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## A Residential Approach to the Design of a Manhattan Therapy Office

PJCArchitecture employed a residential approach to design the office for a cognitive behavioral therapy practice located in the upscale Central Park West section of Manhattan. The team was mindful of the client's unique needs, blending traditional work and treatment—all within just 593 square feet.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 3...



## Introducing Verna Vélin

Verna Vélin is a new Michigan-based manufacturer producing wallcoverings with unmatched embossed designs—bringing tactility to residential and commercial spaces. With a range of patterns and colors on offer, from modern geometrics to full-size foliage, specifiers can easily transform any interior.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 8...



## INDEAL Champion Conference 2023

Editor-in-Chief Rob Kirkbride reports on this year's INDEAL Champion Conference held in New Orleans. It brings together a select group of executives and representatives from top industry manufacturers, called brand partners on the INDEAL platform, to an event that adds depth to their conversations and creates connections.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 12...



## Andi Owen in the Hot Seat

MillerKnoll CEO Andi Owen is still facing backlash after a partial clip that the company said was taken out of context was posted on Twitter. The company is now making headlines for toxic culture and its controversial leader. Editor-in-Chief Rob Kirkbride takes a closer look at the bonus payouts and Owen's recent apology.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 16...



### CITED:

"I DRANK TO DROWN MY SORROWS, BUT THE DAMNED THINGS LEARNED HOW TO SWIM."

—FRIDA KAHLO

## A Residential Approach to the Design of a Manhattan Therapy Office

by Anna Zappia

PJCArchitecture employed a residential approach to design the office for a cognitive behavioral therapy practice located in the upscale Central Park West section of Manhattan. The team was mindful of the client's unique needs, blending traditional work and treatment—all within just 593 square feet. "They had a very specific program for what they needed to achieve in a limited amount of space, which was certainly challenging for us," said Philip J. Consalvo, founder and principal, PJCArchitecture.

In collaboration with contractor Quadrant Development Consultants and interior designer Carol Dwyer of Avenue Design Group, key sectors of the office, from the waiting area to the therapy spaces, balance function and style. The interiors do not have the sterility of a clinic, yet provide all of the necessary elements for patient support with added comfort. "It feels a little homey, but it is not like an apartment. We had to walk that fine line as we thought about everyone that would be using the space," explained Nandar Godoy-Dinneen, senior associate, PJCArchitecture.

One of the most significant challenges was bringing natural light into a dark, drab place. To help provide a feeling of openness within the enclosed waiting room, an interior window was built above and incorporated into the millwork partition. The sunlight enhances the visitor experience and critical privacy is still maintained. The partition also cleverly serves as a sleek system that holds a television, shelving for pamphlets, and general storage on either side. "This piece of millwork serves as a wall, and many things have a dual purpose to fit it all in and meet all of the program requirements," Consalvo noted.

The floating dropped ceiling with unobtrusive recessed lighting is another feature the architects used to contribute to an airy, expansive setting. "The ceiling creates a continuous, seamless flow from one room to another, which creates a sensation of openness," Con-

salvo said. It also conceals the visual clutter overhead. "We were able to hide the mechanics of the central air, and everything is just sort of behind the ceiling. And so when you are in the office it feels like it has more height and it is taller," Godoy-Dinneen added.



PJCArchitecture designed a therapy office in Manhattan, maximizing the small footprint. Photo by Bjorg Magnea

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*The space blends function and style to create a welcoming, rather than clinical, environment. Photo by Bjorg Magnea*



*Without access to natural light, the original space was too dark. Photo courtesy of PJCArchitecture.*

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Even the door from the waiting area to therapy rooms was a key consideration for the architects, ensuring that patients felt psychologically safe. A hinged door was installed instead of a sliding option, which creates a sense of security and separation when desired, yet it is easily opened when someone wants to step away.

