

GRAND ALLUSION

Fisher Weisman's Modern Take on Old-World Glamour.

By LINDA O'KEEFFE
Photography by MATTHEW MILLMAN

A LONG TIME AGO, Jeffrey Weisman was asked to undertake a faithful period restoration. He respectfully declined, he recalls, taking time "to explain to the homeowner that we were designers, not curators." Over the years, in fact, this steadfast refusal to favor one architectural era or period of furniture has underpinned the signature style of Weisman and his partner, Andrew Fisher. Though informed by classicism, a sense of historical diversity is key to their harmonious interiors. Case in point: a Nob Hill penthouse where the duo orchestrated an interior that nods respectfully to history while feeling utterly modern.

"Before they relocated to San Francisco, our clients sold their previous home lock, stock, and barrel, so they handed us this empty, clean slate," says Weisman. "It was liberating because both the husband and wife are confident and vocal when it comes to expressing their taste, and they knew exactly how they wanted each room to feel."

Designed when the beaux arts style was evolving into art deco, the penthouse might have been painted the de rigueur cheery colors of the day. But when Weisman first sauntered through its dozen rooms, he found "a plethora of heavy-handed, cacophonous surface

treatments. It was pickled and glazed for days, and its colors—tobacco brown, cordovan, and shades of gold and taupe—felt dated, dreary, and oppressive."

