



**WALK**through

*firm: ghislaine viñas interior design  
site: new york*

# **jungle love**

*At the marketing agency Barrows, Ghislaine Viñas descends stairs enlivened by wallpaper that she designed with her graphic-designer husband, Jaime. ➤*

## WALKthrough

**A South African** marketing agency expanding to New York, Barrows chose the penthouse of an art deco tower. Unobstructed views up and down Manhattan were the big plus, but the lack of convivial common areas was a major minus. So Barrows called on Ghislaine Viñas Interior Design. Founded by another South African transplant—she spent her formative years in Durban—the firm had completed just a few office projects.

To unify, polish, and brighten the 2,300 square feet destined for common use, Ghislaine Viñas emphasized visual connections, high/low design details, and nods to Barrows geography. “We brought the African jungle to the concrete jungle,” Viñas says. For starters,

she painted a tropical sea-blue horizon along the walls of the elevator lobby.

Taking advantage of its generous size, she added seating in the form of a nook, a built-in bench, and ottomans, all in the same blue. Black enters the picture with the lengths of climbing rope that drape across

GARRETT ROWLAND



*Clockwise from top left: Arik Levy's sofa sits in the café. Lissoni Associati designed the elevator lobby's ottomans. Bernstrand & Co and Borselius Design collaborated on the café's chairs. They and Patricia Urquiola's tables are anchored by a rug in goat's hair, nylon, and viscose. Painted wood frames punctuate the mirror in the women's restroom.*





the lobby's wood-slatted ceiling. "The rope was inspired by subway lines, how they take you from one place to the next," she explains.

Indeed, both the black rope and the blue paint travel into the office's skylit atrium. It's now a spunky café, thanks to Viñas's big addition, a white-tiled bar sheltered by a canopy and backed by a chalkboard mural drawn by a Barrows staffer. Furnishings here are mostly green, from Arik Levy's high-backed sofa to the rug on the polished concrete floor. In the adjoining conference room, the rope terminates as the ➤

*Clockwise from top: Ceramic tile clads the café's bar and canopy. The lounge features a table by Victor Carrasco. Vinyl covers the cushion softening the seating nook in the elevator lobby. Barrows graphic designer Hunter Heckroth drew a chalk mural on the café's blackboard. Nylon climbing rope crosses the elevator lobby's existing ceiling.*

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*Clockwise from top: Custom fixtures cluster on the conference room's ceiling. Also suspended from it are painted calabash gourds. The lounge occupies a small mezzanine. Flooring is polished concrete.*

support for another budget-conscious artwork, a hanging sculpture of six calabash gourds painted black.

From the office's main level, stairs connect to a mezzanine lounge. For the stairwell and the mezzanine's rear walls, Viñas worked with her husband to design wallpaper. The pattern combines mammoth green leaves from plants indigenous to, yes, South Africa.

—Molly Heintz

**FROM FRONT FLAVOR PAPER:** WALL PAPER (STAIRWELL, LOUNGE). **VIC-CARBE:** SOFA, TABLES (CAFÉ), OTTOMANS (LOBBY), SIDE TABLE (LOUNGE). **BLÅ STATION:** CHAIRS (CAFÉ, LOUNGE). **TRETTFORD:** RUGS (CAFÉ, CONFERENCE ROOM). **BRIZO:** SINK FITTINGS (RESTROOM). **RETROFURNISH:** STOOLS (CAFÉ). **DOUGLASS INDUSTRIES:** CUSHION UPHOLSTERY (LOBBY). **FEBRIK:** PILLOW FABRIC. **MATERIA:** TABLE (CONFERENCE ROOM). **STEELCASE:** CHAIRS. **THROUGH FURNITURE LEISURE:** PICNIC TABLE (LOUNGE). **THROUGHOUT THROUGH KNOT & ROPE SUPPLY:** ROPE. **BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.:** PAINT. **COLLECTOR:** WOODWORK. **SMA INTERIORS:** GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