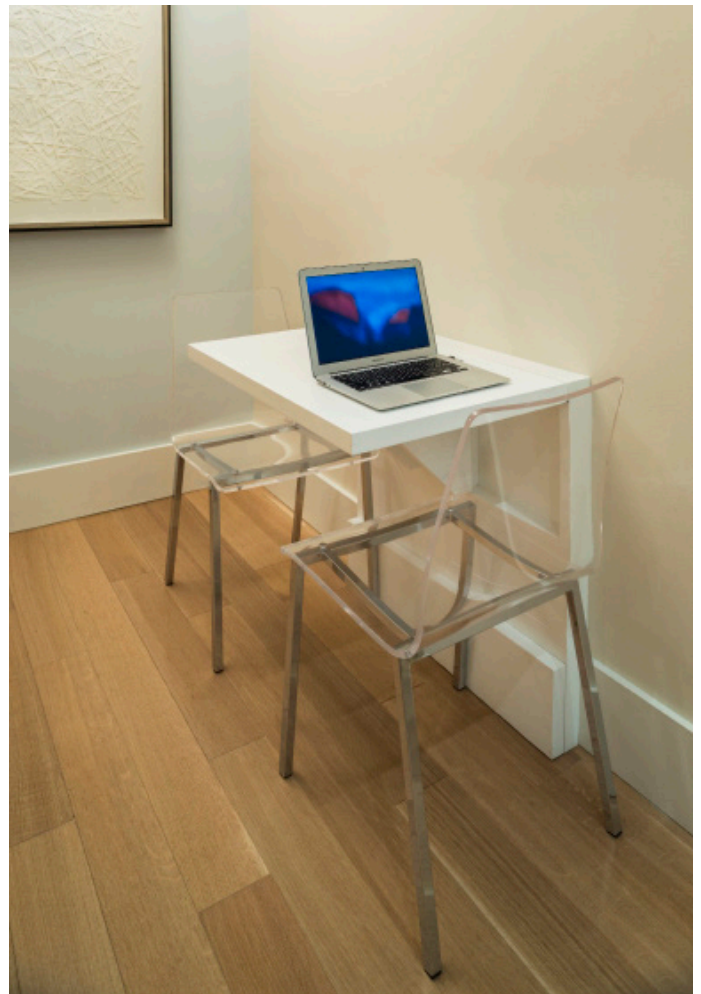
Although the team has completed a doctor's office, this was their first therapy-centric project, and they were particularly interested to learn about how certain shades can affect people's moods. "We really went into it and did our own research. We look at similar interiors and other therapist's offices," Consalvo said. "We studied



*A therapy room features residential touch, with calming blue and white tones.  
Photo by Bjorg Magnea*



*A window built into the partition lets light in and creates a feeling of openness within the small space. Photo by Bjorg Magnea*



*A compact desk that folds up doubles as a check-in center when events are held at the office. Photo by Bjorg Magnea*

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the psychology of color and that really became important to us.”

The materials and colors chosen are meant to soothe, never overstimulate the senses. Shades of blue and white are paired with rift-cut white oak, inspired by the welcoming sensibility of the hospitality arena, but with a softer touch. “The blue walls and the lighter wood calms you down and makes you more introspective,” Godoy-Dinneen noted. “These types of

colors, combined with the natural light, helps to lower anxiety levels.”

The furnishings are surprisingly plush, and extra care was taken with the arrangement to optimize interaction. The size of the furniture and the relationship of one piece to another in the rooms was studied. “They wanted to maintain a certain distance between therapist and patient, and allow for freer movement if chairs are set up for a group counseling session,” Consalvo

noted. “That was another concern when we picked out the furniture; not only did it have to fit in this tiny space, but there had to be proper placement.”

The office is an example of a stunning transformation of a space where change shapes people’s lives for the better, which was the ultimate goal. “Including all of the technical elements and creating a positive environment was at the forefront at every stage of the design,” Consalvo added. ■



Careful consideration was given not only to furniture selection, but also its placement within the rooms. Photo by Bjorg Magnea