



Q&A with Francine Teng, Visionary Design Director at Navigation Capital Group

*How Art Deco Elegance Meets Contemporary Living at Monogram
New York*



Francine Teng is the Design Director at **Navigation Capital Group**, where she leads interior design for high-end residential and hospitality developments worldwide. An award-winning interior designer, she combines creative vision with developer-side strategy to deliver environments that are both visually compelling and commercially successful. Her portfolio spans luxury condominiums in Manhattan and Miami, boutique hospitality projects in the United States and Asia, one of the largest and most iconic retail landmarks in the Middle East, and select residential commissions in Asia. Recognized for her expertise in FF&E, model unit execution, and cross-functional coordination, Francine creates spaces that seamlessly align brand identity with market appeal. Fluent in Mandarin and English, she brings global perspective and refined detail to every project.

Francine Teng guided the overall architectural and interior design vision of **Monogram New York**, an Art Deco-inspired residential tower in midtown Manhattan, conceived by Architect **Ismael Leyva** and design studio **Neri&Hu**'s partners Lyndon Neri and Rossana Hu. We interviewed Francine, asking about her role in leading the project's design and her overall vision for the property.

What was your involvement in the architecture and design of the building?

As Design Director at Navigation Capital Group, I guided the overall design vision for Monogram NYC. My responsibilities included close collaboration with the architectural and interior design teams to ensure that every element, from layout efficiency and material specification to amenity programming and model unit staging, aligned with our development objectives and brand positioning. I oversaw design reviews, evaluated budgets against design integrity, and worked to balance aesthetics with long-term functionality, ensuring that the building would meet both market expectations and international standards of quality.



How would you describe the overall look and feel of Monogram?

Monogram conveys a sense of timeless modernity. Its exterior presence is restrained and elegant, integrating seamlessly with the Manhattan skyline, while the interiors express warmth, sophistication, and a refined residential character. The overall look and feel balance classic proportions with contemporary detailing, creating an enduring design language that is as livable as it is visually striking.

How would you describe the living experience at Monogram?

The living experience at Monogram is defined by curated luxury and ease of daily life. Residences feature well-considered layouts, abundant natural light, and premium finishes selected for both beauty and longevity. Beyond the private spaces, the Sphere Club amenities deliver an enriched lifestyle with spa-inspired wellness areas, lounges, and social spaces that support both privacy and community engagement. Monogram offers a holistic residential environment that reflects the rhythm and aspirations of New York City living.

How was Monogram inspired by New York's Art Deco heritage?

Monogram incorporates subtle references to New York's Art Deco tradition through its geometry, proportion, and materiality. Rather than replicating historical motifs, the design reinterprets Art Deco's refinement and rhythm into a contemporary architectural expression. This approach gives the building a sense of continuity with the city's heritage while projecting a modern identity.

Why was architect Ismael Leyva chosen? What do you like most about his architectural choices for Monogram?

Ismael Leyva Architects were chosen for their extensive expertise in high-density urban residential design. Their ability to optimize floor plans for livability while delivering an elegant architectural form made them a natural partner. What I value most in their contribution to Monogram is the clarity of the building's facade composition paired with functional, light-filled interiors. This equilibrium between design expression and resident comfort is fundamental to the project's success.

Why was design studio Neri&Hu chosen for the interiors? What do you like most about their design choices for the amenities? And for the apartments?

We engaged **Neri&Hu** for their internationally respected design perspective and their skill in creating immersive, narrative-rich environments. For the Sphere Club amenities, their design brings a sense of tranquility and retreat through natural materials, careful lighting, and spatial layering. In the residences, I particularly admire their attention to craftsmanship, from custom joinery to material contrasts, which establishes a sense of intimacy, refinement, and long-term value for homeowners.

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