, but also public spaces and services; therefore, spatial relationships among the units and public spaces also need to be studied. I came to realize apartment interiors continue to evolve; reiterations for each typology continue to evolve.

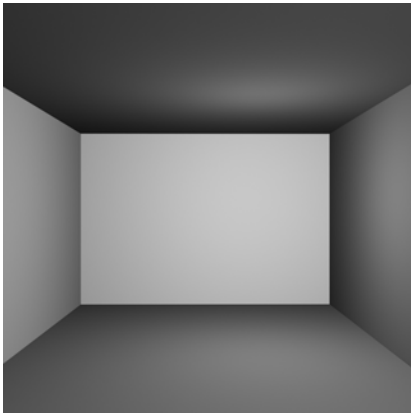
Chapter 2

COLOR

2.1 Blackout

Interior archetypes

Blackout



Element

Color

Space

Descriptive words

Monochromatic, monochrome, neutral, backdrop, dark, colorless

Definition

Black Out is an all black room or space consisting entirely of black shades for walls, floors, ceilings and furnishings.

Application Definition

Black Out in luxury apartments is primarily associated with chic urbanity—a stage set for evening entertaining, a backdrop for important art collections, and a luxury space in monochrome.

Color

Black is the preeminent achromatic color, since there is no true black without depriving a space of light. This is undoubtedly why black has been assigned negative values: evil, death, the devil. Still this color, or rather non-color, is not always associated with such dark symbolism; it is sometimes synonymous with asceticism and austerity, such as in religious clothing. In architecture, it is not uncommon to find homes painted black in Protestant countries, which emphasize and impose self-restraint and austerity.¹

In modern periods, the interpretation of black has been extended and reevaluated. In 1977, Modern artist Wassily Kandinsky, wrote that black was "Like an oblivion without possibility, like a dead void after the sun's death, eternal silence, without future, black resonates internally . . . The feeling of black is mourning without hope, but it is infinite and spiritual."²

In the 1980s, Ad Reinhardt, an artist of the Abstract Expressionist movement, reevaluated the meaning of black in his reductive all-black paintings. Reinhardt is best known for his so-called "black" paintings of the 1960s, which appear, at first glance, to be simply canvases painted black, but are actually composed of

¹ Jean-Philippe Lenclos and Dominique Lenclos, *Colors of the World : The Geography of Color* (New York : Norton, 2004), 33.

² Lenclos, *Colors of the World*, 33.

a number of black and nearly black shades. He had started single-color paintings in Red and Blue, and he focused on the all black paintings as absolutes. The process of a black painting relates to Zen meditation and involves attempting to make the “Ultimate” painting. Ad Reinhardt raised black to a sacred status by making these repetitive, monochromatic, all-black paintings, which influenced Minimalism.³ In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the term Minimalism is also used to describe a trend in design and architecture, in which the subject is reduced to its necessary elements. The use of a variety of colors was restrained in favor of fundamental and geometric forms purged of all metaphor, equality of parts, repetition, neutral surfaces, and industrial materials. Black as pure color became a favorite for interiors and architecture.

In the 20th century there is no bias concerning black space. Black Out is a common color in commercial interiors, such as restaurants, nightclubs and bars. In retail interiors, black settings are used for displaying bright or colorful objects. In residential designs, however, people are reluctant to use black, because natural lighting is considered an important element. In apartments, a small space becomes smaller if the spaces and furnishes are all black.

Black Out in Luxury Apartments

Compared to residents of family homes, city dwellers, who spend most of their time in their apartments at night, expect their spaces to have a dramatic atmosphere. To create the aura of a nighttime urban landscape and provide the desired background for skyline views, high-rise apartments are designed

³ Sam Hunter, “Ad Reinhardt: Sacred and Profane,” *Record of the Art Museum* 50, no. 2 (1991): 26-38.

with an extensive use of black,⁴ a color often associated with chic and urbane spaces. Black Out and White Box have one aspect in common. A White Box tends to make objects precious, untouchable and exclusive. Black Out has a similar effect, especially if artificial lighting reinforces the display aesthetic.

By the 1980 decade Black Out has become an archetypical practice in luxury apartments. Designer Marcel Bretos transformed a Manhattan apartment (Figure 2.1.1) into a Black Out space in order to capitalize on city vistas. Black walls next to windows causes the buildings viewed out the window to become more noticeable and brighter.⁵ In other words, black walls provide the frame for a city view. Black Out also provides a background for objects or spatial areas.



Figure 2.1.1

Living room, unknown building name [unknown date] Marcel Bretos; New York City

PhotoCrd.: Jaime Ardiles-Arc

Edie Lee Cohen, "View from Fifth Avenues," *Interior Design* 51, no. 7 (July 1980): 202-205.

Another Manhattan apartment (Figure 2.1.2) designed by Eric Bernard has all-

⁴ Barry H. Slinker, "Black Magic," *Interior Design* 60, no.1 (Jan. 1989): 222-223.

⁵ Edie Lee Cohen, "View from Fifth Avenues," *Interior Design* 51, no. 7 (Jul.1980): 202-205.

black finishes, including metal, glass, black mirrors, dark vinyl walls and black lacquered surfaces. Artificial lighting focuses the eye on the client's art collection; objects shine against its black frame, creating the illusion that light lifts the pedestal-supported objects from the enveloping darkness.⁶ Bernard notes that since "the occupants' at-home and entertaining hours are confined to evenings almost exclusively, the light and sparkle picked up by reflective surfaces within the basically dark setting creates a dramatic and fantastic atmosphere."⁷



Figure 2.1.2

Living room, unknown building name and date, Eric Bernard, New York, USA
PhotoCrd.: Jaime Ardiles-Arc
M.G.-Monica Geran, "With a View to Enjoyment," *Interior design* 51, no.7 (Sep.1980): 276-281.

In another New York City apartment, designer Charles Allem arranged black and white photographs against a panel of black velvet drapery (Figure 2.1.3). The contrast between the white-matted photographs and the interior walls, transforms the apartment into a gallery space. Polished and glittering materials, from stainless-steel furniture to a 1930s nickel-and-black lacquer triple-tiered

⁶ M.G.-Monica Geran, "With a View to Enjoyment," *Interior design* 51, no.7 (Sep.1980): 276-281.

⁷ Monica Geran, "Artful," *Interior design* 57, no.5 (May.1986): 296.

circular table and a stainless-steel bench, draw eyes to furniture in space “like jewelry in a showcase.”⁸ The zebra-striped black and white floor covering almost creates a Black White space.



Figure 2.1.3

Living room, unknown building name [2001] Charles Allem, New York City
PhotoCrd.: Michael Moran

Steven M. L. Aronson, "Charles Allem: A Feel for Twentieth-Century Style and Glamour Marks his New York City Apartment" *Architectural Digest* 58, no. 9 (Sept. 2001): 248-53, 292.

In the 21st century, Black Out continues to be used as an interior backdrop, but black has also acquired a more nuanced expression. For example, Greg Natale’s design in 2005 for a Sydney, Australian apartment emphasized various textures and tones in walls, furnishings and furniture. (Figure 2.1.4). The interior is composed of a bold basalt floor, a charcoal gray stucco finished wall, a tea table made of black back painted glass, a black leather sofa, and black taffeta window coverings.⁹ This black composition highlights the richness, stylishness, and luxury of the apartment. A single yellow armchair

⁸ Steven M. L. Aronson, "Charles Allem: A Feel for Twentieth-Century Style and Glamour Marks his New York City Apartment" *Architectural Digest* 58, no. 9 (Sept. 2001): 248-53, 292.

⁹ Montse Borrás, "Darlinghurst Apartment," *The New Apartment: Smart Living in Small Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2007), 256.

breaks the black, and at the same time, calls attention to an all-black setting.



Figure 2.1.4

Living room, unknown building name [2005] Greg Natale Interior Design, Sydney, Australia

PhotoCrd.: Sharrin Rees

Montse Borrás, "Darlinghurst Apartment," *The New Apartment: Smart Living in Small Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2007), 256.

At the beginning of the 21st century, New York City experienced a condominium building boom of new luxury high-rises designed by celebrity architects and designers, such as Richard Meier (Perry Street Towers, 2002); Armani/Casa (20 Pine, 2006); and asymptote, Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture (166 Perry Street, 2007). These luxury condominiums offered concierge services, views of city skylines and opulent materials for kitchens and bathrooms, and each sales office used model apartments to show potential clients. The interior design division of Giorgio Armani, Armani/Casa, converted a former Chase bank into a 409-unit building, and showcased it with a Black Out model apartment. Clients entering the sales office of the W Hotel Condo stepped from a bright city street into an all black space with red neon accents.

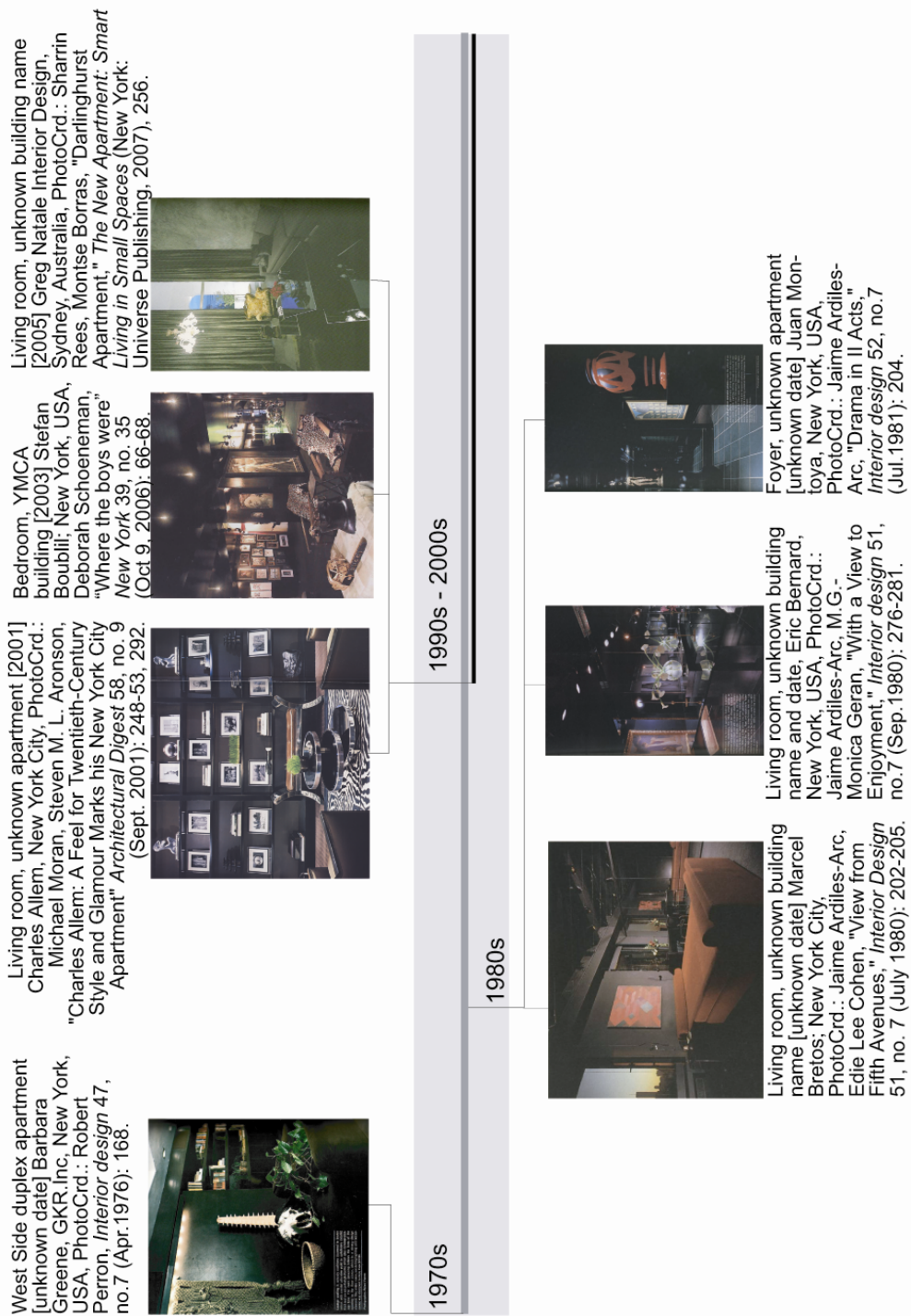


Figure 2.1.5
Timeline: Black out

The archetypical practice of Black Out in lavish apartments continues unabated as a symbol of extravagance and drama.¹⁰

2.2 Korean White

Interior archetypes

Korean White



Element

COLOR

¹⁰ **Citations from the timeline:**

1970s: West Side duplex apartment [unknown date] Barbara Greene, GKR.Inc.;New York, USA in *Interior design* 47, no.7 (Apr.1976): 168 **1980s:** Living room, unknown apartment [unknown date] Marcel Bretos; New York City in Edie Lee Cohen, "View from Fifth Avenues," *Interior Design* 51, no. 7 (July 1980): 202-205.; Living room, unknown apartment [unknown date] Eric Bernard; New York, USA in M.G.-Monica Geran, "With a View to Enjoyment," *Interior design* 51, no.7 (Sep.1980): 276-281.; Foyer, unknown apartment [unknown date] Juan Montoya; New York, USA, in "Drama in II Acts," *Interior design* 52, no.7 (Jul.1981): 204., **1990s-2000s:** Living room, unknown apartment [2001] Charles Allem; New York City, USA in Steven M. L. Aronson, "Charles Allem: A Feel for Twentieth-Century Style and Glamour Marks his New York City Apartment" *Architectural Digest* 58, no. 9 (Sept. 2001): 248-53, 292.; Bedroom, YMCA building [2003] Stefan Boubliil; New York, USA in Deborah Schoeneman, "Where the boys were" *New York* 39, no. 35 (Oct 9, 2006): 66-68.; Living room, unknown apartment [2005] Greg Natale Interior Design; Sydney, Australia in Montse Borrás, "Darlinghurst Apartment," *The New Apartment: Smart Living in Small Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2007), 256.

MATERIAL

Descriptive words

pure, natural, clean, unexaggerated, original, organic, innate, superficial, spiritual, not artificial, untouched

Definition

Korean White is an organic white material, such as plaster, rice paper, hemp, or silk, used in traditional and contemporary Korean residences. The materials express an imperfect beauty of natural textures and tones, rather than artificiality or perfection.

Application Definition

Korean designers interpret traditional uses of Korean White in contemporary luxury apartments by combining several shades of white in one space and adding black as an accent.

Description

Korean White is a subdued white, similar to off-white or ivory, and combined with texture such as white color pigments of plaster for walls and rice paper for windows and doors. Korean White occurs naturally and organically from a material's properties, such as plaster, rice paper, hemp and silk whose properties.

The Meaning of White in Korean Culture

Although there are diverse explanations why Koreans have favored white

throughout their long history, white's importance to the culture cannot be denied. Koreans believe themselves to be the descendants of the bright and pure sun.¹¹ White is related to purity and good omens. Many names of mountains in Korea contain the suffix paksan (a white mountain), because Koreans regard them as sacred, having absorbed the spirit of the sun's rays. The Chinese history, *Three Kingdoms*, notes that the common Korean in Buyo, one of the historical Korean nations (B.C 238- A.D 494), wore white clothing and called themselves "white-clad folk."¹² Expressions of pure white are embedded in cultural rites, such as the custom of making white rice cakes on the hundredth day after the birth of a child and distributing them to 100 households. White noodles are eaten at weddings, as symbolic of many good things in life, including the sanctity of births and hopes for bright futures. White evokes the traditional Korean philosophy of inner beauty and originality. White also expresses the elegance that is characteristic in nature. Korean White is the opposite of artificiality.

The beauty of white in Korean arts is exemplified by Chosun white porcelain which was produced during the Chosun dynasty (1392-1910) (Figure 2.2.1). Chosun white porcelains reflect the Confucian ideals of modesty and frugality.¹³ The book of traditional Korean homes, *Hanoak*, describes the beauty of Chosun *porcelain*: when sunlight seeps through rice paper it casts warm, "milky rays on the decoration-free Chosun celadon pottery; the white color of the pottery glows subtly. With the creation of such understated art, Chosun

¹¹ James Hoare and Susan Pares. *Korean, An Introduction* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1988), 173.

¹² Jae-Soon Choi, et al., *Hanoak: Traditional Korean Homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 173.

¹³ Hoare and Pares. *Korean, An Introduction*, 143.

people strove to create an atmosphere that exuded quiet and comfortable beauty.”¹⁴ There are various white colors, classified as milkish-white, snowish-white, jade-like white, and opaque greyish-white according to the quality and the chronology of white porcelain.¹⁵

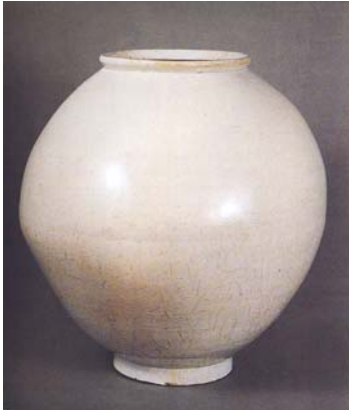


Figure 2.2.1

Chosun White Porcelain

Jae-yeol Kim, *White Porcelain and Punch'ŏng Ware* (London: Laurence King, 2003), 21.

Natural white materials used in traditional Korean houses expressed an imperfect beauty of natural textures and tones, rather than artificiality or perfection. Korean White represents simplistic, natural, spiritual and philosophical ideologies.

¹⁴ Jae-Soon Choi, *Hanoak*, 143.

¹⁵ Jae-yeol Kim, *White Porcelain and Punch'ŏng Ware* (London: Laurence King, 2003), 21.



Figure 2.2.2

Left: Naksunjae Estate, Changdug Palaca [1405] Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Jai-sik Suh

Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: traditional Korean homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 196.

Right: Traditional Korean House [unknown] Korea

PhotoCrd.: Jai-sik Suh

Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: traditional Korean homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 116.

Plaster or white paper wall finishes contrast sharply with dark wood floors, accenting the textural differences between the plaster and wood. The use of white rice paper for windows also provides a stunning visual element. Various lattice patterns are laid across the window frames; rice paper is glued on the interior side of the window (Figure 2.2.2 - Left).¹⁶ Rice paper has various expressions according to its particles, components, density and fineness (Figure 2.2.2 - Right). Soft natural light filtering through white rice paper and latticework produces a rich, warm interior space.¹⁷

Korean White in Contemporary Apartments.

Nostalgia for traditional and eco-friendly living insures that Korean White will remain an archetypical practice in luxury apartments for many more years.

¹⁶ Michael Freeman, Sian Evans and Mimi Lipton, *In the Oriental Style: A Sourcebook of Decoration and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 179-182.

¹⁷ Freeman, *In the Oriental Style*, 179-182.

Reiterations include both traditional and new materials, and often include a white background with black elements.

Korean designers, such as Si-young Choi, are interpreting traditional Korean White in contemporary luxury apartments. For the entrance wall in the Houstory Apartment in Daejeon, Korea (Figure 2.2.3-Left) Choi selected an off-white wall covering made of rice paper components. Small black sculptural objects adjacent to the back entry wall punctuate the wall.¹⁸ When people enter the apartment, their first impression is of a large black and white painting. However, small three-dimensional black sculptural objects on rice paper create this illusion. All of the surface finishes of the entry are shades of all natural materials. Choi suggests another use of Korean White for the living room of the Michelin Apartment in Seoul (Figure 2.2.3-right). He installed ivory fabric panels and arranged a conversational area with a long couch and matching chairs. A potted crape-myrtle tree stands in close proximity to a Korean White wall which sets a natural and subtly patterned background. The whites from the carpet and selective lighting also highlight textural differences among materials.¹⁹

¹⁸ Si-young Choi, "Houstory," *Interiors Korea* no.252(Sept. 2007): 180-184.

