

BUSINESS OF HOME

BOH

ISSUE NINE | FALL 2018

A PUBLICATION BY EDITOR AT LARGE



THE LEADERSHIP ISSUE

Inside the Work & Lives of
8 Visionary Women



THE
SHADE
STORE

custom made simple.

custom
SHADES, BLINDS
& DRAPERY

HANDCRAFTED IN THE USA SINCE 1946. MADE FROM EXCLUSIVE DESIGNER MATERIALS.
ALL PRODUCTS SHIP FREE IN 10 DAYS OR LESS.

SHOP: 60+ SHOWROOMS | [THESHADESTORE.COM](https://www.theshadestore.com) | 866.505.5827

STARK

SAPPHIRE³

TIMELESS BEAUTY
BEAUTIFULLY TIMED

ULTRA PREMIUM
TRADE EXCLUSIVE
AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY

HIRAETH SILVER IN SILK
HANDKNOTTED BROADLOOM 18' WIDE
ALSO AVAILABLE IN RUG SIZES

844.40.STARK | [STARKSAPPHIRE.COM](https://www.starksapphire.com)

SOAK IT IN!



Immerse yourself in kitchen and bath design.

Get interactive with the latest products, trends and technologies in the kitchen and bath industry.

Register now at kbis.com.



Kitchen & Bath Business

KBIS LAS VEGAS
FEBRUARY 19-21
2019

SHOW OFF YOUR CHIC

The National Kitchen & Bath Association is home to the industry's top thought leaders, leading designers and chic tastemakers. Join the NKBA and be one of the best in class.



Kitchen Design: Elma Gardner, CMKBD



Kitchen Design: Peter Salerno, CMKBD

As a member of the NKBA, you are invited to showcase your personal portfolio and profile on the newly designed website – NKBA.ORG.

NKBA member profiles are searchable so consumers can easily be inspired, find fabulous kitchen and bath designs and find you faster.

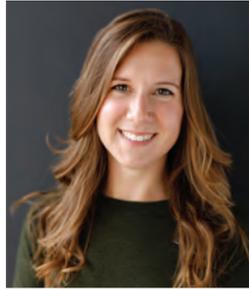
Become a member of the National Kitchen & Bath Association and join the thought leaders using this powerful member-benefit platform to better your business.



Kitchen Design: Paula Kennedy, CMKBD

To learn more about joining this impressive talent pool, visit nkba.org.
It's like finding the perfect match.





EDITOR'S LETTER

For years, I kept a handwritten quote by tennis champion and civil rights activist Arthur Ashe on a sticky note on the back of my medicine cabinet mirror—a daily dose of perspective that only I could see. “Start where you are, use what you have, do what you can,” it read. It’s an aphorism I’ve returned to often, and one that feels especially relevant here; that same spirit is present in the ambitions and accomplishments of the leaders featured in this issue.

Our exploration of what leadership means includes a closer look at how manufacturers, brands and design firms have approached the of-the-moment topic of company culture; the importance of mentorship through the eyes of industry veterans; and a one-on-one interview with legendary *Architectural Digest* editor emeritus Paige Rense, whose methodical approach to growing the brand single-handedly transformed the look and feel of shelter magazines.

The cover story is a portrait of eight extraordinary female trailblazers presented in their own words. “Leadership is doing what you think is right, quietly, not going on about it,” says designer and wellness pioneer Clodagh—one of the many Post-it-worthy quotes from Katy B. Olson’s beautiful conversations with the brand builders and entrepreneurs. “It’s being an example that people can follow.”

I met Keia McSwain, also featured in Olson’s story, when I attended the Black Interior Designers Network’s seventh-annual conference this summer in Atlanta. It was striking and inspiring to see established professionals share everything from how and where they source product to the wording of their contracts, client intake forms and questionnaires. McSwain, who became the president of BIDN last year, had gathered designers who view their peers not as the competition, but as valued colleagues—and with warm, welcoming results. There was also overwhelming support for the leaders of tomorrow. On the opening day, all of the students in attendance were asked to stand up to be recognized, and then were challenged to find a mentor in their region or hometown. I met 17-year-old Egypt Jackson, a high school senior with a design business on the side who was attending the conference to rub elbows with her role models, and 12-year-old Gabriella White, aspiring architect and designer and present-day CEO of ARCHY (Architecture Reaching Communities Helping Youth), a fledgling GoFundMe campaign-turned-nonprofit that encourages minorities and girls to pursue careers in architecture, design and engineering.

As an organization, BIDN asks designers of color: What can I do to pull you up? There’s no better example of living Clodagh’s version of leadership—or embodying Ashe’s famous words—than that.

Kaitlin

Kaitlin Petersen
Editor in Chief
@knpetersen

P.S. This issue also marks the debut of our reimagined front-of-book, designed to highlight more of the news you should know about. We’re always looking for better ways to tell the stories you want and need. Have an idea? I’d love to hear from you.

BOH

BUSINESS OF HOME

ISSUE NINE FALL 2018

President

Julia Noran Johnston

Editor in Chief

Kaitlin Petersen

Executive Editor

Katy B. Olson

Art Director

Robyn Boehler

Copy Editor

Krissy Roleke

Writer & Social Media Manager

Melissa Studach

Editorial Assistant

Robyn Smith

Sales & Marketing Manager

Billy Fisher | bfisher@editoratlarge.com

Marketing Manager

Kim Trepanier | ktrepanier@editoratlarge.com

Business of Home

45 West 29th Street, Suite 301
New York, NY 10001
(212) 904-1040



ON THE COVER: Illustrations by Monica Ahanonu.



KEEP UP WITH BUSINESS OF HOME

Your people, your news. Stay informed.

In Print: A quarterly in-depth analysis of the topics that matter most to the interior design community.
businessofhome.com/subscribe

Podcast: Explore the challenges facing the industry in interviews with thought leaders and entrepreneurs.
businessofhome.com/podcast

Newsletter: All the news you don't want to miss, delivered to your inbox. Now in daily or weekly formats!
businessofhome.com/newsletter

Job Board: The top destination for design industry professionals—including the ones you want to hire.
businessofhome.com/jobs

[facebook.com/BOHBusinessOfHome](https://www.facebook.com/BOHBusinessOfHome) [instagram.com/BusinessOfHome](https://www.instagram.com/BusinessOfHome) twitter.com/BusinessOfHome



© 2018 Design Within Reach

BOH

FEATURES

26

Star Power

In her 40-year tenure at *Architectural Digest*, Paige Rense transformed a sleepy regional quarterly into an iconic brand—and catapulted interior designers to stardom along the way.

28

Culture is King

It's been a buzzword in the startup world for several years, but company culture is more than just hype. *BOH* highlights design brands large and small that have put employee satisfaction at the forefront of their practices.

34

Follow the Leader

With more and more young designers eschewing the apprenticeship model altogether, are there still lessons to be learned working in-house for an established firm? *BOH* spotlights top talents and rising stars for insights into their success.

38

The Pathfinders

2018 has been called the Year of the Woman, and the design industry is ripe for its own revolution. Meet our shortlist of the leading female changemakers and boundary breakers as they share their stories.



DESIGN DISPATCH

9 The Scoop

Top stories from the *BOH* news desk.

10 Ones to Watch

Catch up with four creatives and industry innovators to get the latest on their new roles and ventures.

14 On the Beat

Here's a trend we'll raise a glass to: Entertaining at home is on the rise, and the bar cabinet is becoming a household essential.

16 Trade Tales

Family ties are tricky, and that's *before* adding business to the mix. Peek behind the curtain at some of the industry's favorite family businesses.

22 Show-Rumors

The season's most exciting new showrooms and storefronts come from Italian brands that highlight *la bella vita*.

22 #ShowroomGoals

As showroom foot traffic declines, fabric businesses are increasingly turning to a sophisticated network of outside sales representatives to reach designers at their desks.

25 Designers Debate

Susan Ferrier and Patrick Sutton face off on finishes.

SCENE

48 People & Parties

Our favorite shelter mags descended on the Hamptons this summer for shopping, showhouses and soirées.

48 Events

Mark your calendar.

LEFT: Hem's Zig Zag shelf. (For more on the company's move into residential design, *page 9*.)

PHOTOGRAPHY: HEM, COURTESY OF HEM.

License to spill.

We create intelligent stain-resistant fabrics, ready for spills, drops, or whatever comes their way. Offered in a wide variety of beautiful colors and styles, giving designers the freedom to create. And letting homeowners live without fear.



Find one of our retail partners or explore the possibilities at cryptonhomefabric.com/find

Visit our NEW
Expanded
Showrooms

High Point:
1st Floor/ Lobby
C&D Building

NYC:
2nd Floor
New York Design Center

ARTERIOURS



DESIGN DISPATCH

The Scoop 9 Ones to Watch 10 On the Beat 14 Trade Tales 16 Show-Rumors 22 #ShowroomGoals 22 Designers Debate 25



The Scoop

Top stories from the *BOH* news desk.

BY ROBYN SMITH

→ Word on the Street: Resimercial

If hot topics at this year's design shows and recent company acquisitions tell us anything, the demand for resimercial—design that incorporates elements of the home into the workplace—is on the rise. The phenomenon is evident in our own reporting: We used the word (a portmanteau of *residential* and *commercial*) on our site for the first time in December 2017, and have watched the enthusiasm and news around the category explode in the months since. What's behind the fast-growing trend? "It's not an arbitrary shift in tastes or

fashion," argued architect Jennifer Tulley during a panel at San Francisco Design Week. "It is a requirement caused by a change in the way people in the creative and service industries work." Byron Morton, vice president of leasing at commercial design show NeoCon, confirmed the increase of companies offering product for the "softer side of the workplace," which he attributes to the advent of collaborative office spaces.

Furniture designer Petrus Palmér, founder and CEO of direct-to-consumer Swedish home brand Hem, (*continued*)

Hem's Los Angeles pop-up shop

has found a ready audience for his designs in the offices of forward-thinking tech companies and startups. “Before, we had cubicles because we needed tools [like] the stationary computer to do our work,” he explained recently on the BOH podcast. “Now we have smartphones, laptops and iPads, [so] what you’re after is a nice environment where people feel good in that space.”

Other brands have taken note too: Herman Miller added a more residential touch to its offerings with its acquisition of one-third of Scandinavian brand Hay; SuiteNY reissued Danish design icon Bodil Kjær’s sleek workplace designs from the 1950s and ‘60s, which have decidedly of-the-moment residential undertones; and West Elm, which began offering contract-grade products in 2015, launched a new partnership with leading office furniture manufacturer Steelcase to capitalize on the demand for office spaces featuring the brand’s modern aesthetic with new product offerings and access to Steelcase’s network of more than 800 dealer locations.

→ **Galerie gets a new EIC; Domino gets a new owner:** Jacqueline Terrebbonne has replaced Margaret Russell as editor in chief of quarterly shelter magazine *Galerie*, where she was formerly the design editor. Prior to *Galerie*, Terrebbonne held roles at Coach, *Gourmet*, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, *Vogue* and *Architectural Digest*, where she curated the AD100 list. Her first issue debuted in early September. Meanwhile, St. Louis–based digital media company Multiply, which publishes the U.K.-based men’s fashion site *FashionBeans* and holistic wellness journal *HealthyWay*, purchased



Jacqueline Terrebbonne

Domino Media Group from the investors who had relaunched the beloved shelter brand in 2013. Editor in chief Jessica Romm Perez and publisher Beth Brenner will remain on staff in New York; Nathan Coyle has stepped down as CEO to take the helm at Pride Media, which publishes the LGBTQ-focused titles *Out* and *The Advocate*.

→ **Century enters talks to acquire Hickory Chair:** On the heels of Heritage Home Group’s bankruptcy filing in late July, Rock House Farm (also known as RHF Investments, the parent

company of Century Furniture and Highland House, among others) announced that it had entered into an agreement to acquire “substantially all assets” of the Hickory Chair, Maitland-Smith and Pearson furniture brands from HHG.

→ **Bunny Williams Home alums launch direct-to-consumer venture:** Former Bunny Williams Home CEO Jennifer Potter and creative director Audrey Margarite have left the venerable brand to launch a direct-to-consumer product line all their own. Called Fête Home, the new collection of home accents debuts in October, with a portion of all sales going to the nonprofit Girls On the Run.

→ **House Beautiful website redesign ruffles feathers:** Legacy shelter brand *House Beautiful* relaunched its website with a new focus (read: Cardi B’s nursery and inflatable furniture)—and its online followers noticed. The strategy shift, which is produced separately from the brand’s print product, was spearheaded by the site’s new editorial director, Joanna Saltz, who pioneered a similar digital strategy at *Delish.com*, and new Hearst Magazines president Troy Young, who previously led the company’s digital division. (On the heels of the site’s debut, Hearst announced that Young would succeed David Carey, who joined the company in 2010 and will remain a chairman until 2019.)

→ **DECASO takes a stand on fakes:** DECASO launched a new policy that formally bans reproductions of notable designs in order to keep inauthentic pieces off its platform. The company claims the policy is the first of its kind among online marketplaces; it will rely mostly on self-monitoring, but will also work with advisers to vet items. ■

ONES TO WATCH

Talent Show

BOH catches up with four creatives and industry innovators to get the latest on their new roles and ventures.

New Network for High-End Decorators

British-born, Los Angeles–based designer **Kathryn M. Ireland** has many irons in the fire: In addition to her renowned interiors business, the former *Million Dollar Decorators* star designs a fabric line, sources another textiles collection with her son, and hosts design retreats. Now, she has soft-launched a new online venture, The Perfect Room, to bring the room-in-a-box e-commerce model to luxury consumers by delivering as-seen-in-shelter-magazines spaces from top designers.

The idea of bridging the gap between online shopping and hiring a professional designer had been on her mind for some time: “I remember hosting one of my design boot camps, teaching clients how to create mood boards and shop for furniture on their own,” she recalls. “Even then,

they still asked for my design touch to make their homes complete. I realized that there is an element of interiors that clients want to do themselves, but also an element that they need curated by a designer.” Ireland’s site is both a digital portfolio for the featured designers and a shoppable service. Customers can purchase a curated selection of products to replicate the entire room for each image, buy just its essential pieces or the accents and accessories, or shop the site à la carte. “These are clients who walk into RH and say they want everything on page 35 of the catalog because they don’t have any time,” she explains. “Our goal is to educate and highlight good design to make the luxury aspect more accessible than ever.”

In addition to her own rooms, Ireland collaborated with big names out of the gate: Bunny Williams, Jeffrey Bilhuber, Rachel Ashwell, and (continued)

PHOTOGRAPHY: TERREBONNE, KELLY TAUB, COURTESY OF GALERIE MAGAZINE; INTERIOR, TIM BEDDOW, PAGE 9; HEM; COURTESY OF HEM.



Introducing The World of Mark D. Sikes

FURNITURE RUGS PILLOWS ART ACCESSORIES VINTAGE



A Kathryn M. Ireland-designed living room, now shoppable on the designer’s e-commerce platform.

her *Million Dollar* costars Martyn Lawrence Bullard and Jeffrey Alan Marks each contributed designs. She also set the bar high for future designers on the platform. “Designers I bring on must have been on the AD100 or *Elle Decor* A-List and have previous book deals and licensee partners,” she says. It’s a simple revenue-share model extended to Ireland’s close-knit list for now, but eventually she plans to take submissions from other prominent designers, vendors and photographers to showcase their product and work on the site.”

Through an in-house concierge program, designers and field experts help clients from first click to installation—answering design questions, creating custom floorplans, sending samples, coordinating shopping, and overseeing delivery and installation—to ensure that the experience never loses the designer touch. “There’s nothing like working with Bunny or Jeffrey that we can replicate completely,” admits Ireland—but that’s not the point of *The Perfect Room*. “When you work with a designer, you make something entirely new. We’re a bit of the opposite: We want this journey to feel as though you found a Martyn Lawrence Bullard room in *House Beautiful* that would be perfect in your home, rang Martyn, and he told you where to get everything to get the look—and then went on to handle everything thereafter to bring it to life.”

