

DECO DUET

DESIGNER CATHERINE CLEARE HARMONIZES A COMPOSER'S COLLECTION AT THE CARLYLE.



"What stood out to me was this was a client who knew what he wanted, a period piece that was formal and felt like the '30s," says Connecticut designer Catherine Cleare, recalling her creation of a French Art Deco interior for composer Al Tapper's Manhattan apartment in the Carlyle Hotel.

The understated foyer belies the meticulous planning and major renovating it underwent for nearly a year. "Art Deco interiors can look simple but are intensely complicated and ornate," says Cleare, who redesigned the entire space from ceiling to cinder block floor.

Cleare focused on the foyer's classic formality, carefully considering the requirements for displaying her client's 1930s collection. She used mirrored panels to create multiple perspectives of the sculptures and to visually expand the 7-by-20-square-foot space.

Cove lighting creates a wide radius of soft illumination, spotlight beams highlight the sculptures, and wall-mounted strip-lighting shines on the oil paintings. "All lighting decisions were based on enhancing the artwork and creating a neutral, monochromatic palette," says Cleare.

Tapper spent an entire year acquiring his personalized art collection, and sought to display it appropriately. "These artworks were chosen because they touched me in a certain way," he explains. He carefully searched antiques shows and auctions from Miami to Philadelphia, and made his decisions with Cleare's suggestions.

At one Christie's auction, they found an oil on canvas that depicts a flapper and once belonged to Barbara Streisand. Another oil painting, by J.D. Van Caulaet, portrays a nude figure titled *Pink Hat Pink Gloves*.

Two mixed-media sculptures by D.K. Chiparus welcome guests to the foyer. *Night Stand*, featuring bronze-and-steel cabaret dancers joins *The Secret*, a bronze-and-marble sculpture of two women in Tapper's collection.

The parquet floor pattern underscores the drama created by the art. According to Cleare, "Repeating geometric patterns are common in Art Deco designs. This diamond pattern creates an interesting contrast to the straight lines found in the border."

According to Cleare, the foyer creates strong first impressions for visitors and still resonates with her client. "The thrill has not worn off for him. He still loves to walk into the apartment," she says. By GWEN WILLIAMS

A '20s PERSPECTIVE: CONNECTICUT DESIGNER CATHERINE CLEARE CONCEIVED THIS ART DECO SPACE WITH HIGH FINISHES, SMOOTH SURFACES, AND THE CLIENT'S OWN COLLECTION.