¹⁹ Ji-seong Jeong, *MARU Annual 1* (Seoul: CAPress, 2005), 266-269.



Figure 2.2.3

Left: Foyer, Houstory Apartment [unknown] Si-young Choi of Axis Design; Daejeon, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Ingi Jo

Si-young Choi, "Houstory" *Interiors Korea* no.252 (Sep. 2007): 180-184.

Right: Living room, Michelin Apartment [unknown] Si-young Choi: Axis Design, Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung

Ji-seong Jeong, *MARU Annual 1*(Seoul: CAPress, 2005), 266-269.

For the Parkpolis Apartment's living room (Figure 2.2.5 - Left) in Seoul, Bugon Kim installed an organically shaped light fixture made of layered rice paper; its light color and materiality create a sense of the fixture floating in space. The natural texture of the hand-made rice paper is emphasized by lighting; it makes irregular patterns emphasizing a finish that is not uniformly even, but random.²⁰

As traditional lighting devices (Figure 2.2.4) were made of white rice paper or silk, and provided a warm atmosphere to traditional houses filtering through white rice paper, designer Ee-Wha Yu placed a custom-made lighting box made of white rice paper with a lattice wood frame as a tea table in the living room in a Seoul apartment (Figure 2.2.5 - right). When the tea set is placed on

²⁰ Hyungju Yoon, "Parkpolis, 氣/安/感/休" *Interiors Korea* no.235 (April 2006): 138-148.

the table, it is illuminated by the indirect lighting effect through the white rice paper.²¹ The space is filled with white light from the rice paper lighting table.



Figure 2.2.4

Traditional lighting devices

PhotoCrd.: Jai-sik Suh

Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: traditional Korean homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 139.



Figure 2.2.5

Left: Living room, Parkpolis apartment [unknown] Bugon Kim, Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung

Hyungju Yoon, "Parkpolis, 氣/安/感/休" *Interiors Korea* no.235 (Apr. 2006): 138-148.

Right: Living room, unknown building name [unknown date] Ee-Wha Yu: ITM I&A; Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung

Unknown author, "A-Project" *Interiors Korea* no.240 (Sep. 2006): 144-155.

²¹ "A-project" *Interiors Korea* no.240 (Sept. 2006): 144-155.

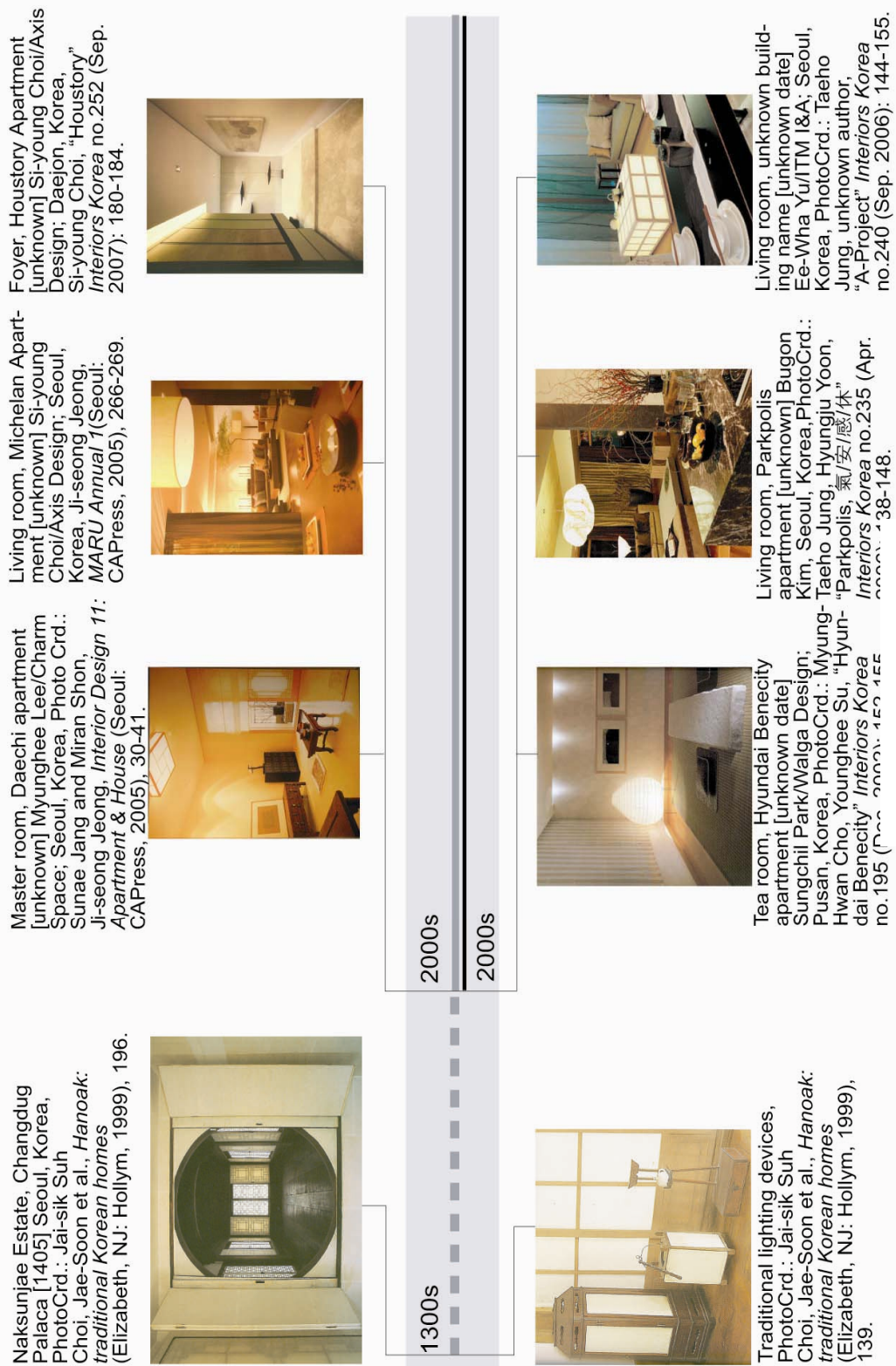


Figure 2.2.6
Timeline: Korean White

Using a contemporary vocabulary, modern Korean residential designers are achieving the abundance of white that pays homage to their ancestors' spaces.⁴⁰

White rice paper windows and filtered natural light is a borrowed visual effect from traditional houses. Lattices which frame window openings also contribute to a spatial richness.

⁴⁰ **1300s** Naksunjae Estate, Changdug Palaca [1405] Seoul, Korea in Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: traditional Korean homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 196; Traditional lighting devices in Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: traditional Korean homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 139; **2000s** Tea room, Hyundai Benecity apartment [unknown date] Sungchil Park/Wallga Design; Pusan, Korea in Younghee Su, "Hyundai Benecity" *Interiors Korea* no.195 (Dec. 2002): 152-155; Master room, Daechi apartment [unknown] Myunghee Lee/Charm Space; Seoul, Korea in Ji-seong Jeong, *Interior Design 11: Apartment & House* (Seoul: CAPress, 2005), 30-41; Living room, Michelin Apartment [unknown] Si-young Choi/Axis Design; Seoul, Korea in Ji-seong Jeong, *MARU Annual 1*(Seoul: CAPress, 2005), 266-269; Living room, Parkpolis apartment [unknown] Bugon Kim, Seoul, Korea in Hyungju Yoon, "Parkpolis, 氣/安/感/休" *Interiors Korea* no.235 (Apr. 2006): 138-148; Living room, unknown building name [unknown date] Ee-Wha Yu: ITM I&A; Seoul, Korea in unknown author, "A-Project" *Interiors Korea* no.240 (Sep. 2006): 144-155; Foyer, Houstory Apartment [unknown] Si-young Choi of Axis Design; Daejon, Korea in Si-young Choi, "Houstory" *Interiors Korea* no.252 (Sep. 2007): 180-184.

Chapter 3

DISPLAY AESTHETIC

3.1 Mix Match

Interior archetypes

Mix Match



Element

Furnishing

Descriptive words

Mixed, blended, intermingled, compounded, compositive

Definition

Mix Match describes the appropriation and mixing together of cultural artifacts, aesthetic styles, and/or time periods without regard for original meanings. Mix Match is subject to theming.

Application Definition—Luxury Apartments

Mix Match in luxury apartment interiors is represented by carefully-selected examples of fine and decorative arts and traditional artifacts and antiques, as well as decorative motifs, wall treatments, and display. The collections in apartments are often highly personalized.

Description

The mixing and matching of cultural artifacts is as old as the arrival in 1542 of the Portuguese in Japan; one of the earliest introductions of western culture to eastern ones. There are too many of these examples to capture them all, but by the middle of the 19th century, European, American and Asian countries came together to participate in various world exhibitions. For example, in 1862 Japan took part in the London Exhibition, and Asian cultures became more popular to the Western public.¹ Japanism, the late-19th century western vogue for all things Japanese, developed primarily from French *Japonisme*. This aesthetic trend was closely related to the general heightening of European and American interests in decorative design during the second half of the 19th century, stemming from the Aesthetic Movement.² A general awareness of Japanese art was fairly widespread among upper-middle-class Americans at the close of the 19th century.³

Mix Match is a form of eclecticism—the borrowing of a variety of styles from different sources and combining them. Eclecticism in architecture, interior

¹ Kevin Nute, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan: The Role of Traditional Japanese Art and Architecture in the Work of Frank Lloyd Wright* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1993), 5.

² Nute, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan*, 10.

³ John Pile, *A History of Interior Design* (Hoboken, N.J.: J. Wiley & Sons, 2005), 373.

design and the fine and decorative arts describe the combination of elements from different historical styles in a single work. Eclecticism is distant from the actual forms of the artifacts to which it is applied, and its meaning is thus rather indistinct.¹ Eclecticism never amounted to a movement or constituted a specific style.

Mix Match for luxury apartments (published in trade sources) emerges in the 1950s. By then western and eastern design had exerted their respective influences in architecture through such projects as Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel in Tokyo and the Hollyhock House in Los Angeles. There is some evidence that in the 1950 decade, a growing number of eastern and western home owners and apartment dwellers were exhibiting another culture's artifacts in their residences. By the 1960s European styles fully embraced Mix Match as urbane. The London drawing room of John French (Fig. 3.1.1) illustrates the use of Japanese paintings, vases and a screen. The large painting illustrates a Chinese woman sitting on a Regency sofa. In *Twentieth-Century Decoration* author Stephen Calloway referred to this arrangement as the "sparse or cool arrangement of rather heterogeneous objects."²

¹ Walter C. Kidney, "Preface," *The Architecture of Choice: Eclecticism in America, 1880-1910* (New York: G. Braziller, 1974), vii-viii.

² Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 336.



Figure 3.1.1

Drawing Room of John French, unknown building name, [c1960] London
PhotoCrd.: Vere French

Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988),
336.



Figure 3.1.2

Living room, unknown building name [unknown date] Robert Dowining, Atlanta,
USA

PhotoCrd.: Alexandre Georges

Unknown author, "At Home in Colony Sqaure," *Interior Design* 45, no. 1 (Jan,
1974): 112.

In luxury apartments in the 1980s, Mix Match extended its boundaries to spatial elements such as furnishings, wall treatments and finishes. For a redesigned New York apartment (Fig. 3.1.3), Billy W. Francis created a polyglot style of mixed period and provenance. There are 18th century Japanese screens, a Regency bench, a contemporary sofa set on an angle,

and a bronze sculpture by Michel Steiner. Japanese shoji window screens are managed electronically.¹ The apartment also adopts the Japanese practice of borrowing a commanding view, in this case of New York City. Modern, antique and cultural elements make this living room a good example of Mix Match.



Figure 3.1.3

Living room, United Nations Plaza Apartment [unknown date] Billy W.Francis; New York.

PhotoCrd.: Peter Viltale,
Monica Geran, "Contemporary Goes Global", *Interior Design* 60, no.9 (July 1989): 166-167.

In the 1990s and in luxury apartments Mix Match extended beyond the mixing together of two cultures to a variety of cultures, styles and periods. The Mix Match practice also expanded from a single room to the entire apartment. The living room of an apartment in Monte Carlo (Fig. 3.1.4) is comprised of wooden wall panels, suggesting Japanese screens; Chinese carpet designs painted on the parquet floors; a Chinese cloisonne copper piece; an oval English mahogany table; and an Orientalist English painting. Every room is differently themed and, in each room, the theme is expressed by different references. The dining room is a European interpretation of Eastern elements. In the blue entrance hall, called *Retour de Turquie*, the wooden paneled walls are painted to resemble ceramic tiles with Iznik designs; the bronze floor lamp is Neo-

¹ Monica Geran, "Contemporary Goes Global", *Interior Design* 45, no. 1 (July 1989): 166-167.

Greek; the chandelier is late French Imperial; and Turkey is evoked in the entrance door with an Ottoman motif. The designer, Roberto Peregalli, states “It’s not France, not Italy. It would be absurd to impose a specific style on a provincial farm, an English country residence.” The residents traveled widely and collected pieces throughout the world, and the space is a story of their experiences.¹



Figure 3.1.4

Living room, Monte Carlo Apartment [Unknown date] Roberto Peregalli, Italia
Photocrd.: Massimo Listri

W. Weaver, “Monte Carlo Reverie: Exotic Rooms for an Italian Television Star”,
Architectural Digest 55, no. 7 (July 1998): 156-61.

The practice of mixing and matching Asian and European Modern furnishings continues into the early part of the 21st century. In the Paris apartment of Jean-Michel Beurdeley (Fig. 3.1.5), designer Edouard Salas arranged an 8th century Siamese Buddha next to a 20th century Barcelona chair by Mies van der Rohe. Symbolic objects, such as Asian statuary or Buddha figures possess dramatic display value. They are evocative, because of their associations. Americans have adopted various Asian objects and aesthetics to provide an atmosphere

¹ W. Weaver, “Monte Carlo Reverie: Exotic Rooms for an Italian Television Star,” *Architectural Digest* 55, no. 7 (July 1998): 156-61.

of calm and tranquility. ¹



Figure 3.1.5

Living room, Paris apartment of Jean-Michel Beurdeley [unknown date]

Edouard Salas; Paris, France

PhotoCrd.: Pasca Hinouis

Michael Freeman, Sian Evans and Mimi Lipton, *In the Oriental Style: A Sourcebook of Decoration and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 205.

Increasing globalization and the growth of multicultural societies create an inevitable blurring, merging, and hybridization of stylistic and cultural influences. It is ironic that stylistic choice increases while, at the same time, many of the elements of the indigenous and ethnic diversity lose their origins.² Mix Match is the interior design practice that responds to this cultural phenomenon.

¹ Michael Freeman, Sian Evans and Mimi Lipton, *In the Oriental Style: A Sourcebook of Decoration and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 205.

² Martin Waller and Dominic Bradbury, *Fusion interiors* (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 2000), 212-245.

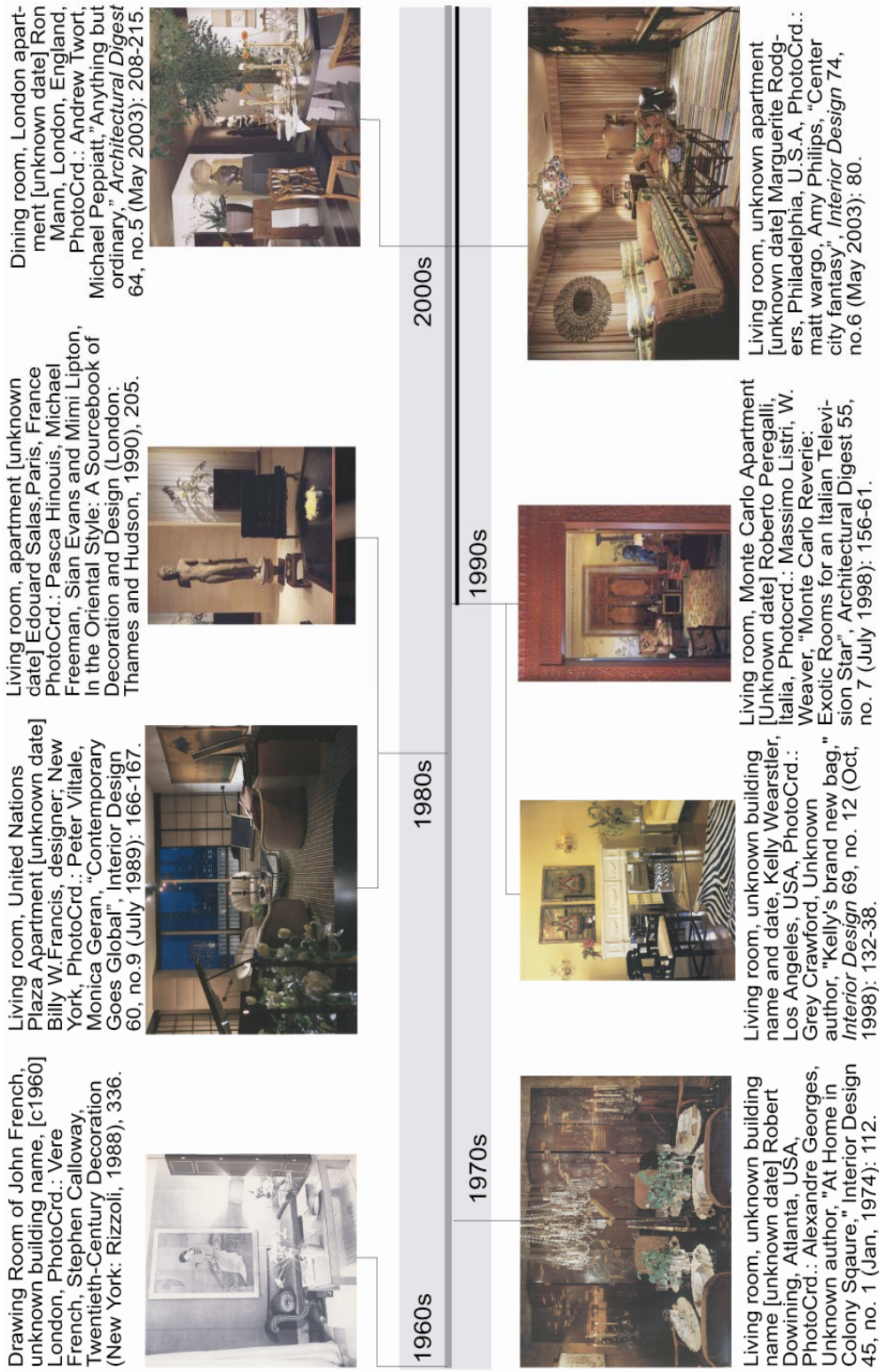


Figure 3.1.6
Timeline: Mix Match

Contemporary apartments are usually less affected by natural environments and regional surroundings in cosmopolitan cities; therefore, apartment interiors easily embrace the practice of Mix Match. Trade magazines illustrate a rich mix of sources, from all around the globe, from past and present, and from diverse indigenous cultures.¹

¹ **1960s:** Drawing Room of John French, [1960] London, in Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 336. **1970s:** Living room, unknown apartment [unknown date] Robert Dowining; Atlanta in "At Home in Colony Square," *Interior Design* 45, no. 1 (Jan, 1974): 112. **1980s:** Living room, United Nations Plaza Apartment [unknown date] Billy W. Francis; New York in Monica Geran, "Contemporary Goes Global," *Interior Design* 60, no.9 (July 1989): 166-167.; Living room, unknown apartment [unknown date] Edouard Salas, Paris, France in Michael Freeman, Sian Evans and Mimi Lipton, *In the Oriental Style: A Sourcebook of Decoration and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 205. **1990s:** Living room, unknown apartment [unknown date], Kelly Wearstler, Los Angeles, USA, PhotoCrd.: Grey Crawford, Unknown author, "Kelly's brand new bag," *Interior Design* 69, no. 12 (Oct, 1998): 132-38.; Living room, Monte Carlo Apartment [Unknown date] Roberto Peregalli, Italia in W. Weaver, "Monte Carlo Reverie: Exotic Rooms for an Italian Television Star", *Architectural Digest* 55, no. 7 (July 1998): 156-61. **2000s:** Dining room, unknown apartment [unknown date] Ron Mann, London, England in Michael Peppiatt, "Anything but ordinary," *Architectural Digest* 64, no.5 (May 2003): 208-215.; Living room, unknown apartment [unknown date] Marguerite Rodgers, Philadelphia, U.S.A in Amy Philips, "Center city fantasy," *Interior Design* 74, no.6 (May 2003): 80.

