



Winner

Best Limited Species

# Radiating Elegance

## Birger Juell Ltd.

Chicago

The Birger Juell Ltd. staff spend a fair amount of time criss-crossing the country—"We have a broad connection with the A & D community," company President Chuck Crispin says—but this Wood Floor of the Year winner is right in the company's backyard. Located on the 14<sup>th</sup> floor of a stately midrise on Chicago's north lakeshore, the condo is the personal home of one of the company's builders.

The builder's work is very high-end, and so is his new home. "He wanted something very elegant, something that made a statement, so the Versailles parquet was kind of a natural fit,"

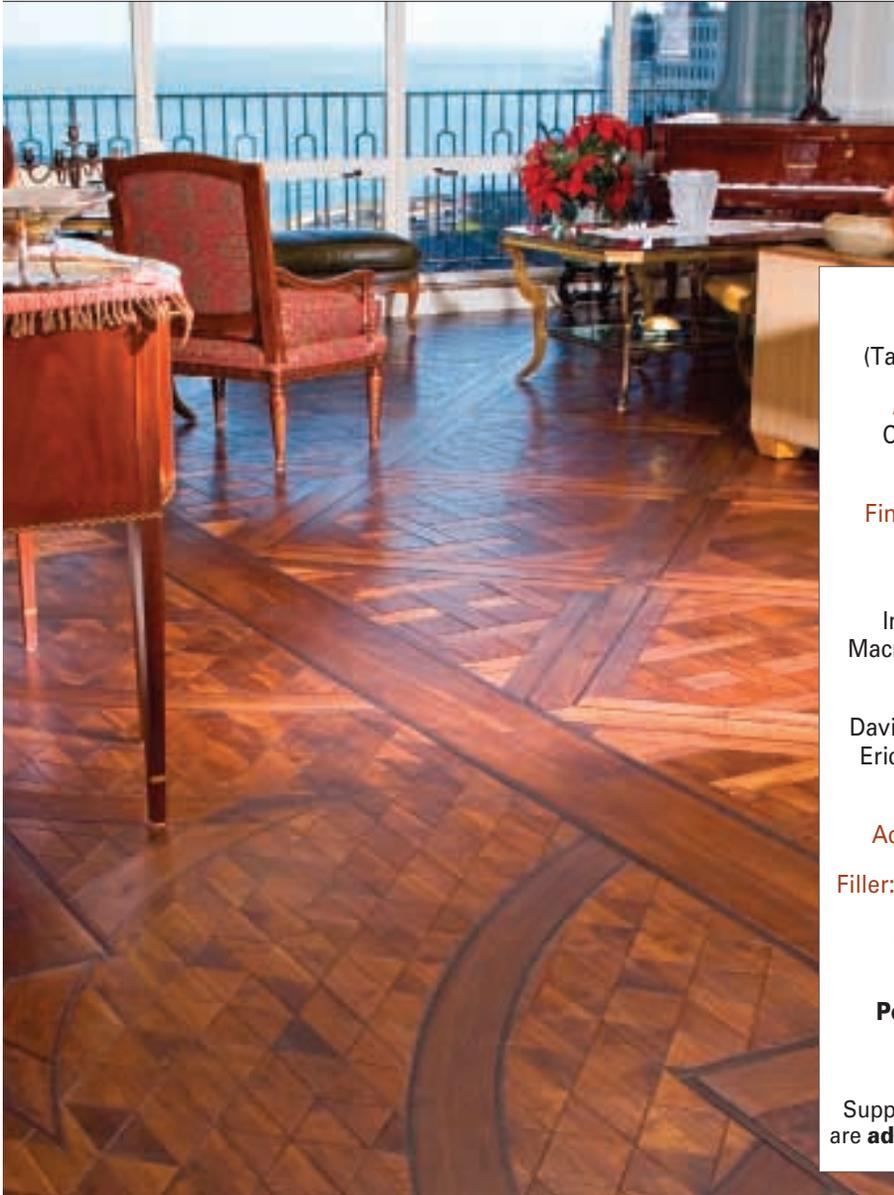
Crispin says. Meanwhile, the owner's wife wanted a special design for the space. "We played with an exploded star pattern first, but then we decided that was too over the top," Crispin says. The final design features Versailles parquet in the living room and the study, while the adjoining foyer has a pattern of interlocking figured black walnut triangles that essentially form an inlaid wood rug. The spaces are tied together by a series of radial design elements.

"You get this tease of these parts and pieces that lead you down the hall, and then you turn to the left and are introduced to the parquet elements," Crispin explains. The geometry of the spaces made for a layout challenge: No two walls are parallel in the living room, and the foyer has a key-like shape. "We had to center the parquet so we were able to break on halves and wholes on the main point of address architecturally," Crispin explains. Additionally, the entire floor is bordered by a simple walnut plank with a wenge feature strip.

Birger Juell is legendary for his secret color techniques that he applies to his floors, and this floor is a classic example.

"It's one of Birger Juell's special proprietary colors," Crispin says. "It enhances the rich, golden brown undertones of the walnut." As with many Birger Juell floors, each piece was hand-scraped.

Although there are only two species, the floor makes a bold, yet elegant, statement that meshes with the philosophy of Birger Juell himself, who believes that the floor shouldn't draw attention to itself but rather enhance the design of the room. "It's a really fun floor; everybody gasps when they walk in the door," Crispin says. At the same time, "All the architectural elements in the home were so beautifully designed ... and so the floor was very much in keeping with the attention to detail that was paid everywhere else." —*K.M.W.*



**Builder:**  
Adel Tarakdjian  
(Tara Designer Homes)

**AutoCAD Design:**  
Candace Mountain,  
Sakhon Nhek

**Finish Superintendent:**  
Hally Juell

**Finishers:**  
Immanuel Orta, Cal  
Macmillan, Lyman Gaines

**Installers:**  
David Guido (supervisor),  
Eric Rout, Kevin Zobott,  
Kevin Smith

**Adhesive:** Bostik Inc.

**Filler:** Timbermate USA Inc.

**Finish:** Dura Seal

**Nailer:**  
Powernail Company

**Saw:** Festool

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