Creating a New Chapter

“Point of view is everything,” says **Kyle Marshall**, who in mid-July reported to work as the new creative director of Bunny Williams Home. It’s a dream job for the RISD architecture grad who is as interested in classical references and immersive experiences as he is in designing furniture. “I was one of those kids who was obsessed with houses and rooms,” he recalls. “I realized early on that it was about more than just design—it’s about creating an atmosphere.”

Marshall spent several years as an independent designer; the pull of crafting entire spaces and experiences led him to Ralph Lauren Home, where he designed furniture for the past three years. “I was designing one-offs and interiors, but was more interested in how to make multiples of something,” he says of the transition to a branded design studio. “My conversations before joining both Ralph Lauren Home and Bunny Williams Home were actually very similar. It was about bigger ideas, and having a knowledge base to create something new that is anchored in a certain historical sensibility.”

Now, he will oversee not only the Bunny Williams Home line—his first collection will arrive in 2019—but also licensed lines with Mirror Image Home and Ballard, which debuts its Bunny Williams upholstery collection this October. “It’s all part of the same world,” says Marshall. “They’re at different price points, but everything is beautifully made and meant to evoke this experience of Bunny Williams at home.” It is an ethos he is grateful to channel: “Bunny has a heritage, she doesn’t have to invent one. I like that there’s all of this existing knowledge—the projects she’s designed and put out into the world. There’s a sensation, a feeling, an ambiance. And being able to design new things that fit into that story—creating a new chapter in that book—is exciting to me.”



Kathryn M. Ireland
The Perfect Room



Kyle Marshall
Bunny Williams Home



Kristi Forbes
FortyOne Madison



Nicole Gibbons
Clare

The New Face of Tabletop

Personalization and authenticity are keys to continued success in the tabletop business, says **Kristi Forbes**, the new director and senior vice president of FortyOne Madison. It’s also been a defining characteristic of her nine-month tenure at the building. Although Forbes had attended nine years’ worth of FortyOne Madison’s spring and fall New York Tabletop shows as an executive at AmericasMart, relocating to the city and immersing herself in the day-to-day life of the building has been illuminating. “Sometimes I’ll sit at the front desk to see who’s registering,” she admits. “I can run a report to see that this restaurant or museum or designer came in, but being face-to-face personalizes it.” Hospitality is one of the major growth areas for the building; in addition to providing special programs for designers, many brands offer customization for restaurant and

hotel clients. “A chef opening a new restaurant recently came in for appointments with several tenants, so I saw firsthand how FortyOne Madison plays an important role in his business,” she says.

Forbes also sees brands capitalizing on a social-media-fueled obsession with health and wellness. “Consumers are cooking and entertaining more,” she explains. “Our brands are using this opportunity to educate them—but they’re also evolving their offerings to fit lifestyle trends. For example, casual dining has become an extremely important category, especially for the younger generation. But casual doesn’t mean cheap. It’s functional, high-quality and also beautiful.”

With her first market under her belt as of the spring, Forbes is energized for what’s to come in October. On deck is a partnership with Holiday House for the lobby displays, as well as the impending arrival of several big-name tenants that will join the ranks of the other 95 showrooms and more than 130 brands. “There’s a lot of energy and optimism in the building,” she says. “FortyOne Madison is the epicenter of the tabletop world. Market is definitely about order writing and doing business for the upcoming season, but it’s also where everyone from designers to creatives at the Bloomingdale’s of the world gather for inspiration.”

Painting a Hassle-Free Picture

Like many designers, **Nicole Gibbons** had a tried-and-true roster of paint colors in her arsenal. “No one has a difficult time picking paint when they have a design expert to guide them,” she says. “When I would present to clients, I would only recommend one color. No one’s ever like, ‘Show me five more, I’m not convinced.’” But the interior designer turned startup CEO recognized that, for the average shopper, buying paint was a real pain point in the decorating experience. So Gibbons leveraged her expertise to create Clare, a venture capital-backed paint brand that launched in July with designer-approved color options and the seductive ease of online shopping.

Early in the development process, she identified the major problems with paint shopping at big-box stores and paint dealers: too many colors, too many product lines, a lack of transparency about ingredients, and a cumbersome, costly shopping and sampling process that requires several trips to the store. Clare answers each head-on, from an easy-to-use website and a paint-free, peel-and-stick sampling process to an edited selection of colors (“I looked at 600 color formulations to get down to our perfect

55 shades,” says Gibbons), finishes (eggshell for walls; semigloss for doors, cabinetry, and trim; primer; and a flat white for ceilings) and the quality tools needed to get the best results. “We exist to make paint shopping easier and more inspiring,” says Gibbons. “I saw an opportunity to support the customer through their entire journey, from picking the color to offering paint, tools and tips—and even after the paint has dried, continuing to inspire them.” ■



On the **BOH podcast**, Nicole Gibbons explains how she attracted prelaunch venture capital to found Clare.

PHOTOGRAPHY: IRELAND, SUE HUIELSON; MARSHALL, MATT SMOAK; FORBES, COURTESY OF FORTYONE MADISON; GIBBONS, COURTESY OF CLARE.



BE FEARLESS

THE CONVERGENCE OF FUNCTION & STYLE

Experience a comfortable collaboration of classic modern silhouettes draped in luxurious, worry-free Sunbrella® performance fabrics.

Explore more at mgbwhome.com.

Mitchell Gold
+Bob Williams

 sunbrella®



ON THE BEAT

Power Bars

Here's a trend we'll raise a glass to: Entertaining at home is on the rise, and the bar cabinet is becoming a household essential. **BY ROBYN SMITH**

"My clients love to end their days unwinding in a comfortable room with their favorite cocktail, and I know I do too," says interior designer Barclay Butera, whose Newport collection for Lexington includes the Jade bar cabinet (above). Research supports the idea: 55 percent of respondents in a survey by market research firm Mintel preferred mixing drinks themselves in the relaxed ambiance of their own spaces over an evening socializing at a bar or restaurant. Furniture manufacturers have taken note, with brands like Christopher Guy and Vanguard billing at-home bars as a collection necessity. "The entertaining and receiving of friends at home is on the climb," says Jon Spurlock, director of visual merchandising and sales for Christopher Guy's Southeastern region. "Because of these 'needs and wants,' we have developed several new bar cabinet and concierge pieces for the home." Vanguard experienced the same phenomenon: "The demand for bar cabinets has grown dramatically," says company president Andy Bray. These industry best-sellers bring the party home.



1. X marks the spot at **Bernhardt**, whose sleek *Clarendon* bar cabinet perches atop a shapely base. 2. In a taupe lacquer with mirrored brass geometric details, the Kelly Hoppen–designed *Sting* bar cabinet from **Resource Decor** oozes British glamour. 3. The dreamy *Pollock* drinks cabinet from **Julian Chichester** rocks a vellum cloud motif—and an églomisé back panel hidden inside. 4. The reeded front of the *Chez Harrods* cabinet by **Christopher Guy** was inspired by the intricately carved walls of an old staircase in the tony London department store. 5. The elegant teak veneer surfaces of **Currey & Company's** *Bohlend* cabinet features hand-cut ginkgo-leaf marquetry. 6. Fling open the top of the **Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams** *Roxbury* bar to reveal a mirrored backdrop for mixing drinks. 7. The **Karges** *Queen Anne* cabinet, with its hand-carved base, ball and claw feet, and elaborate brass details, was inspired by lacquer cabinets of the period. 8. In white lacquer, the geometric detailing of the *Knickerboker* bar cabinet, from Michael Weiss's collection for **Vanguard Furniture**, feels especially cosmopolitan. 9. With its reclaimed elm wood in a chevron pattern, the *Langston* bar cabinet from **Universal Furniture** has a rustic flair. 10. With its sapphire-hued aniline dye, **Century's** *Lotus* bar takes center stage.

PHOTOGRAPHY: LEXINGTON; COURTESY LEXINGTON HOME BRANDS; BAR CABINETS COURTESY OF BERNHARDT FURNITURE, RESOURCE DECOR, CURREY & COMPANY, MITCHELL GOLD + BOB WILLIAMS, KARGES & VANGUARD. PAGE 15: GLASSWARE, COURTESY OF FISHS EDDY, 1STDIBS, ABC CARPET & HOME, IKEA.CO.UK, CB2 & AMANDA LINDROTH.

Cocktail Hour

Essential glassware for a stylish evening in.



"For me, it's all about the mix, whether it's design or cocktails. I love a bar stocked with a full range of simple glassware paired with a mix of vintage Champagne coupes, like these Stevens & Williams finds (above right) from **1stDibs**. For a quirky twist, I'll shop **Fishs Eddy** for novelty glasses for clients." —*Lisa Sherry of Lisa Sherry Interieurs*

"Glassware is one of my favorite international finds when I travel. The multicolored Murano glasses I got in Italy are a personal favorite; they overflow with character. For clients, I'll recommend Souk's Moroccan glasses from **ABC Carpet & Home** in jeweled tones to pop against a neutral dining space." —*Rayman Boozer of Apartment 48*

"More and more, I prefer the idea of timeless pieces like **IKEA's** *Ivrig* stemless glass (above left) or the *Marta* from **CB2**, both of which can go modern or traditional, can dress up or down—and that you can use every day, so you don't have to worry about breakage when friends come over." —*Grant K. Gibson of Grant K. Gibson Interior Design*

"I'm a fan of real glass, real china and real silver whenever practical—or even when not practical! For al fresco dining, I source my own **Amanda Lindroth** *Island* table glasses, which are wrapped in natural seagrass. They work for water, wine, juices—they even double as small hurricanes or vases." —*Amanda Lindroth*

HPMKT
HIGH POINT MARKET

#hpmkt
#producthunt
#carrierandco

Find. Fabulous.

The showrooms are tremendous. You see the full breadth of each exhibitor's collections.

Jesse Carrier and Mara Miller, Carrier and Company



October 13-17

Register at www.highpointmarket.org



TRADE TALES

All in the Family

Family ties are tricky, and that's *before* adding business to the mix. What's good, bad and complicated about working side by side with relatives? And how do you draw the line between work and personal life? Peek behind the curtain at some of the industry's favorite family businesses.

Arteriors

Dallas-based lighting and accessories purveyor Arteriors has grown from naming two of its collections after founder Mark Moussa's children to bringing both on board—Tanner Moussa as senior designer and Mackenzie Moussa Lewis as a product designer.



"The challenge is to be a professional, not a parent. Parents usually tell their child what to do, but as a professional, you partner with them, suggest, listen and advise." —Mark Moussa

"It's been a learning experience to figure out how to communicate as colleagues, rather than just as a big brother or a son. It's a different way of speaking, emailing and addressing each other." —Tanner Moussa



"It is important to keep a professional environment and respect everyone's roles, but it definitely took some time to get comfortable calling my dad 'Mark' in the office!" —Mackenzie Moussa Lewis



Currey & Company

Currey & Company was founded by Robert and Suzy Currey and has become a major player in the high-end lighting and furniture industry. The couple's son, Brownlee Currey, took over the Atlanta-based business in 2010 after spending his career learning not only from his parents, but also from other company executives.



"Although Brownlee was around our business for most of his life, he also had the experience of working for others from the age of 14. Currey & Company has had a series of very capable senior managers as COOs and as CEOs who were not family members, and Brownlee reported directly to them, not to us. He earned their respect by accomplishment, not by being the son of the company's founders." —Robert and Suzy Currey

"Family businesses foster conversations about business that are unlikely to happen under other circumstances, which lead to a casual transfer of knowledge that is unique. My parents did a good job at the transition from one generation to the next. I didn't ever presume that I'd be the one running the company one day; I worked my way through a variety of positions, which really allowed me a strong understanding of our operations." —Brownlee Currey

Stark

Luxury carpet and rug brand Stark is a resource to be reckoned with. Founded in 1938, the company is overseen by second-generation leaders Steven Stark, president, and John Stark, chairman, who have in turn proudly watched their respective children, Chad Stark and Ashley Stark Kenner, flourish in the business as senior vice president and creative director.



"During the last year of his life, our father taught us about the industry and sourcing strategies. We came into the business during our college years, so we didn't really have much time to think about a career. We learned on the fly as we grew the business. Today, we've learned to rely on Ashley's creative instincts over our own, and to trust Chad to completely overhaul our IT infrastructure." —Steven and John Stark



"We're learning as we go. When we were doing a big showroom renovation in Costa Mesa, California, we could not agree on a budget. I think our fathers knew that we were going to go over budget no matter what, so they held a hard line in the sand. Fast-forward a few months and they were right, we did [go over budget], so it was good that we didn't start with a higher one." —Chad Stark and Ashley Stark Kenner

Pembroke & Ives

New York-based interior design studio Pembroke & Ives was founded in 1987 by Andrew Sheinman. Today, his daughter Alexia Sheinman oversees branding and communications at the 57-person firm, which has completed luxury projects around the world.



"Alexia is both my harshest critic and biggest fan. She always gives me the unabashed truth. I've always shied away from marketing myself or my company, but she's made me see that it's not about ego—it's all for the good of the company and our staff." —Andrew Sheinman



"Being seen as the 'next generation' can be hard. When you come into a company that's 30 years old, you have to respect that it must be doing something right. It has good bones, and you need to stay true to that while also staying current and preparing to bring the company into the next decade." —Alexia Sheinman

PHOTOGRAPHY: CURREY & COMPANY; COURTESY OF CURREY & COMPANY; PEMBROKE & IVES; COURTESY OF DUSTIN O'NEAL; JOHN & STEVEN STARK; ANDREW WERNER; CHAD STARK; GENEVIEVE GARRUPPO; ASHLEY STARK KENNER; BRITTANY AMBRIDGE



SUNBRELLA®
PERFORMANCE
DOESN'T
STOP AT
THE FINISH

- SOFT TOUCH
- CLEANABLE
- DURABLE
- STAIN RESISTANT



DESIGN + PERFORMANCE™

Adriana Hoyos Furnishings

Adriana Hoyos launched her eponymous furnishings company in 1994 to complement her interior design studio. The Ecuador- and Miami-based company has grown to include upholstery, casegoods and home decor. The designer's daughter, Andrea Pérez, recently joined the business as junior creative director.



"Working with your family has many advantages, but it is not easy to separate the business from daily life. When something goes wrong, we all suffer! Communication and transparency are key. Everybody presents their ideas and points of view so we can get to a consensus."
—Adriana Hoyos

"When I design new products, my job is to depict the brand while at the same time adding a fresh touch. For a new buffet, I wanted to execute a funky concept for the doors, while my mother wanted something a little bit more conservative. She proposed that we produce both door designs and put them in our catalog, then monitor the sales results. In the end, her idea sold better, so we discontinued my idea, but I was glad she gave me the opportunity to try something new. Even though it wasn't successful, it is always a learning process."
—Andrea Pérez



Skyline Furniture

Skyline Furniture is a 70-year-old manufacturing business based in Chicago and operated by CEO Ted Wecker. The company adopted the quick-to-market, e-commerce model for sales thanks to his daughter, third-generation company president Meganne Wecker. In 2016, she launched Cloth & Company, which creates on-demand pieces shipped in as few as six days.



"One of the hardest parts is letting the next generation to take the reins, especially when they want to alter parts of the company that perform well. When Meganne wanted to move into e-commerce, we had been successful selling at traditional brick-and-mortar outlets for years. Pivoting required significant changes to the business, but was one of the best decisions we've made."
—Ted Wecker



"Putting my lens on our business has been the most rewarding aspect of my professional life. My father and I are very different in our strengths and weaknesses, but we complement each other. He gave me the creative license to experiment with designing furniture, textiles and showrooms—which ultimately took the company in a different and successful direction."
—Meganne Wecker

Élitis

When French fabric and wallcoverings company Élitis celebrated its 30th anniversary this year, the party was an international family affair, with Toulouse-based founder and creative director Patrice Marraud des Grottes welcoming his niece Julie Marraud des Grottes into her role as CEO and head of U.S. operations.