Chapter 4

SPACE

4.1 Kaleidoscope

Interior archetypes

Kaleidoscope



Element

Material

Space

View

Descriptive Words

Mirrored, reflective, duplicated, repeated, deceptive, illusory, magical, copied

Definition

Kaleidoscope describes an interior space in which two reflective planar surfaces are placed perpendicularly to each other, such as a mirror wall and a window wall, or a mirror ceiling and a mirror wall. The planes create a kaleidoscope of reflections.

Application Definition

Beginning in the 1920s Kaleidoscope became a popular intervention to visually enlarge small apartment spaces or those with low ceilings. It is especially effective in high-rise urban apartments as a way to capitalize and expand city views. At night, artificial lighting provides multi-dimensional views different from those in daylight reflections.

Description

Kaleidoscope is the result of years of experimentation in mirror usage, beginning in the 17th century. During parts of this history the mirror has loomed large as a framed object, but the Kaleidoscope effect emerged from the paneling of whole walls with mirrors. If one wall resulted in a good effect, then why not add a second wall in the same space? The window walls of the Modernist and International Style were so highly reflective that soon they were regarded as another type of mirror. This reasoning brings us to the archetypical practice of the Kaleidoscope effect in luxury apartments.

By 1670 the idea of facing walls with large areas of mirror-glass became increasingly popular to French architects and their clients. Decorators had achieved some striking effects in relatively small rooms by abutting plates of mirror-glass to form larger panels.

Perhaps the most well known of the French interiors is the Louis XIV Palace of Versailles (1678). (Figure 4.1.1) Set in is an elaborate complex of landscaped formal gardens, the Palace includes the famous Ga

lerie des Glaces (Hall of Mirrors), the plates of which were blown in Venice.¹ The gallery is comprised of seventeen mirror-clad arches that reflect seventeen arcaded windows overlooking the gardens. Lighted its entire length (75-meters), the gallery's surfaces reflect an opulent décor of glistening marble, shiny gilt bronze ornaments, glass chandeliers, and a painted ceiling.²



Figure 4.1.1
Galerie des Glaces (Hall of Mirrors), Palace of Versailles [1678] Versailles, France
PhotoCrd.: Brooklyn College History Dept, 1997

In 1678 Nicodemus Tessin (1654-1728), a Swedish architect, installed a mirror ceiling in the closet of the Princess of Orange at the little Dutch pleasure-palace at Honeselersdijk. By 1700 the princess of Germany also had a glazed bedchamber, as well.³ Throughout the 17th century glass and mirror makers continued to increase the size of individual plates.

In the 18th century architects set small panels of mirror-glass into the chimney-

¹ Corky Binggeli, *Materials for Interior Environments* (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 78; Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor: The Domestic Interior, 1620-1920* (New York: Viking, 1984), 53-54.

² Guy Walton, *Louis, XIV's Versailles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 25-27.

³ Thornton, *Authentic Décor*, 53-54.

breast above a fireplace opening and below an inset painting or some other form of ornament. In Paris between 1685 and 1720 decorative art (vases, tables, candle-stands, door-furniture, silver ware, arabesque wall-decoration) were placed in front of mirror-glass and the chimney-breast.¹ These panels formed a background for a display of art objects, each arranged on a separate bracket to form exciting visual patterns in reflection.²

In 1786 Paris, the bed, which stood opposite the windows, was surrounded with panels of mirror-glass in such a way as to reflect exterior views and to simulate an occupant's feeling of lying in the open air.³ The integration of outside and inside achieved with mirror reflections sometimes provides panoramic views which help to determine furniture arrangement.

The Arts and Crafts movement in 19th century England and the United States valued natural, matte materials and deemphasized bright and shiny surfaces for domestic and office interiors. Photographs of high-style or ordinary houses alike indicate the occasional use of framed mirrors in parlors and living rooms, but the mirrors are not large.

In 1925 the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs in Paris influenced a new decorative arts movement known as Art Deco that remained popular until about 1939. New materials, such as aluminum, stainless steel and Lucite, as well as glass, copper and gold leaf added to a lavish interior aesthetic adopted by hotels, office towers and movie theaters, such as the Chrysler Building in

¹ Thornton, *Authentic Décor*, 53-54.

² Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 245.

³ Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor*, 156.

New York City.

The Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, in 1923, extolled the virtues of mirror walls in shops, hotels and particularly restaurants where “very few people are willing to sit facing blank walls. A feeling of discomfort is common to most human beings when they sit thus turned away from companionship.”

Pittsburgh characterized an unbroken series of mirrors for the walls as expedient and desirable, because no matter where a guest sat, other people were visible. Mirrors were the most economical form of decoration, Pittsburgh reasoned, because at night lighting added brilliancy to the scene, and the mirrors were a permanent surface and easy to clean.¹



Figure 4.1.2

Ladies' Powder Room, Main Lounge, Radio City Music Hall [1932] Donald Deskey; New York

PhotoCrd.: The Donald Deskey Collection, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York
David A. Hanks, *Donald Deskey: decorative designs and interiors* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1987), 105.

In the late 1920s Coco Chanel renovated her Paris apartment in the Hotel Pillet-Will by covering the wooden wall paneling, which she disliked, with

¹ *Glass History, Manufacture and Its Universal Application* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., 1923), 68-71.

mirrors. (Figure 4.1.3) The effect gave the rooms ambiguous spatial quality, but one with an undeniable grandeur and richness. The kaleidoscope effect was further increased with other reflective surfaces of furniture, furnishings and artificial lighting.



Figure 4.1.3
Coco Chanel's Grand Apartment, Hotel Pillet-Will [c1928] Jose-Maria and Misia Sert; Paris
PhotoCrd.: Private collection
Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 175.

American interior and industrial designer Donald Deskey (1894-1989) created many lavish Art Deco apartment interiors for prominent New York City clients, such as Abby Aldrich Rockefeller in 1929 and Helena Rubinstein in 1930. In 1927 Adam Gimbel, newly appointed president of Sak's Fifth Avenue store, commissioned Deskey to design his Park Avenue apartment. Deskey finished the Gimbel's study with a polished copper ceiling that produced reflections with a Kaleidoscope effect, a treatment that Deskey repeated in several apartments.¹ (Figure 4.1.4 - Left) His earliest model for the interior of an apartment, shown at the American Designers' Gallery, New York, in 1929,

¹ David A. Hanks, *Donald Deskey: decorative designs and interiors* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1987), 76.

(Figure 4.1.4 - Right) included cork-lined walls, copper ceiling, movable walls, pigskin-covered furniture and a linoleum floor. He was one of the first American designers to use Bakelite, Formica, Fabrikoid, brushed aluminum and chromium-plated brass, in combination with other industrial materials.¹

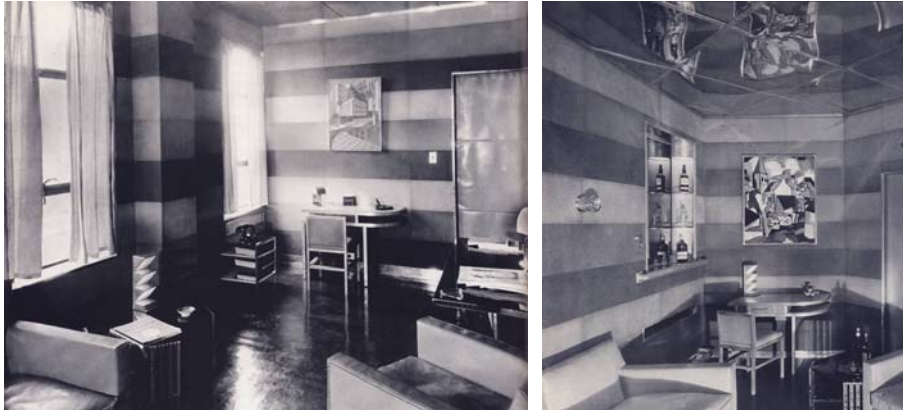


Figure 4.1.4

Left: Study room, Adam Gimbel Apartment [1927] Donald Deskey; New York PhotoCrd.: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York

David A. Hanks, *Donald Deskey: decorative designs and interiors* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1987), 76.

Right: Man's Smoking room, American Designers' Gallery [1928] Donald Deskey; New York

PhotoCrd.: The Donald Deskey Collection, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York
David A. Hanks, *Donald Deskey: decorative designs and interiors* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1987), 22-23.

Another early 20th century Manhattan interior designer, Rose Cumming (1886-1968), was also drawn to the use of shiny materials with reflective effects. In the 1930s, for the design of her own house on West Fifty Fourth Street in New York City, (Figure 4.1.5) Cumming installed polished floors and mirrored nearly every surface of a dressing room that opened into an entry hall. Mirrored panels in the foyer multiplied the image of a Chinese temple pagoda and marble goddesses, over which she suspended an 18th century crystal

¹ Hanks, *Donald Deskey*, 22-23.

chandelier in the form of a galleon.¹



Figure 4.1.5

Rose Cumming's Town house on West Fifth fourth Street [1930s] Rose Cumming; New York
PhotoCrd.: Rose Cumming, Incorporated
John Esten, *Manhattan Style* (Boston : Little, Brown, 1990), 37-38.

During the 1920 and 1930 decades, Art Deco bathrooms became the site of reflective effects similar to Kaleidoscope with the use of mirrors and pigmented structural glass (PSG), first introduced as a re-facing material for downtown storefronts. The chains of Rexall Drug and Russell Stover Candies both used mirrored dark cobalt blue PSG as their trademark fronts. Known by the trade names of Carrara, Vitrolite or Sani Onyx, the glass came in many colors.² The Pittsburgh Glass Company manufactured white, opaque Carrara as a substitute for marble, and Black Glass that had the appearance of polished jet. Interior architectural uses included wall base, wainscoting, partitions, interior walls and ceilings.³ Architect Cass Gilbert designed bright and spacious men's

¹ John Esten, *Manhattan Style* (Boston : Little, Brown, 1990), 37-38

² For a complete history of its manufacture and use, as well as maintenance and repair, see Preservation Brief 12, "The Preservation of Historic Pigmented Structural Glass (Vitrolite and Carrara Glass) (Washington, D.C.: Technical Preservation Service, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, n.d.), n.p.

³ *Glass History*, 159, 165.

and women's restrooms of the Woolworth Building (1913) and used Vitrolite and white Carrara glass surfaces of which craftsmen sheathed on all of upper office floors.¹ The Chrysler Building's Cloud Room (1930) included an etched Vitrolite mural. Black Glass, silvered to give it a rich mirror finish, was used as panels in Art Deco bathrooms in public, as well as residential buildings, including extravagant apartment bathrooms, including extravagant apartment bathrooms. In 1931, for the showman Samuel L. Rothafel and the Rockefeller family, Deskey created the interiors of Radio City Music Hall introducing aluminum foil wallpaper in the men's smoking lounge.

Film star Tilly Losch's 1932 bathroom in her London home caused a great sensation with the use of new reflective materials, including polished glass walls and a tilting ceiling mirror. (Figure 4.1.6) Artist Paul Nash used inch-thick stippled cathedral glass, which is pure white, but treated it with alloy silvering to produce a deep metallic purple color. The doors and electric radiator were treated with silvered reeded glass alloy; all additional metalwork was chromium plated. The composition of the wall resembled a Cubist painting rendered in reflective materials of different sizes, colors, tones, and textures.² The Kaleidoscope effect of mirrored planes created a dramatic aesthetic impact.

¹ Gail Fenske, *The skyscraper and the city : the Woolworth Building and the making of modern New York* (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 2008), 257.

² Fiona Leslie, *Designs for 20th-century interiors* (London: V&A Publications, 2000), 59-60.



Figure 4.1.6

Tilly Losch's bathroom, London home at 35 Wimpole Street [1932] Paul Nash, London

PhotoCrd: V & A Photographic Studio: W.12-1981

Fiona Leslie, *Designs for 20th-century interiors* (London: V&A Publications, 2000), 59-60.

In the 1930s, Olive Hill installed panels of beveled mirrors without decorative frames for the walls, ceilings, decorative panels and door architraves in a bathroom at the Gayfere House in London.¹(Figure 4.1.7) In front of a mirrored wall, Hill placed decorative objects, such as vases and perfume bottles, on glass shelves. Combined with the reflective fronts of a lavatory and a chest, every surface became available for reflection. Altogether the walls, ceiling, cabinet fronts, shelves and accessories formed endless Kaleidoscope effects made more capricious with electric lighting.

¹ Bathroom, Gayfere House [1932] Oliver Hill; Lord North Street, London in Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration*, 276.



Figure 4.1.7

Bathroom, Gayfere House [1932] Oliver Hill; Lord North Street London

PhotoCrd: Country House

Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 276.

At the end of the 1950s, Michael Inchbald created a space of endless vistas with opposing mirror-glass panels and boldly scaled inlaid flooring at his own house in London. In the entrance lobby two symmetrically placed obelisks reflect over and over again. (Figure 4.1.8) If one of the outer doors is folded back against a mirrored wall, a door handle in the shape of a lion's face seems to float into the kaleidoscopic scene.¹

¹ Entrance Lobby, Victorian Chelsea House [1959] Michael Inchbald; London in Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration*, 321.



Figure 4.1.8

Entrance Lobby, Victorian Chelsea House [1959] Michael Inchbald; London PhotoCrd': Michael Inchbald

Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 321.

International Style glass and steel high-rise apartments define the luxury apartment market in the 1950 and 1960s decades. Corner apartments, such as those in the Mies van der Rohe-designed Lake Shore Drive Apartments (1949-1951) in Chicago, are comprised of perpendicular window walls whose reflective qualities have much the same effect as a window wall and a mirror wall. John Heinrich and George Schipporeit, who were both students of Mies van der Rohe, designed Lake Point Tower in 1968. The placement of a mirror wall perpendicular to a window wall creates a double image of the views outside the window of Lake Michigan's shore. (Figure 4.1.9) Also in Chicago, Bertrand Goldberg's sixty-story round apartment towers, Marina City (1959-1964), feature window walls and breath-taking views of the city. (Figure 4.1.10)



Figure 4.1.9
Lake Point Tower [1968] John Heinrich and George Schipporeit; Chicago
Ph.Credit: Najung Kim



Figure 4.1.10
Marina City Apartment [1959-1964] Bertrand Goldberg; Chicago Ph.Credit:
Marina Management Corporation

Beginning in the 1960 decade, interior design trade magazines provide many examples of the use of Kaleidoscope in small apartments. One of the most effective of these is the East Side Manhattan cooperative converted by Valerian Rybar into a luxurious apartment. (Figure 4.1.11) She paneled the dining room walls in mirrors and installed library shelves filled with faux books. The space seems to be filled with books; their images reflected repeatedly. The bathroom is treated similarly, with mirrored wall and ceiling panels. When one is bathing in the tub, countless images of the room elements and of

oneself provide multiple and ever-changing views.¹



Figure 4.1.11

Left: Dining room, Right: Bathroom, East Side Manhattan Apartment [unknown date] Valerian Rybar; Manhattan, New York

PhotoCrd.: Alexandre Georges

Unknown, "There's No Place Like," *Interior Design* 43, no.9 (Sept. 1972): 156.

Jacques Grange, president of his own Paris-based design firm, created an imaginative space in a Paris apartment's dining room with a ceiling and wall grid of mirrors set in a wooden frame. (Figure 4.1.12) The countless reflective images reflect Greek style furniture, the sheen of a dining table top, crystal and candelabra.² In Madrid, for their own home, the Spanish design team of Roman Arange and Pin Morales achieved imaginative spaces with the Kaleidoscope effect. In the hall, mirrored surfaces create spatial illusion with a reflective infinity. A mirrored pyramid hangs from the ceiling and suspending an iron chandelier provides multi-dimensional images.³

¹ "There's No Place Like," *Interior Design* 43, no.9 (Sept. 1972): 156.

² Paige Rense, *Contemporary apartments* (Los Angeles : Knapp Press ; New York : Distributors, Viking Press, 1982), 56-65.

³ Rense, *Contemporary apartments*, 136-143.



Figure 4.1.12

Left: Paris Apartment [1970-1980s] Jacques Grange; Paris, France

PhotoCrd.: Pascal Hinous

Paige Rense, Contemporary apartments (Los Angeles : Knapp Press ; New York : Distributors, Viking Press, 1982), 56-65.

Right: Madrid Apartment on the Plaza de Oriente [1970-1980s] Roman Arango and Pin Morales; Madrid, Spain

PhotoCrd.: Jose Luis Perez

Paige Rense, Contemporary apartments (Los Angeles : Knapp Press ; New York : Distributors, Viking Press, 1982), 136-143.

On the 45th floor of a Manhattan apartment, mirrored surfaces are the outstanding feature of the master bedroom, reflecting all of mid-town Manhattan. Manchen & Walker Design placed the bed opposite the mirrors, so that occupants experience complex city panoramas that are both real and artificial.¹ (Figure 4.1.13) An angled mirror in Richard Assatly living room in Manhattan also offer changeable city panoramas that confuse people about whether the view is actual or reflected. The effect is especially spectacular at night when the interior is darkened.² (Figure 4.1.14)

¹ Edie Lee Cohen, "View from the 45th floor," *Interior Design* 52, no.10 (Oct.1981): 283.

² M.G-Monica Geran, "With a View to Enjoyment," *Interior Design* 51, no.9 (Sep.1980): 276-277.



Figure 4.1.13

Bedroom, New York Apartment [unknown date] Manchen & Walker Design;
New York City

PhotoCrd.: Jaime Ardiles-arce

Edie Lee Cohen, "View from the 45th floor," *Interior Design* 52, no.10 (Oct.
1981): 283.



Figure 4.1.14

Living room, New York Apartment, unknown building name [unknown date],
Eric Bernard; New York, U.S.A

PhotoCrd.: Jaime Ardiles-arce

M.G-Monica Geran, "With a View to Enjoyment," *Interior Design* 51, no.9
(Sep.1980): 276-277.

