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REAL ESTATE | DESIGN

The Big Decorating Mistake: Forgetting Your Hallways

Maxing out passageways can make your whole house look better. Here, how designers are strengthening the “backbone” of the home with paint, wallpaper and strategic chic

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Designer Juan Montoya commissioned local sculptor Nina Helms to create bas-relief for a New York apartment's hallway. PHOTO: MIGUEL FLORES-VIANNA

Fellow New York designer Juan Montoya went artfully bold in an Upper East Side hallway by hiring local sculptor Nina Helms to create custom floral bas-relief for the walls, inspired by plaster work he'd seen in Paris. To further up the sense of unexpected drama, he tiled the floor in black and white marble and used it as a stage for a single Italian armchair upholstered in royal-blue velvet. "I wanted to design something that is personal, will stay there for many years and always give you pleasure," said Mr. Montoya.