

ECLECTIC LIVING

FEATURE: MICAH MCGEE. PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF EKLEGO DESIGN

An intoxicating mix of Oriental, vintage and contemporary design, the Ibn Zanky apartment by Eklego Design is a free-flowing and original space, evoking wonder of the resident's art collection.



Designer Hedayat Islam

Set in the affluent district of Zamalek, Cairo, the Ibn Zanky apartment is nestled in a high-rise building overlooking the Nile. A project by Eklego Design, this modern apartment was fashioned around the personality of its owner, an avid art collector and world traveller. The well-established architecture and interiors firm takes its name from the Greek word for eclectic, and one can see Eklego's adept skill in fashioning a dynamic space that stays true to its owner's ethos.

With espresso-hued parquet lining the floors, designer Hedayat Islam decided to leave the walls a soft off-white, reminiscent of a blank canvas. This simplistic base allows for a striking and luminous display of the owner's vibrant art collection. During

the apartment's formation, the designer removed most of the walls to generate a free-flowing space akin to that of a gallery. Alcove lighting inset in the ceilings casts soft light over the rooms and further adds to this atmosphere.

Blending modern and classical pieces, the apartment's living room furniture is as eclectic as the owner's art collection, and yet comes together in a modern-meets-oriental theme, such as eye-catching pallet cushions by French design house Roche Bobois, which rest on a conventional leather couch joined by a vintage straight-backed chair. The novel centerpiece of the room is the coffee table. This unique design is made from a 20-millimetre sheet of glass set atop four stacks of the owner's



The owner's favourite books were used to form the legs of this glass coffee table



A Vietnamese painting hangs above a leather sofa by Roche Bobois



Woven rugs provide an Oriental touch to the rooms



Antique maps and a mirror by Janan Shihadeh decorate the hallway

favourite books, which act as legs. Set in the corner is a futuristic side table made from two rounded surfaces. Seemingly levitating on their silver stand, the bottom one protrudes further than the top, creating a contemporary stacked look.

Even the hall between the kitchen and living room has been accorded special detail. Most of the woven rugs throughout the apartment were handpicked by the owner at a market in Istanbul, two of which lie in the hall next to four oversized, ornately-embroidered cushions. These oriental rugs and cushions give off an Eastern vibe but are uniquely contrasted by three modish, silver scooped bar stools sitting next to the window bar of the kitchen. This bar connecting the kitchen and entertainment room is made from back-lit beige onyx stone. Also enlivening the far hallway is an iconic red mirror by Janan Shihadeh. The artist created the scrolled frame by manipulating plastic and intricately inlaying it with mother of pearl. Additionally, framed artworks of varying sizes adorn all walls in an effortlessly unassuming manner and, as the owner is also a lover of geography, the room features two old maps framed for admiration.

The dark Ipe wood floors continue out onto the outdoor balcony and the space follows the same minimalist theme to allow one to connect with the surrounding nature. The floors curve up on one side to create a rectangular window seat of a long white cushion and matching pillows. A clear glass banister encases the balcony, granting a liberating view among the trees and thus completing the serene ambience elicited by this charming apartment.

“**B**LENDING MODERN AND CLASSICAL PIECES, THE APARTMENT'S LIVING ROOM FURNITURE IS AS ECLECTIC AS THE OWNER'S ART COLLECTION”



The balcony's glass banister allows for a seat among the trees