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Vol. 14 No. 6
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NZ \$14.50
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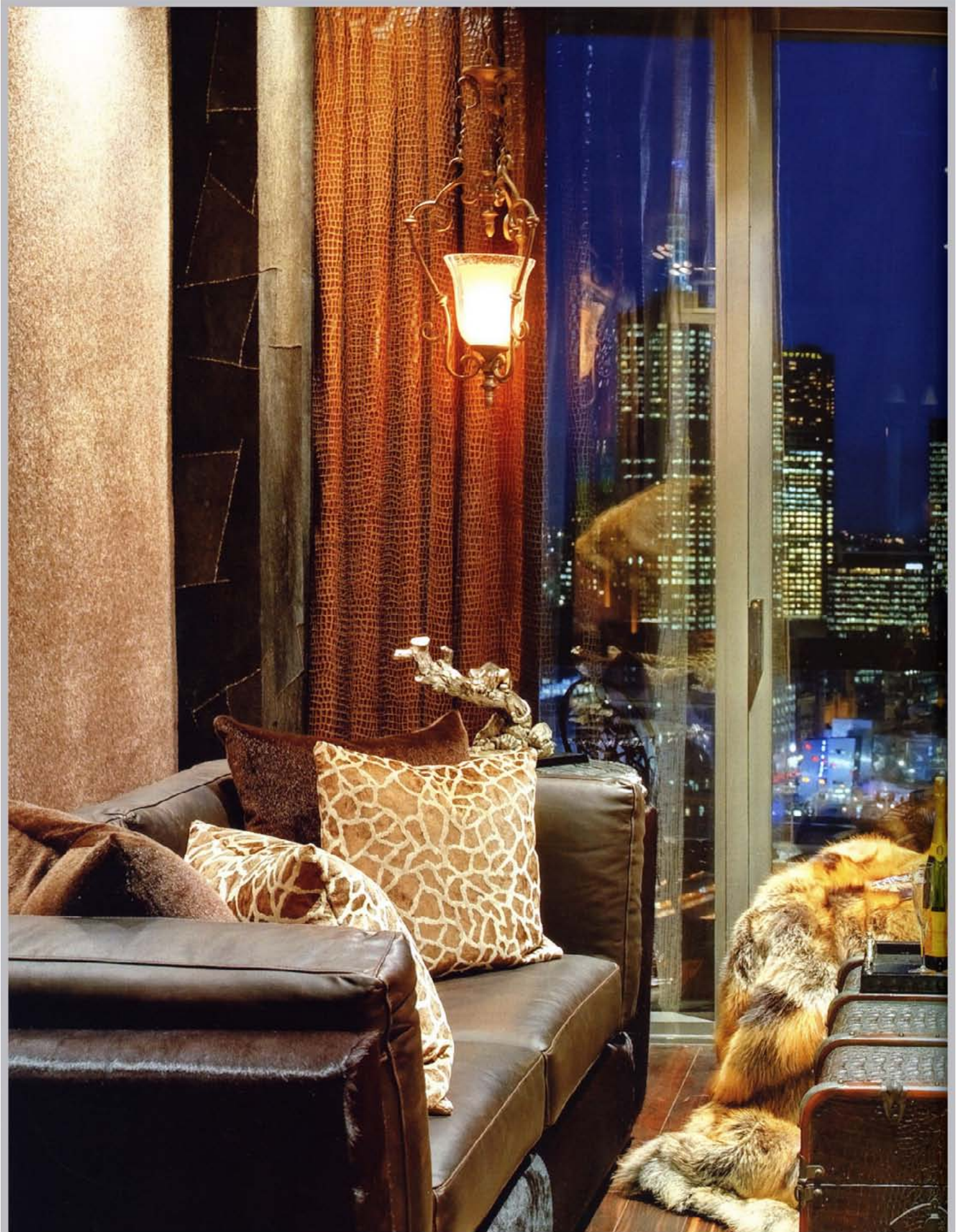
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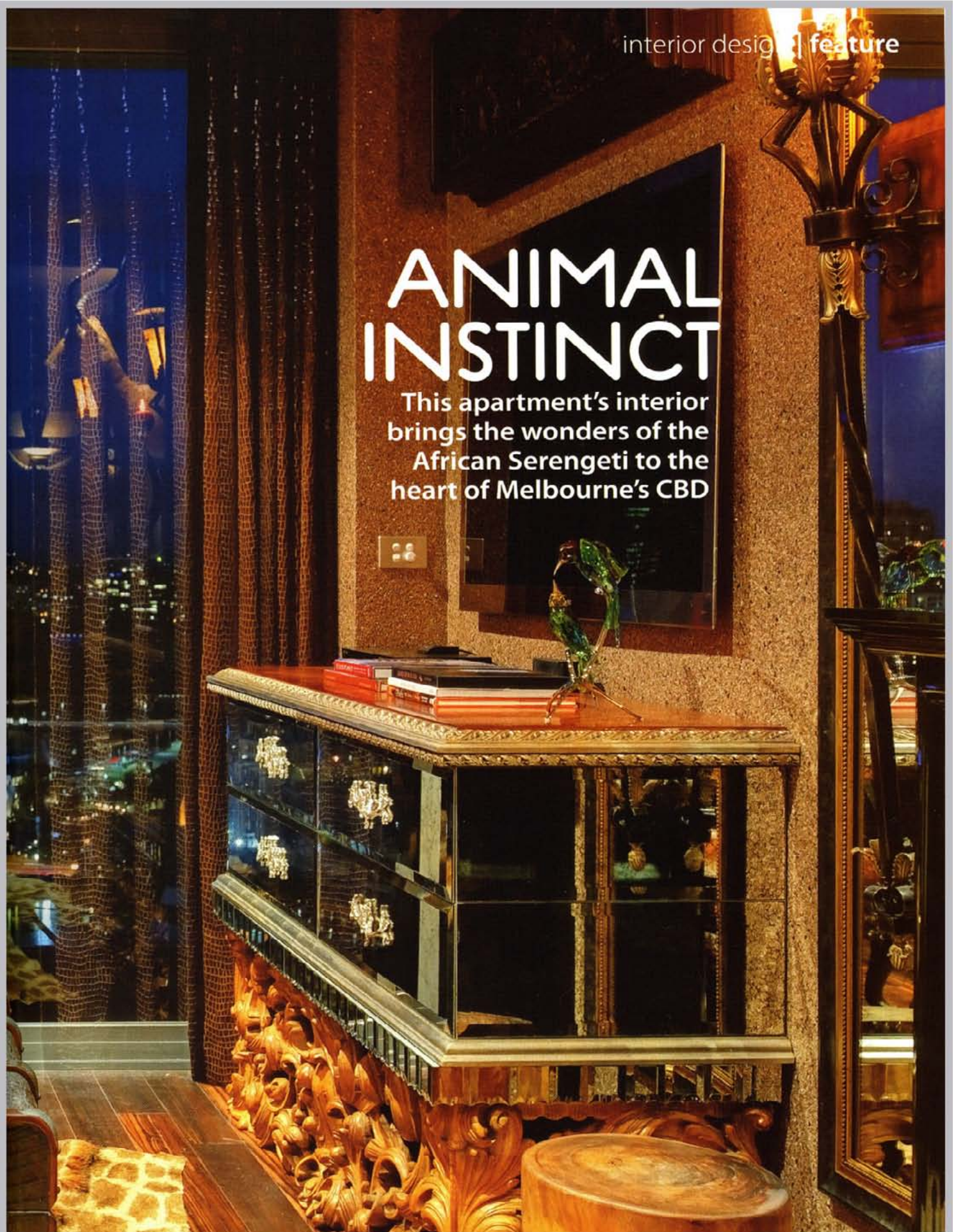
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ANIMAL INSTINCT

