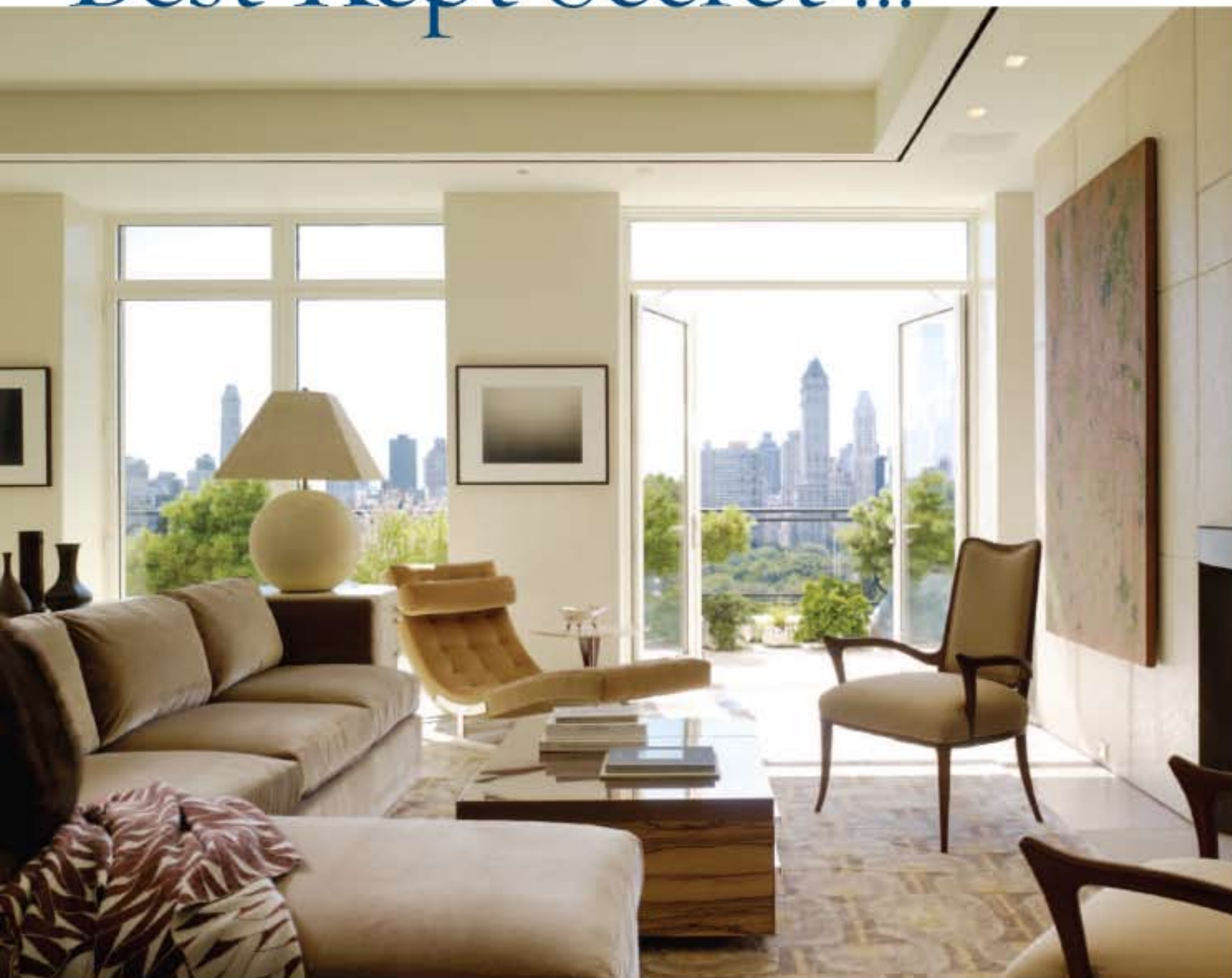


# New York's Best Kept Secret ...

... is out: Interior Management, the high-end construction management firm, turns classic residences into dream homes



It is not an easy thing to keep a secret in Manhattan, especially among the savvy, well-heeled power players the city both breeds and attracts. But one secret weapon that the rich and powerful wield is right in their own homes. It's a unique firm in the high-end interior renovation business that has been quietly and efficiently helping residents of many of Manhattan's grandest addresses attain the apartments of their dreams for more than 20 years now. It's a firm called Interior Management. "They are just one of the best-kept secrets in Manhattan," says architectural historian and tastemaker Barbaralee Diamond-Stielvoegel. "They are a very experienced construction management team with excellent taste and excellent sources. They handle the job with an ease and calm that should set even the most jittery, neophyte renovator at ease."

Interior Management, a family-owned, high-end construction management firm, has been filling a much-needed niche in the marketplace for the past three decades. Working closely with many of the city's most notable architects and designers, Interior Management specializes in making interior renovation dreams a smooth reality in classic Manhattan residences by supervising the entire construction process from plans to finished, and completely transformed, living spaces. And they perform this feat for Manhattan's most sophisticated and discerning residents. "The sophistication part is very important," points out Mark Martinez, the soft-spoken owner of Interior Management. "Because as construction managers, it's vital that we understand how our clients live. And when you understand how your clients live, how they are trying to make something of the highest quality—of museum quality—and you are working on this huge job under stringent time conditions, there is just no time for a learning curve."

The relationship between Interior Management and the clients they serve is no ordinary one. "We are in their homes," says Martinez. "And even after a project is done, we are in the business of serving our clients' needs in an ongoing way, as their needs evolve and change. It's a very intimate level of trust." Those who have worked with Interior Management confirm just that. "When you're dealing with people's interior spaces, it's always personal, and [owners] Al and Mark Martinez have the perfect combination for working with clients both personally and professionally," says lighting designer Greg Yale, who's worked on many projects with the company. "It's always a pleasure to work on a job with them and to see it at the end without flaw."

It was Mark Martinez's father, Al Martinez, who started the visionary business back in the mid-1980s to fill the gaps in the business between the client, the architect, the interior designer and the skilled craftsmen who do the actual building. Interior management would be no ordinary general contractor. They would specialize in getting everything done efficiently, with the highest quality workmanship and to the client's utmost satisfaction. And they would know, inside and out, how to accomplish these feats in Park and Fifth Avenue's most exacting buildings. "My father is very driven, dynamic and sophisticated," says Martinez, who learned the business working for his father during the summer for many years. Discovering that he too had a passion for building high-quality things the right way, the younger Martinez joined forces with his father full-time in 1993, working with him side by side for a number of years. "He had his clients," Mark Martinez says. "And I had mine."

Within the first year, he recounts, he was working on a project with the designer Mark Hampton. "It was great to sit in on meetings, and work with someone who is so talented," Martinez marvels. "It took a few months before I realized that I should just sit back, listen and learn."

Another big opportunity came when Martinez was just 25 years old, when some plans for a large renovation involving combining two apartments on Central Park West came into the office. "My father, who was quite busy at the time, said, 'Why don't you try and get this one?'" Martinez recalls. "So, I made my presentation, and it turned out that the owner was Harvey Weinstein. He liked me and said, 'You're the guy for this.' That was a big turning point for me. A big confidence builder." Martinez continues to do work for Mr. Weinstein today.

Since his father's retirement in 2002, Martinez has expanded on the original vision, growing the company by 400 percent, in both personnel and revenue. The one-time, one-man operation has now expanded to upwards of 50 employees, in the office and in the field. And during the busy summer months,

Left: Manhattan apartment by Orlando Diaz-Azcuy Design Associates and Cook + Fox Architects