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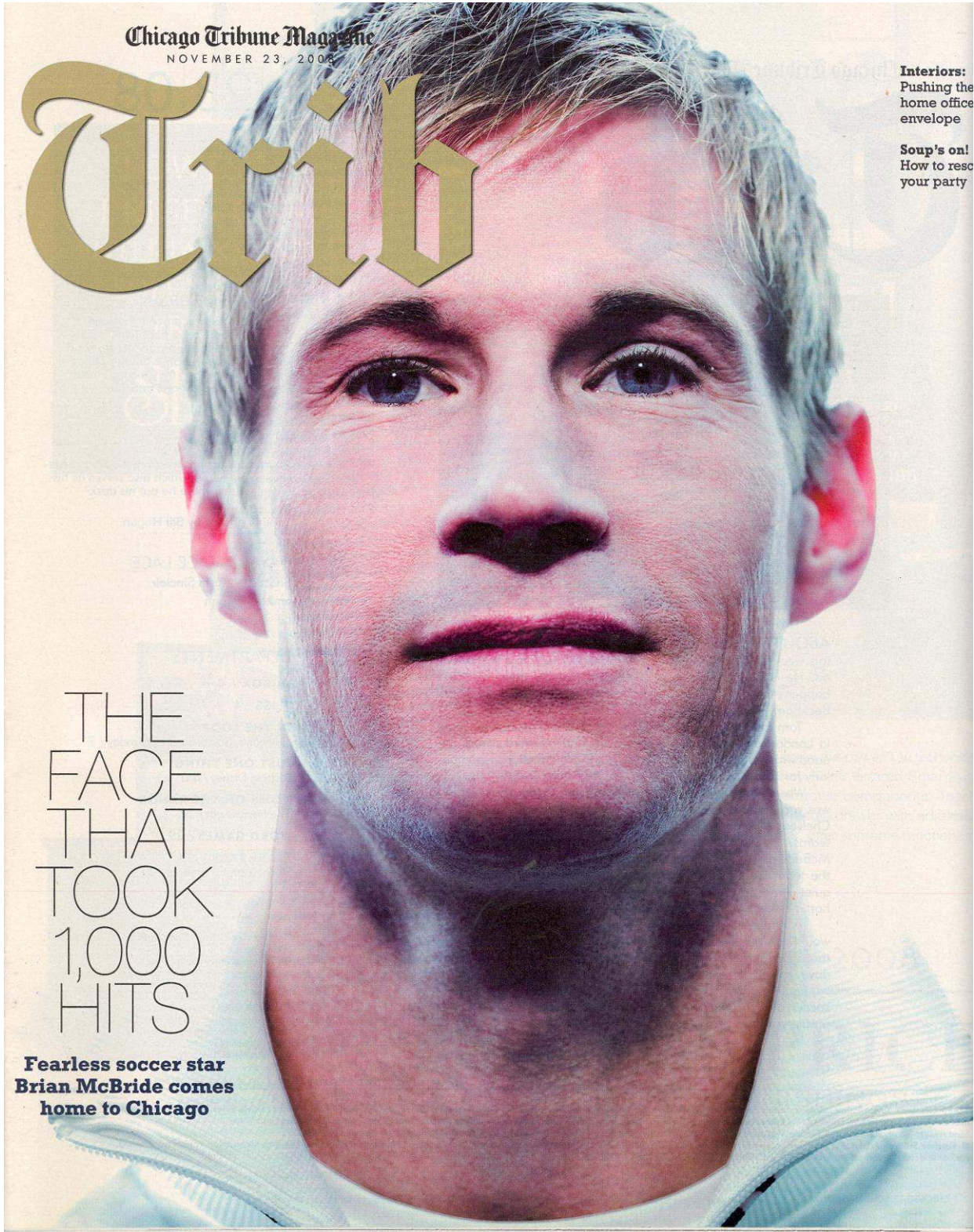
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THE RISK TAKER

AN INVESTOR PUSHES THE PORTFOLIO WHEN REDESIGNING HIS HOME, WHICH ALSO SERVES AS HIS OFFICE. GUESS WHERE HE PUT HIS DESK?

BY LISA CREGAN

TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY BILL HOGAN

W

e all know that some financial guys love to push the limits, right up to the edge of scary—thus our recent economic roller-coaster ride.

But in his striking Lake Shore Drive apartment, it's clear private equity investor Mark Schindel is one financial guy who knows how to take a risk and have it pay off, beautifully.

"I like to push myself, push other people, push the envelope, be a little edgy," says the bachelor homeowner. "I think my place reflects that."

Schindel's designers, James Dolenc and Tom Riker, agree. "He asked us to step out of the box," says Dolenc, who with Riker created the Chicago interiors firm jamesthomas 5 years ago. "He wanted explosive color, wanted to be vibrant and playful—this is actually the perfect reflection of Mark's joyous personality."