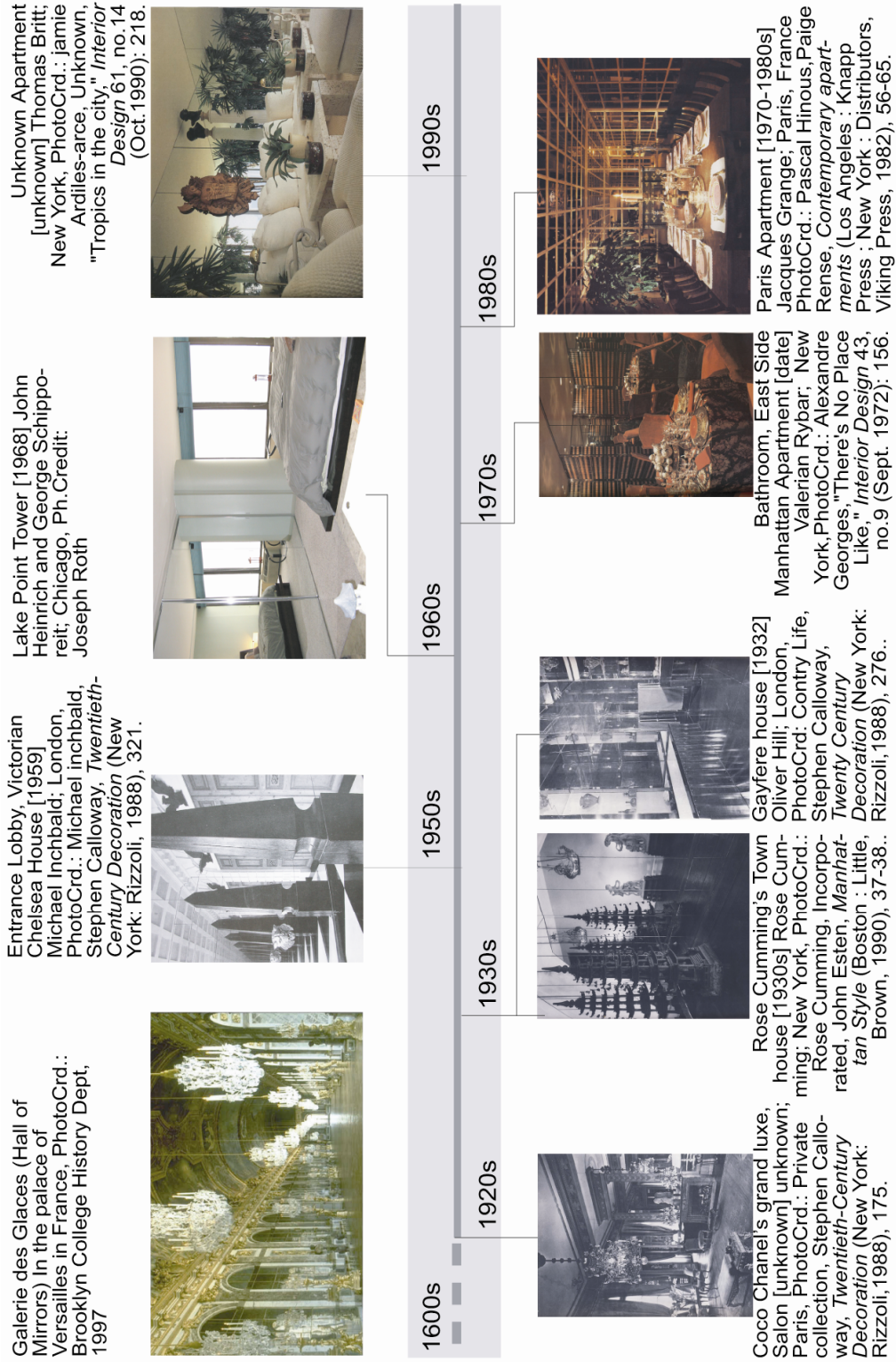


Figure 4.1.15
Timeline: Kaleidoscope

Generally apartments are limited to only one wall of windows, or two perpendicular walls in corner apartments, and square footage and quality views are always factors in luxury and/or high-rise apartments. The Kaleidoscope technique, begun in the 17th century, enlarges interiors perceptually.¹

¹ **1600s** Galerie des Glaces (Hall of Mirrors) In the palace of Versailles in France in Brooklyn College History Dept, 1997 **1920s** Study room, Adam Gimbel Apartment [1927] Donald Deskey; New York, in David A. Hanks, *Donald Deskey: decorative designs and interiors* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1987), 76., Man's Smoking room, American Designers' Gallery [1928] Donald Deskey; New York in Hanks, *Donald Deskey*, 22-23., Coco Chanel's Grand Apartment, Hotel Pillet-Will [1928] Jose-Maria and Misia Sert; Paris in Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 175. **1930s** Rose Cumming's Town house on West Fifth fourth Street [1930s] Rose Cumming; New York in John Esten, *Manhattan Style* (Boston : Little, Brown, 1990), 37-38., Ladies' Powder Room, Radio City Music Hall[1932] Donald Deskey; New York in Hanks, *Donald Deskey*, 105., Unknown Apartment [unknown] Frederick W. Davis; New York in unknown "Two by line," *Interior Design* 32, no.2 (Feb.1961):101., Tilly Losch's bathroom, London home at 35 Wimpole Street [1932] Paul Nash, London in Fiona Leslie, *Designs for 20th-century interiors* (London: V&A Publications, 2000), 59-60., Bathroom, Gayfere House [1932] Oliver Hill; Lord North Street London in Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration*, 276., **1950** Entrance Lobby, Victorian Chelsea House [1959] Michael Inchbald; London in Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration*, 321., **1970** Unknown Apartment [unknown] Marcus Caine of Mayerson, Inc.; New Jersey in unknown, *Interior Design* 49, no.5 (May.1978): 199., **1980** Paris Apartment [1970-1980s] Jacques Grange; Paris, France in Paige Rense, *Contemporary apartments* (Los Angeles : Knapp Press ; New York : Distributors, Viking Press, 1982), 56-65., Madrid Apartment on the Plaza de Oriente [1970-1980s] Roman Arango and Pin Morales; Madrid, Spain in Rense, *Contemporary apartments*, 136-143., Unknown Apartment, Manchen & Walker Design; New York, in Edie Lee Cohen,"View from the 45th Floor," *Interior Design* 52, no.10 (Oct.1981): 283.; Unknown Apartment, Eric Bernard; New York in M.G-Monica Geran, "With a View to Enjoyment," *Interior Design* 51, no.9 (Sep.1980): 276-277. **2000** Bloomberg building, Shane Reilly; New York in Charlotte Druckman, "On Cloud Nine," *Interior Design* 78, no. 11 (Sep.2007): 211-215.

4.2 Living Floor

Interior archetypes

Living Floor



Element

Floor

Furnishing

Descriptive words

Tactile, sitting, compact, flexible, elastic, open plan

Definition

Living Floor describes the Asian cultural practice of a life in which daily activities occurred on, or near, the floor. Low-height furniture and furnishings that were small, sparse, and used only for necessity, allowed them to be pushed aside and the space used for multiple activities.

Application Definition

In luxury apartments historically and contemporarily, the Korean tradition of eating, sleeping and sitting on the floor includes the importance of the tactile

qualities of specific floor finishes, as well as the use of low-level furniture and bangsuks (cushions for sitting).

Description

A number of Asian cultures, including those of China, Korea, Japan and Thailand traditionally conducted life on the floor. Korea's long-standing custom of sitting on the floor.

This study examines how contemporary Korean apartments reflect traditional culture in terms of the archetypical practice of removing one's shoes at the entry and sitting low to the floor level. Traditional rooms are usually decorated in unadorned natural materials and are largely unfurnished, allowing several activities to occur in the same space at different times of the day and night. The custom of a Living Floor is more flexible than western style living spaces. Much of the family's life is conducted while seated on mats or the *bangsuk* (cushion for sitting) without western sofas or chairs. (Figure 4.2.1) Furniture is therefore constructed so that the height is close to the floor. Moreover, the number of furniture pieces is generally kept to a minimum and can often be stacked or stored when not in use. The simplicity and austerity of a living floor is thought to derive from the Buddhist philosophy. ¹

¹ Michael Freeman, Sian Evans and Mimi Lipton, *In the Oriental Style: A Sourcebook of Decoration and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 62.

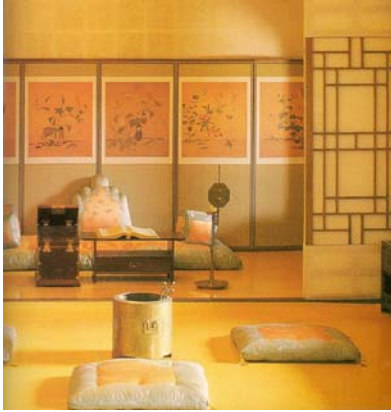


Figure 4.2.1

Bed Room, Wunhyon Palace [c1880] Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Jai-sik Suh

Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: Traditional Korean Homes* (Elizabeth, N.J.: Hollym, 1999), 155.

The living floor developed, and was sustained over time, because of two representative floor systems that mitigated Korea's long winters and hot summers—*ondol* (floors heated from underneath) and *maru* (wooden floors).¹ *Ondol* utilizes direct heat transfer from wood smoke to the underside of a thick masonry floor. During the Chosun Dynasty (1392 –1910), when the *ondol* was popularized, general living standards improved, and many Koreans equipped individual rooms with *ondol* floors. Chairs and sofas suspended above the floor were unnecessary, because *ondol* warmed the floor surface where people sat in winter, and when unheated, *ondol* created a cool floor in summer. In modern usage *ondol* refers to any type of underfloor heating. Modern versions of *ondol* floors are heated by circulated hot water from water heaters, or an electrical heating system of dielectric heating or induction heating. Koreans prize the natural materials and the tactile of their floors. *Ondol* floors were covered with oiled-paper, which received a coat of bean oil mixed with

¹ Sang Hun Choi, *Interior Space and Furniture of Joseon Upper-Class Houses* (Seoul, Korea: Ewha Womans University Press, 2007), 15, 41.

yellow coloring from gardenia seeds. Thus finished, the waxed *ondol* floor created a soft and intimate surface texture, and it kept the surface uncontaminated and easy to clean. Aesthetically, the *ondol* floor shone with a warm yellowish hue, giving an otherwise stark appearance of white-walled rooms an inviting appearance.¹

The public spaces in traditional Korean homes, such as *maru*, were floored with wood. *Maru* provides a cool space in Korea's hot and humid summers, so that various family rituals could be held regardless of the season. Raised above the ground, *maru* also facilitated ventilation through the house.² In contemporary Korean apartments, *maru* has *ondol* system as a home heating. Traditional *maru* is finished by a glue-like substance mixed with red clay coated the wood and made the finishes durable. If a more even coloring was desired, gardenia dye was added to the bean oil mixture. With use, the wood floors generally turned a deep dark brown.³ Natural materials and their finishes were thought to create harmony between humans, the natural environment, and a house. A traditional Korean floor provided an appropriate living environment for daily practices, functional, aesthetic, and sanitary.

The Living Floor in traditional Korean spaces were marked by adaptability in that furniture pieces are not permanently assigned to any room. To allow for a variety of activities, furniture was cleared away and returned later. A Living Floor requires a sparsely furnished space and makes multiple activities

¹ Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: Traditional Korean Homes* (Elizabeth, N.J.: Hollym, 1999), 179.

² Choi, *Interior Space and Furniture of Joseon*, 41.

³ Choi, Jae-Soon, *Hanoak*, 179.

possible in that space. In the *sarangbang*, the master of the house, when alone, would rest on a padded mat (*boryo*) placed on the warmest part of the floor in order for him to read at a special reading table. When friends or relatives came to visit the master, the table would be removed and visitors provided with *bangsuks* (cushions for sitting).¹ (Figure 4.2.2) Bedding included a portable padded mattress filled with soft cotton wadding, which could be rolled and stored when not in use. The bedding was easily heated from the *ondol* floor and kept warm in the winter. Because most daily activities occurred on the floor, low-height furnishings and seating were used, and the furniture was small and sparse, used only for necessity. Consequently, the arrangement of furniture for Living Floor made rooms spacious.²

Living Floor in Contemporary Apartments—East and West

As Koreans moved from traditional housing to urban apartments, their life styles and interior spaces became more westernized. There are, however, several cases in which the traditional Living Floor has been adapted to contemporary apartment living.

In one interpretation, Si-young Choi designed a River Way Apartment in Seoul with a tea room centered in the space and consisting of a lower table and four *bangsuks*. (Figure 4.2.2) He placed decorative elements, such as a gilt framed mirror and antique objects, on the floor, in consideration of people's eye level when they are sitting. A water feature next to the wall attunes people to a natural environment further enhanced by low lighting.³

¹ Choi, *Interior Space and Furniture of Joseon*, 90-91.

² Freeman, *In the Oriental Style*, 143.

³ Sung-a Byun, "River Way," *Interiors Korea*, no. 202 (July 2003): n.p.



Figure 4.2.2

Tea Room, River Way Apartment [c2003] Si-young Choi/Axis; Seoul, Korea
PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung, Tao-o Kim and Gung-sun Nam
Sung-a Byun, "River Way" *Interiors Korea*, no. 202 (July 2003): n.p.

Designer E-wha Yu's design for another Seoul luxury apartment combined a bed in the western style with bedding in the Korean style. (Figure 4.2.3) The bed is low, but visually its base does not touch the floor; a plinth with a deep reveal contributes to the effect of the bed frame floating in space. Moreover the bed is encased in a low shelf, a plinth, at the head and one side, anchoring the bed and connecting it to the plinth, as if it and bed were a single piece of furniture. The floor is darkened, and the bed-shelf is light. The feeling of lightness is reinforced by a diaphanous shimmering textile hanging above the bed, which can be unrolled, and light color draperies that cover the window wall. The Korean floral screen on a side wall completes the integration of a modified Korean bedroom.¹

¹ "A-Project," *Interiors Korea*, no. 240 (Sept. 2006): 144 -149.



Figure 4.2.3

Bed Room [c2006] E-wha Yu/ ITM I&A; Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung

Unknown, "A-Project" *Interiors Korea*, no. 240 (Sept. 2006): 144 -149.

The Living Floor is not only an aspect of indigenous cultures in specific Asian areas, but it has also become an international living style particularly adaptable for apartments. The idea of a Living Floor has also gained a growing number of western converts as a technique to make small spaces visually larger. Low-ceilinged rooms grow higher perceptually with lower-to-the-floor furnishings.

In the early 1960s, J. Neil Stevens designed a penthouse guest room with a Living Floor in the Ambassador West Hotel in Chicago. (Figure 4.2.4) The "mattress" was placed on a low platform, and an antique tea table and *bangsuks* were arranged with a traditional Asian screen in the background. Other chests in the room are western in height. In the same time period Jerald Intrator designed a Living Floor seating area in a Greenwich apartment in New York City by raising the seating area off the floor plane, but keeping it low to the floor. (Figure 4.2.5) Essentially a platform, raised by a plinth with a deep reveal, accommodates *Bangsuks*, as well as a corner seat with cushions to

support one's back.¹ In both designs, the adaptation of a Living Floor for Americans relied on raised cushions and beds slightly off the floor, but Stevens' penthouse guest room borrows strongly from an Asian aesthetic. Intrator's design, however, is more generalized in its iteration, drawing from traditional Asian design, as well as Modernism.



Figure 4.2.4
Guest Bed Room, Ambassador West Hotel Penthouse [c1962] J. Neil Stevens;
Chicago
PhotoCrd.: Marshall Berman Jr.
"Mood Oriental" *Interior Design* 33, no. 8 (Aug. 1962): 108 -109.



Figure 4.2.5
Living Room [c1961] Jerald Intrator; New York City
PhotoCrd.: Lisanti
"Converted Stable" *Interior Design* 47, no. 2 (Feb. 1961): 124-125.

¹ "Converted Stable," *Interior Design* 47, no.2 (Feb. 1961): 124-125.

In the 1970 decade, Ron Doud and Lisa Elfenbein designed a Living Floor for another New York City apartment. (Figure 4.2.6- Left) The furniture in the living space is comprised of two seats and a table whose shapes are exaggerated, as if they were sculptural objects in gallery. Contributing to this impression is a sculptural object, an abstract lamp, and a dark, round object dropped slightly below the ceiling. A single seat sits on a two-inch high wooden platform which is turned vertically to serve as the framework for the seat back, which is of an exaggerated height. The seat and back are upholstered in the same manner. Two pillows rest on the upholstered seat. The “sofa” has the same two-inch wooden seat and seat back and the same upholstery treatment. This seat is elongated horizontally to sit more than one person. One side has a low back next to the wall, and four pillows are arranged as if a person should recline. The room also contains a large round table that is also low in height. When the interior was published in *Architectural Record*, the author argued that the abstract shapes of the furniture could be adapted to the human body in various ways, and be used in various positions in tune with users’ needs.¹ However the furniture was used, the design of this Living Floor departed from the expression of Asian themes and origins.

¹ CKH, “Opting for the Unconventional Interior” *Architectural Record* 167, no.11 (Nov. 1979): 127-130.



Figure 4.2.6

Left: Living Room [c1979] Ron Doud Inc. Lisa Elfenbein; New York City
PhotoCrd.: Bill Helms

CKH, "Opting for the Unconventional Interior," *Architectural Record* 167, no. 11 (Nov. 1979): 127-130.

Right: Living Room of a French Apartment [Date Unknown] Paris, France
PhotoCrd.: Edimedia/R.Guillemot

Michael Freeman, Sian Evans and Mimi Lipton, *In the Oriental Style: A Sourcebook of Decoration and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 206-207.

In European apartments, evidence for the Living Floor practice continued through the last decade of the 20th century. One example of Living Floor in a Parisian apartment illustrates upholstered chairs with deeply buttoned seats and backs placed directly on a low platform. (Figure 4.2.6 -Right) The conventional character of the seats look as though they once had legs now removed. The platform upon which the seats reside also serves as a display area for Asian antiques. Hanging bamboo blinds and a light warm brown with black accents evoke a harmonious associated with an Asian aesthetic.¹

¹ Freeman, *In the Oriental Style*, 206-207.