This apartment's interior
brings the wonders of the
African Serengeti to the
heart of Melbourne's CBD



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DESPITE THE APARTMENT'S SMALL SIZE, INTERIOR DESIGNER AMGAD KAMEL WORKED ALONGSIDE BUILDER GEORGE DE PELLEGRIN TO CREATE AN AFRICAN-INSPIRED RETREAT FOR THE CLIENT. "HE WANTED TO CREATE A SPECIAL INTERIOR THAT EXUDES AN EAST AFRICAN ENVIRONMENT"

Words Caitlin Chander

Photography Andrew Lecky

In the heart of the South Bank, hidden away on the 31st floor of a city high-rise, lies Melbourne's answer to an African safari. Before this apartment's transformation, it housed 70sqm of plain, neutral-toned space. The client, a well-travelled executive with a deep passion for Africa, sought to transform this humdrum, everyday apartment into a wild, untamed haven.

Despite the apartment's small size, interior designer Amgad Kamel worked alongside builder George De Pellegrin to create an African-inspired retreat for the client. "The client brief was very specific and challenging, and different to anything I had done before," says Amgad. "He wanted to create a special interior that exudes an East African environment; it had to combine special materials and finishes from different parts of the world, while remaining sophisticated and inviting."

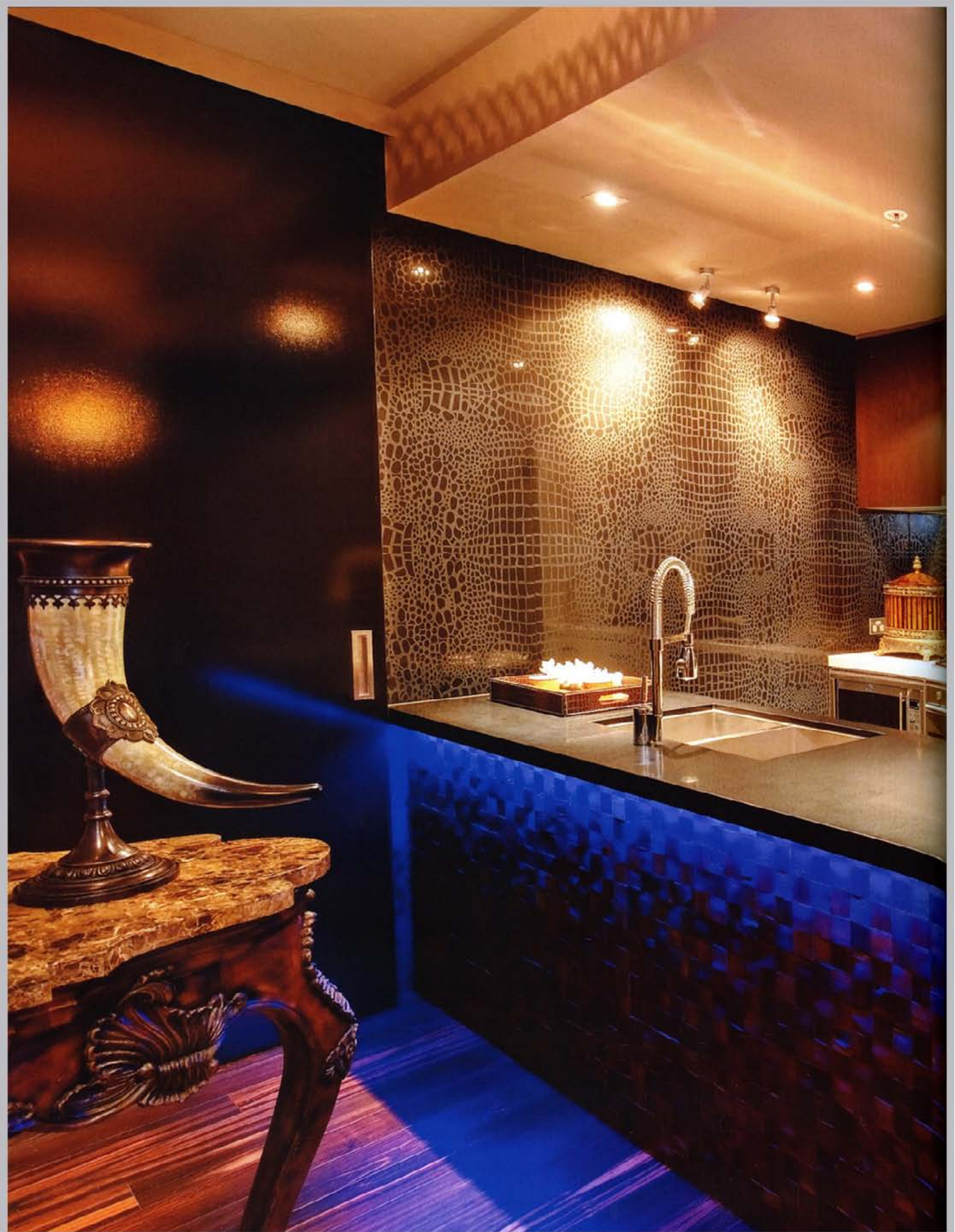
The original layout of the one-bedroom

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The mix of deep tones with extravagant textures intensifies the style of this room.

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THE BATHROOM CARRIES THE ANIMAL MOTIF TO ANOTHER LEVEL. TO REFLECT THE CLIENT'S LOVE OF AFRICAN FAUNA, AN ARRAY OF DIFFERENT PRINTS AND TEXTURES WAS APPLIED.

Left The kitchen boasts an array of intriguing relics, each a remnant of a wild past.

Above Space is used effectively in the bathroom to incorporate every aspect of luxury into a compact space.

apartment was simple, with a kitchen, bathroom and living area. Its most interesting aspect was the spectacular views of the Yarra. Clearly inspired by his travels, the client shared his vision with Amgad and this allowed the interior designer to flex his creative muscle with no limitations. "The design consideration started with intensive collaboration between the owner and the designer to convert a pleasant apartment into an exotic retreat, creating space that is very different from conventional trends," Amgad explains.

With most of the décor sourced from around the globe (more than 14 countries), the apartment boasts eclectic styles with different features and textures. Every corner of the dwelling boasts wild animal prints and patterns. A variety of animal-print wallpaper lines the area and encapsulates a variety of wildlife. The spectacular jet-black crocodile-motif CaesarStone kitchen benchtop, along with the ebony-toned cabinetry by New Age Veneers, are central features to the living area and integrate with the theme.