"Having family members involved in the company was not part of my original vision—at Élitis, we believe in competence and talent above all. For us, family inclusion evolved naturally, but somewhat unexpectedly. As the new generation comes in, it is important to find the right balance between passing on an invaluable savoir faire and integrating new approaches."
—Patrice Marraud des Grottes



"As a family member, it is harder to win legitimacy. But for me, the rules were very clear from the start: If it works, perfect; if not, we would go our separate ways. Assuming a leadership role always adds pressure, whether or not it is in a family business. What counts most is the people you surround yourself with. Being from the same family is wonderful, but what comes first is the Élitis family."
—Julie Marraud des Grottes

Dedar

Nicola and Elda Fabrizio founded the Milan-based textile house Dedar in 1976; their children, Caterina and Raffaele Fabrizio, have served as co-owners, overseeing the day-to-day operations of the company since 1997.



"What was one disagreement and how did we resolve it? We have been lucky, thanks to the gradual growth of the company, that the complications [along the way] have been overcome without trauma—and without a formal handover."
—Nicola and Elda Fabrizio



"The secret to separating work and life is simple: We have different lives! Sometimes we go on family trips with grandparents and kids, and in these moments, we are just a family that is traveling together, sharing that pleasure for discovery and learning, food and jokes, textiles, rugs, jewels and furniture. We do not talk business. We live these trips in the moment. But [at work], it can be heavy when we disagree. Fighting with somebody who has been important throughout your entire life is sad and scary, especially [when faced] with the possibility [of] that disagreement carrying on. You have to bring up different opinions and find solutions; keeping it in does not help."
—Caterina Fabrizio



"The decision to work in the company was born from a natural, logical—and also sentimental—path. How could you not be attracted by the beautiful materials, colors, and technical and aesthetic expressions? We have the biggest disagreements at lunchtime. For instance, Caterina prefers to walk to a trattoria, while I prefer to drive. But then we are promptly seated at the table at the same time. There are often two different ways to do the same thing."
—Raffaele Fabrizio



ADRIANA HOYOS, JUAN PABLO MERCHÁN NICOLA & ELDA FABRIZIO, COURTESY OF DEDAR; CATERINA & RAFFAELE FABRIZIO, MAX ZAMBELLI; PATRICE MARRAUD DES GROTTES, COURTESY OF ELITIS; JULIE MARRAUD DES GROTTES, AYANO HISA



STYLE *that makes a* STATEMENT.

Universal To The Trade offers amazing benefits, and 20% off your initial order is just the beginning:

- Online ordering
- Exclusive products sold only to interior designers
- No order minimum
- Products ship in an average of 14 days

To activate your account, email ToTheTrade@UniversalFurniture.com, call The Design Line™ at 877-804-5535 or visit us online.

UNIVERSAL TO THE TRADE



Featuring
performance
FABRICS

Shop Now: universalfurniture.com/home/performancefabric

High Point Showroom: 101 South Hamilton | UniversalToTheTrade.com

PTM Images

PTM Images is a 24-year-old manufacturing firm (and partner for Badgley Mischka Home) owned and operated by Jonathan Bass. His daughter Lauren Bass joined the firm in 2015, transforming the established company into a family business.



"I always thought I would sell the business one day, but when Lauren joined, I could visualize the growth of the company beyond my lifetime. If she learns the business and makes a few more right decisions than wrong ones, she could lead the company into the next generation. But for her to do that, I need to let her make, and learn from, her own mistakes. I can't be a helicopter parent or boss. When we disagree, it's usually about how to handle a situation. She will fight like a millennial until you can prove her wrong... but sometimes she can prove you wrong. I've learned to accept that she may be 25 years old, but she can be right." —Jonathan Bass

"Working with my father has been an amazing opportunity. He has taught me the tricks of the trade that he had to learn the hard way. One of the biggest challenges for me has been to prove that I was not hired because we are related. He's spent his whole life building an incredible operation and wouldn't allow me to take on responsibility if I was not fit for the job. I have to work hard to earn respect." —Lauren Bass



A. Rudin

A. Rudin is a fourth-generation manufacturing company based in Los Angeles, where owner Ralph Rudin works with his two sons—Spencer Rudin, who serves as vice president of sales and marketing, and Evan Rudin, who is the vice president of visual communications—to create custom furniture and other products.



"It is wonderful to see and interact with my sons daily. They are incredibly inventive, and I learn from their ideas and input constantly. It's exciting to take what my grandfather and father built and adapt it to modern methods and new ideas." —Ralph Rudin

"I can't close my eyes without thinking about our business. We can finish each other's sentences and almost know the exact answer we'll get before it's delivered. We grew up in our showrooms and factories and around some of the most talented designers and architects in the world, so we've always felt that the A. Rudin brand is part of our DNA." —Spencer Rudin



"Family businesses have the ability to make decisions more efficiently than other companies. If there's a problem, a whole committee isn't always necessary to find and execute a solution. Although we all have hobbies, the work conversation always finds its way in because we enjoy what we do and we're passionate." —Evan Rudin



CREDIT PHOTOGRAPHY: A. RUDIN, SAM FROST



Hamilton Wrenn



Located in the center of the Hamilton Wrenn Design District, this complex caters to designers and high-end retailers. Showrooms feature a broad selection of furniture, floor coverings, wall art, lighting and fine decorative accessories.

200 • 320 • 330
North Hamilton
IN THE DESIGN DISTRICT

- 320/330 N. Hamilton**
 - Dorya
 - Paladin Industries Inc.
 - RS Distribution
 - Resource Décor
 - Trump Home
 - Vogue Living
 - Woodbridge Furniture Co.
- 200 North Hamilton**
 - AMO Milano Leather
 - Artistica
 - Artitalia Group, LLC
 - Boknas
 - Brownstone Furniture Inc.
 - California House
 - Cates Cove
 - Decorati by Artitalia Group
 - Design NS
 - Fairfield Chair
 - Fly by Artitalia Group
- SOUTH COURT**
 - Frederick Cooper Lamps
 - French Accents Rugs & Tapestry
 - Jonathan Charles Fine Furniture
 - Leathercraft
 - Leonardo by Artitalia Group 200
 - MacKenzie Dow
 - Mottahedeh & Co Inc.
 - Palatial Furniture
 - Spectra Home
 - Vere Antichita by Artitalia Group
 - Wildwood Lamps & Accents Inc.

Visit your complete furniture, lighting, and home destination.
It's all here this January.

Furniture | Decorative Accessories | Wall Décor | Antiques
Rugs | Tabletop | Textiles | Holiday & Floral | Lighting | Gifts

The Atlanta International Gift & Home Furnishings Market®

Showrooms: **Jan. 8–15, 2019**
Temporaries: **Jan. 10–14, 2019**



SHOW-RUMORS

La Bella Vita

The season's most exciting new U.S. showrooms and storefronts come from Italian brands that highlight the good life.



1 Kartell SoHo gets an Instagram-friendly update: Gone are the stark white walls and pedestals that displayed the brand's plastic contemporary furniture with a museum-like effect. Instead, Kartell's New York outpost has been softened with a playful but muted wallcovering that serves as a backdrop for walls of furniture that appear to float on glass shelves.

The redesign is Kartell's response to the brand's shifting retail business, says John J. Jenkin, CEO of Kartell U.S. "Social media has changed the way we communicate with our customer," he explains. Many young fans of the brand may not know or revere the names of Kartell's iconic pieces—Philippe Starck's Sir Gio table and Louis Ghost chair, or Ferruccio Laviani's Bloom fixture. "But show them a picture and they recognize the table, the chair, the light," he says. "It means that the shop today has to be a visual experience. Before, people were afraid to touch the furniture—it was [displayed] like art. While we are not changing the mission of our products, this new layout encourages people to have an experience, to reach out and grab the products."

Kartell unveiled the first iteration of the new layout at its Milan flagship (left) during

Salone del Mobile this spring, and after New York, is setting its sights on revamping the London and Paris stores. "We play with refraction and color, how the light goes through the transparency of the furniture—it's playful and joyful, but still elegant," says Jenkin. "Every time I open the door, it feels like a candy store." (39 Greene St., New York)

2 At last, Dedar unveils its first-ever stateside showroom: Luxury fabric house Dedar opened its first U.S. showroom in New York's D&D Building (opposite), an atelier so beautifully crafted, visitors may nearly forget that they're still in a design center. "My approach to design begins by identifying the context of how the environment will be used and how life will flow within it," said Florentine architect and long-time Dedar collaborator Michele Bónan. He drew inspiration from American residential architecture of the 1960s to create an intimate space with warm wood floors, white brick on the walls, and dramatically lit textile displays. More than 3,000 of the brand's classic and contemporary palettes and patterns are on view, in addition to textiles and wallcoverings by Hermès; the showroom will also stock bolts of fabric for designers'



last-minute yardage needs. A 15-foot-long antique table from a textile store in Florence, complete with a brass ruler along one side, anchors the space and provides an ample surface for designers to work. "We asked [Bónan] to design ... the ideal house we would love to have in New York," says Raffaele Fabrizio, co-owner of Dedar with his sister, Caterina Fabrizio. And home it is, down to the wooden slats installed overhead to disguise the building's sprinkler system—a masterful touch that completes the illusion. (979 Third Ave., Suite 1009, New York)

3 Poltrona Frau makes big moves: The century-old modern furniture brand opens a 4,300-square-foot Miami Design



District showroom (above) that features its most iconic leather and upholstery options in neutral and ocean-blue hues that evoke the nearby sand and sea. The company has also carved out a corner to showcase its immense leather collection, housed in a leather-covered bookcase, and the Cockpit office chair, created in collaboration with Ferrari's design team. On the other side of the country, Poltrona Frau is shuttering its West Hollywood showroom and eyeing a new home for its Los Angeles flagship in Beverly Hills. Each showroom is inspired by the concept of the brand's Via Manzoni store in Milan, from the warm gray walls and natural oak floors to intimate furniture groupings. "The layout combines historical

and contemporary pieces with coherence," says Nicola Coropulis, Poltrona Frau's managing director. "Everything is part of a global strategy of attention to retail and distribution formats—and of course Miami is the right place to be now." (4100 NE Second Ave., Miami)

Plus: Miami gets a bit more Euro-chic in November with the opening of "Made in Italy: MITA Textile Design 1926-1976," an exhibit that highlights 50 years of collaborations between Genovese textile firm Manifattura Italiana Tappeti Artistici and artists like Fortunato Depero and Gio Ponti. (The Wolfsonian-Florida International University, 1001 Washington Ave., Miami Beach) ■

#SHOWROOMGOALS

On the Road Again

As showroom foot traffic declines, fabric businesses are increasingly turning to a sophisticated network of outside sales representatives to reach designers at their desks.

BY KAITLIN PETERSEN

All of the costs have gone up, but the number of visitors has gone down," says Andrea Rubelli, CEO of Donghia and an executive at the Rubelli Group, a fifth-generation Italian textiles business. There's no hand-wringing about it, just a simple acknowledgment of the facts: "You can't have huge, American-sized showrooms [in design centers] anymore, because there aren't enough people who walk in every day to cover the rent and the cost of the salespeople. The profitability of most showrooms is going to be negative soon. It's happening, and it's happening very fast."

Designers' shopping habits are changing, says Nina Butkin, vice president of design at Fabricut. "It used to be that designers would come into the showroom and spend hours there. The person working in the showroom would help them, guide them, educate them. That is still happening, but not necessarily face-to-face. Interior designers and the consumers they serve have much more access to everything on the internet. Designers go online, then call the showroom and ask, 'Can you order me a sample of this?' [It's up to the] showroom salesperson to say, 'That's great, but are you familiar

with this product too? It's similar and may be interesting [to you]. There's still a lot of work with customers going on, but we're all trying to adjust."

That doesn't mean the showroom model is necessarily on the ropes. Though Fabricut is constantly expanding its outside sales program in pursuit of new distribution channels, be they online or with new showroom partners, the company has maintained its existing showrooms and staff. Although Rubelli's companies tested going without showrooms in a few markets, he found that the physical spaces play an important—albeit secondary—role. "There is still a large community of designers who need showrooms," says Rubelli. "It's not enough business to support the showroom, but big enough to be important." Ten years ago, 70 percent of Rubelli's business in the United States came from showroom sales and 30 percent came from outside reps; today, it is the reverse. "You can no longer count on a showroom to make the sale, with outside reps to get something additional. Now, the outside reps chase business where the business is," he says. His companies have spent the past year investing heavily in talent, both in their showrooms and out. "The showroom today is a service point more than a sales point."

PHOTOGRAPHY: KARTELL; COURTESY OF KARTELL.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DEDAR; MAX ZAMBELLI; POLTRONA FRAU; COURTESY OF POLTRONA FRAU.

Opportunities for intrepid outside salespeople are on the rise. Since last fall, heritage textile brand Holland & Sherry has hired nine new traveling sales reps; the brand now has at least one or two outside salespeople in every territory—seven in New York City alone—who are working outside of the showroom four days each week.

"It's the toughest job out there," says Holland & Sherry vice president Daniel Waldron. "You're in your car, you don't have a lot of support, and you're doing a lot of cold-calling." That uphill battle is rewarded with a more competitive commission structure, but Waldron says it can be grueling, especially at the outset as sales reps build relationships. Each of his reps takes 48 to 60 meetings with design firms each month; the company aims to get in front of its best clients every four to six weeks, and to visit secondary markets two to four times each year. (Holland & Sherry has also invested in the marketing collateral that reps take to meetings, like videos and lookbooks, to get the most mileage out of the appointments.) "It's about timing, not how hard you push. It's like putting more balls in the raffle tumbler—the more times you are in front of a client, the more opportunities you have."

In metro-area showrooms, Holland & Sherry's reps are often calling on existing clients. But secondary cities like Minneapolis, Baltimore, San Diego, and Richmond, Virginia—where the nearest design center may feel out of reach—have been promising early markets for new clients and sales growth. "There are a lot of talented designers who don't have access to product the way they do in major cities, and we've found so much good traction there," says Waldron. The hiring spree and shift in focus are already paying off: In most regions, at least half of the company's revenue now comes from outside sales. (The only exceptions are New York and London, where heavily trafficked showrooms do a brisk business.) Though the company opened a showroom at the Design Center of the Americas in Dania Beach, Florida, in 2014, since then, more than 75 percent of the region's sales have been generated through road reps. Yet Waldron insists that the company's showrooms play an important role—even simply as a home base for reps and a place to fulfill sample requests, or as a gallery for designers to view the brand in a cohesive setting.

"We still believe in the showroom model as it stands, and it is very important to us to have our look

on display for local clients in our 16 locations worldwide," he says. "But as we expand in the near future, outside sales will be at the heart of what we do. Together with simplified presentation models and targeted stocked-product sales, we have seen our business grow quite substantially—especially in areas outside of the major showroom locations." He affirms that the path to success requires hiring the right people: "If you find dynamic individuals with the will to succeed, they become much more valuable to our interior designers than any showroom can be."

"Our goal is to become a resource, and hopefully an initial resource, for designers when they start a project," adds Waldron. "If we meet with your junior designer and leave eight fabric books, three wallpaper books, and one leather book that get put on the shelf—that, for us, is free advertising. If a designer goes to look for something when they start a project and our books are there, there's a better chance. And hopefully when those designers are starting a new project, they'll think, 'This company has come to my attention; they obviously care because they came out to visit me.'"

Not all brands have the ability or the desire to send reps across the country. Design (continued)

industry veteran Crans Baldwin knows the business well enough to see that, while the lament about declining foot traffic might be industry-wide, there are pockets of the country where business remains steady and strong. "There's a rising shadow network of small, successful showrooms," he says. "If you want to be really blown away, go to the showroom locator on the Robert Allen Duralee or Kravet websites and look up states like Texas, Connecticut, Missouri, Florida or Maryland. All of those states have independent, to-the-trade showrooms that are doing just fine, thank you." Those showrooms may not have all of the top lines, he says, but they offer easy access to enough resources—and extra perks too—in areas where it may be difficult to get to a major design center. The appeal is not so different from that of a sales rep who brings product to your office: "These design showrooms figured out how to make it work without the fancy names by offering fabulous service," says Baldwin.