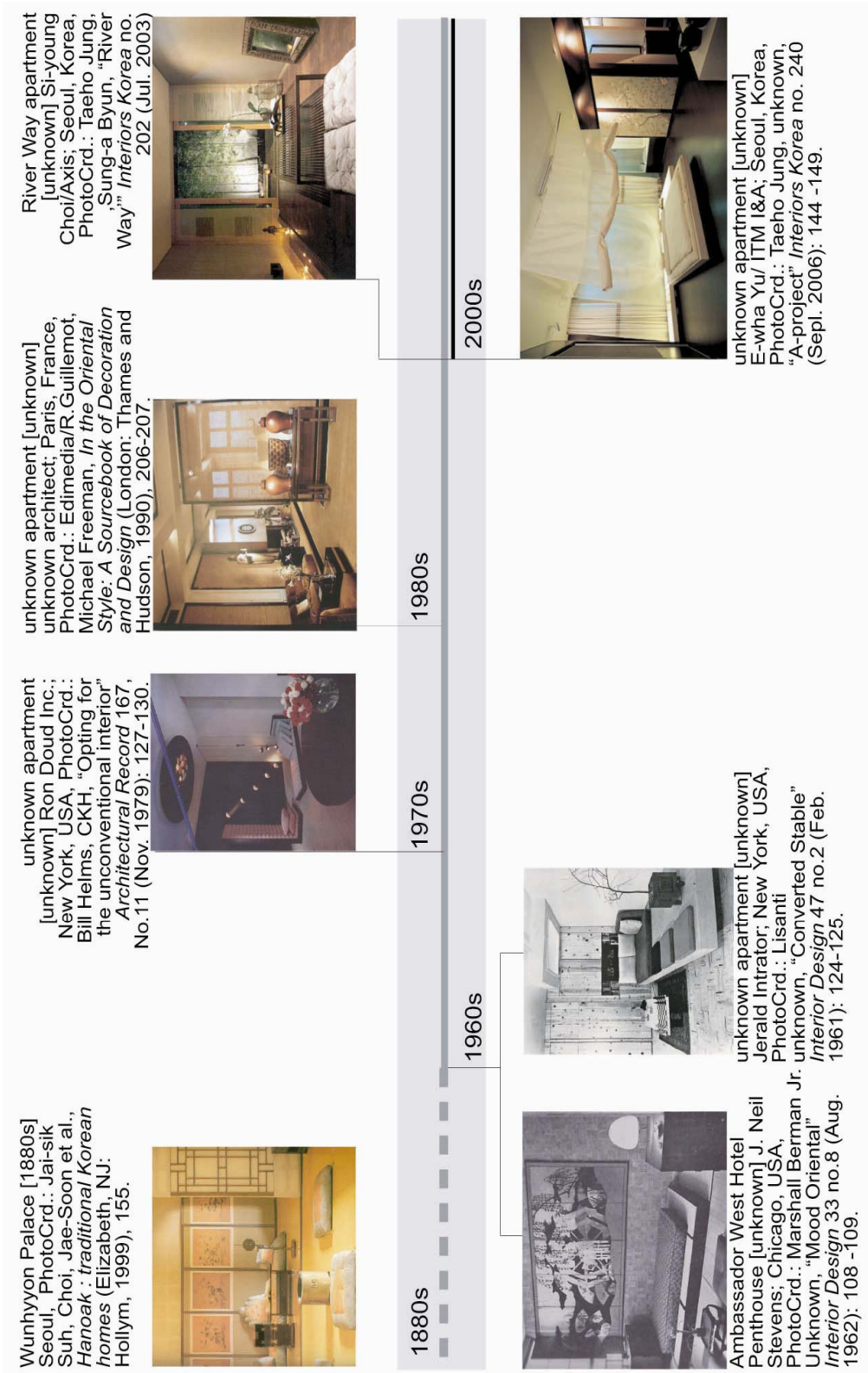


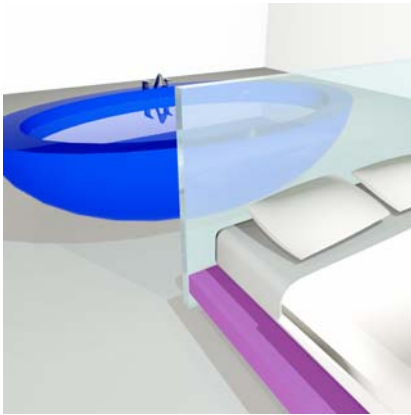
Figure 4.2.7
Timeline: living floor

This study suggests that the appearance of an Asian Living Floor in contemporary Korean, European and American urban luxury apartments means that it has been adapted for an international audience, one whose life style necessitates flexibility and open space planning.¹

4.3. Naked

Interior archetypes

Naked



Element

Space

¹ **1880** Wunhyon Palace [1880s] Seoul in Choi, Jae-Soon et al, *Hanoak: Traditional Korean Homes* (Elizabeth, N.J.: Hollym, 1999), 155; **1960** Unidentified Apartment [Date Unknown] Jerald Intrator; New York City in "Converted Stable" *Interior Design* 47, no.2 (Feb. 1961): 124-125; Ambassador West Hotel Penthouse [c1962] J. Neil Stevens; Chicago in "Mood Oriental," *Interior Design* 33, no.8 (Aug. 1962): 108 -109; **1970** Unidentified Apartment [Date Unknown] Ron Doud Inc.; New York City in CKH, "Opting for the Unconventional Interior," *Architectural Record* 167, no.11 (Nov. 1979): 127-130; **1990** Unidentified Apartment [Date Unknown] Paris in Michael Freeman, *In the Oriental Style: A Sourcebook of Decoration and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 206-207; **2000** Unidentified Apartment [Date Unknown] E-wha Yu/ ITM I&A; Seoul, Korea in "A-Project" *Interiors Korea*, no. 240 (Sept. 2006): 144 -149; River Way apartment [c2003] Si-young Choi/Axis; Seoul, Korea in Sung-a Byun, "River Way" *Interiors Korea*, no. 202 (July 2003): n.p..

Descriptive words

bare, stripped, unconfined, exposed, open, vulnerable, visible, no disguise, no concealment

Definition

Naked describes a space in which one or more bathroom fixtures are visible through transparent partitions, or located out of the context of a private space, such as a bathtub located in a bedroom.

Applied Definition

Naked as a design practice in contemporary luxury apartments reiterates the value of bathing culture, and at the same time, joins boutique hotels in making new spatial innovations for the bathroom.

Description

Naked was first identified by researcher Mijin Julie Yang as an interior archetypical practice in boutique hotel designs. She asserts that “naked pushes the boundaries of what is socially and culturally private space.”¹

A Naked bathroom is not concealed, nor is it isolated; it may have transparent or translucent partitions or none at all. One or more fixtures may be exposed; generally these are a tub or a lavatory. Expensive European bathroom fixtures, especially tubs and lavatories, have become so aesthetically pleasing and sculptural that they require display as beautiful objects. The design of bathroom fixtures has

¹ Mijin Juliet Yang, “Theory studies: Contemporary Boutique Hotel Design” (M.A. thesis, Cornell University, 2005), 21.

also become the purview of architects, such as Michael Graves, Philippe Stark, and Norman Foster. Duravit, a German company, manufactures fixtures and fittings by these designers and refers to their product installations as “living bathrooms.” Another high-end German manufacturer advertises that “With Hangrohe, Water Becomes Pleasure—what used to be a bare washroom is now a place for recreation, relaxation and wellbeing—not just for the body, but also for the soul. . . . A shower or faucet from Hangrohe is a masterpiece of technology and form that you can enjoy every day!” The Japanese company, TOTO, best known for its toilets, states that their products are “luxury in balance” and encourages a consumer “to find your sanctuary in TOTO.”²

There is a close correlation in design and effect between spa facilities and residential bathrooms in the Naked mode. Wellness is engrained as a function of the contemporary bathroom, and an aesthetic approach to bathroom design is expected. Tubs or whirlpools claim to stimulate circulation, produce water massage, ease tension and reduce aches. For at least thirty years bathrooms have been marketed as a lavish indulgent space, and it is no surprise that Naked has become an important design practice in luxury apartments.

History of Bathing and Bathrooms

Culturally, Naked implies a return to ancient bathing cultures that were less self-conscious about the nude body. Bathing has experienced many historical shifts and technological changes. In certain periods, it has been a central social activity and, in others, an exclusively private one; in some periods, it has been widespread and, in

² Duravit. <http://www.duravit.com/> (accessed August 15, 2008); Hangrohe. http://www.hangrohe-usa.com/us_en/26083.htm (accessed August 15, 2008); TOTO. http://www.totousa.com/consumer_landing.asp (accessed August 15, 2008)

others, uncommon.³ Although there were different bathrooms designs and diverse bathing cultures, bathing has been viewed as important for health and physical well-being, as well as castigated as sinful indulgence throughout ages and areas.⁴ Bathing has been undertaken as a public activity, sometimes communal, and sometimes family-wide.⁵

The origin of the luxury bathroom and the value of a bathing culture can be traced from 1500 B.C. and the Queen's bathroom in King Minos' Palace at Knossos. The room and tub were sumptuous with an elegant decorative frieze.⁶ In *Clean and Decent*, Lawrence Wright's history of the bath, 4th-century Rome had eleven public baths, 1,352 fountains and cisterns, and 856 private baths.⁷ Although private bathing took place in the great public baths, the most developed bathing places were leisure centers with recreational facilities, and were regarded as both social and pleasurable. Some had separate facilities for men and woman; some were shared by both genders.⁸ The medieval bath accommodated several people bathing together. Middle Ages citizens accepted nudity between genders, as it was common to sleep in communal rooms. The royal apartments in the Renaissance *Palazzo Pitti* in Florence contain bathrooms of great size and magnificence with inlaid marbles and paintings.⁹

In France, the luxury bathroom was popular among the nobility. Napoleon had a splendid bathroom in the *Palais de l'Elysees* which was so large that it resembled a ballroom.¹⁰ During the 17th century, private bathtubs were often designed for two

³ Terence Conran, *Bathrooms: Just Add Water* (London: Conran Octopus, 2004), 6.

⁴ Conran, *Bathrooms*, 6.

⁵ Alexander Kira, *The Bathroom* (New York: Viking Press, 1976), 2.

⁶ Brian Morris, *Bathrooms* (New York: Viking Press, 1971), 6-20.

⁷ Morris, *Bathrooms*, 6-20

⁸ Conran, *Bathrooms*, 8-9.

⁹ Morris, *Bathrooms*, 6-20.

¹⁰ Morris, *Bathrooms*, 6-20

people, for the entertainment value of bathing. These opulent tubs displayed the wealth and status of the owners by having their portraits painted on them.¹¹ In 1765 a Paris newspaper advertised a bathroom as a temptation to buy a house.

In various parts of the world, there are still mixed gender bathing cultures and diverse bathroom designs. The Scandinavians still use female attendants in bath houses for men as well as for women. In Japan whole families still bathe together as they have for centuries.¹²

The development of bathing designs and culture largely reflects the history of our attitudes and values. Privacy appears to be a relatively recent phenomenon.

Alexander Kira hypothesized in *The Bathrooms* that some of the United States' contemporary demands for privacy are the legacy of Puritanism and Victorian prudishness, as well as self-awareness and self-consciousness encouraged by modern psychology.¹³

Author Isabel Ross, in *Taste in America*, argues that the first complete bathroom in American history was achieved by architect Benjamin Latrobe. About 1811, he arranged a bathtub, a basin and a toilet together in the same space in a Philadelphia house, making America's first three-piece sanitary suite.¹⁴ Latrobe's bathroom layout was iterated over and over again. Eventually mass production of fixtures helped to bring bathrooms to Americans.

¹¹ Kira, *The Bathroom*, 2 - 4.

¹² Kira, *The Bathroom*, 2 - 4.

¹³ Kira, *The Bathroom*, 2 - 4.

¹⁴ Morris, *Bathrooms*, 6-20.

During the 20th-century, the apartment became a major influence in popularizing the contemporary standardized and functional bathroom. The proliferation of skyscrapers and tall apartment houses, growth in population, and increasing pressure on space have all contributed to the reduction in the size of the bathroom, as well as to its functional improvement.¹⁵

In 1967, a pre-formed plastic bathroom was introduced at the Montreal World's Fair for Habitat, in the apartment development built as part of the Exposition program. This bathroom was exported to many countries to be installed complete.¹⁶ Joe Colombo, an innovative Italian product designer, experimented with environments for the future. In 1969, Colombo created a more luxurious version of Box 1 (Night and Day Facility) in which the contents of an entire house are contained within a series of mobile elements in a space with no dividing walls. He then developed the 1971 "Total Furnishing Unit" in which all essential living spaces (kitchen, cupboard, bed, bathroom) are contained in a single unit in Colombo's signature colors of white, yellow, red and black. The "Total Furnishing Unit" was exhibited at the *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1972.

Although Naked appears in boutique hotels beginning in the 1900s,¹⁷ it is a recent trend in apartments. The luxury apartment bathroom is often bigger than a bedroom in size, and it has moved to the center of the room or next to windows with stunning exterior views.

A New York City apartment occupying the 49th floor of a 51-story black-glass clad skyscraper on Fifth Avenue is exemplary of a Naked installation. Designers Gabellini

¹⁵ Morris, *Bathrooms*, 6-20.

¹⁶ Morris, *Bathrooms*, 6-20.

¹⁷ Yang, "Theory Studies: Contemporary Boutique Hotel Design", 21-24.

and Shepard combined the bathing ritual with the act of sleeping. (Figure 4.3.1) The tub is situated to allow magnificent views of the New York skyline through a clear glass panel that separates it from the bedroom. The bathroom features are carved from a monolithic piece of marble, and sculpturally punctuate the stone-clad volume of the bath. "The serene master bath in the New York sky resembles the ancient Roman style bath."¹⁸



Figure 4.3.1

Bathroom, Unknown Building Name, Gabellini and Shepard; New York City

PhotoCrd.: Paul Warchol

Mildred F. Schmertz, "Reaching for the Sky" *Architectural Digest* 61, no.5 (May. 2004): 262-267, 351.

Naked became the main design element of an open plan bedroom-bathroom in a Class Dream apartment in Tenzin, China. (Figure 4.3.2, Left) The combined spaces are located at the center of the apartment. Both the inside and outside walls of the elliptically-shaped bathroom are finished with mosaic tiles in flower patterns; Yenhee Kum, the designer, calls it an "elliptical flower garden." The wall next to the bedroom is made of clear glass which opens the bathing area and a bather to the bedroom.¹⁹

¹⁸ Mildred F. Schmertz, "Reaching for the Sky" *Architectural Digest* v.61 no. 5 (May. 2004): 262-7, 351.

¹⁹ Unknown author, "Class Dream," *Interiors* (Sep. 2007): 192-194.



Figure 4.3.2

Bedroom and Bathroom, Class Dream Apartment, Yenhee Kum; Tenzin, China

PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung

Unknown author, "Class Dream," *Interiors* (Sep. 2007): 192-194.

A luxury apartment bathroom sometimes faces window walls that have significant views and are similar in size to a bedroom. One example is the the Donghua South Road Apartment in Taipei, Taiwan. (Figure 4.3.2, Right) Clear glass encloses the other side of the living room and bedroom. The openness of the space allows natural light from the windows to reach the entire space. The large bathtub stands at the center of the bathroom, a pair of rectangular mirrors is suspended from the ceiling, and two boxy white Corian basins are mounted at the foot of a square soaking tub.²⁰ The bathroom is not subordinated to the bedroom; it independently occupies one of the best places in the apartment.

²⁰ Andrew Yang, "Pearly Whites" *Interior Design* 79, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): S.5.



Figure 4.3.3

Bathroom, Donghua South Road Apartment [unknown date] C.J. Studio; Taipei, Taiwan

PhotoCrd.: Mark Gerritsen

Andrew Yang, "Pearly Whites" *Interior Design* 79, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): S.5.

Naked as a design practice in contemporary apartments reiterates the value of bathing culture, and at the same time, joins boutique hotels in making a new spatial innovation for the bathroom.²¹

²¹ **Citations from the time line:**

2000s: Bathroom, Unknown Building Name [Unknown Date] Gabellini and Shepard; New York City in Mildred F. Schmertz, "Reaching for the Sky" *Architectural Digest* 61, no. 5 (May. 2004): 262-267, 351.; Unknown Apartment [2006] Fernandes & Capanema, Brasilia, Brazil in Montse Borrás, "Apartment in Brasilia," *The New Apartment: Smart Living in Small Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2007), 215.; Bedroom and Bathroom, Class Dream Apartment [unknown date] Yenhee Kum; Tenzin, China in "Class Dream," *Interiors* (Sep. 2007): 192-194.; Living room, I-park Apartment [2008] Peter Remedios+Design Studio, Pusan, Korea in Minsun Lee, "Haeundae I-park", *Interiors* (May, 2007):136-149.; Bathroom, Donghua South Road Apartment [unknown date] C.J. Studio; Taipei, Taiwan in Andrew Yang, "Pearly Whites" *Interior Design* 79, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): S.5.



Figure 4.3.4
Timeline: Naked

4.4 Numaru

Interior archetypes

Numaru



Element

SPACE

Descriptive words

Pavilion, veranda, greeting, entertained, symbolic,

Definition

A numaru is a traditional Korean wood-floored room to entertain guests and a space for the occupants' relaxation and contemplation. Numaru is often distinguished from a larger living room by a plinth, a partial enclosure (such as shades), and low-to-the-floor furniture.

Application Definition

In contemporary Korean apartments Numaru is a small living room located within a large living room. In many cases, three of its sides are flexible; these sides may be opened or closed with screens or folding doors. The view from

an apartment Numaru is often of a city.

Description

Traditional Korean Numaru. Traditionally, the Numaru was primarily used by a male family head as a special place to greet and entertain guests. The master and his guests chatted, socialized and were served food and drink in the Numaru. There were intellectual and cultured gatherings where the guests composed poems or painted calligraphic pictures.¹

The Numaru was located in front of an entrance area as a representation of the class status of the occupants. The Numaru was connected to a female master room and sometimes to the main veranda. In many cases, the structure protrudes like an attached pavilion from a house. It is built one or two ch'ok (12-23 inch) higher than the main floor with columns on the foundation stone to give the appearance of floating on the ground. Raising the Numaru from the ground plane was thought to make the space special. Functionally, raising the Numaru above the ground plane allowed for breezes to cool and control humidity. (Figure 4.3.1)²

The interior of the Numaru was designed with consideration for the natural environment in which it was placed. Three sides of the Numaru were open to the exterior. Hanging partitions or hinged windows replaced solid walls. This spatial flow connected outside and inside.³ When the partitions were open,

¹ Choi, Jae-Soon, et al, *Hanoak: Traditional Korean Homes* (Elizabeth, N.J.: Hollym, 1999), 93.

² Kūl Yu Kyōng-su, *The Appearance of the Korean Traditional Architecture* (Seoul: Taewōnsa, 1998), 14-28.

³ Kūl Yu Kyōng-su, *Appearance*, 14-28.

garden and scenery continued seamlessly into the Numaru. In this sense, it is an interior that is like an exterior space, bringing elements of the outside and the natural environment to the inside. Therefore, the distinction between walls and doors is very elastic.⁴ In the summer, paneled doors are kept propped up by folding open or swinging up the panels between the posts or removing them entirely. However, in the winter they are lowered and remain closed, and the Numaru serves as an enclosed room.⁵



Figure 4.4.1

Exterior Numaru, Changdug Palace [1405] Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Jai-sik Suh

Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: traditional Korean homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 92.

Fashioned in a variety of intricate designs, the railings and their lattice works provided an important aesthetic dimension to the appearance of a Numaru as a symbolic mansion. Both the exterior design and the interior had astonishing visual elements. *When sunlight seeped through rice paper partitions into the entirely closed Numaru, the space filled with soft warm light filtering through*

⁴ Choi Sang-Hun, ed., *Interior Space and Furniture of Joseon Upper-Class Houses* (Seoul, Korea: Ewha Womans University Press, 2007), 61-63.

⁵ Sang-Hun, *Interior Space*, 68, 84-85.

white rice paper and into shadow patterns of latticework.



Figure 4.4.2

Interior Numaru, Changdug Palace [1405] Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Jai-sik Suh

Choi, Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: traditional Korean homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 81.

Modern Korean apartments borrow from traditional interiors in their use of antique furniture or traditional patterns. There is also ample evidence that modern spaces also adapt historic spatial arrangements using a contemporary vocabulary rather than one of excessive decoration.

The Pyeongchang-Dong House features an updated, abstracted version of a traditional Numaru. (Figure 4.4.3) A minimalistic small-scale Numaru (almost a shadow box) is located on the second floor. It appears to float in space, neither wholly inside, nor out. The spatial relationships between the house and the Numaru, and the Numaru and the natural environment, provide a traditional sensitivity to the modern house. The designer, Junggyu Lee, describes the Pyeongchang-Dong House as a space where nature and human-made space

meet organically—a space of harmony where past and present come together.⁶



Figure 4.4.3

Exterior, Pyeongchang-dong House [Date Unknown] DesignBlock+ii6; Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung

Sung-a Byun, “Pyeongchang-dong S’ House” *Interiors Korea*, no.214 (July 2004): n.p.

Numaru in apartments

Apartment interiors also include traditional Numaru in combination with a contemporary vocabulary. In the 1950s, Korean apartments provided a solution to the housing shortage, and they introduced a western style of living to Korea. As large and luxurious apartments became popular, interiors regarded as simple boxes diversified and became larger and more personally residential. In its adaptation to apartment living, a Numaru is seen as a poetic space, one capable of weaving new relationships between the living room (the inner court) and an intervening space. A 21st century apartment Numaru may look like a traditional one, or it may take on only the spatial function of a

⁶ Sung-a Byun, “Pyeongchang-dong S’ House” *Interiors Korea*, no.214 (July 2004):

Numaru. An apartment Numaru mimics traditional practice as a welcoming space; it also provides a place for contemplation, and its use is no longer gendered.

