



# MIAMI

**TRENDS AND TRADITIONS**

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## CA' ZIFF

*Maria de la Guardia and Teófilo Victoria, 1960*

The inscription on the front gate of the Ca' Ziff reads *Urbis Facit* – Latin for “to build a city.” The phrase is a motto and a mandate that Maria de la Guardia and Teófilo Victoria took to heart.

Ca' Ziff's setting, just south of Vizcaya on Biscayne Bay, at the edge of a public park, is at once prominent and secluded, urban and bucolic. To design this house, de la Guardia and Victoria went back to the roots of architecture in Miami and in the Caribbean. The idea was to mediate between the water's edge and the jungle-like vegetation that grows along the bluff above the bay. The result is a powerful synthesis of architectural ideas.

In some ways, Ca' Ziff is a Venetian townhouse, drawing directly from Venice rather than from the other Northern Italian-style buildings in Miami and Palm Beach, such as Vizcaya and numerous houses by Addison Mizner. It has the hard, rich flatness of a Venetian house, yet it also has an unexpected depth and warmth more typically found in Miami's Mediterranean houses.

Ca' Ziff includes a main house overlooking the bay and, across a lawn behind it, a separate guest house. The main house is square and centered on an atrium with a painted blue ceiling dotted with stars.

*RIGHT: The western facade of Ca' Ziff shows its simple geometry and elegant proportions.  
OVERLEAF: The second-floor loggia.*









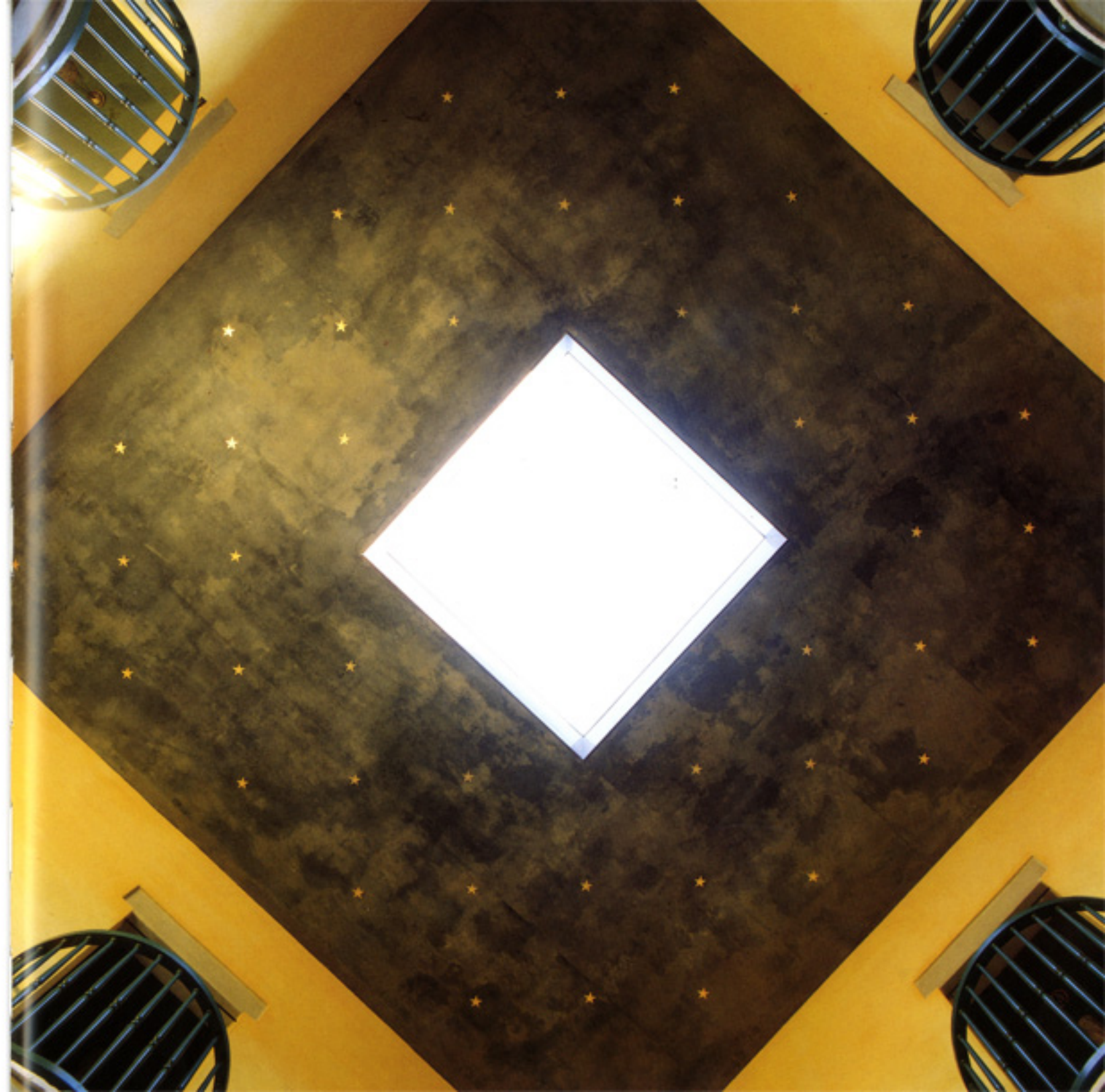


LEFT: A narrow stairway of local keystone. ■ ABOVE: The guest house





ABOVE: View of the atrium.  
RIGHT: The atrium ceiling, with *trompe l'œil* stars.  
OVERLEAF: The view to the bay, with columns reminiscent of Venice and Pizcaya.











LEFT: Ca' Ziff was intentionally aged, a longstanding Miami tradition.  
ABOVE: Detail of a sculpture.