The bathroom carries the animal motif to another level. To reflect the client's love of African fauna, an array of different prints and textures was applied. The bathroom, which boasts tiger-print ceramic tiles, is home to a variety of unusual features that assimilate effectively — a shrine to the wonders of the African landscape. The unique faux cobra-skin basin sits on dark wooden cabinetry with mother-of-pearl horned handles sourced from India. The black antler shower head is sourced from the Milan Fair and truly captures

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the remarkable visions of the client and Amgad. The client's passion is also seen in the leopard glass print panelling, custom made with 3D glass décor in southern China.

The Serengeti theme flows through to the living room and master bedroom, creating a feeling of interconnectedness. The warm tones of the hand-made bark coverings — a particularly special addition, imported from Namibia — add depth and feeling to the rooms. To further heighten the animal theme, the giraffe skin rugs and dyed cowhide upholstery all contribute to the warmth and sophistication of Amgad's vision. The impala and lioness mounts are incredible additions to the living room; both were sourced by the client and have CITES and AQIS permits.

Warmth and light were vital in this project to highlight the apartment's features. The warm tones of the Belgian Makassar ebony floors combined with the brilliant electric fireplace add a touch of elegance, while lighting by Monduluce is simplistic yet sophisticated, increasing the décor's impact.

The client's eccentricity, and Amgad's creativity and skill as an interior designer, have produced an inimitable piece of art. While the main challenges of the project were sourcing authentic and unique pieces for the theme, Amgad remains confident that this is one of his best designs to date. "The owner's clear and detailed imagination, plus access to unique materials globally, gave me an opportunity to really create a completely distinct, one-of-a-kind interior," he says. "It was as challenging as it was professionally satisfying."

This tribal environment provides the perfect escape from the commotion of the city. ■

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Above Set against the backdrop of tiger-print tiles, the snake-skin basin is an unusual statement piece.

Right The soft lighting provided by the antler chandelier enhances the deep, strong tones of the bedroom.



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