The Parkpolis Apartment in Seoul features a contemporary Numaru by designer Bugon Kim(Figure 4.4.4). Kim located the Numaru as an intermediary space between the living room and the kitchen. He raised it slightly off the floor to achieve the floating appearance of a traditional Numara, an effect strengthened by indirect lighting underneath the floor that glows. Kim also gave the Parkpolis Numaru a low wooden balustrade like that of a veranda. Bamboo screens that can be rolled up or down create a Soft Room which does not interfere with spatial continuity.⁷



Figure 4.4.4

Living room, Parkpolis Apartment [date unknown] Bugon Kim; Seoul, Korea
PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung

Hyungju Yoon, "Parkpolis, 氣/安/感/休" *Interiors Korea* no. 235 (Apr. 2006): 138-148.

⁷ Hyungju Yoon, "Parkpolis, 氣/安/感/休" *Interiors Korea*, no. 235 (April 2006): 138-148.

A Numaru in the A-Project Apartment, designed by Ee-Wha Yu, is placed at one end of the living room against a solid wall. The dark stained wood plinth that serves as the floor floats above the pale marble floor. The Numaru in the Parkpolis Apartment used the apartment's ceiling as its overhead plane, but Yu created a separate, lower ceiling plane for the A-Project Apartment. Indirect lighting above the lowered ceiling glows. The A-Project Numaru is open on three sides to the living room; it has no balustrade. Five lattice partitions can be opened for wall decoration, and there are also textiles on two sides that can be lowered. Artificial lighting behind the lattice screens provides the soft, warm atmosphere of a traditional Numaru when natural lighting filters through rice paper. Yu created a dry garden next to the Numaru, evocative of the refined taste which Korean ancestors appreciated when looking at their gardens and natural landscapes.⁸ The space accommodates a long low dark table with large square cushions.



Figure 4.4.5

Living Room [date unknown] Ee-Wha Yu: ITM I&A; Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Taeho Jung

Unknown author, "A-Project" *Interiors Korea*, no.240 (Sept. 2006): 144-155.

⁸ "A-Project" *Interiors Korea*, no.240 (Sept. 2006): 144-155.

In some cases, the Numaru adapts itself to urban views instead of a traditional garden. The Gangjin Haustory Apartment, located on the Han River in Seoul, is one example.⁹ Si-young Choi gave this Numaru two parallel solid walls, and a window wall that permits stunning views of the city and the riverside. Its open side faces the living room. Choi's design makes the Numaru an alcove, its opening flush with the fireplace wall. One of the solid walls features a circular shape that is back-lit and filled with horizontal slats like lattice; a painting is hung on the parallel wall. The ceiling, wall and floor planes are white, and the floor appears glossy, making the Numaru into a minimalist niche. Although the floor is raised, its whiteness melds seamlessly with the living room floor. A large pendant light fixture with several shades, is unlike anything else in the apartment. It appears both Western and historic in style. The chandelier hangs above a rectangular block of stone that serves as the table.



Figure 4.4.6

Living Room, Gangjin Haustory [date unknown] Si-young Choi: AXIS DESIGN, Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Chul Lee, Ingy Jo

Sung-a Byun, "Gangjin Haustory" *Interiors Korea*, no.237 (Jun. 2006): n.p.

⁹ Sung-a Byun, "Gangjin Haustory," *Interiors Korea*, no.237 (Jun. 2006): n.p.

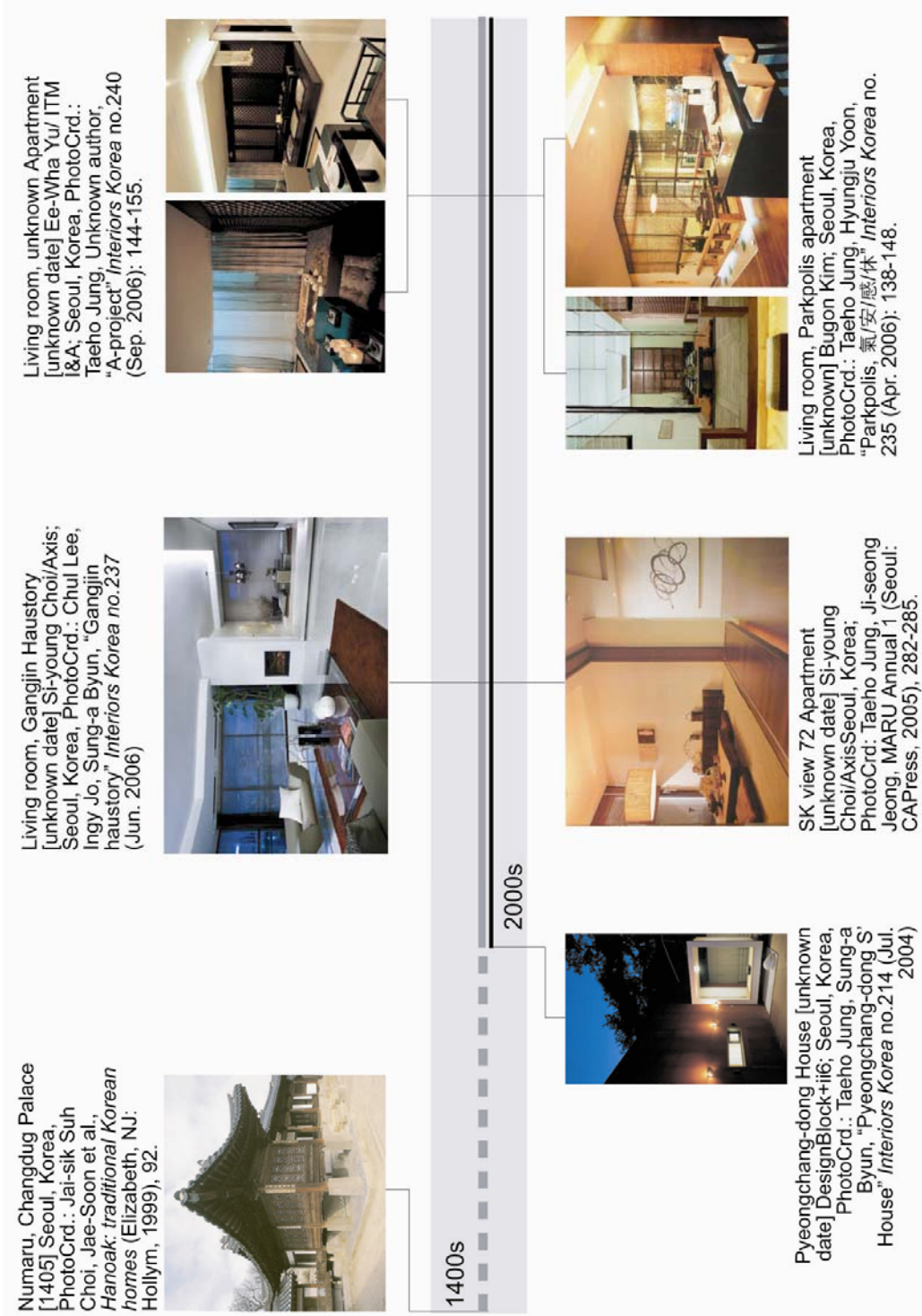


Figure 4.4.7
Timeline: Numaru

In the 2000 decade, the inclusion of a Numaru in luxury apartments is a recent design trend. Korean designers are interpreting traditional Numarus for contemporary spaces using new materials, but the social function of the practice remains almost unchanged.¹⁰

¹⁰ **1400** Numaru, Changdug Palace [1405] Seoul, Korea in Jae-Soon et al., *Hanoak: Traditional Korean Homes* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1999), 92; **2000** Pyeongchang-Dong House [Date Unknown] DesignBlock+ii6; Seoul, Korea in Sung-a Byun, "Pyeongchang-Dong S' House" *Interiors Korea*, no.214 (July 2004):n.p.; SK View 72 Apartment [Date Unknown] Si-young Choi/Axis; Seoul, Korea in Ji-seong Jeong, *MARU Annual 1* (Seoul: CAPress, 2005), 282-285.; Living Room, Gangjin Haustory [Date Unknown] Si-young Choi/Axis; Seoul, Korea in Sung-a Byun, "Gangjin haustory" *Interiors Korea*, no.237 (June 2006); Living room, Parkpolis Apartment [Date Unknown] Bugon Kim; Seoul, Korea in Hyungju Yoon, "Parkpolis, 氣/安/感/休" *Interiors Korea*, no. 235 (April 2006): 138-148; Living Room [Date Unknown] Ee-Wha Yu/ ITM I&A; Seoul, Korea in "A-Project" *Interiors Korea*, no.240 (Sept. 2006): 144-155.

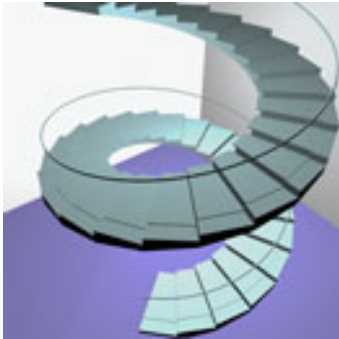
Chapter 5

STAIR

5.1 Showcase stair

Intype

Showcase stair



Element

Stair

Definition

A Showcase Stair is an extravagantly designed architectural feature in which the stair itself becomes a prominent display element. Its functionality is often secondary to the spatial drama created by the stair's structure, form, materials and lighting.

Applied Definition

A showcase stair in a luxury apartment is located in 1) a lobby, as a grand stair that represents an apartment's style, and/or 2) a private unit as a sculptural and/or dematerialized stair.

Description

Showcase Stairs in luxury apartments share some similarities with Showcase Stairs in retail store settings. Researcher Leah Scolere defined a Showcase Stair in retail as the most significant architectural element, affording a high degree of visual access. In some cases, the stair also becomes an iconic symbol of the store's brand or location. The functionality of the stair... is secondary to the spatial drama that is created by form, materiality, and visual access of the stair."¹¹

Showcase stairs in historic and contemporary luxury apartments are also grand in size, scale, materials and visual access. Located in public lobbies, their function is less about circulation than they are about visual access and making a strong architectural statement. Similarly a dramatic or sculptural stair can transform simple box-shaped spaces into one with architectural character.

Stair Types in Luxury Apartments

There are two types of stairs in luxury apartments—a grand staircase located in the lobby-entrance space and an internal-stair located within a private apartment.

Grand Staircases in Apartment Lobbies

A grand staircase in a public lobby is symbolic, a “Staircase of Honor,”¹² used for ceremonial purposes. As in retail design, it serves as a prominent architectural feature, an icon that represents an apartment's stylistic intentions.

A Showcase Stair in the lobby may also convey the aspirations of the management or

¹¹ Leah Scolere, “*Theory Studies: Contemporary Retail Design*” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2004), 68.

¹² Julien Guadet, *Elements et Theorie de l'Architecture* (Paris, Librairie de la construction moderne, 1905), n.p.

clientele in terms of class status. A grand stair defined the boundary between general public areas on the ground floor and private areas (for residents only) in upper levels.

The oldest record of a grand staircase in apartments may prove to be the Eastern Apartments (1450-1370 B.C.E.) in the Palace of Minos at Knossos, Crete. (Fig. 1.1.1.1) The stair was located approximately at the middle of the east side of the Central Court and led to the state rooms. A light-well immediately adjoined the stair amplifying the spaciousness and grandeur.¹³ The walls were decorated with painted murals that included bands of running spirals—superimposed with full-sized replicas of the characteristic Minoan figure eight shields, in the case of the upper hall. The Grand Staircase at Knossos contained many of the elements that remain today—a sense of grandeur in terms of materials and finishes, decorative treatments and ornament, size and scale. Grand staircases from this time forward have also been lit by natural lighting.

¹³ John Templer, *The Staircase: history and theories* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 94-95.



Figure 5.1.1

Stair at Knossos, Crete

PhotoCrd.: Massachusetts institute of Technology

John Templer, *The Staircase: History and Theories* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 95.

In the Renaissance and Baroque periods a grand stair was functionally a typical solution for architectural structure and aesthetically expressed the taste and elegance of the aristocracy. The grand stair was presented by the separated stair house and was inherently static as a characteristic architectural element with an elaborate backdrop and great monumental features. One stepped up the grand stair and was entertained by its theatrical devices to draw one's attention to the stair.¹⁴

In the early 18th century, a grand stair became the first impression of the luxury French apartment. In 1702 Pierre Bullet designed a stair as a staged experience.¹⁵ The grand staircase had two large stair "stages" from the entrance on the ground floor that led to the great antechamber which preceded the salon upstairs. At the first stage, the straight stair is full of light and has stunning views from French windows that open onto the garden. Then the large opening of the stairs narrows between two decorative

¹⁴ Templer, *The Staircase*, 122-128.

¹⁵ Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor: The Domestic Interior 1620-1920*, 94-95

columns. It opens again to a grand opening, and terminates with elegant curvilinear stairs with fashionable rounded corners.

Early luxury New York apartments, such as Richard Morris Hunt's Stuyvesant Apartments on East 18th Street, interpreted the French apartment style of grand stairs. In an described the tenant's stages of entry as arriving first in a "sparely decorated lobby and from the lobby they went to the grand stairway and reached their own front doors from either end of a public landing."¹⁶ The stairway opened into the private hall of each unit. The stairway toward the front of the building rose around a circular open well in the center (often filled with natural light), while the service stairway in the rear was a tight spiral. The grand stair in the Stuyvesant Apartments is not much as magnificent and elegant as French apartments, but reminiscent of typical features of Parisian grand stair design.

In the 1880 and 1800 decades European staircase designers dispensed with previous historic points of reference. The Art Nouveau style consisted of an architectural language containing a highly imaginative vocabulary of decorative motifs. Antonio Gaudi's curvilinear staircase at the Casa Batllo apartment in Barcelona, is such a work. (Figure 5.1.2) Gaudi "sculpted" each of the materials he employed (stone, brick, wood, metal, broken ceramics), modeling his stairs in flowing, three-dimensional forms as though all were clay.¹⁷

¹⁶ "Houses on the European Plan," (Nov. 6, 1869): 3 in Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Alone Together: a history of New York's early apartments* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1990), 88.

¹⁷ Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 48-49; Staircase, Casa Batllo Apartment [1906] Antonio Gaudi; Barcelona in Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 48-49.



Figure 5.1.2

Staircase of the Casa Batlló Apartment [1906] Barcelona, Antonio Gaudí, Barcelona

PhotoCrd.: Fisa indistrias graficas

Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 48-49.

As the first high-rise apartment buildings of Modernism, 860 880 Lake Shore Drive Apartments, created on Lake Michigan by Mies van der Rohe in 1951,¹⁸ shows the modern and International style of stairways and elevators in the apartments' lobbies. The staircases and elevators are located in the center of lobbies and are next to each other with the minimalist compositions. According to Mies' statement "less is more",¹⁹ staircases and elevators are very simple and functional without decorations, and facilitate maximum freedom of lobby interiors. The skin-and-bone expression of the steel I-beams and glass windows visually create staircases and elevators structure to be seen from outside through the lobbies.²⁰

Internal-Apartment Stairs

The second type of stair in luxury apartments is located in the interior of a two-story apartment. In the 1880s European apartments tended to be duplexes with double-

¹⁸ Werner Blaser, *Mies van der Rohe : Lake Shore Drive apartments : high-rise building* (Basel ; Boston : Birkhäuser, 1999), 11

¹⁹ Werner Blaser, *Mies van der Rohe : less is more* (New York : Waser, 1986), 14.

²⁰ Blaser, *Mies van der Rohe : Lake Shore Drive apartments : high-rise building*, 14-15.

height ceilings. The stair was to reproduce as closely as possible the atmosphere of a private (noble) house. When the principal rooms were relocated from their traditional place on the ground floor to the *piano nobile*, access to the second floor became much more important. The staircase from the ground plane to the *piano nobile* grew in size and magnificence, designed to make the transition and the upper floors as imperceptible a spatial barrier as possible.²¹

In American luxury apartments of the 1920 decade, particularly those built in New York City, internal stairs for each residence grew larger and grander, such as the palatial apartment at 666 Park Avenue, decorated by William R. Pearsall, J. Layng Mills and F. Burrall Hoffman. From the first floor, a grand oval staircase consisting of a flight of broad marble steps, swept past a mezzanine, where the plans called for two guest rooms, five servants' rooms and extensive storage. The stair continued up to the fourth floor with elaborate decoration. Also there were two sets of back stairs, one accessing an intermediate demi-mezzanine over the butler's pantry for storing china and glassware, and general receiving area adjoining the goods elevator, the kitchen and the pantry. The main grand stair was completely distinguished from the functional stairs, making the apartment a palatial space.²²

In Europe spiral stairs became a popular internal stair type in the 17th and 18th centuries. Functionally, they occupied little space; the entry and exit points were not far apart, as they were for straight flight stairs, so finding a place to locate them was

²¹ John Templer, *The Staircase: History and Theories* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 1-11, 95, 119-120. A *piano nobile* is the principal floor of a large house, usually built in one of the styles of classical Renaissance architecture. This floor contains the principal reception and bedrooms of the house. The *piano nobile* is often the first or sometimes the second floor, located above a ground floor containing minor rooms and service rooms. The upper floors had better views and avoided the damp ground plane.

²² Alpern, *Luxury Apartment Houses of Manhattan*, 124-129

relatively simple. Aesthetically internal spiral stairs in luxury apartments were also symbolic of an owner's status. Each unit of the luxury New York apartment at 1185 Park Avenue, designed by Schwarts and Gross in 1929, included a spiral stair located in the spacious entrance gallery. An elegant spiral stair led people from the ground floor to a sun parlor, giving the apartment's interior a particularly gracious ambience.²³

The Modernists liked a spiral stair, because of its functionalism. It conserved square footage, reduced opportunities for excessive ornamentation, and contrasted the notion of a grand staircase.²⁴ The new techniques in concrete, cast iron, steel and glass opened up new opportunities for modern stairs. At the beginning of the 1930s, Le Corbusier designed a startlingly stylish spiral stair with a central glass newel post for the Charles de Beistegui's apartment in Paris. (Fig. 5.1.3) The stair led from the movie room to a roof terrace. Of all the architect's original features, the stair design garnered much attention for its singular elegance, as well as its ability to compete visually and sculpturally with Baroque furnishings in the house.²⁵ In modern houses internationally, spiral stairs are credited with transforming "dismal holes into sculptural objects."²⁶

²³ Alpern, *New York's Luxury Apartments*, 116-117.

²⁴ Eva Jiricna, *Staircases* (London: Calmann & King Ltd, 2001), 13.

²⁵ Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration*, 268.

²⁶ Templer, *The Staircase*, 60; Living Room [1936] Le Corbusier; Paris in Fantasy on the Roof of Paris," *Architectural Review* (April 1936): 155.



Figure 5.1.3

Living Room [1936] Le Corbusier; Paris, France

PhotoCrd.: Jaime Ardiles-arce,

Unknown author, "Fantasy on the Roof of Paris," *Architectural Review* LXXIX, no.473 (April 1936): 155.

In the development of materials and technology, the articulation of the stair became increasingly refined and even more sophisticated in detail.²⁷ Ward Bennett's 1970s remodel of a historical New York duplex apartment (converted servants' quarters on the top level of the Dakota), included an open spiral showcase stair. (Figure 5.1.4) The stair had no solid walls; only a central steel newel post supported each tread, making the stair visually and physically lighter, and also greatly expressive. On the ground plane, it created a spatial dynamism. From above it resembled a three-dimensional fan that transformed into an undulating ribbon on the lower story.²⁸

²⁷ Michael Spens, *Staircases* (London: Academy Editions, 1995), 10.