That kind of personalized attention to designers' needs was something Baldwin thought he could replicate himself. Thirty years ago, he started his career as a regional sales rep for Baker. He became a national sales manager for several textiles and home furnishings brands, then spent 20 years in executive roles, Cowtan & Tout, Bergamo Fabrics and Donghia, as well as five years as a consulting executive at Edward Ferrell + Lewis Mittman and Dedar. But in February, he saw an opportunity, and re-entered the road-rep business himself. His new, Darien, Connecticut-based firm represents fabric,

wallcovering and furniture companies large and small throughout the tri-state area.

"The market has moved towards the client," says Baldwin. He says he doesn't see himself going head-to-head with online shopping, as one might assume; rather, his competitor is the rep who gets the meeting instead of him. "The internet is a good way for a designer to check out something they've heard about, but it's not a good discovery tool for fabric," he explains. "The competition here is either a hot, of-the-moment line—that's competition because every designer wants to see them—or a very well-serviced line with a good rep."

For Robert Shields, a designer at Tiger Lily's in Greenwich, Connecticut, one of the biggest benefits of working with reps is the ability to collaborate. On a recent project, a client wanted chintz—not exactly an everyday textile for his business. "I called Crans, and he came over the next day with chintzes from Rose Cummings and Clarence House—beautiful things we hadn't seen in years." For another project, Shields explained a client's penchant for the Old World English look to his de Gournay rep and received a customized assortment of samples. "Reps at higher-end lines really understand their product and can tailor a presentation for us to take to the client," he says. "I even know designers who give reps their entire project and say, 'This is what I'm looking for.'"

Collaborating with reps also offers an inherent time savings that Shields appreciates. "It's so easy to call up a rep who knows us and say, 'I'm looking for such and such.' They're on-site or the samples

arrive in the mail the next day—that makes our business much more efficient." Geography plays a critical role. "When I was based in D.C., I was close to a design center and used it a lot—it was easy to pop over for an hour or two," he says. In Greenwich, he relies on road reps like Baldwin and an extensive in-house sample library. "I'm only a 45-minute train ride into the city, but that still adds hours to the day, and it's just not realistic on a daily basis." Though he and his team make trips to the New York design centers in the fall and spring for inspiration and to see what's new, most of their business is conducted through regional reps. "I'd hate to see showrooms disappear," he says. "They're very valuable, especially when it comes to furniture—and inspiration, too. There's just no way to replace that experience with a picture."

It's a sentiment Waldron at Holland & Sherry understands. "It's still important to have that brick-and-mortar established," he says. The company's 9,000-square-foot showroom on the 14th floor of the D&D Building is a testament to that continued commitment. "It's worth the rent," says Waldron, noting that upwards of 60 designers come through the door each day. "But if you're going to be successful in this day and age, there's no showroom left where you can sit back and let business come to you. Time is an interior designer's most valuable commodity; more and more, we see that designers don't have time to get to the design center. We hope to make their lives the slightest bit easier by bringing the product to them." ■

DESIGNERS DEBATE

Wax On, Wax Off

It's a fight to the finish, as designers Patrick Sutton and Susan Ferrier tackle the finer points of timeworn patina and hand-hewn metals versus glimmer and shine.

Patrick Sutton

I gravitate toward materials that have character, where you can see the craftsman's hand, like the subtle pitting from grains of sand in sand-cast bronze hardware. Unlike a polished gold or brass fitting, where every piece is exactly the same, matte finishes project a sense of individuality. They seem the most honest to me, as they present themselves without gloss or hype. ¶ I'm also drawn to the romance of travel and the patina of time. Think about aged copper and pewter, galvanized or waxed blackened steel, and zinc countertops—these timeworn finishes convey qualities of authenticity and endurance. They are living finishes whose beauty is only amplified with use. Grand old European buildings with their fading plaster walls and the sophisticated, highly edited palette of Japanese architecture are both sources of inspiration for me. Shine has no place in either aesthetic. ¶ Don't get me wrong, I can appreciate a blingy chandelier—in someone else's dining room. But for me, shine is a lot like that boisterous, attention-seeking guest at a party: entertaining for a while, but by the end of the evening, you can't wait for them to leave.



VERSUS

Susan Ferrier

Shiny surfaces reflect light and share it around the room, but matte is selfish. Matte finishes grab the light and keep it all for themselves. Shine does for a room what a smile does for the face—we all look better smiling, and the same is true for an interior with a little brightness. Distressed mirrors, gilded woods, silk velvet pillows, metallic leathers, rock crystal lighting, bamboo rugs, glistening trims, glass, and exceptional hardware are just a few of my favorite shiny elements! ¶ Shine creates movement in the same way that bubbles make a flute of Champagne sparkle. Who doesn't want to be greeted with a glass of Champagne? Shiny is the person who keeps the conversation going at the dinner table; matte is the drab bore you hope you don't get seated next to! Think of shiny furnishings and finishes as jewelry for a room: It's the final touch, the detail that takes an otherwise nice outfit and gives it real style. ¶ Patrick's not flashy, but I think there's a secret shiny-loving side of him just waiting to come out. He's welcome to check out my jewelry box for inspiration anytime. I'll serve Champagne. ■



PHOTOGRAPHY: FERRIER: PORTRAIT, COURTESY OF SUSAN FERRIER; INTERIOR, ERICA GEORGE DINES; SUTTON: PORTRAIT, ROGER DAVIES; INTERIOR, GORDON BEALL.

EXCELLENCE IN
RECRUITING.

EXCLUSIVE TO
THE TRADE.

Interior Design, Architecture and Home Furnishings Sales Professionals
(212) 777-5718 | (310) 697-7700 | www.idtalentsearch.com

DESIGN MANAGEMENT COMPANY
CAREER MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS CONSULTING



STAR POWER

In her 40-year tenure at *Architectural Digest*, Paige Rense's singular focus on making an exceptional magazine transformed a sleepy regional quarterly into an iconic brand—and catapulted interior designers to stardom along the way. **BY KAITLIN PETERSEN**

Like attracts like. It's a simple enough premise—and for Paige Rense, it was the key to success when she joined the *Architectural Digest* staff in 1970. Her unwavering objective was straightforward: to be the best. To do that, she reckoned that she needed the best projects; to attract the best work of premier designers, she assured them that their project would be covered by the best photographers and writers. And as she delivered on that promise again and again, the magazine's influence—and her own—grew.

Today, Rense lives in West Palm Beach, where she continues to write. She rejects attempts to categorize her meteoric rise as legendary. "Most of what I did seemed obvious," she says when we sat down for an interview in Rizzoli's New York offices this summer. She had just made the final edits to her forthcoming book, *Architectural Digest: Autobiography of a Magazine*, a retrospective that traces *AD*'s oeuvre from its founding in 1920 as a large-format regional magazine until her departure from the title in 2010. "There was no secret formula at all," she insists,

though she single-handedly shepherded the transformation of the Los Angeles quarterly into a glossy international style arbiter. "It seemed to me that, given the subject matter, designers were key. So I started interviewing them—and they loved it. Then I graduated to architects."

Her first big "get" was legendary San Francisco designer Anthony Hail, who agreed to be interviewed and introduced her to other Bay Area talent. The resulting coverage got the attention of designers nationwide, and she traveled to New York on the coattails of that success. While there, she had lunch with Angelo Donghia, then a star on the rise. "He believed that I would do with the magazine what I said [I would do]," says Rense. Donghia was taken with her vision and in a major coup for the magazine, he showed his own New York townhouse in *AD*—a story all of the major shelter magazines were after.

There was something special about the magazine, even in the early days of Rense's tenure. "Rich people don't usually want to have their homes photographed,

but they all want to be in *AD*," Donghia told her shortly after his home was published. There was a certain celebrity that came with publication—an appeal Rense actively encouraged. "By showing top designers, other top designers wanted to be in the magazine," recalls Rense. She also brought a new look and feel to the shelter category, creating stories that amplified a designer's portfolio by running photographs as full pages and across spreads instead of many smaller images, which was common practice at the time.

Designer and architect Campion Platt, who credits Rense with launching his career, was one of the professionals lucky enough to be published frequently in her pages. His editorial debut in the magazine, a Manhattan high-rise apartment in the Olympic Tower that belonged to a Malaysian princess, garnered him seven new clients—five immediately, and the others years later. "It was a different time—there were no blogs, no social media," recalls Platt. "You were lucky if you were published once a year, and *AD* was the most important place to be on the planet."

Rense will be the first to tell you that her journey to becoming editor of the magazine was filled with surprises. She applied for the job on the recommendation of a friend after a brief career at Peterson Publications, where she worked under her managing-editor husband, Arthur Rense. In her *AD* interview, the publisher asked what she would do if she were hired. "I said, 'Well, first I'd make it good,'" recalls Rense. Following the still-unsolved 1971 murder of Bradley Little, the magazine's editor in chief, she filled in as his replacement—and eventually got the top job.

"Every once in a while, she'd call and say, 'Come have lunch, and bring your latest work,'" recalls architect Marc Appleton, whose projects Rense published often. He even designed her home in Santa Barbara, which, as she reveals in the Rizzoli retrospective, she published anonymously in the magazine; the two later became friends. "I'd come to the office with 15 or 20 slides. She had poor eyesight, so she'd pull out a magnifying glass, and in the space of literally one minute, she would look at everything I'd done and decide what she was interested in—'No, no, maybe, yes, maybe, no, yes.' And then we'd go have lunch."

Designer Sandra Nunnerley also remembers meetings with Rense. "She wanted to know what you were doing, see what your interests were and what you were working on," says Nunnerley. "It was understood that you'd go to her first with new projects, before the other magazines. She was so supportive of my career and my work, so I always did." Many designers recall the editor's emphasis on exclusivity. Platt tells the story of a project he had photographed and submitted to Rense: "She was keen to publish it," he says. "Then, one Sunday morning, she saw a 1-inch-by-1-inch photo of the space in the real estate section of *The New York Times*—the couple had decided to list it—and that was it." Rense was no longer interested. "She had to be the first; she was a stickler about that. It's in my book, which was published in 2010, but I never did get that project published [in a magazine]."

As the mystique of the publication grew, Rense introduced the AD100—a list of top designers—in a stand-alone bonus issue in August 1990. (The next iteration focused exclusively on architects; subsequent editions merged the two.) It was immediately regarded as the definitive who's who of top architects and designers—and became a wellspring of exclusive talent for *AD*.

"She ran things with a severe grip," says Appleton, who graced the list for the entirety of Rense's tenure. "But if you were on the AD100, why would you go anywhere else? I was quite content to be published in her magazine." Like Platt, another longtime AD100 honoree, Appleton says that the frequent exposure in *AD*'s pages helped propel his career. "What I came to admire as I experienced the magazine over the years was that she



1970
Paige Rense appears on the masthead of *Architectural Digest* for the first time. Arthur Elrod's Palm Springs house (above) appears in the Spring 1970 issue.

1973
AD publishes two big projects that garner buzz: a 10-page feature on the never-published home of Coco Chanel and the sought-after Manhattan townhouse of Angelo Donghia.



1981
Circulation swells to 450,000. The White House appears on the cover of the December issue (above) when Rense publishes photos of the Reagans' private quarters.

1990
The first AD100 list debuts, as a bonus stand-alone issue in August.

2005
AD publishes the 30-person Deans of American Design list.

2010
In March, *AD* publishes one of the top-performing issues of all time, selling nearly 120,000 copies on newsstands. That summer, Rense announces her retirement; her final issue is published in December.

1971
AD editor in chief Bradley Little is murdered. Although Rense doesn't assume the title of editor in chief until 1975, she takes over the editorial operations of the magazine.

1975
Publisher Bud Knapp purchases *Bon Appétit*, which Rense edits in addition to *AD* until 1983.



1976
The Hamptons home of Truman Capote (above) is featured in *AD*.

1985
Literary contributors to the magazine include Truman Capote, William Styron, Kurt Vonnegut, Gerald Clarke, John Updike, Susan Sheehan and Judith Thurman. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales pens a guest column.

1993
Condé Nast purchases *AD* and *Bon Appétit* from Knapp Communications.

2000
Circulation reaches nearly 850,000.



2018
Rense's retrospective, *Architectural Digest: Autobiography of a Magazine*, is slated to be published in October.

put great stock in the writers and photographers, as well as the design and architectural talent she represented. I think that explains a lot of her success—the writing, the pictures, and the work were all consistently good."

The work of photographer Mary E. Nichols often graced the magazine's pages. "She was a perfectionist," says Nichols of shooting for Rense. "There was no tolerance for photographs that weren't technically perfect." Unlike at today's heavily-produced shoots, Nichols and her photography assistant were often the only representatives of the magazine on site. Nichols arrived armed with Rense's instructions for each project—ghastly window treatments or vulgar artwork to avoid, for example—but her mission was to capture the home the way the architect or designer intended it to be, not a stylist's interpretation of the space. "She wanted everything [in the pictures] to feel like you were there—like you had just arrived in the room and it was ready for you. She wanted that integrity." Even with all of her celebrity subjects, Rense rejected spaces that felt artificial. "I wanted reality," insists Rense. "I didn't want a stylist—that has always seemed fake to me. I wanted the reality of whatever was there."

Rense weathered changing ownership, forging a cordial relationship with the late S.I. "Si" Newhouse, the longtime chairman of Condé Nast, when the esteemed media company purchased the magazine from Knapp Communications in 1993. "Si asked me to lunch [after the acquisition]. I said, 'Do I report to you now?' And he said, 'You don't report to anyone—but you have lunch with me whenever you come to New York.' He was so wonderful and supportive." Rense also adapted to the comings and goings of competitors—and the fickle nature of such a public job. In the forthcoming book, she chronicles her meetings, and sometimes ensuing friendships, with designers, celebrities and socialites, but also the constant pitches, and the finer points of saying no. Rejecting a home, she muses, is akin to rejecting its designer—something she tried never to do in person.

"Paige built a stable of super-talented people that were also longtime, loyal friends," says Platt. "It worked both ways: She was going to be loyal to you and build your career; in return, you were going to hold the line and come to her first. I know people who stepped the wrong way and were shut out. She had an absolute grip on the top end of the interior design business for decades. To get an audience with her, to have her want to visit your projects, was a very special thing."

That control, say designers who know Rense, is what cemented the magazine's place among an ever-widening audience of design enthusiasts. "She is a tough lady, and she ran the magazine for so long," says Platt. "It was really her; she was making all these decisions by herself all those years. But she never had an ego about it. She was all about the work." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY: ELROD INTERIOR; LELAND LEE © AD COURTESY OF CONDENASTPUB; CAPOTE, RICHARD CHAMPION © AD COURTESY OF CONDENASTPUB; WHITE HOUSE COVER; DERRY MOORE © AD COURTESY OF CONDENASTPUB; BOOK COVER, COURTESY OF RIZZOLI; PORTRAIT, KENNETH NOLAND.



CULTURE IS KING

It's been a buzzword in the startup world for several years, but a company's culture is more than just hype. Studies show that happy, engaged employees are more productive, and better problem-solvers—and the companies they work for perform better too. *BOH* highlights design brands large and small that have put employee satisfaction at the forefront of their practices. **BY KAITLIN PETERSEN**

On a recent visit to The Urban Electric Co.'s workshop in Charleston, South Carolina, I noticed a life-sized cardboard cutout of Elvis draped in a gold Mylar boa, standing alongside a row of chemical-filled dunk tanks. Mr. Presley doesn't have anything to do with the company's nickel plating, but his presence on the manufacturing floor has everything to do with the way company founder and CEO Dave Dawson runs the 15-year-old lighting business.

"About five years ago, there was a period where I felt like there wasn't enough focus on all of the good things people were doing," says Dawson. So he started a peer-nominated Rock Star of the Month program. Every month, the team creates a surprise "flash mob," with a boombox playing Elvis songs, tambourines, and plenty of singing and shouting as employees parade through the factory to deliver the cardboard King to the chosen star. Dawson also orchestrates the flash mobs to celebrate promotions, like when an employee finishes an apprenticeship and becomes a craftsman. "You hear it coming, but you don't know where we're going to stop," he explains. "Then, all of the sudden, you find yourself surrounded by 15, 20, 25 people cheering, yelling and high-fiving you. On a fundamental level, there's something very satisfying about it that most people don't experience in their daily work."