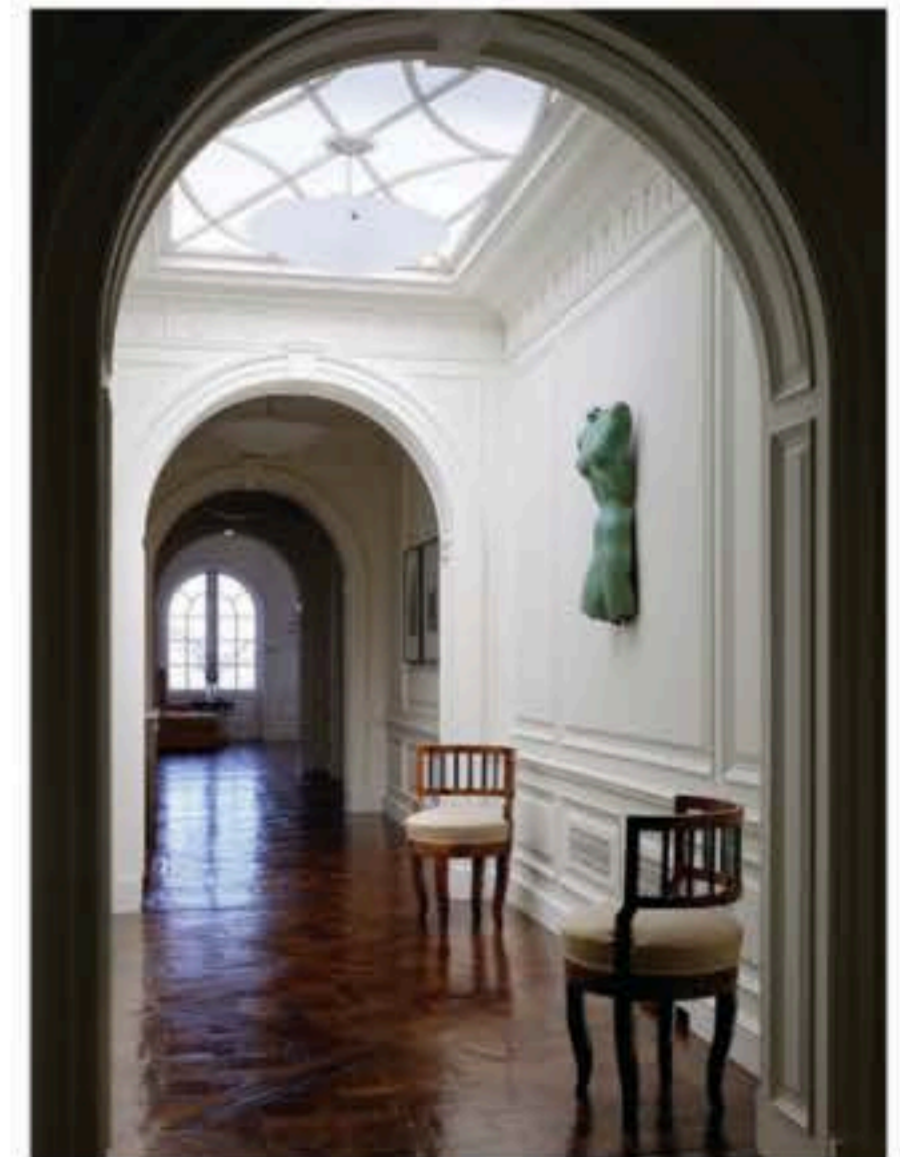
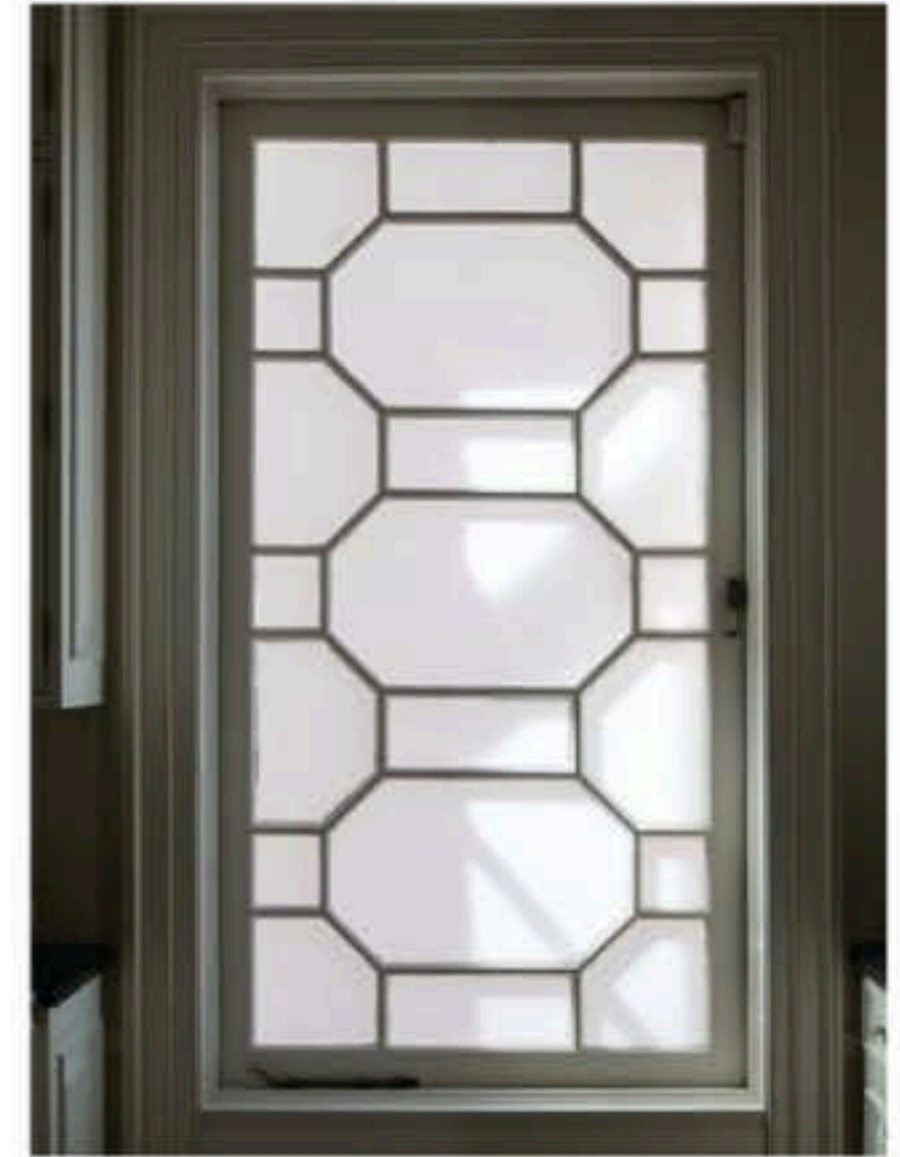
To satisfy the clients' request for atmospheric calm, the designers' dramatic first step was swathing the entire space in matte white—described by Weisman as "dipping it in French vanilla ice cream"—to showcase the architecture. The decisive palette of off-whites, cream, and cashmere, paired with the contoured parquet de Versailles floor, brings to mind a chic, modern abstraction of an 18th-century boiserie. "It's sculptural and consciously spare," Weisman says, "because the owners are art lovers, and they're intuitively drawn to the concept of negative space."

Before Fisher Weisman entered the scene, the previous owners had commissioned architect Andrew Skurman, an expert in European classical architecture, to reconfigure the space. On his first site visit, he encountered a meandering, disjointed "naked" apartment (everything had been demolished except the concrete structure). Bringing together historical precedent, 21st-century technology, and cutting-edge ecology, he expanded the space to its current 5,500

CLASSIC BEAUTY: A neo-classical arch frames the gracious living room, a crisp but comfortable gathering space (left).



EASY ELEGANCE: The light-filled dining room invites lingering over a read. The custom dining table is by Fisher Weisman, rug by Stark Custom (Stark), the dining chairs are upholstered in white leather (Edelman). Refraction (Deep Purple) by Bernadette Jyong Frank (Cavalier by Jay Jeffers) (Right) A Robert Adams-inspired black and white marble "pinwheel" floor in the foyer; a Chippendale-inspired window; a pair of Biedermeier chairs grace the gallery; a custom settee in the entry hall.





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