²⁸ Living Room, Dakota Apartment [1979] Ward Bennett, New York in "Soothing, Serene, Civilized," *Interior Design* (Sep.1979): 246.



Figure 5.1.4

Living Room, Dakota Apartment [1979] Ward Bennett; New York City

PhotoCrd.: Jaime Ardiles-arce

“Soothing, Serene, Civilized,” *Interior Design* 50, no.9 (Sept.1979): 246.

In 1989, Michael Gabellini designed a spiral stair that seeming floats in space. Located on the 20th and 21th floors of a New York apartment, the stair has been characterized as more dynamic and ethereal than Corbusier’s. Gabellini’s stair creates a sleek, fluid line that connects the day area with the lower bedroom story by dissolving the solid walls and newel. (Figure 5.1.5) The staircase is arranged as a sequence of suspended slabs. The exceptional marble band of its form is unusually light in its design, almost a papery volume.²⁹ The marble treads are almost immaterial, like “overlaid sheets of paper that comply with the trajectory of the supporting framework.”³⁰

²⁹ Matteo Vercelloni and Silvio San Pietro, *Urban Interiors in New York* (Milano: Edizioni L’Archivoltto, 1996), 52-61.

³⁰ Silvio San Pietro and Paola Gallo, *Stairs: Scale* (Milano: Edizioni L’Archivoltto, 2002), 96-99; Bedroom [1989] Michael Gabellini, New York in Oscar Riera Ojeda, “Dente Residence,” *The New American Apartment* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1997), 232.



Figure 5.1.5

Bedroom [1989] Michael Gabellini, New York City

PhotoCrd.: Paul Warchol

Oscar Riera Ojeda, "Dente Residence," *The New American Apartment* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1997), 232.

The 1936 Le Corbusier spiral stair for a Paris apartment, Ward Bennett's 1979 spiral for an apartment in the Dakota, New York City, and Michael Gabellini's 1989 interpretation, also in New York City, can be read as a sequence of design reiterations, each stair becoming more sculptural and abstract through time. From the 1990s forward the dematerialization of the spiral stair influenced the design other stair types in efforts to make them appear free floating or suspended in space. Showcase stairs have taken on countless lightweight shapes, refined details, and transparent materials. Functionally and aesthetically, these contemporary showcase stairs allow limited square-footage apartment interiors to save space, to allow natural light to penetrate deeper into spaces, and to create dynamic spatial effects.

An open plan for apartments encouraged the design of ethereal showcase stairs in the center of a space. The visual accessibility of stairs enhances the concept of openness through materiality and forms. For example, each stair tread is fixed parallel to the wall to the second floor without handrail, a single sheet of steel was

folded together, or showcase stairs made of glass and steel plate is hung from the ceiling. Therefore, these contemporary showcase stairs achieve a high visibility and heighten both the awareness of one's own presence and the experience inside the showcase stairs.

Only a single sheet of steel resolves the linkage between two levels of a Milan apartment living room (1995) designed by Guillaume Saalburg. (Figure 5.1.6) Set slightly shy of a wall, the staircase rises on a central support system to which the "wafer-like steps" of bent metal have been welded, each comprising an individual modular element of the whole. This is elaborately hidden by a curved plate of shining steel, which sustains slender steps made of bent copper plate that ascend in an apparently continuous flow. Attached to the frame-work is the tubular stainless steel handrail, whose smooth flowing spiral terminates in exquisite volutes. This showcase stair coordinates the construction of various metal materials with their shifting, glistening, metallic effects.³¹ Another Guillaume Saalburg design (1997), this time for a Paris apartment, features a free-floating glass showcase stair. (Figure 5.1.7) Vertical glass panels are suspended from the ceiling and horizontal glass treads are in turn fixed between the glass panels. This detail, seen from the side, shows that they are in fact held in place by metal shoes, which are then screwed to metal straps on the other side of the glass wall. The glass showcase stair is completely detached from the floor and appears to be floating in space.³² The showcase stair allows visual access from all sides and opens up to be seen and let see.³³

³¹ Silvio San Pietro and Paola Gallo, *Stairs: Scale*, 202-203; Living room [1995] Guillaume Saalburg, Milan, Italy in Eva Jiricna, *Staircases* (London: Calmann & King Ltd, 2001), 202-203.

³² Jiricna, *Staircases*, 66-69.

³³ Scolere, "*Theory Studies: Contemporary Retail Design*," 69; Living Room [1997] Guillaume Saalburg; Paris in Eva Jiricna, *Staircases* (London: Calmann & King Ltd, 2001), 66-9.



Figure 5.1.6

Living Room [1995] Guillaume Saalburg; Milan, Italy

PhotoCrd.: Giulio Oriani –Vega MG.

Eva Jiricna, *Staircases* (London: Calmann & King Ltd, 2001), 202-203.

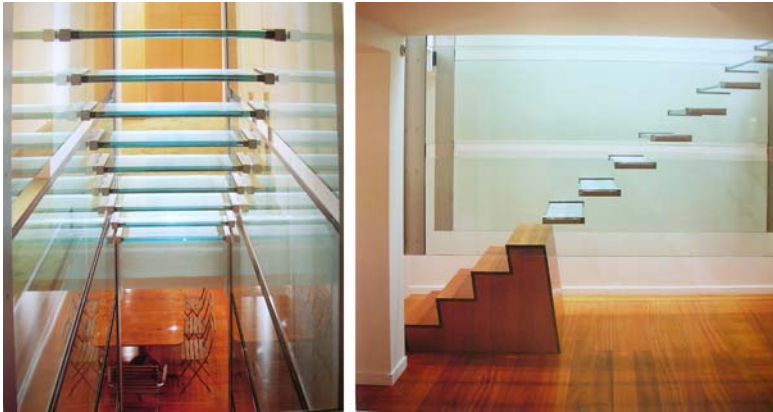


Figure 5.1.7

Living Room [1997] Guillaume Saalburg; Paris

PhotoCrd.: Luc Boegly/ Archipress

Eva Jiricna, *Staircases* (London: Calmann & King Ltd, 2001), 66-69.

A hanging stair made of steel gives a spatial dynamic to one of Mies Van Der Rohe's renowned Lake Shore Drive Apartments by visually connecting two levels. (Figure 5.1.8) The staircase is lightweight and amplifies the heights of the floors. A single asymmetrical brushed steel beam is set into the floor above and fixed to two hidden pillars. This element provides support for the cantilevered steps made of the same

material.³⁴



Figure 5.1.8

Living Room, 860 Lake Shore Drive Apartment [c1997] Krueck and Sexton; Chicago
PhotoCrd.: Paul Warchol,
“Kitchen Cabinet,” *Interior Design* 68, no. 4 (March 1997): 77.

The grand stair of luxury apartment lobbies has been a symbolic architectural element of sometimes monumental proportions and multifarious decorative ornaments.

³⁴ Silvio San Pietro and Paola Gallo, *Stairs: Scale*, 106-109; Living room, 860 Lake Shore Apartment [unknown date] Krueck and Sexton, Chicago in “Kitchen Cabinet,” *Interior Design* 68, no.4 (Mar.1997): 77.

Spiral Showcase stair Timeline

<p>Paris Apartment [1936] Le Courbusier, PhotoCrd.: Jaime Ardiles-arce, unknown author, "Fantasy on the Roof of Paris," Architectural Review (Apr. 1936): 155.</p>	
<p>Paris Apartment, Charles Boxenbaum, PhotoCrd.: Norman McGrath, unknown author, "Apartment by Charles Boxenbaum," Architectural Record (Jan. 1979): 109.</p>	
<p>New York Apartment, Ward Bennett, PhotoCrd.: Ardiles-arce, unknown author, "Soothing, Serene, Civilized," Interior Design (Sep. 1979): 246.</p>	
<p>New York Apartment [1989] Michael Gabellini, PhotoCrd.: Paul Warhol, Oscar Riera Ojeda, "Dente Residence", The New American Apartment (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1997), 232.</p>	
<p>Milano Apartment [1996] Luigi Ferrario: Italy, PhotoCrd.: Alberto Emanuele Piovano, Silvio San Pietro & Paola Gallo, Stairs:Scale (Milano: Edizioni L'Archivoltto, 2002), 82-83.</p>	

<p>1930s</p>	<p>1970s</p>	<p>1980s</p>	<p>1990s</p>	<p>2000s</p>
<p>Free - floating Showcase stair Timeline Cooper Bauer Apartment, 1988, Denison/Luchini Architects; Boston, PhotoCrd.: Jon Jensen, Oscar Riera Ojeda, The New American Apartment (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1997), 88.</p>	<p>860 Lake Shore Apartment, Krueck and Sexton, Chicago, PhotoCrd.: Michael Moran, Edie Lee Cohen "Krueck & Sexton," Interior Design 61, no.3 (Mar. 1997): 77.</p>	<p>New York Apartment, Graftworks, PhotoCrd.: Roy wright, unknown author, "Stair masters," Interior Design 72, no.14 (Nov. 2001.): 92.</p>	<p>Sydney Apartment [2002] Engelenmoore, PhotoCrd.: Ross Honeysett, Ana G. Canizares, New Apartments (New York: Collins Design, 200), 260.</p>	<p></p>
				

Figure 5.1.9
Timeline: Showcase s



Figure 5.1.10
Timeline: Showcase stair

The dramatic spatial character of lobby stairs are also evidenced in private units. As one of the principle interior features of luxury apartments, both locations of stairs provide interiors with rich materials and dynamic expressions, whether they are a grand stair, spiral stair or dematerialized stair.³⁵

³⁵ **1930** Paris Apartment [1936] Le Courbusier; Paris, France in "Fantasy on the Roof of Paris," *Architectural Review* LXXIX, no.473 (April 1936):155. **1970** Paris Apartment, Charles Boxenbaum; Paris, France in "Apartment by Charles Boxenbaum," *Architectural Record* (Jan. 1979): 109.; New York Apartment, Ward Bennett; New York City in "Soothing, Serene, Civilized," *Interior Design* 50, no.9 (Sept.1979): 246.; **1980** New York Apartment [1989] Michael Gabellini; New York City in Oscar Riera Ojeda, "Dente Residence," *The New American Apartment* (New York: Whitney Library of Design,1997), 232; Cooper Bauer Apartment [1988] Denison/Luchini Architects; Boston, Mass. in Oscar Riera Ojeda, *The New American Apartment*, 88., **1990** Milan Apartment [1995] Guillaume Saalburg; Milan, Italy in Eva Jiricna, *Staircases* (London: Calmann & King, 2001), 202-203; Chicago Apartment [1995] Valerio Dewalt Train Associates; Chicago in Oscar Riera Ojeda, "Gardner Apartment", *The New American Apartment*, 56.; 860 Lake Shore Apartment, Krueck and Sexton, Chicago, in Edie Lee Cohen "Krueck & Sexton," *Interior Design* 61, no.3 (Mar. 1997); 7; New York Apartment, Maya Lin Studio; New York City in "Norton Apartment," *Architectural Record* (Sept. 1999): 134; **2000** New York Apartment, Graftworks; New York City in "Stair Masters," *Interior Design* 72, no.14 (Nov. 2001): 92; Sydney Apartment [2002] Engelenmoore; Sydney, Australia in Ana G. Canizares, *New Apartments* (New York: Collins Design, 200), 260; Rudolph Apartment, Jared Della Valle and Bernheimer in "Norton Apartment," *New York* 39, no.35 (Oct. 9, 2006): 54.

Chapter 6

VIEW

6.1 Borrowed View

Interior archetypes

Borrowed view



Element

View

Descriptive Words

shakkei, interior-exterior relationships, inside-outside relationships

Definition

Borrowed view originates from a traditional Japanese practice of visually incorporating an extraordinary distant exterior view into the interior by interior window frames.

Description

As traditional Asian buildings usually demonstrate a highly attuned concern for

integration with their natural environment,¹ contemporary interior designs in cities, consisting of more artificial environments made by humans, consider urban context and cityscapes.

In the well-known device as *shakkei* or “borrowed scenery,” in which a distant landscape is integrated into a garden composition, Japanese designers found a very different yet equally effective means of linking the tectonic to its natural context. This is achieved by a carefully designed frame located some distance from the viewer, which is usually of natural plant material. Trees and hedges are popular framing devices. The frame is positioned to trim away the raw view, obscuring many of the spatial depth clues that would normally indicate the true distance between the observer and the far-off landscape. This concealing of the intervening space has the effect of bringing the distant natural scene forward so as to appear part of the built foreground.² The foreground, middle ground, and background planes are set up to create a strong relationship between the private garden (foreground), the framed or borrowed feature (middle ground) and the distant views of nature (background) (Figure 6.1.1).³

¹ Kazuo Nishi and Kazuo Hozumi, *What is Japanese Architecture?* (Tokyo and New York : Kodansha International, 1985), 10-11.

² Kevin Nute, *Place, Time and Being in Japanese Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2004), 20-21.

³ Toshiro Inaji, *The Garden as Architecture: Form and Spirit in the Gardens of Japan, China, and Korea* (New York: Kodansha International, 1998), 41.



Figure 6.1.1

Shoden-ji, Kyoto. With Mt. Hiei in distance, captured by a framed garden edge or shakkei.

PhotoCrd.: Kevin Nute

Kevin Nute, *Place, Time and being in Japanese Architecture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 21.

Traditional Japanese architecture also incorporates the scenes with the inner spaces, which are the views of a castle or sacred mountain, capturing a scene by interior window frames. The Jiko-in of the Nara Prefecture is an example of the defining element of boundaries to be terminated at the clipped hedge. The end of the wooden floor and the eaves mark the edge of the building while the hedge marks the edge of the property. From the inside, one gazes out to the distant Yamato Mountains to view a scene connected to the outside natural world.¹ The same apparent merging of nature and architecture was often evident in the relationship between gardens and the inner spaces.² Watanabe house and its garden are merged as a single built entity (Figure 6.1.2).

¹ Masao Hayakawa, *The Garden Art of Japan* (New York: Weatherhill, 1974), 146.

² Nute, *Place, Time and Being in Japanese Architecture*, 22.



Figure 6.1.2

Watanabe House, unknown date and architect, Niigata, Japan

PhotoCrd.:Sosei Kuzunishi

Kevin Nute, *Place, Time and being in Japanese Architecture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 22.

The archetypical practice of Borrowed View in high-rise luxury apartments draws from some of the same techniques as traditional Japanese practices, but the significant view is often of a skyline or an important building, such as the Chrysler building in New York City. A curtain wall system allowed walls of apartments to become virtually transparent, leading to a heightened integration of interior and exterior views.¹

However, small framing devices are rarely used, in favor of full-height window walls with minimal visual obstructions. In other words, Borrowed Scenery in an apartment is more akin to a raw view than a tightly framed one. Nevertheless, developers, designers, and realtors promote the Borrowed View as a highly

¹ Curtain Wall: William Le Baron Jenney's ten-story Home Insurance Company Building (1884–85) in Chicago was the first to use steel-girder construction; his skyscrapers were also the first to employ a curtain wall, an outer covering of masonry or other material that bears only its own weight and is affixed to and supported by the steel skeleton. Architects Le Corbusier and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe also designed glass curtain walls, a non-load-bearing "skin" attached to the exterior structural components of the building.

desirable aspect of luxury apartment design. Consequently space planning and furniture arrangement are configured in such a way as to reap the full benefit of a magnificent scene provided by an apartment's location and siting.

Architect Paul Rudolph made his Manhattan apartment (Figure 6.1.3) remarkable through the use of full-height window walls overlooking the East River in New York City. The living room area opens through a whole glass window wall to the river. Rudolph eliminated the window frames except opening areas for maximizing the stunning riverside views. The borrowed view of the full-height window walls in this apartment not only takes the outside views into the inside moment by moment like a movie screen, but also makes the living room spacious, solving the drawback of low ceiling height.¹



Figure 6.1.3

Living room, Manhattan apartment [unknown date] Paul Rudolph; New York City, U.S.A

PhotoCrd.:Tom Yee

Unknown author "Record of Interiors of 1978," *Architectural Record* (Jan,1978): 77-79.

¹ Unknown author "Record of Interiors of 1978," *Architectural Record* (Jan,1978): 77-79

A window of the riverside New York apartment (Figure 6.1.4) designed by Klein Stolzman, captures such a spectacular New York skyline that it looks like a framed photograph. Stolzman placed a window seat immediately below the window and draped diaphanous window coverings loosely around the window, further framing the view.¹ The urban context becomes one of main interior spatial components, and the space is defined by the borrowed views the city provides.



Figure 6.1.4

Living room, Unknown Building [1993] Klein Stolzman; New York City

PhotoCrd.: Paul Warchol

Matteo Vercelloni, *Lofts & Apartments in NY* (Milano: Edizioni

l'Archivoltto,1999), 156.

In another Klein Stolzman design, the terrace of a New York apartment (Figure 6.1.5-Left) acts as an “urban porch”, an exterior space to enjoy views of Central Park. The steel-framed glass doors of the terrace are the middle frames for a view from the living room, while the art collection can be seen through them.² Borrowed View establishes not only interior-exterior

¹ Matteo Vercelloni, *Lofts & Apartments in NY* (Milano: Edizioni l'Archivoltto,1999), 156.

² Matteo Vercelloni, *Lofts & Apartments in NY*, 161.

relationships, but also visual accessibility from one space to another—inside to outside or in a longer visual sequence, such as interior to interior to exterior. Melbourne, Australia's eastern suburbs are the Borrowed View in a high rise apartment designed by Fender Katsalidis (Figure 6.1.5-Right). A skeletal frame of continuous windows on three sides makes the view a panoramic one in which occupants experience changing light from sunrise to sunset. In this setting, distant towers become sculptural.¹ The living area looks as if it floats in the above the city. One's experience varies when viewing from a sitting or standing prospect.



Figure 6.1.5

Leftt: Living room, unknown building name [1989] Klein Stolzman, New York
PhotoCrd.: Paul Warchol

Matteo Vercelloni, *Lofts & Apartments in NY* (Milano: Edizioni
l'Archivolto,1999), 161.

Right: Living room, unknown building name and date, Fender Katsalidis Pty
Ltd., Melbourne, Australia

PhotoCrd.: David B Simmonds

Robyn Beaver, *50 of the World's Best Apartments* (Australia: Images
Publishing Group Pty Ltd, 2004), 197.

¹ Robyn Beaver, *50 of the World's Best Apartments* (Australia: Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd, 2004), 197.



Figure 6.1.6
Timeline: Borrowed view

Borrowed Views in high-rise luxury apartments enhance the interior experience by making the city a constant reference.¹

¹ Citations from the timeline:

1970s: Living room, unknown apartment [unknown date] Pual Rudolph; New York City, U.S.A in unknown author "Record of Interiors of 1978," *Architectural Record* (Jan,1978): 77-79.
1980s: Metropolitan Tower Apartment [1980s] Steven Holl Architects; New York, USA in James S. Russell, "Skin and bones," *Architectural Record* (May,1988): 122-127., Living room, unknown apartment [1989] Klein Stolzman; New York, USA in Matteo Vercelloni, *Lofts & Apartments in NY* (Milano: Edizioni l'Archivolta,1999), 161. 1990s: Study room, unknown apartment [unknown date] Roger Hirsch, Architect and Drew Souza; New York City, U.S.A in unknown author "All in the family (Flatiron Residence)," *Architectural Record* (Jan,1978): 102-107.; Living room, Unknown Building [1993] Klein Stolzman; New York City in Matteo Vercelloni, *Lofts & Apartments in NY* (Milano: Edizioni l'Archivolta,1999), 156., 2000s: Living room, unknown building name and date, Fender Katsalidis Pty Ltd.; Melbourne, Australia In Robyn Beaver, 50 of the World's Best Apartments (Australia: Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd, 2004), 197.; Carlton Ramsey Apartment [1989] Paul Brace Design; Sydney, Australia in Montse Borrás, *The New Apartment* (New York: Universe, 2007), 298-305.