Inside the factory, the company's values are omnipresent—both among the people I met and in the space itself. As he walked me through the manufacturing process of Urban Electric's fixtures, Dawson greeted employees from all corners of the factory by name, often tossing in an anecdote about their strengths or a recent accomplishment. And over each of the workshop's two floors, banners that read "Always proud, never satisfied" hung overhead—a battle cry for the entire company that complements its six core values, which are emblazoned atop every performance review and on the training room's wall.

"For years, we did not have a set of core values written down," recalls Dawson. "You're busy and you think, 'Oh, we've got values: We want a respectful culture, we're kind to one another. Everyone knows what our values are.'" Then, a business acquaintance of Dawson's asked to see them. "We'd been running the business for seven years at that point, and it dawned on me: Having core values is not the same thing as having them written down."

Today, new employees get their own letter-pressed copy of the company's core values. For Dawson, those characteristics are aspirational—a guide to what to strive for in one's daily work. "You know it's working when [those values are] sent back to you," he tells me. "I get dozens of Elvis nominations every month with paragraphs about why a certain person should win—and eight times out of 10, the person doing the nominating writes about the core value the nominee is exhibiting. That means it's come full circle."

A manufacturing floor of Urban Electric's Charleston, South Carolina, factory.

WHAT IS CULTURE?

→ Leadership experts weigh in.

Tech startups have made company culture a phenomenon with their unlimited vacation days, Ping-Pong tables and beer on tap. But there's much more to culture than perks. "Culture is the tacit social order of an organization. It shapes attitudes and behaviors in wide-ranging and durable ways," wrote Boris Groysberg, Jeremiah Lee, Jesse Price and J. Yo-Jud Cheng in a recent *Harvard Business Review* article that helps leaders take stock of their organization's culture and shape it for the future. "Cultural norms define what is encouraged, discouraged, accepted or rejected within a group. When properly aligned with personal values, drives and needs, culture can unleash tremendous amounts of energy toward a shared purpose and foster an organization's capacity to thrive."

In the formative stages of building a business, culture may not feel like a top priority. But as Jean Brownhill, the founder and CEO of Sweeten, a free service that matches renovation-seekers with vetted general contractors, discovered, culture exists with or without executive oversight. "Once we had more than 10 employees, it became pretty clear that culture was something that either I was going to shape, or it was going to form around me," says Brownhill. There's no cookie-cutter formula for the "perfect" company culture. In shaping the culture at Sweeten, she looked to companies she admired for inspiration, then adapted their best practices to suit her team and her business. "It's like any recipe—it's always a little bit different," says Brownhill. "It's not possible to completely copy a culture of another company. Our recipe is our own, unique to us."

The practice of forming a culture is often a misunderstood or underutilized tool, but culture is also increasingly vital for business success. "Leading with culture may be among the few sources of sustainable competitive advantage left to companies today," according to the *HBR* article. "Successful leaders will ... use [culture] as a fundamental management tool."

THE PERFECT SCORE

→ Interior Define unlocks the secret to employee satisfaction.

At press time, custom upholstery company Interior Define boasted a rare superlative—a perfect 5.0 score on Glassdoor, a website that allows employees to anonymously review their employers. So it comes as no surprise that for Rob Royer, the company's founder and CEO, culture was a concept he thought about from the get-go. "I wanted to build a culture where everyone felt they were sharing the same mission to deliver a superior customer experience," he explains. Team leads share weekly updates, and sales metrics are distributed to all employees daily. That level of transparency with the inner workings of the business keeps employees invested in the company's success. "People have a lot of accountability, but we are trying to do that in a way that empowers the team so that they feel even more passionate about their roles."

Interior Define launched in Chicago in 2014 with three employees. As the team grew, communicating that culture—as well as codifying it in more concrete ways—became increasingly important. The company now has 44

"Culture is a serious fuel for corporate success. There's that saying: 'Culture eats strategy for breakfast.' I really believe that." —Dave Dawson



←
Jean Brownhill
Sweeten
Founder & CEO

"In some places, folks use the idea of culture as a way to make a homogeneous environment, but I [want] every type of diversity I can find—age, race, sexual orientation. I want the full gamut of perspectives. Ideas are better, product is better, and experiences are better when you have a lot of people giving their vantage points."



←
Rob Royer
Interior Define
Founder & CEO

"People today have more options, so I'm cognizant that if we can find the right people, we want to keep them and keep them happy. We've started a Slack channel to [publicly] thank team members for a job well done. We want to make sure we are really celebrating when people demonstrate clear cultural objectives."

employees at its headquarters, as well as an additional 30 in its six shops across the country. "We do worry about being disconnected as we expand nationally," says Royer. "We're thinking about how we get design specialists [in the regional storefronts] to spend more time in the office to make sure we remain closely connected."

Royer also creates opportunities to send team members to other locations, including the production facilities overseas. "As a company, we are very connected with the people making our pieces," he says. Organizing a factory visit abroad for a team member is not only a reward for a job well done, it has an added bonus for the company as a whole too. "When employees come back and share [what they learned] with others, it makes everyone better at their jobs. The team is knowledgeable not just about what we're doing here, but also how we're actually achieving it."

Interior Define offers some of the perks synonymous with startup culture, like free lunches on Friday. More radical is the company's unlimited paid time off. "We allow people to take what they need," says Royer of the policy, which he feels has made his employees more committed and conscientious about leaving their work in a good place before taking days off. "It has created a really nice dynamic where people are comfortable taking time off, but also feel a real sense of responsibility to make sure their coworkers are well prepared for when that time off occurs. Our team members take that very seriously."

Royer's employees have been the strongest proponents of preserving the company's culture. "What's interesting about starting a business and having a small team is that you can see so clearly when someone who doesn't share the same values, how quickly that can change the dynamic of the business," he says. "We're lucky that our people were excited about what we were doing in the early days. Getting the initial team members right has continued to lead to good hiring decisions." The company originally included all employees in the interview process out of necessity, simply because the office was too small to interview privately. But over time, the team interview, in which several employees meet each candidate to assess fit—has become institutionalized as an integral part of Interior Define's growth.

"Everyone feels a level of ownership over the types of employees we hire," says Royer. "We filter candidates and hires based on criteria that goes beyond traditional factors, like level of experience or pedigree." A year after launching, as Royer began to formalize the annual review process, he and his team defined those characteristics for the first time. The company also launched a culture committee last year, which comprises a rotating group of team members at various levels of seniority; feedback from the committee, as well as from employee surveys, has been put into practice in the performance review and hiring processes. "We're looking for things like empathy, which can be hard to screen for, but that is a core characteristic of our team members. We want to demonstrate empathy at every level and interaction with our customer—and with coworkers too."



ABOVE: A winning team from Workshop/APD's annual Halloween costume contest, wearing outfits inspired by the pigeons in Manhattan's Bryant Park near the company's office.

GROWTH EXPERIENCE

→ Workshop/APD scales responsibly.

At design studio Workshop/APD, the desire to create a collaborative workplace started with the name. "We wanted to build a firm that was about the people, not the singular person with his or her name on the door—a place that feels like it could grow regardless of the leaders of the firm," says Andrew Kotchen, who founded the company with Matt Berman. "Even at the beginning, when it was just two of us, the goal was always to have a collaborative studio environment."

The co-founders' primary struggle was finding the right way to grow without disrupting the culture they had established. "This business is so project-driven that the quantity and scale of your projects determines how many people you need," explains Kotchen. "We were very intentional about building a practice that never scaled because of projects, but instead grew to advance our big-picture goals. We've never ballooned in size and then had to let people go because of workflow. That's challenging, because when things are slow, we are essentially reducing our income to sustain the business."

Growth brought its own challenges. As the firm hires more employees, from support staff to senior management, Kotchen and Berman have developed a hierarchy among the design talent on both the architecture and interior design sides—sometimes with success, sometimes without. "We want to implement a hierarchical structure so that growth and advancement are clear, but it creates a ripple effect, where you begin to create more distance between senior and junior people," explains Kotchen. In one misstep, Workshop/APD implemented a series of titles and positions within each team that proved to be too complicated, so the founders backtracked. Kotchen and Berman have worked with several business coaches to navigate their 19-year-old firm's evolving needs. "We're still learning every day," he says. "Culture is not an accessory within a space, it's the energy of an office. That fluctuates—sometimes high, sometimes low—but you try to create a great environment for people to be in."

Creating a physical environment that meets employees' needs is another critical way to empower a team. The Workshop/APD founders listened to their team, and are currently renovating 80 percent of their office as a result. "One person said it best: Our kitchen was great for a single person with five cats, not a 45-person office," jokes Kotchen. The new layout creates a large kitchen for socializing. "It's expensive, it's daunting, but it's the right thinking to maintain positive energy and morale in the workplace."



←
Andrew Kotchen
Workshop/APD
Co-founder & Partner

"We think about creating an environment where people are engaged and feel happy and empowered when they come to work each day. Our team is working on a wide range of projects, so it's no easy thing to ensure that everyone has the right balance of different types of work and gets the right experiences."

Workshop/APD also celebrates staff successes. Kotchen says they aim to plan at least one out-of-office event each quarter, often visiting co-workers' completed job sites. "Talent is a scarce commodity, and you have to create an environment where people want to stay," he says. Allowing employees to show the rest of the team what they've been working on has proven to be a highlight for staff members—one of many moving parts that lead to employee retention. "It's money, but it's also culture, the people you're surrounded by all day, the project you're working on—and how you pull all of those elements together."

POTTERY IS POLITICAL

→ East Fork Pottery stands by its beliefs.

Growth at the Asheville, North Carolina–based ceramics studio East Fork Pottery has been more rapid than co-founder Alex Matisse expected—or planned for. "The early team was just me, my wife [company creative director] Connie, and my business partner, [CFO] John Vigeland, making things," says Matisse. Over the past two and a half years, their staff has swelled to 31 people, including marketing, creative and production teams, plus retail staff for the Asheville storefront as well as the one in Atlanta, which is set to open this fall. As the transition from scrappy startup to mid-sized operation begins in earnest, Matisse knows that he has to set the tone. "The hardest thing for us right now is learning how larger organizations work—making sure our vision is communicated to everyone in a way that gets people excited and inspired."

The nine-year-old company is currently transitioning from two production workshops and an office space to a new 15,000-square-foot studio. At the heart of the new space is a big kitchen with a long communal dining table, which was designed to preserve a company tradition of coming together for lunch and drinking Hu-Kwa, a smoky lapsang souchong tea Matisse grew up with. When the company was small, individuals would take turns preparing a meal for the rest of the staff; today, teams work together to make the daily meal. "The goal is to maintain the things that are important," says Matisse. "It's a way of being in the world that we'd like to model. We make dinnerware that enables what happens around the table. A big part of what we're doing is manufacturing ceramics—it's dirty work—so we think about how to have an ethical place for people to work that's not a dingy grind."

Another defining characteristic of the East Fork ethos that Matisse hopes will continue to withstand the

PHOTOGRAPHY: PAGE 28: URBAN ELECTRIC, COURTESY OF THE URBAN ELECTRIC CO.

PHOTOGRAPHY: KOTCHEN, ARTHUR COHEN; WORKSHOP/APD, COURTESY OF WORKSHOP/APD.

company's expansion is its willingness to take a stand on political issues. For the past three years, it has made special-edition mugs to benefit LGBTQ advocacy groups that consistently sell out in under 15 minutes; when Instagram commenters pushed back at the campaign's beneficiary and suggested that the company shut up and stick to making plates, Connie Matisse manufactured a T-shirt with the slogan "Pottery is political." (Proceeds from each sale benefit Higher Heights, a nonprofit that supports and develops black female leadership, and Everytown for Gun Safety, an organization working to end gun violence in America.)

"We don't want to build this thing for the sake of building some profit machine—we want to be part of a bigger conversation," says Alex Matisse. "We're pretty outspoken politically toward anything that centers around inclusion and equality—that's a big part of East Fork. I've wondered if that changes as we grow; does it need to change? For now, I don't think it does. I think it's pretty important to take a stand and not just sit back and watch these conversations happening."

RUNNING AN ETHICAL BUSINESS

→ Fireclay Tile puts its values to the test.

In Los Angeles, Fireclay Tile has found a road-less-traveled approach to living its values: The eco-friendly handmade tile company has gone through the rigorous application process to become a Certified B Corporation, joining a consortium of more than 2,500 businesses in 150 industries that have been independently evaluated for their focus on both purpose and profit. (Notable B Corps include Ben & Jerry's, Patagonia and Kickstarter; Fireclay is one of the few in the home space.)

When Eric Edelson joined the company in 2009 as a consultant, it was effectively insolvent. Fireclay's founder then hired Edelson as CEO to implement the vision he had outlined. "The company had suffered for years, paycheck to paycheck. So, to be frank, culture wasn't an early focus for me," says Edelson. "It was a good group of people who enjoyed being there, so that was not the most immediate challenge; the focus was keeping people employed." In 2014, he had an epiphany. "I had this Jerry



Alex Matisse

East Fork Pottery
Co-founder and CEO

"We speak out when other companies will not, and I think that attracts talent. I'm always the one that's concerned about alienating someone, but in the end, the things we stand for—like human dignity—are too important."



Eric Edelson

Fireclay Tile
CEO

"We're only successful based on the effort and tenacity our team brings. As owners, we believe that to win without sharing that success doesn't feel right."

Maguire moment one night and started writing a manifesto," he says. Inspired by brands like Flor and The Shade Store, he outlined a new direct-to-consumer business model. "We had done a good job building a website, so people were finding us—but we kept directing them back to a dealer channel that didn't give a shit about us." The brand relaunched that year as a vertically integrated company—"from dust to doorstep," says Edelson—for its residential and commercial clients.

The move ushered in a welcome period of growth, but it was also a disruptive change for much of the Fireclay team, some of whom had been with the company for decades. In response, Edelson finally turned his attention to the company's culture. "We wanted to define what our values are in terms of how we treat people, the planet and the community," he recalls. "You can talk about culture, but it's hard to measure. And we have such a diverse workforce—white-collar and blue-collar. We got passionate about the idea of being a B Corp because it allowed us to measure ourselves in a highly accountable, public way."

Becoming a B Corp is no small undertaking. The independent nonprofit B Lab's guiding mission is to leverage the business community to address societal challenges; as part of the B Corp application process, B Lab conducts an assessment to measure how a company's practices impact its workers, the local community, the environment and customers. No stone is left unturned—everything from a business's supply chain to its charitable giving are factors. B Corps are also legally required to make structural changes to their businesses, rewriting their articles of incorporation to explicitly include the importance of balancing purpose and profit.

Fireclay offers competitive benefits, an employee ownership option (12 percent of the company is owned by employees), and a fair living wage. What does that look like in practice? The company uses a living wage calculator developed by Amy Glasmeier, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, that assesses the cost of living in a community or region to help employers determine a fair wage. "We look at that annually for the community where our factory is located," explains Edelson. This year, the calculated wage jumped from \$11.49 an hour to \$13.29—a 16 percent increase that Fireclay honored for all of its employees. "But if you raise the starting wage, you have to raise everyone else's, so we ended up giving 55 people raises. It's easily \$11,000 more in pay each month just because of this benchmark. You can sit there and talk about parties and fun, but as a basic premise, we are taking care of our people."

BIG BUSINESS

→ Rejuvenation balances corporate goals with local culture.

In the corporate world, culture looks a little different. Ryan Ross, executive vice president of Portland-based design brand and manufacturer Rejuvenation, is tasked with finding the balance between a corporation's goals and the quirky, free-spirited quality that underpins the brand. The company, which celebrated its 40th anniversary last year, began as an architectural salvage shop. While it has since grown into a well-known retailer of lighting, hardware and furniture, and was acquired in 2011 by Williams-Sonoma, Rejuvenation still maintains its local roots and manufactures the majority of its own lighting products in an 87,000-square-foot Portland factory.