Until a few short years ago the only personality the apartment reflected was total buzzkill. "It was a developer's redo, a downer, done in dark, Spanish Colonial style," Dolenc says. "It was awful." Not surprisingly, the first order of business was to apply a

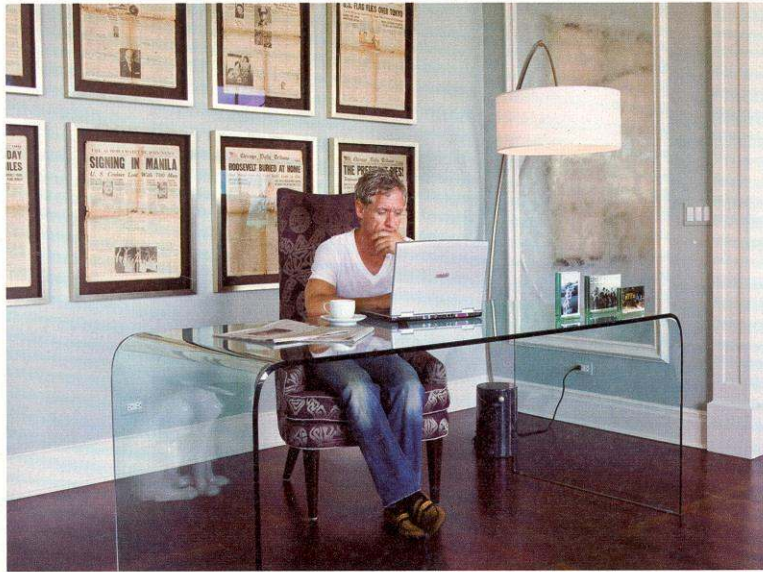




Although the living room colors are bold, the symmetry of the furniture arrangement keeps the mood serene. The painting over the sofa, by Chicago artist Francine Turk, was created especially for the space. "That painting captures the sky and the view perfectly," says designer James Dolenc.

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Homeowner Mark Schindel works at his living room desk, made from one continuous piece of glass.

coat of shiny white lacquer over anything dark and "Spanish style," from the chandeliers to the columns, to pave the way for the colors Schindel craved.

But that's when things got tricky. Lightening up those elements meant the dark cherry floors really stood out, and not in a good way. "It's so hard to make colors work with cherry," Dolenc says. "Red looks terrible against it."

That was unfortunate since the only tangible inspiration Schindel had given the team was a magazine photo of the lobby of New York's Gramercy Park Hotel, where the color palette is shot through with—you guessed it—deep red accents. Luckily, his designers knew how to get there while avoiding the dread red. "They captured the look exactly, using a completely different color palette; it's amazing," Schindel says.

When the door opens, you're met with a melange of eye-popping yet sophisticated color. The foyer's Florence Broadhurst wallpaper, crowded with glistening ginkgo leaves against a deep turquoise ground, literally glows. A swath of grayish blue on the living room walls and a pair of gold inflected tete-a-tete chairs draws your eye to the windows and out to a view of Belmont Harbor. The mix of bright hues has a rhythm and flow, a seriously thought-out undercurrent that imbues the place with a gentle, comforting quality. A deep eggplant sofa anchors the room on one end while a supremely inviting chaise floats in the center.

Four mirrored wallpaper panels dreamt up by Jamestomas associate Suzan Celeboglu "pull so much light into the space, they truly open up the whole room," Dolenc says.

The luminosity of the mirrored panels is balanced by a glamorous, high-backed dining room banquette that's juxtaposed against a custom

wall treatment that has a touch of metallic thread running through it. "We wanted the room to be like an intimate little supper club at night," Dolenc says.

"It's not your typical dining room. That's what I love," Schindel says. "[The table] can be a staging area for food or snacks while the banquette provides additional seating at cocktail parties."

But at the same time the design couldn't be all about fun. "I work at home," says Schindel, "and spend an enormous amount of time at my desk."

The last thing Schindel wanted was to spend his days tucked away in some tiny back hall maid's room. He wanted an office in the living room, front and center, so that he could enjoy the changing seasons over the wind-ruffled lake.

The designers loved Schindel's idea. As an architect and history buff, Riker thought it completely appropriate to have a desk in the living room. "He thinks it harkens back to the era when this building was built," says Dolenc, "a time when everyone had a desk in their living room for writing thank-you notes and letters." Dolenc and Riker suggested using an enormous glass desk—a place to do business by day that would visually disappear at night. Schindel calls the desk "a fantastic solution." □

Lisa Cregan writes frequently for the Magazine about interiors and home entertaining.

Resources: Interior Design: jamestomas, Chicago. Living room: mirrored wallpaper panels—Florence Broadhurst, Lucy Rose Design Collection, Chicago; custom sofa, jamestomas; crystal table lamps—Visual Comfort & Co, Houston; custom end tables, armchairs, X-base stools and chairs—jamestomas; antique mirrored cigarette table—Worlds Away, Memphis, Tenn. Living room desk area: glass waterfall desk—Ultra Modern, Dallas; chair—Jonathan Adler, Chicago. Dining room: custom dining table and chairs—jamestomas; fabric on chairs, velvet, Dedar, Holly Hunt, Mart.



In the dining room, the soaring scale of the 1920s architecture is played up by a surprisingly tall, tufted banquette. "We didn't want the room to be crammed with little bits of furniture," says Dolenc, "It's more elegant this way."