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# THE LIGHTING OF TOMORROW

Mark L. Johnson



Patrick J. Tighe

**Residential Lighting:** Tell us about the different “zones” you created for Fine Living: 2026?

**Patrick J. Tighe:** Fine Living:2026 has three zones, each with programmable functions. Central to the space is the live/work zone with 20-foot-long lounge seating that morphs into a workstation. Adjacent to it is an elliptical-shaped space serving as the kitchen. Finally, there is the sanctuary, which consists of a spa, natural light, a stylized garden and a steel “fire orb,” or hanging fireplace. Much of the concept space features a raised floor made with a translucent honeycomb material called Panelite. The floor changes color via programmable LED lighting.

**RL:** Sounds like a lot of ambient lighting.

**PT:** The idea is that the user can change it. The space is all about integration—with lighting built into the architecture—so we didn’t use any portable lamps. We

basically reduced the lighting to two systems. One is the LED lighting underneath the translucent floors—about 170 linear feet. The other is track lighting, which appears in the [kitchen] zone, where we installed a custom-bent track system with about 20 fixtures.

**RL:** Describe the lighting in the kitchen zone.

**PT:** It’s an elliptical room, where we milled 65 13-foot-high plywood ribs, sheathing them to create walls with undulations—an architectural way of expressing movement. Randomly embedded in the walls are little light portals made from a material called SensiTile™. Each SensiTile has a little metal chamber. When light enters the chamber, it gets redistributed back out into the space, creating some incredible lighting effects. So, as the halogen track lights wash the walls, light is absorbed by the tiles and then redistributed into the space as colored light. Central to this space is a 15-foot-long island with a surface made of stainless steel that reflects the varying light conditions. We have only one MR16 downlight over the island.

**RL:** Overall, what were you trying to achieve?

**PT:** Fine Living: 2026 is geared toward the occupants; they can use technology to personalize their space. The lighting is integral to the space, but we didn’t call attention to the fixtures. We focused on the effect of the lighting. The future, we believe, will be all about light sources—how they can change the environment. We used lighting how it’s normally used. But we also used it to alter the space. Since the building materials were colorless, the lighting added a color dimension. In the future, lighting will be the main means of changing the color rendering of an interior.

Patrick J. Tighe is Principal and lead designer at *Tighe Architecture*, a four-time National AIA Honor Award-winning firm based in Santa Monica, CA.