Urban Electric's break room includes a full-service coffee bar.

"We were acquired by Williams-Sonoma, but we have maintained a lot of those small company values and an entrepreneurial spirit," explains Ross. "We are a small organization within the overall portfolio, but we're growing quickly. We need to build a culture that allows us to scale the business, while maintaining the closeness of the teams themselves."

Ross has experience with that mandate: He was at Pottery Barn, ultimately as vice president of e-commerce, from 2000 to 2008. At the time, he says, "Pottery Barn was starting to hit its stride in terms of sourcing and proprietary design, determining its point of view, and controlling that experience a lot more within its stores—and that's what we're doing with Rejuvenation today: evolving our business model to be more proprietary and product-led."

Rejuvenation's ability to leverage local craftsmanship is an added bonus—one that wasn't in the mix during Ross's Pottery Barn days. With 250 employees, the company is not exactly small, but they're all based locally, and Ross considers the team "a close community." And although he makes an effort to know everyone's names and what they do, part of his success in preserving the company's ethos is in being hands-off. "You have to, culturally, ride a fine line between myself being in charge of the brand, versus my direct reports cultivating a culture that's right for their teams," he explains. "It's being very clear with the strategy for the brand, where we're headed and what we need to do—but allowing them to identify the nuances of what they need to do with their teams. We all roll up to the original vision, but we embrace the microcultures that exist. The teams need to be able to celebrate their own strengths and uniqueness."

CELEBRATING TALENT

→ The Urban Electric Co. throws itself a party to look back—and ahead.

Back at The Urban Electric Co., the leadership team is preparing for the annual company retreat, coming up in December. Past iterations of the off-site have taken place at a state park, a movie theater, a bowling alley, a restored Navy chapel and a plantation. No matter where it is held, the daylong event is a celebration of Urban Electric's accomplishments that year, as



Ryan Ross

Rejuvenation
Executive Vice President

"When people come in for interviews, they want to work for a brand that means something."



Dave Dawson

The Urban Electric Co.
Founder & CEO

"It's important to celebrate small wins. It may feel kind of corny, to be honest, but public praise and real celebration are meaningful to people. It's simple, straightforward, authentic."

well an opportunity to unveil the Blueprint, a document that outlines goals for the year ahead.

"It's a big pep rally to get everyone fired up," explains CEO Dave Dawson. "It's a relatively simple way for everyone to stay on the same page, especially as we grow. It's helpful for everyone—a member of the senior team, a craftsman, or someone in the shipping department—to know the company's priorities, how we measure success, and how their work impacts that." At the end of each retreat, the whole team signs a giant poster board emblazoned with that year's theme, not unlike signing a yearbook.

Those poster boards hang on the wall at the entrance to the café, one of the spaces that most represents the company's commitment to its employees. It's a bright, open room with whitewashed brick, a stylishly mismatched assortment of antique tables and metal chairs, and a bevy of metal lanterns and fixtures overhead—more indie Brooklyn coffee shop than manufacturing site, with a full-time barista serving free coffee, tea and snacks. "Our business is based on the celebration of craftsmanship," says Dawson. "The break room shouldn't be an afterthought—a sad place to eat a sad lunch, with folding chairs and a microwave. This is a subtle message that what we do here is worthy of cool design and progressive amenities that are standard in other industries these days." The free drinks and snacks are in addition to the company's medical and dental insurance contributions and 401K matching, paid parental leave for mothers and fathers, and a generous PTO policy, rigorous in-house training programs, and help with tuition, books and fees for professional development.

Urban Electric listens to its employees—and takes their recommendations seriously. The manufacturing teams now work four 10-hour days each week, largely at the urging of the employees. It was a move that Dawson opposed early on, he says, but he acquiesced after a trial run proved to be a hit—and increased the team's productivity too.

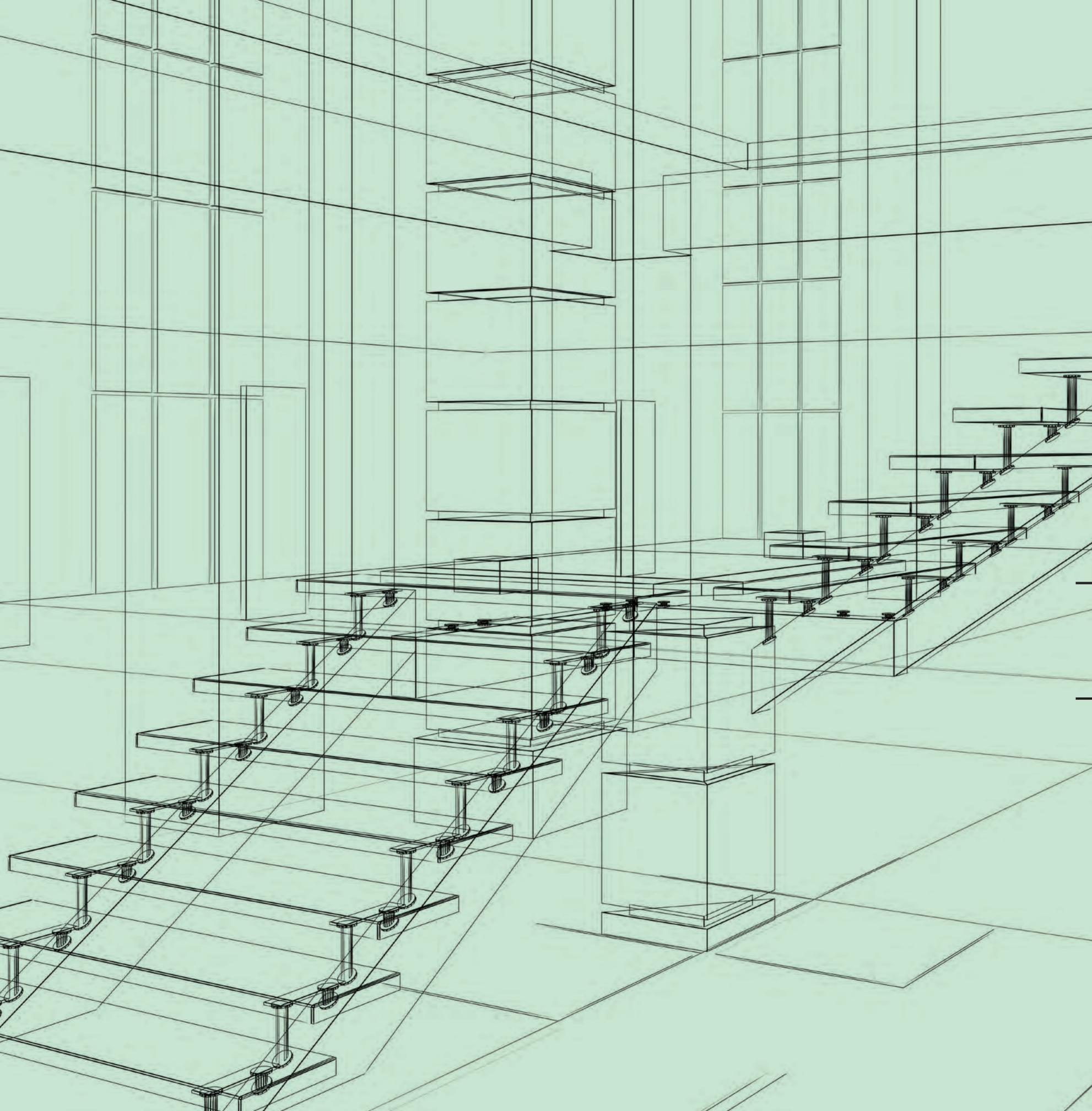
"Culture is a serious fuel for corporate success," says Dawson. "There's that saying: 'Culture eats strategy for breakfast.' I really believe that. It's not to say you don't need strategy, but you can have a great strategy in a white paper, and if the team's not behind it, it won't work. If you've got people who are aligned, working with a sense of purpose and passion—the rest gets figured out." ■



East Fork Pottery co-founder Alex Matisse at the wheel.

PHOTOGRAPHY: MATISSE & EAST FORK, COURTESY OF EAST FORK POTTERY.

PHOTOGRAPHY: URBAN ELECTRIC & DAVE DAWSON, COURTESY OF THE URBAN ELECTRIC CO.; ROSS, COURTESY OF REJUVENATION.



Follow THE Leader

Does nature or nurture determine a designer's success? What kind of mentorship breeds the headline names we know and love? And with more and more young designers eschewing the apprenticeship model altogether, are there still lessons to be learned working in-house for an established firm? *BOH* spotlights top talents and rising stars for insights into their success. **BY KATHRYN O'SHEA-EVANS**

No matter how illustrious their careers or deep their clients' pockets, nearly all top designers began at the same place: the bottom rung. But not all entry-level positions are created equal. Take Brian J. McCarthy, who, after graduating from Pratt, kick-started his career at one of the most storied bastions of design history in America. "When I went to work at Parish-Hadley, I knew I believed in their values and aesthetic—and I knew that if it worked, I wasn't going to want to leave anytime soon," he recalls. It did work—in large part because Albert Hadley was a dream mentor for the young designer, who stayed at the firm for 10 years. "Albert was just amazing," says McCarthy. "I could not imagine my life today had I not been taught by somebody who took the time to mentor. And it was natural—it wasn't like he was making some effort to be professor in the classroom." The learning experience was hands-on, allowing him to work in Hadley's shadow. "The big thing is being included. The only way projects become real is if you're really a part of the process. If you're only brought in for bits and pieces, you're never going to get the whole picture."

Many of the designers *BOH* spoke with agreed that working at a larger firm was a vital experience before they broke out on their own. "You would never become a doctor without going to medical school and doing a residency," says Nashville designer Stephanie Sabbe. The 2016 *House Beautiful* Next Wave honoree had a textbook career path:

first school, then practicing under other designers, before launching her own, now-flourishing firm. "There are very few [careers] where you would just show up in a field and start doing it—yet for some reason, in design, people do."

Seattle designer Andy Beers, founder and principal of OreStudios, worked for Jessica Helgerson after finishing graduate school—and considers his time there one of the foundational linchpins of his career. "Interior design is a trade, and best practices are really only learned on the job," he says. "Working for a talented, established designer

provides younger designers an opportunity to work with vendors they might not otherwise know about, understand detailing in a richer, more specific way, and see first-hand how to run a successful project from intake to final installation. There is such a learning curve in this industry, and working in another office provides a safe place to learn the ins and outs of the business.”

The New York School of Interior Design (NYSID) reports that about 75 percent of its graduates go on to work at established firms, with the remaining quarter launching their own businesses or freelancing. “Although we don’t require internships, all of our students want to do them,” says Ellen Fisher, dean and vice president for academic affairs at NYSID. The school has a longstanding policy of promoting only paid internships to students, based on the philosophy that while students should value the learning experiences they gain, their work should be valued too. And although Fisher encourages students to pursue those opportunities, there are other experiences she values just as highly. “We’re creating fully rounded human beings, especially at the undergraduate level,” she explains. “If our students want to travel, that’s contributing to their growth as a designer. If they have a love of drawing and rendering, that’s a great asset to them in their future. People can’t only think about work-work-work; they have to think about what they love and what’s meaningful to them.”

Though Charleston-based designer J.P. Horton went solo early in his career—two years ago, he launched his own firm at the age of 26—he recommends taking a traditional approach to learning the business. “I’m 100 percent an advocate for interning with an established firm once you graduate, because there’s no way to understand the business without living it,” he says. “You need to be able to read a floor plan, draw, know what types of textiles work in what situation, and understand how wholesale works. It’s definitely business; it’s not easy, and it’s not as glamorous as it appears to be. Yes, the end result is glamorous, but it’s quite a process.”

Horton gained essential insights from working for other firms before founding his own. “The biggest, most important part of the learning experience was that I was working on every project with a senior designer,” he says. “Learning the ins and outs of how to properly talk to a client, how to present or place orders, how to deal with something when it comes in damaged or late, how to set up meetings—that was all a positive learning experience.”

For San Francisco designer Suzanne Tucker, working for an established firm before breaking out on one’s own is absolutely critical, whether that experience comes with or without a degree. “Look back on any of the great designers in interiors, fashion or furniture, and they all had the benefit of tutelage under someone in their early career,” she says. “Getting that hands-on education with a design firm is invaluable.” Tucker herself spent her formative years working for the legendary Michael Taylor, whose breezy California style is still referenced in her work. (See “Leader with a Legacy,” page 37.) “I always say that in hindsight, you should feel like you should have paid your employers for the education you gained under their mentorship.”

Architects also often begin their careers as apprentices, notes Ken Pursley of Charlotte, North Carolina–based Pursley Dixon Architecture. “The firm you work for shapes your worldview and becomes your professional foundation,” he says. For Pursley, that early guidance came from seven years working under the legendary Southern architect

What was the best advice you ever received?



“Know and understand your weaknesses, then surround yourself with the best people possible so you’re able to focus on the things you excel at.”
—Andy Beers



“Always trust your instincts, especially when it comes to business decisions. No one has your best interest at heart more than you do.”
—J.P. Horton



“You cannot let them see you cry. If you need to cry, go to the bathroom.”
—Stephanie Sabbe



“Give them what they never knew they wanted.”
—Brian J. McCarthy



“You don’t need to be perfect to start. Perfect is the enemy of good.”
—Cheryl Luckett

Bobby McAlpine. “His knowledge and insight unveiled a point of view within me that takes the best of our architectural traditions and fuses them with current patterns of living,” says Pursley, who sees himself as part of an ecosystem of architects working throughout the South that are part of the McAlpine family tree. “The root of our design decisions is founded in emotional impact much more than intellectual correctness,” he explains. “We share a common passion of infusing a traditional skin with a modern bone structure. Although our work translates differently, there is a similar visceral viewpoint.”

McCarthy cautions aspiring designers not to launch their own firms right away: “If you have no experience with somebody who can teach you the ropes, you cut yourself off at the knees,” he says. “Developing your references, your best, most creative ideas—that comes with time [on the job]. You’re only as good as the hard work you put in to anything you do, and that includes working for somebody—gaining experience, ways of problem solving, and confidence. And having some consistency.”

A dream career may also germinate from a side hustle. Charlotte-based Cheryl Luckett worked full-time as a registered dietitian at a Fortune 500 firm for 10 years before she transitioned into a human resources role in order to have time to pursue a career as an interior designer. She started from the ground up, taking night classes at the local community college and launching her own blog. “I wanted to do things the right way, so I hired a blog designer, developed a logo and business name, purchased a domain—and before I knew it, I had a business,” she says. “I blogged two to three times per week, and interest grew and my blog quickly brought in clients.” Yet Luckett continued working full-time, juggling design work with her HR position for five years before quitting her day job—time, she says, that wasn’t wasted. “Those years enabled me to establish a brand presence, connect and develop relationships with successful designers, complete design school and finance the investments needed for my business.”

During her second year of blogging, Luckett attended the Design Bloggers Conference, where she connected with the seasoned interior design professionals who would serve as mentors as she established her business. “I’ve consistently invested in education, whether attending conferences and markets or hiring a coach,” she says. Today, as a full-time designer, she has plenty of lessons to share with her design assistant. “There’s no substitute for hands-on training,” says Luckett—including skills gained while working in other industries. “After a 15-year stint in corporate America, there were lots of transferable lessons that I was able to roll over into my business.”

Beginners can garner career takeaways from anywhere, agrees Tucker, who found one of her best mentors while working at a department store shortly after college. “I had landed a coveted manager position at I. Magnin Beverly Hills under the watchful eye of a legendary store manager. She told me how I would conduct myself at the executive level with clients like Nancy Reagan (difficult) and Betsy Bloomingdale (lovely); how I would dress (in designer clothes) and wear my hair (in a chignon at the nape of my neck); and how I would be addressed by my sales staff (Miss Tucker),” recalls the designer. “She was a formidable lady, but a marvelous mentor. At a young age, she taught me the value of superlative service—and that the customer is always right!”

