

STAND Up *home*

For the widow of legendary comedian Alan King, Marc Janecki designs a condominium with casual sophistication.

By Shayne Benowitz
Portrait by Brett Hufziger
Interiors by Marc Janecki Design

In the late comedian Alan King's most famous bit from the 1970s, he descends from the stage to cavort amongst dinner tables at a Las Vegas club, unfolding the obituary section of a newspaper from his coat pocket, and egging on audience members to read the line that each listing has in common: "Survived by his wife."

The premise of the bit—that women live longer than men—becomes increasingly absurd. With each repetition of the mounting evidence, King grows more flummoxed. "What does this one say? Survived by his wife!" The bit escalates with the obituary of "West Point's oldest graduate" who dies at 104, "four times awarded the Silver Star, Distinguished Service Cross and the French Croix du Guerre, 104—survived by his wife!"

He pauses a beat for the audience's laughter and regains his composure before delivering the measured knockout. "Here's a man who fought Pancho Villa, survived seven wars. Couldn't survive the old lady!" The bit concludes with the preposterous obituary of a woman who throws herself out of a window upon learning that her husband's having an affair to only land on top of him, softening her fall and killing him instead. Thus, "He is



HONEY TONES The living area of the 3,641-square-foot Marc Janecki-designed residence features the client's beloved objects, including antique stools and Chinese wheel sculptures.



survived,” King exclaims, “by his wife!”

A giant of Hollywood’s Golden Age with a swaggering persona and Brooklyn-inflected baritone, King was a comic who often worked family life into his routine. He was a protégé of Milton Berle, made frequent appearances on the *Ed Sullivan Show* and was a regular guest-host of Johnny Carson’s *The Tonight Show*. He was also, as the punch line goes, survived by his wife, his childhood sweetheart, Jeanette King. He died in 2004 at age 76.

Mrs. King enlisted Palm Beach-based interior designer Marc Janecki to work on her three-bedroom, four-and-a-half-bath condominium, and the designer describes his client as “fun, generous, sincere, honest, the kind of person you instantly want to be friends with, funny, upbeat, gregarious. If all clients were like her, it would be a dream.”

Shortly after Mr. King’s death, Mrs. King sold their 2.39-acre Long Island Tudor estate in Kings Point, which had its own show business pedigree, having been built by lyricist Oscar Hammerstein. Today, she divides her time between an

apartment in Manhattan, friends’ homes in Los Angeles and the 3,641-square-foot Aventura residence.

“She almost gave me carte blanche,” says Janecki of his easygoing client. She wanted a warm, comfortable home with casual sophistication. We infused it with personality, variety and character that reflects the interesting life she’s led.”

The home is aglow with oak wood stained floors, creamy textured upholstery, ostrich and antique leather furniture and embroidered curtains in a palette that Janecki describes as “honey, gold and sunset brown.” The central open floor plan encompasses a dining room, built-in library and a sitting area overlooking floor-to-ceiling windows in a transitional design motif with a playful and intuitive balance of shapes.

The circular Luca dining room table is a slick, stone plane with an open cube metal base surrounded by smooth, dark chocolate leather chairs with decorative wooden French legs from the Marjorie Shushan Collection. Above, a Paul Ferrante chandelier with shaded candlestick lights hangs from a square-shaped trace ceiling, while a custom circular,

SINGULAR SEATING

Opposite page: Sofas and chairs are by JJ Custom. This page: The circular dining room table is by Luca, while the leather chairs with decorative wooden French legs are from Marjorie Shushan.





iron-framed mirror designed by Janecki completes the vignette, bookended by wall sconces and a pair of candlesticks atop a Naga Antiques console. “The chandelier is like the top point of a triangle. It reflects the traditional chairs and contrasts with the modern table,” Janecki says. “The design enhances the architecture by not repeating it.”

The sitting area, with its ecru painted walls and wool matting carpet, is an inviting mix of upholstered chairs and sofas by JJ Custom. Wooden accents appear in graphic framed chairs by Therien, a Janecki custom rectangular coffee table, a framed-full length mirror and a wicker basket of pussy willows, all in warm honey tones. A few choice items from Mrs. King’s Long Island home are scattered throughout, including antique stools with tasseled cushions and Chinese wheel sculptures. Janecki says that she wasn’t attached to these vestiges, but she was happy to relocate

them south if he thought they would suit the new home.

One item she was intent on keeping, though, was her bed, a dark mahogany twisted-turn, four-poster in a custom size, larger than a full, yet smaller than a queen. Janecki refinished it with an ivory glaze and added a canopy and full crown in two creamy fabrics by Bennison, one solid and the other striped. The effect is a show-stopping piece fit for modern royalty. The bedroom’s chaise lounge is also from her home, which Janecki reupholstered with modern lines corresponding to the bed. A vanity nightstand and mirror in dark wood and metal brings contrast to the otherwise ivory room and echoes the furnishings of the living and dining areas.

Much like Mrs. King’s life and the entertaining she and her late husband enjoyed, Janecki likens her eclectic Florida home to “a great cocktail party with a mix of different people from all over the world.” ■



WOOD CRAFT Opposite page: The master bedroom features a mahogany bed refinished by Janecki in ivory glaze, with fabrics by Bennison and mirrors by Palm Beach Framemakers. This page: The entry console is from Paul Ferrante.

DESIGN DETAILS

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TYPE
High-rise condo

LOCATION
Aventura

INTERIOR DESIGN
Marc Janecki Design
marcjaneckidesign.com

RESOURCES
Bennison
Master bed fabrics
bennisonfabrics.com

BK Antiques (formerly Sentimento Antiques)
Living room art deco library table
bkantiques.com

Cowtan and Tout
Master bedroom curtain fabric
cowtan.com

JJ Custom
Living room upholstered sofas, lounge chairs, ottoman
jjcustominc.com

Lars Bolander
Ostrich leather side tables
larsbolander.com

Marc Janecki Custom
Elevator entry screen, living room coffee table, round mirror, bedroom TV cabinet
marcjaneckidesign.com

Marjorie Shushan Collection
Dining room leather chairs
marjorieshushan.com

Naga Antiques
Dining room console
nagaantiques.com

Palm Beach Framemakers
Master bedroom mirrors
561-835-0080

Paul Ferrante
Entry hall console, living room floor lamps, dining room chandelier, master bedroom night table
paulferrante.com

Rose Tarlow
Master bedroom stool and floor lamp
rosetarlow.com

Therien
Living room wood frame lounge chairs
therienantiques.com