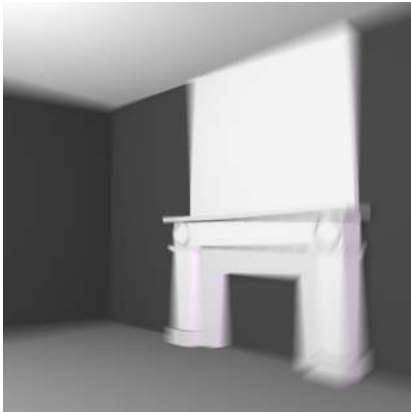
Chapter 7

WALL

7.1 Ghost Hearth

Interior archetypes

Ghost Hearth



Element

Preservation

Wall

Cluster

Ghost Hearth + Mix Match

Ghost Hearth + White Out

Definition

A Ghost Hearth consists of a non-functioning fireplace with a mantel and surround that together serve as decorative wall element. The “hearth” may be original, historic, faux or new.

Application Definition

Unless a luxury apartment building is historical, Ghost Hearth is almost always faux, an appropriation of an original historic fireplace that is used as a decorative device or focal element.

Description

There are two types of usage of Ghost Hearth in luxury apartments. 1) One is an existing, but not functioning, fireplace in an historic apartment; the historic fireplace is primarily intact with its original mantel and surround. 2) The second type of Ghost Hearth is a new, non-original, or faux fireplace (surround and mantel) that is essentially a decorative wall element. In all cases, there is no thermal function.

Despite technological gains, luxury apartments retained fireplaces in one or two important rooms, but they no longer function thermally. When fireplaces were no longer necessary for heating, the mantelpiece and hearth continued to represent cultural notions of domesticity—warmth, light, and comfort.² And other reasons to retain fireplaces emerged—economic status, style, tradition or nostalgia, as well as historic conservation and preservation.

16th-19th Century Mantel Design in Europe and America

Chimneypieces constituted the first interior architectural feature for which 16th century architects turned their attention, and the first for which pattern books were published. The Italians devised a formula for fireplaces that have

² Jan Jennings, *Cheap and Tasteful Dwellings: Architectural Competitions and the Convenient Interior, 1879-1909* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 2005), 178-180.

remained in vogue ever since. The principal form comprised a projecting chimney-breast with a surround to the opening. The area above the opening, on the front of the chimney-breast, was denoted as a site for ornament, either architectural or sculptural in character. The typical grand chimneypiece produced in Europe around 1620 was massive, with a large opening of tall proportions, above which was heaped a wealth of ornament. French architects set about making this feature more compact, and the ornament gradually became better integrated with the structure. To solve the issue of massiveness, many architects set a painting into the chimney breast. French architects in the 17th century introduced a mirror-glass panel between the picture and the mantel opening and began shaping the fireplace surround to project and recede.³



Figure 7.1.1

Chimneypiece in a fashionable closet [1693] Paris, France

PhotoCrd.: National museum, Stockholm; Tessin-Harleman Collection

Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor: The Domestic Interior, 1620-1920* (New York: Viking, 1984), 51.

³ Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor: The Domestic Interior, 1620-1920* (New York: Viking, 1984), 15, 30-31, 32, 51, 54.

In 18th century France, the chimneypiece continued to form a focal point of a room, but it was no longer quite so obtrusive a feature. It began to be integrated with wall composition, although the English and Germans continued to publish pattern books illustrating the mantel piece as a separate design. From the 16th century forward, one pictorial pattern had been irrevocably determined—the wall above the opening became the site of a special feature (a painting or a mirror, for example).⁴

Building on a system of hierarchy in both design and cultural history, mantel designs constituted some of the most important working drawings of American architects. Many form a visual essay of design features suggested in 1868 by English architect and furniture designer, Charles Eastlake, in his widely disseminated book *Hints on Household Taste*. Eastlake promoted the use of a wooden overmantel with a long low strip of mirror (about 18" high) and narrow shelves (6" wide, 12" apart) for specimens of old china. Further, he recommended the display of plates upright on their edges and prevented them from slipping off by sinking a shallow groove in the thickness of each shelf—what came to be known as a plate rail. Eastlake's mantel made a shelf a permanent element. Mantel shelves for bric-a-brac in American homes reinforced the notion of the mantel as the site for some of the family's important possessions: "A little museum may thus be formed and remain a source of lasting pleasure to its possessors, seeing that a thing of beauty is a joy forever."⁵ During the Arts and Crafts period in the United States, the medieval fireplace was reinterpreted for ordinary bungalows and English and

⁴ Jennings, *Cheap and Tasteful Dwellings*, 180.

⁵ Charles L. Eastlake, *Hints on Household Taste: The Classic Handbook of Victorian Interior Decoration* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1878), 136.

Spanish revival houses.

20th Century Mantel Design and the Ghost Hearth

In America, Revivalist styles, such as Georgian and Colonial continued almost unabated well into the 20th century.⁶ In some cases, antique fireplaces were removed from historic houses and installed in rather plain apartment interiors to give the spaces architectural character. In a New York apartment at 666 Park Avenue, decorated in the 1920s by William R. Pearsall, J. Layng Mills and F. Burrall Hoffman, the library's fireplace (Figure 7.1.2) was removed from an 18th century London house. Reinstalled in an oval room of an apartment, the Classically detailed mantel is flanked by built-in bookcases, wall moldings, and a large mirrored over-mantel topped with a broken pediment in which an eagle has been placed.⁷

⁶ Encarna Castillo, *Fireplaces: Architecture and Design* (New York: Harper Design International, 2004), 23-25.

⁷ Library, Seton Porte Apartment [1929] Park Avenue, New York City in Andrew Alpern, *New York's Luxury Apartments: With Original Floor Plans from the Dakota, River House, Olypic Tower and other Great Buildings* (New York: Dover, 1975), 124-129.



Figure 7.1.2

The library as furnished for Seton Porte, New York Apartment, 666 Park Avenue [1929] William R. Pearsall, J. Layng Mills and F. Burrall Hoffman; New York City

PhotoCrd.: Hewitt-Smith, The New-York Historical Society

Andrew Alpern, *New York's Luxury Apartments: With Original Floor Plans from the Dakota, River House, Olypic Tower and other Great Buildings* (New York: Dover, 1975.), 127.

After the Second World War, fireplace technology advanced. Prefabricated electronic and gas fireplaces became the preferred type, because they were quicker and simpler to install, reduced construction costs, and allowed more design options. Whatever its style, period or expression, the fireplace remains a deeply engrained culturally symbolic element.⁸

During the latter-half of the 20th century, fireplaces in houses continued to be significant features. Americans desired them for their cultural meanings, but they also wanted fireplaces in which actual fires could be built. Drawing the family around the fireplace became an important visual icon. Therefore, during the 1950 to 1970 eras, fireplaces in single-family houses were real ones,

⁸ Castillo, *Fireplace*, 23-25; Henry J. Kauffman, *The American Fireplace: Chimneys, Mantelpieces, Fireplaces and Accessories*, (Nashville, T. Nelson, 1972), 175.

competing with television screens. New types of fireplaces with modern forms and new materials synthesized industrialism and design.⁹ During the 1945 to 1960 period in luxury apartments, fireplaces of any type almost disappeared.

During the 1970 and 1980 decades, the preservation of historic American buildings became a popular practice, which no doubt encouraged the preservation of historic fireplaces and the reinstallation of historic fireplaces in interiors that were contemporary. The National Park Service dubbed this latter practice as “phony historicism”.

Luxury apartment interiors published in trade magazines illustrate the prevalent use of original, non-functioning fireplaces.¹⁰ In historic buildings, the fireplace sometimes lost its original function because of the inefficiency of old fireplaces, such as the inconvenience involved in supplying fuel, difficulty of cleaning, and insufficient heat. The visual comfort and nostalgic associations, however, made the fireplace more important than thermal function.

Many historic preservation projects in the late 20th century included restoration of original historic mantels. One such project was a small, first half of the 19th century, Greek Revival house (Figure 7.1.3) in Greenwich Village, Manhattan. The firm, Site Environmental Design, respected the historic element by treating the fireplace as an art installation. Artifacts, such as candelabrum and a bust, were added to the mantel shelf. The entire vignette and the wall were painted white. Visually the artifacts, as well as the fireplace opening, surround

⁹ Henry J. Kauffman, *The American Fireplace: Chimneys, Mantelpieces, Fireplaces and Accessories*, (Nashville, T. Nelson, 1972), 175.

¹⁰ Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration*, 362.

and mantel shelf, sink into the wall of the living room, creating one of the best examples of Ghost Hearth. “Everything seems to appear and disappear at the same time.”¹¹

Another example of an installation comes from interior designer Peter Carlson who found a rare 18th century English wire mantelpiece that was used in gardens for topiary or trailing ivy. He covered the mantelpiece in moss and placed it in a formal interior, further setting the scene with a pair of 18th Italian scones and chairs. His partner, Linda Chase, recognized the mantelpiece’s potential and began reproducing it for a line of wire garden ornaments that include chairs and sofas.

In 1986 interior designer Kathleen Gibson and architect Paul Westlake, Jr. drew from the cultural meaning of a mantelpiece wall elevation when they designed a faux fireplace for the Goodnough Guesthouse in Cleveland (Figure 7.1.4) Heights, Ohio. The symmetrical organization of the wall includes the requisite elements—painting, mantel shelf, fireplace opening, surround and hearth—and fabricated in appropriate materials—plaster and marble. The installation abstracts the architectural while keeping cultural meaning intact.

¹¹ Matteo Vercelloni, *Urban Interiors in New York* (Milano: Edizioni l’Archivoloto, 1996), 178-187.



Figure 7.1.3

Left: Living Room, unknown building name [1985] Site Environmental Design, Greenwich Village, New York City

PhotoCrd.: Paul Warchol

Matteo Vercelloni, *Urban Interiors in New York* (Milano: Edizioni l'Archivoloto, 1996), 178-187.

Right : Installation, English Mantelpiece [bef 1992] Peter Carlsson; London, England

Photo Crd.: Cookie Kinhead

Alexandra Edwards, *Fireplaces* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1992), 21.



Figure 7.1.4

Living Room, Goodnough Guesthouse [1986] KGibson and P. Westlake, Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Photo Crd.: Kathleen Gibson

21st Century Ghost Hearths

Mix-matching an original historic architectural envelope with contemporary furnishings continues into the 21st century, and Ghost Hearths remain popular practices in Europe, the Americas and Asia.

In 2003 designer Christophe Pillet renovated a Napoleon III era apartment in Paris by combining the Mix Match practice with White Out—an all-white room with all white furnishings (Figure 7.1.5). Only the artwork retains color. Elegant moldings, the mantel piece and coffered ceilings contribute to the unique character of the apartment. A large mirror on the chimney breast is strategically placed to heighten the sense of space.¹²



Figure 7.1.5

Left: Living Room, Napoleon III–Era Apartment [2003] Christophe Pillet; Paris PhotoCrd.: Vincent Knapp

Montse Borrás, "Apartment on Rue Rivoli," *The New Apartment: Smart Living in Small Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2007), 149.

Right: Entry Hall, Daechi Apartment [unknown date] Home & Deco Interior Co. Ltd., Seoul, Korea

PhotoCrd.: Hong Sung-jun and Jang Woong-soo,

Jeong Ji-seong, *Apartment & Villa* (Seoul: CAPress, 2003), 76.

¹² Montse Borrás, "Apartment on Rue Rivoli," *The New Apartment: Smart Living in Small Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2007), 149.

In Seoul, Korea apartments never had fireplaces, but there is evidence that Ghost Hearths are being used to impart architectural character into typically modular, unornamented boxes. For example, the designer of the Daechi Apartments (Figure 7.1.5, Left) installed a faux fireplace in a wall of the entry space. The fireplace is finished with an antique wood frame, but the opening of the fireplace is closed with brick, making it clear that the fireplace is not functional.¹³ A Ghost Hearth in a Seoul apartment (Figure 7.1.5, Left) may not convey the same cultural meaning as one in Europe or the United States, but it certainly suggests that the entry hall is an important space to receive such an unique (and foreign) element.

In Brazil, designer Brunete Fraccaroli, created a room for watching television by linking a centuries old focal point, the fireplace, with the 20th-century's most important icon, a tv screen. The opening of the fireplace is entirely closed with the cut-ends of logs. The white marble of the antique fireplace contrasts as a Mix Match with the strong orange color of the laminated mirror and walls and white Italian furniture.¹⁴ The trend to hang a television screen above a fireplace is evidenced in published work, as well as in ordinary residences.

¹³ Jeong Ji-seong, *Apartment & Villa* (Seoul: CAPress, 2003), 76.

¹⁴ Robyn Beaver, "Color and Light," *50 of the World's Best Apartments* (Australia: Images Publishing Group, 2004), 90.

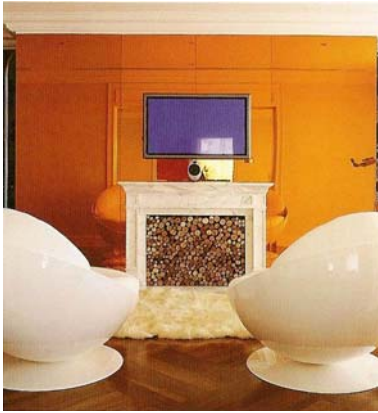


Figure 7.1.6

Living Room, Unknown Building [unknown date] Brunete Fraccaroli; Sao Paulo, Brazil

PhotoCrd.: Tuca Reines

Robyn Beaver, "Color and Light," *50 of the World's Best Apartments* (Australia: Images Publishing Group, 2004), 90.

Fireplaces and mantelpieces live on in residential settings as Ghost Hearths.¹⁵

¹⁵ **1980** Living Room, [1985] Site Environmental Design; Greenwich Village, New York City in Matteo Vercelloni, *Urban Interiors in New York* (Milano: Edizioni l'Archivoloto, 1996), 178-187.; Living Room, Goodnough Guesthouse [1986] KGibson and P. Westlake; Cleveland Heights, Ohio; unpub.; **1990** Installation, English Mantelpiece [bef 1992] Peter Carlsson; London, England in Alexandra Edwards, *Fireplaces* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1992), 21; Apartment [1990] Peter Stamberg & Paul Aferiat Architects; New York City in Matteo Vercelloni, *Lofts and Apartments in New York* (Milano: Edizioni l'Archivolto, 1999), 200; Alex Verhoustraeten Apartment [c1998] John M. Hall; Brussels, Belgium in Abby Bussel, "Living Large," *Interior Design* 69, no. 10 (Aug. 1998): 125; **2000** Living Room, Napoleon III–Era Apartment [2003] Christophe Pillet; Paris, France in Montse Borrás, "Apartment on Rue Rivoli," *The New Apartment: Smart Living in Small Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2007), 149; Entry Hall, Daechi Apartment [bef. 2003] Home & Deco Interior Co. Ltd., Seoul, Korea in Jeong Ji-seong, *Apartment & Villa* (Seoul: CAPress, 2003), 76; Living Room [unknown date] Brunete Fraccaroli; Sao Paulo, Brazil in Robyn Beaver, "Color and Light," *50 of the World's Best Apartments* (Australia: Images Publishing Group, 2004), 90.

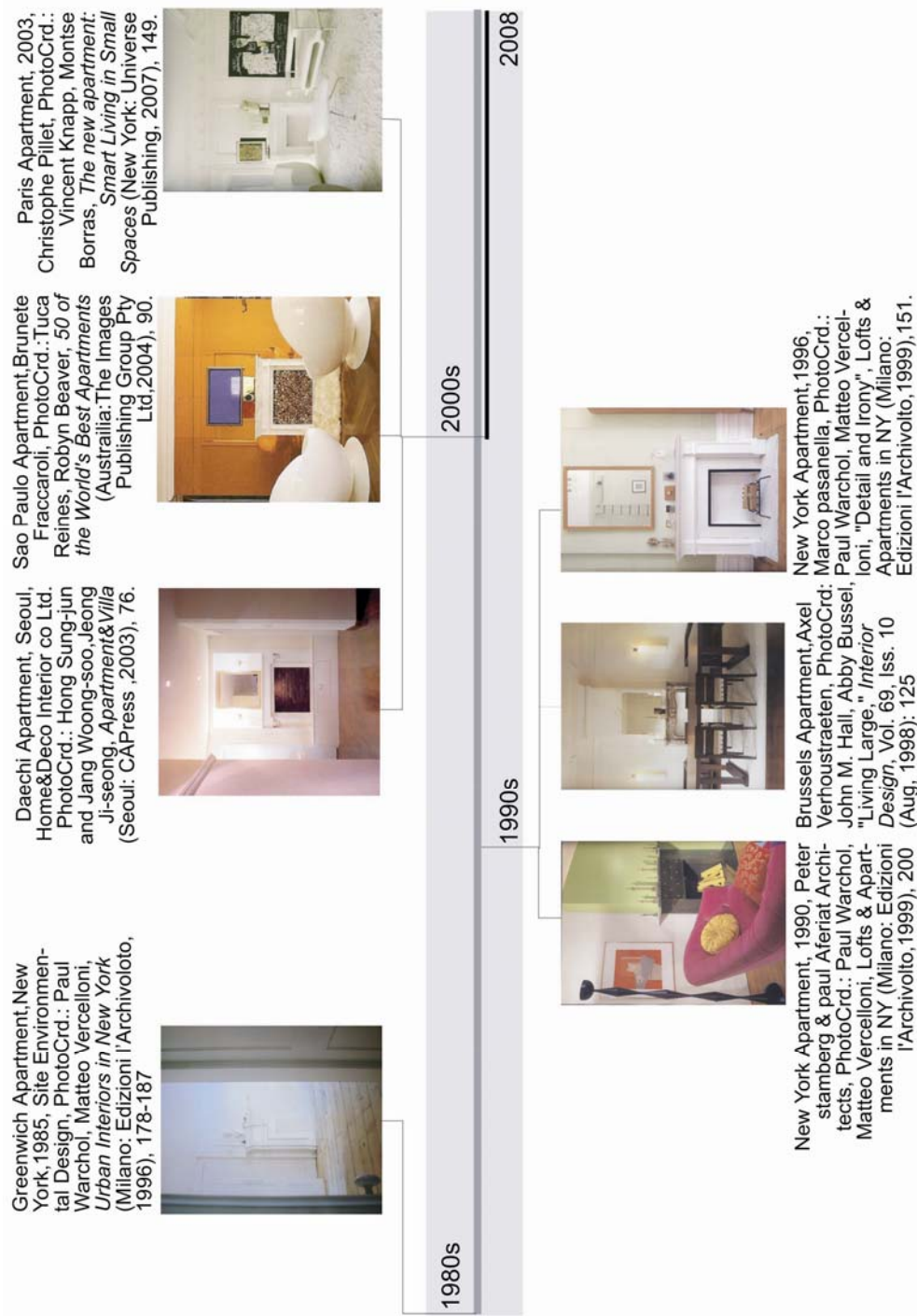


Figure 7.1.7
Timeline: Ghost hearth

They have benefited from the historic preservation movement, and from artists who make art installations from mantelpieces. When contemporary designers fill a fireplace opening with an interesting and/or textured material, such as the Sao Paulo example, they are reiterating a Victorian custom of filling or covering a fireplace opening decoratively.

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