PHOTOGRAPHY: BEERS, COURTESY OF ORESTUDIOS; HORTON, ROBIN VERRIER; SABBE, BRIAN SABBE; MCCARTHY, FRANCESCO LAGNESE; LUCKETT, MONIQUE FLOYD; PAGE 37: TAYLOR VIGNETTE, STEVE HAAG; INTERIOR, JOHN VAUGHAN & ASSOCIATES; TUCKER VIGNETTE & INTERIOR, MATTHEW MILLMAN.

Unfortunately, not every mentor is on par with the likes of Tucker’s, or offers the hands-on training McCarthy experienced under the tutelage of Hadley—but sometimes emerging designers can learn just as much from the bad jobs as from the good ones. As a young graduate, Sabbe worked at two large firms in the South. When she moved to the East Coast in 2009 in the midst of the recession, she found a job at a small firm, working for a designer who was “a total mess,” she says, describing how he built his business around the practice of hiring recent graduates for short-term projects then firing them en masse after the jobs were complete. “He had all these international projects, yet he was still working with the student version of CAD! His business was not at all like the streamlined corporate structure I had come from, but he was still successful, and I felt very motivated by that,” explains Sabbe. “After working for him for several months, I thought, If he can do this, I could try.”

Horton had a similar experience. “Even if you are working as a junior designer for someone and it’s a bad situation, you’re learning what is correct or not correct in the business,” he says. “I wouldn’t have been able to open my own company right after college—a college degree isn’t enough. In a firm, you learn what works and doesn’t work, what not to do, what to do. Obviously, there’s a lot of moving pieces when you’re working on a home, and a lot of things can go wrong.” Beers agrees that all kinds of mentors have value. “I worked for people I admired greatly, like Jessica, and have modeled my own practice on lessons from that office. I have also held jobs where I struggled with the way the business was run, and have used those lessons in what *not* to do in equal measure.”

The most insightful career guru could very well be sitting next to you, in the trenches at work or at a dinner party. “Mentors are the people that are critical and inspirational at the same time, whether or not they’re industry-related,” says designer Richard Mishaan. “My friend Manolo Valdés, an influential painter and sculptor from Spain, came into my offices one day and said, ‘Are you an accountant?’ I said, ‘You know I’m not.’ ‘Well, your office looks like you are. I would never hire you walking in here. You should have a space that, when you walk in, it blows your mind.’ That conversation changed my entire life. Now, the office is the perfect example of the quality craftsmanship we can execute and use in your home.”

Perhaps the most important part of being mentored is passing your hard-won wisdom on to the next generation. “It is interesting to shift from the role of mentee to mentor,” says Pursley. “What I immediately came to appreciate is the amount of patience Bobby had for his younger staff as they grew from interns to architects. Now that I find myself in a leadership role, I try to remember that nurturing perspective and carry it forward. I’m not always successful—but I do try!”

Tucker coaches her junior designers, teaching them not just how to run a business, but also how to think critically about design decisions. “I encourage my team to think outside the box, take initiative, and come up with new ideas,” she says. “Even if they may not be the right ideas, I’ll have them tell me why they think it’s right. That in and of itself helps a young designer start questioning, and ultimately develop a discerning eye. When I’m working on something, be it making edits or shifting something around, and they don’t ask, I always say, ‘Don’t you want to know *why*?’ Ask questions and listen. That’s how you learn.” ■

Leader With a Legacy

Suzanne Tucker spent her early years working for Michael Taylor, the legendary West Coast designer who pioneered the airy, light-filled “California Look” in the 1950s and ’60s. (Diana Vreeland once called him the “James Dean of decorators.”) Tucker explains how her mentor’s oeuvre left an indelible mark on her work.

MICHAEL TAYLOR



THEN

“Michael Taylor had a wonderful way of pairing mirrors and consoles, and I’ve always been inspired by the drama he would create with unique pieces, like this magnificent antique Venetian mirror and 18th-century George II console from Luttrellstown Castle.”

SUZANNE TUCKER



NOW

“Here, I paired a George II giltwood mirror and a spectacular William Kent console from one of his earlier projects with an exquisite pair of Venetian dolphin torchères, lead planters and a watchful 17th-century Buddha to set off a dramatic entry hall.”



THEN

“In the 1980s, Michael Taylor designed this memorable living room for Dodie and John Rosekrans with classic architecture painted off-white and large-scale furniture.”



NOW

“This 2007 showcase living room was directly inspired by that room, and included Dodie’s own antique William Kent armchairs, which she let me borrow.”

THE PATHFINDERS

2018 has been called the Year of the Woman, and the design industry is ripe for its own revolution. Meet our shortlist of the leading female changemakers and boundary breakers as they share their stories.

AS TOLD TO KATY B. OLSON

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MONICA AHANONU

Keia McSwain

Holly Hunt

Wendy Goodman

Deborah Berke

Aneeqa Khan

Susan Lyne

Kelly Wearstler

Clodagh



COMMUNITY BUILDER

Keia McSwain

Interior designer Keia McSwain took over as president of the Black Interior Designers Network (BIDN) and principal of Kimberly + Cameron Interiors when their founder, Kimberly Ward, passed away last year. This summer, she presided over BIDN's seventh-annual conference in Atlanta, a three-day gathering that embodied Ward's mantra, "Let's keep moving forward." Inspired by her forerunner, McSwain is doing her damndest to fill what she calls "super huge shoes" while making a lasting impact that's all her own.

I'd dreamt of seeing other designers that looked like me, and apparently I wasn't the only one—or the first. Before I hit the scene, interior designer Kimberly Ward was always asked, "Where are all of the black designers?" She published the first Top 20 African American Interior Designers list in 2010 with the hope of creating a resource for those seeking to work with or for black interior designers. It soon grew into an entire network for designers of color.

I met Kimberly at an ASID event, where we talked about how many people are working for a paycheck instead of doing exactly what they are meant to do. I was one of those people!

I began writing for Kimberly's online magazine, and at the same time, I pestered her to teach me what I needed to know to be a great designer. I assured her that I was willing to do whatever it took to be great and to serve others. She recognized that I didn't lie about "having an eye," gave me what seems like a million books to read—and it was all uphill from there! Kimberly mentored me for two and a half years. The most important lesson she taught me was that everyone won't always see or accept your vision, but you have to keep going. She said that fear keeps you stuck—both fear of failure and of success. "It's OK to shine, to stand out from the ordinary," she always said.

Our biggest challenge is being underestimated. What's frustrating for me, based on conversations I've had, is the assumption that black designers only do work for athletes, singers or rappers. I've designed so many single-family homes for people who have retired from the military, doctors, lawyers—for people from all aspects of life. But those stereotypes, or going to trade shows and not seeing people who look like us, are also what motivate us. The struggles we deal with every day are what help us grow.

Since I became president of the BIDN last year, we've established strategic partnerships with industry leaders like Design Trade Service, and are working with the High Point Market Authority so that we can put more of a fingerprint—and footprint—on Market. In November, we're setting up a panel at the New York School of Interior Design; a new Top 20 list will be revealed this year; and we're in the process of setting up webinars and CEU courses. We've also launched a new website that will [be a resource for our members and] fuel the network's growth.

One of the best parts about this network is that it's not just for black interior designers. It's a home for us, but that doesn't mean we're not welcoming everyone. We just do what we can to support one another. If another person doesn't support you, that's OK—we support you.

I'm running a boutique design firm. In the past year, I've taken on projects that will be awesome additions to the coffee-table book Kimberly wanted the firm to produce someday. I've shifted the types of projects I take on, [focusing on the ones] that will allow me full creativity.

I pursued a passion—and changed careers to do it. I got a degree in English; when I moved to Atlanta after college, I didn't know what I wanted to do. The right people pushed me and said, "You've got it; what are you gonna do with it?" So I do that for others now. If I can become president of a nonprofit organization and inherit an entire design company at the age of 30, they can do that—and more.



EDITOR

Wendy Goodman

For decades, Wendy Goodman has been a chronicler of good design in the Big Apple. As design editor of New York magazine, she produces its weekly Design Hunting feature and a new video series, Interior Lives; through her reporting, she has uncovered the city's most intoxicating interiors. Her third book (and the first to document her own career) hits shelves in September.

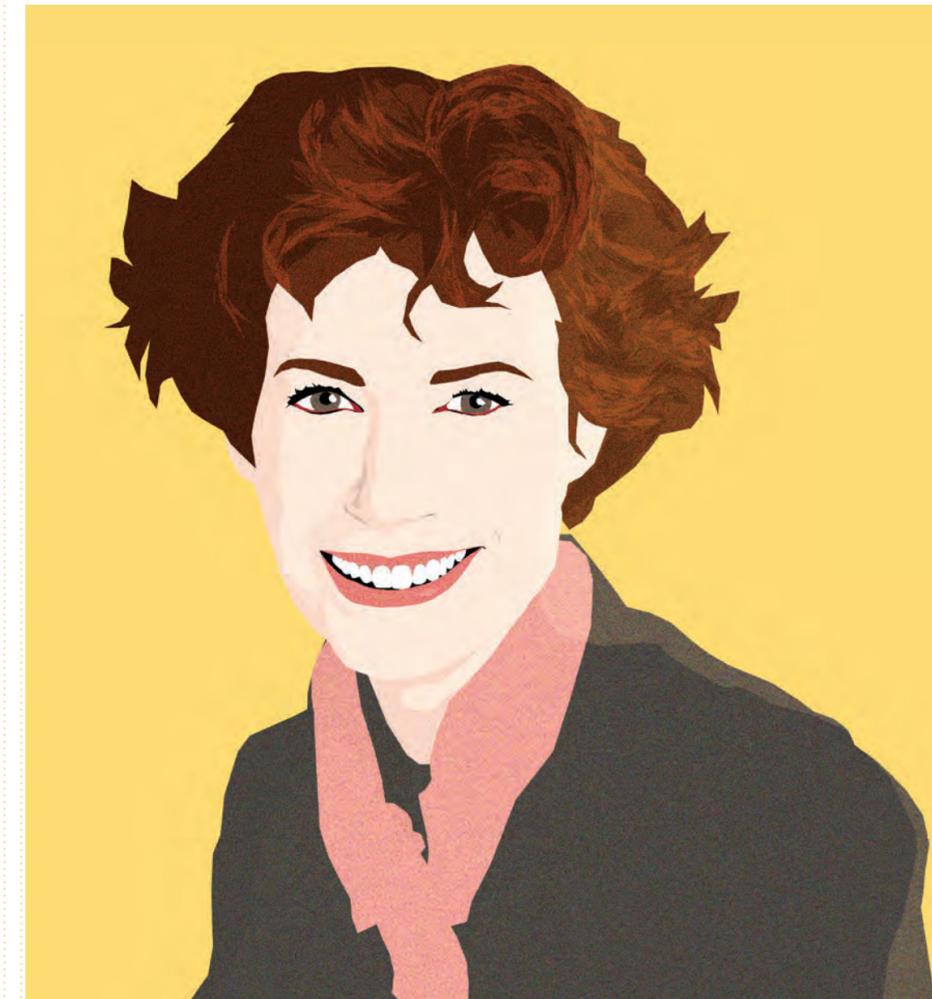
that person's passions, what they collect, books, paintings, objects. Or not! Some people don't like to have anything around. A home is really the inner life of that person. It tells you so much without a word being spoken. You *know* about that person. Editing and writing my latest book, *May I Come In? Discovering the World in Other People's Houses*, was the hardest of the three books I have done, because it's personal—the stories behind the stories I've already told.

Richard Avedon's private space above his studio was the most revealing and astounding home. I knew he was this charismatic and wildly intelligent, wildy curious person, but I always thought that if you're a grownup, you live in a certain way. Then I got to his house, where the walls were bulletin boards and he literally just

pinned things up. I thought, You can do anything you want! It's your space, your rules. I never recovered from that first impression of entering his home.

Instagram is great, and it's awful at the same time, in the sense that it becomes obsessive, getting lost looking at all this stuff. People may think they need not experience things, because they see them on screen. Almost every house I write about, I do visit. You have to know and see and experience these places to know what the story is. Actually experiencing the air, the smells, the temperature, the climate, the personality of that space is really important. We have all these tools, so you think, I know that. I've seen that. You know a part of it but not the whole essence of it.

When liaising with my editors, it's a constant rallying cry for what I think is of the moment to give our readers—which is challenging, because our readers are getting so much information. What can we bring them that they haven't seen? How can I keep raising the bar so people go, "Ooh, that's interesting. I didn't know that!"



BRAND BUILDER

Holly Hunt

Equal parts coach, designer and business-woman, Holly Hunt set out not to take over the interiors landscape but to support her family after a divorce. In the process, she built her own empire—and sold it to Knoll for \$95 million.

My first job after college was in retail, and I learned everything I know about business in those four years at the department store. The rest has come as I've grown and gone through experiences.

I decided to be in the business when I was already *doing* the business. My ex-husband and I had decided to buy a small showroom and grow it. I had been buying from some of these showrooms—I had designed a lot of my own houses and apartments during the years I was married—so I understood a lot of problems with those businesses. They were crowded, seldom had a clear point of view, and it was hard to get good customer service.

And no one wanted to talk about the real price! I went in as a designer, and I said, "This is crazy! You're spending someone else's money and not telling them how much you're spending.

Why wouldn't you want to be transparent? Why wouldn't the client want you to be transparent?"

Necessity is the mother of invention. [My career originally] began as an escape plan. It was 1983, I had to get away from a marriage that wasn't working, I had three young sons, and I needed a job. In the beginning, I was probably just waiting until I found the next tall, dark, handsome guy. Instead, I fell into the business. That year, I bought a small showroom business in the Merchandise Mart in Chicago. The next year, I changed the business name to my own and began representing designer collections—and expanding.

I grew up knowing that whatever I was going to be, I wanted to be the best at it. Not academically, necessarily, but I wanted to be respected by others. I had great parents who said, "You can be successful at whatever you want, as long as you work really hard at it." I think that's true in most cases.

I came to realize that I'd rather make furniture than represent other people's—or, rather, I'd do both. I met Christian Liaigre and

decided he was a better designer than I was, which worked really well. Then, once we had a furniture line together, I needed a fabric line. I was naming the linens one day—I'd call [one of the products] Great Plains. It evolved into the name of our own textile line. At exactly the same time, [my ex] decided he wouldn't be paying any more support. I had to borrow money for the first time in my life. I paid it back within the year and never borrowed money again. That was a big inflection point.

What makes the biggest difference is how a person handles the tough times. That's where you learn—about yourself and about your team.

When you're building a business, you need to hire the best people you can. It is not unlike building a baseball or basketball team. Michael Jordan couldn't have ever won without his team; Phil Jackson held him together. I wouldn't be where I am without the people I have been able to bring on my team. It's teamwork—the *team* is what makes it work, it can't just be you. Sometimes you hire and the business outgrows the people, and so you move on, but the fun part is growing a business with other people.

The biggest challenge came in 2008, when I had to make a new collection very fast. Financially, the world was falling apart, and Christian told me he was going to sell the company to a private equity [firm]. I opened a prototype shop with people who had worked for production companies, and who at the time didn't have a job, so that we could make prototypes fast and rough. When you make furniture, [the result] doesn't come from drawing, it comes from sculpting. You have to see it and sit in it. We did a lot of that, fast, with a whole team working night and day. We made 60 to 80 prototypes, of which 50 pieces wound up on showroom floors. And they sold.

The new line worked out really well—so well that, in 2014, I sold the company to Knoll.

My biggest challenge today is taking my entrepreneurial spirit and adapting it to a public company that looks at quarterly earnings. In general, it's very hard to go from an entrepreneurial company to a more bureaucratic company—and one where you have a lot of bosses.

As the founder, I get to be the boss—it's my company! I'm also the coach. I'm the director. I'm the leader.

A leader's job is to get the people who are following them to be the best they can be and to help employees grow; a manager's job is to control the details. Some people have the DNA for leadership, others for management. Everyone has a different job, but they're all equal.



