



ART HOUSE

One of designer John Robert Wiltgen's proud possessions is this Giovanni Veronesi's painting, "Life."

Inspired Environs

A renowned designer decks out his Loop abode in art and texture.

| By Amalie Drury |
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It's a long walk from the elevator at Metropolitan Place to designer John Robert Wiltgen's upper-floor condo. The Loop building was originally the headquarters and manufacturing facility for Chicago-based Florsheim Shoe Co., and it was built in a sprawling U shape to allow plenty of natural light to reach the shoemakers and leather tanners who once worked there. The building's top four stories, including the one where Wiltgen's condo is located, were added during a late-'90s renovation by the architect George Pappageorge, and there are at least a city block's worth of twisting hallways to traverse before you reach Wiltgen's front door. This could be seen as either an epic trudge or a great way to build anticipation, depending on how you look at it.

Either way, the payoff is rich. Wiltgen's two-bedroom home is a study in dramatic effect, from his striking hall of mirrors-inspired entryway to the tall bank **CONTINUED...**