EDUCATOR

Deborah Berke

Deborah Berke decided at an early age that she was going to become an architect. When she founded her own firm, Deborah Berke Partners, in 1982, she couldn't have predicted the trailblazing success that followed—or the path toward teaching. But as the dean of the Yale School of Architecture reflects on it now, it all makes sense.

I have had my own business—now with partners, of course—for a long time. So I learned, not so much from summer jobs as a kid, but when I opened my own business. I started off on my

own, and then employed a couple of other people. That grew into a substantial architecture and design business over time. Architecture is a group effort; what I have learned over the years is to be supportive and respectful of everybody in our firm.

I decided I was going to be an architect when I was 14 and focused on that as a plan for life. My role as an educator came a little later; it had a lot to do with opening my own business with both very little experience and no money. I started teaching because I loved it, and also

because it provided a steady albeit small paycheck. My mom had been a professor at the Fashion Institute of Technology, so the environment of teaching in the design world was something that I'd grown up with. Becoming an architect was an absolute decision, but education came as a series of decisions, each one revealing that teaching was really satisfying and fulfilling.

In the firm, I set the aesthetic direction for the office. But at Yale, I don't expect my faculty to

agree philosophically on architecture. I'm encouraging a diversity of voices, all of the best possible quality, as opposed to a focused set of voices.

When assembling a team, I look for respect, honesty, talent, intelligence, grace and generosity. How do we [suss out] those traits? Not always successfully. It's through talking, looking, listening. Employers often ask job candidates, "What's the most difficult situation you faced and how did you handle it?" I don't like that question. The question I prefer is, "What do you personally find most fulfilling in your work?" Talent you see in a portfolio, but grace and respect you pick up in a conversation.

Ten years ago, I would have said that the ideal employee should be fully adept with all relevant software. But now the skill everybody needs to have in this office is to be able to take a step back from software and see what they're creating as three-dimensional space, and as objects that people will experience.

I admire people who stretch the definition of what they do, rather than accepting the definition. A student of mine recently died, unfortunately. Her name was Constance Adams; she designed space stations, and she was extraordinary. What I admired about Constance, and what I look for [in employees], is taking what you've studied or been trained to do and then pushing it further.

My current and longtime challenge is that there aren't enough hours in the day. I don't mean that in a self-aggrandizing way; I have my role as an educator, dean and leader in an academic environment, and then I have an extended family I love, a happy marriage, a beautiful child, two big dogs, a 96-year-old mother, a love of travel. How does one live the kind of full, rich life that makes life worthwhile? My husband uses this expression in response to the question, "How are you?": "Love, work, play—all good." Maybe the challenge is to have love-work-play always be good.

If I could pick up new skills in an instant, they would be playing the piano and speaking perfect French. The skills I'd love to learn aren't related to architecture—I want skills that further enrich the rest of my life.

My defining trait? I hope it's empathy. It's always been important, but perhaps now more than ever. The world's a pretty ugly place right now.



RISING STAR

Aneeqa Khan

Entrepreneurship was inevitable for Aneeqa Khan, whose B2B brainchild has been dubbed "the Airbnb of interior design." An e-commerce platform launched in 2015, the London-based Eporta links designers and makers with trade buyers around the globe. Khan, who gained early experience as head of strategy for the U.K.'s top property search website, has big plans for the brand—including expansion into the U.S. market.

I've grown up with a family that runs small businesses. Becoming an entrepreneur myself was always going to happen. I love design and am a big believer that well-designed spaces make people happy in the day-to-day. I also love anything that makes life more efficient. Building a business which powers great design around the world by making the process easier for people was the perfect fit.

Our online platform connects trade buyers directly with what is now the largest pool of suppliers globally, and helping them purchase items at the best rate possible. We make sure the product arrives on time, and help with project management and administrative work.

Being yourself is a big culture point for us at Eporta. People do best when they're being the weirdest, most wonderful form of themselves

and are very authentic with who they are. A lot of leaders I've seen in the past try to emulate what's considered a characteristic leader, or a leader they've worked with before. But if you're good at what you do, it shines through, and it's pretty damn obvious.

The best boss I ever had was the founder of Zoopla, the leading property search site in the U.K. He let me do my thing, but with his support. He let me run because he knew I was capable of it. The best advice I've ever been given is follow your instincts; they tend to know what the right thing to do is.

I was told I am a "maximizer" at a workshop I attended recently, which is someone who never settles for something being just okay. It has to be *amazing*. So if you're a friend writing a script, I want it to win an Oscar. If someone on our team is doing a great job at photography, I want them to create the best photo we've ever seen. That's something that's part and parcel of who I am. I'm quite competitive.

I have no idea how to define success. I'm still trying to figure that out! There are lots of small challenges daily, medium-sized ones monthly, and bigger ones yearly. One of my greatest achievements is creating an environment at work where people are happy to come in every day.

VENTURE CAPITALIST

Susan Lyne

A lifelong leader, Susan Lyne has held major roles at Gilt Groupe, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, AOL's Brand Group and ABC Entertainment. Her most recent endeavor is BBG (Built by Girls) Ventures, a VC firm funding the likes of design platform Modsy, wedding-registry upstart Zola, and women-only workspace The Wing. Today, Lyne focuses her attention—and her magic touch—on finding and funding female-run businesses.

I dropped out of college to take a job as the assistant to the editor in chief of a magazine in San Francisco. This was in the mid-1970s. With no internet and no smartphones, if you wanted to work someplace where you could have an impact on the way people thought, magazines were it. I later launched my own

magazine, *Premiere*, which led to the second phase of my career, in television. I spent almost a decade at Disney/ABC Entertainment, where I ultimately ran primetime.

I got replaced weeks before the annual upfronts, during which ABC announced a schedule that included [soon-to-be hits] *Grey's Anatomy* and *Desperate Housewives*, which I had developed. I learned a lot during that development season. The accepted wisdom was that men would not watch programming created for women, but women would watch a show that was built for guys. I had spent my first two development seasons trying to do what everyone else was doing; it was only in that last season that I realized we needed to go in a different direction.

"All my shows are gone," said one of my development executives, bemoaning the fact that *Sex and the City* was going off the air. That phrase, "all my shows," really triggered something for me. Out of that [conversation] came *Desperate Housewives* and *Grey's Anatomy*, two shows that proved that men would watch programming for women—and, even if they didn't, there were enough women to make a show hugely successful. That's been a great lesson for me: Women are the dominant consumer. We always have been, and I think we always will be.

You see it across every sector of the economy. It's not just that we buy more clothes and beauty products, it's that we buy more insurance. We make decisions about what house you're going to live in and what doctors you go to. We make the consumer economy move, and so focusing on that female customer is never a bad idea. This was the premise we started BBG Ventures on: If women are the dominant consumer, then identifying the best founders who understand that consumer intuitively is a great bet. And so every company we invest in has to have at least one female founder.

Ultimately, you're investing in a person. Over 4,000 companies have reached out to us or been introduced to us since we launched, and we've probably met with 1,500. You have to believe that this founder is going to obsess over getting it right and that they have the courage to keep going. There is not a single startup that does not go through very bumpy days—even the ones that look like they were clear sailing from the start—and a lot of people aren't built for that. You look for someone who believes she was put on this earth to do this and is a happy warrior. I believe that about myself too. Optimism is a gift. It can't be blind, but if you wake up in the morning believing that the day is full of possibilities and that there's a solution to every problem, then you have a better chance at success.

I love Modsy. Founder Shanna Tellerman had a vision: She believed that it should be possible to see how home furnishings are going to look in your home space. It's a huge ticket item, and not everyone can afford to have a great decorator figure out which pieces are going to work; [Modsy is] giving people the ability to shop with confidence.

I'm a serial home renovator. Most people hate living with construction, but I love it. When I'm not reimagining my own space, I'm helping friends with theirs.

I'm a very good listener, and I'm interested in hearing other people's stories. I'm also a good judge of talent—being able to identify talent, and recruit and then nurture talent, is key to succeeding in this world.



ENTREPRENEUR

Kelly Wearstler

Designer-to-the-stars Kelly Wearstler has parlayed her glamorous portfolio of critically acclaimed, A-list-approved interiors into a well-oiled business that creates highly regarded furniture, lighting, rugs, home decor—and, yes, the residential and hotel design that originally made her famous.

After college, I wanted to start my own interior design business. I was introduced through a friend to a Hollywood producer and his wife to redesign their dining room. They loved it, and I ended up designing the entire home. I did not follow the trends of that time period, and it paid off. The project got published and I started Kelly Wearstler Interior Design. I remain true to my voice, true to my vision, and do not allow what others are doing to dictate my creative process.

My first restaurant was BG at Bergdorf Goodman. It was an incredible honor to work with such an iconic retailer, and it gave me a real sense of accomplishment. I have been fortunate to work with incredible clients throughout my career and consider them

to be my greatest muses. I feel so privileged and excited to do what I love every day.

There are very strong, independent women in my family who have been an incredible inspiration to me. Both of my grandmothers had careers for more than 50 years. My mother always worked and managed being an amazing mother; she set me up with a bank account and checkbook when I got my first job as a teen-ager. Having strong female role models with a great work ethic helps to bolster your own independence and confidence in yourself. They taught me that there is no one who will take care of you better than yourself.

I admire Iris Apfel, who at 97 is a successful businesswoman, model, fashionista and a constant inspiration for how she embraces life. She is a true trailblazer who lives fearlessly.

To be an entrepreneur, you have to have a bold mindset. You can't let fear stop you from creating the life and business that you want. I had to create my own path, break rules, and not be restricted by boundaries in order to

evolve my interior design and architecture studio into a multifaceted business with numerous licensing deals, collaborations, a flagship gallery, and a robust e-commerce site. You need to be deft at wearing many hats.

I look for people who are creative, passionate and have a strong work ethic. Surrounding myself with people that have these attributes is the only way to successfully navigate and evolve my expanding businesses. I most value passion in my working relationships. I am so passionate about what I do, and working with passionate people seems to always lead to a great project or product.

My most significant challenge is learning to say no. The beauty of my work is I get to touch so many mediums and it keeps me on my toes. I have always been a great multitasker. There are so many interesting opportunities that excite me that it is sometimes a challenge to say no. It takes a village, though, and it is so important to have the support of a talented team, and to foster a culture of ownership.





GURU

Clodagh

Irish-born fashion designer-turned-interior designer Clodagh is a minimalist master of the principles of feng shui, chromatherapy, biophilia and biogeometry. Yet, for the mononymous designer, the tenets that ground her work boil down to two essential elements: simplicity and kindness.

I was born in Oscar Wilde's country home. We moved five times before I was 16. I was packed off to boarding school for four years of it.

I've always been a minimalist. My house as a child was stuffed with antiques, which kept

getting sold. We were downwardly mobile. One entire huge sideboard of silver went out one time, and that was a blessing, because we children had to polish it. What has made my work so simple and, in a sense, muscular, is that in my family you had to take care of the furniture. I think the furniture should take care of us.

I started my own fashion company in Dublin when I was 17. I had fallen off a horse and broken my back, so I was on my back for a long time. While recovering, I opened *The Irish Times* and saw a little ad for the Academy of Dress Design. "Why not be a fashion designer?" it

read. I decided there and then. My father wanted me to do classics and mathematics and become a professor, but I went against him. My mother gave me 400 pounds—and my father locked me out of the house. He [only] welcomed me back about 10 months later, after the Irish Cancer Society gave me a fundraising fashion show at this smart hotel and it got written up in the *Times*. It got lots of photographs.

I never had a game plan. I just wanted to be the best that I could be in whatever I did—ever. So I tried to be the best in fashion. When I left fashion, left Ireland, and changed husbands, I tried to start what I'm doing now—and again, I just wanted to be the best at it. Not the best in terms of fame and fortune, but in having people be really happy in the buildings and gardens I design.

They say that a rolling stone gathers no moss, but I've gathered lots of wisdom over my many, many trips to over 100 countries in the world. I'm always looking and testing what makes people happy, how people behave and what the cadence of their voice is to see what I can bring back, and to enrich what I'm doing. The lovely thing about being a designer—whether it's for one man in an apartment or a 400-room hotel—is that you actually affect an awful lot of people. If you affect them in a beneficial way, you're doing your job.

Leadership is doing what you think is right, quietly, not going on about it. It's being an example that people can follow. I want people who work with me to say, "I feel safe with you. I can come in and talk to you about anything." I think that's leadership—that people feel safe with you. Showing up is also important in leadership. Being aware of the faces of people who are working with you, and if you see the shadows there, trying to find what you can do to help. I don't feel like a den mother, but I do feel we're a team, and each part of the team is very precious to me—whether it's the newest intern or the highest architect, it doesn't matter.

There's a certain element of tough love too. I challenge my team: "Have you walked through this place? Where are you going to sit? Are you sure?" I'm challenging myself at the same time. When our project director is doing presentations, I'll treat myself like the client and poke holes in the presentation. So I'm not coming at it from a design point of view but from a hotel guest's point of view, or from the budget point of view. I've always felt you have to hire people that are better than yourself.

I try to follow Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh's teachings and make everything I do bring myself back into mindfulness. I follow Buddhism because it's about kindness, compassion and mindfulness. Those three things encapsulate the kind of person I want to be. ■



PDF SYSTEMS, INC.

JOBBERS · CONVERTERS · WHOLESALERS

Is your operations software efficient and cost effective?
Are in-house servers and support costing more every year?
Can you connect to your data from anywhere in the world?

PDF Systems has industry-specific, easy-to-use cloud software that will reduce your IT costs and improve efficiency.

Learn more about our software, and which of your competitors use it:
www.pdfsystems.com

Fabric: Donghia Showroom
Photography: Hilary Bovay

People and Parties

Our favorite shelter mags descended on Long Island's South Fork this summer for shopping, showhouses and soirées.

Elle Decor Hosts Hamptons Home Tour

Designers Kelly Behun, Rita Schragar and Alex Papachristidis opened the doors to their own summer homes for *Elle Decor's* first-ever Hamptons Home Tour.



Luxe's Hamptons 50

Luxe Interiors + Design celebrated its annual Hamptons 50 summer edition with a cocktail party at the Farrell Show Home in Water Mill.



Traditional Home's Hampton Designer Showhouse

Traditional Home kicked off the 2018 Hampton Designer Showhouse at the Jackson Pollock house and studio in Bridgehampton.



Events

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- September 15-23**
London Design Festival
London, England
- September 20-23**
Interior Design Show Vancouver
Vancouver, Canada
- September 20-25**
Design China Beijing
Beijing, China
- September 25-28**
Casual Market Chicago
Chicago, IL
- September 27**
Pacific Design Center Fall Market
West Hollywood, CA
- September 29**
Michigan Design Center Home Tour
Troy, MI
- October 2-4**
Boston Design Market
Boston, MA
- October 3-4**
Design Chicago
Chicago, IL
- October 3-5**
Design Leadership Summit
Washington, DC
- October 5-7**
Field + Supply
Kingston, NY
- October 9-12**
The New York Tabletop Show
New York, NY
- October 10-11**
D&D Building Fall Market
New York, NY
- October 10-14**
Design Week Mexico
Mexico City, Mexico
- October 10-14**
San Francisco Fall Art & Antiques Show
San Francisco, CA
- October 13-17**
High Point Fall Market
High Point, NC
- October 24**
Decorative Center Houston Fall Market
Houston, TX
- October 27-31**
TEFAF New York
New York, NY
- November 6**
Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) Ball
New York, NY
- December 4-6**
ICFF South Florida
Ft. Lauderdale, FL
- December 5-9**
DesignMiami
Miami, FL

For more design events near you, visit businessofhome.com/events

PHOTOGRAPHY: ELLE DECOR; KEVIN LAU; LUXE & TRADITIONAL HOME; DANIEL GONZALEZ.



The Virginian Hotel

Lynchburg, Virginia | Circa 1913

Located in our historic downtown, The Virginian Hotel has been thoughtfully restored to its original grandeur and refreshed with modern amenities.

LEATHER SINCE 1933



MOOREANDGILES.COM

Mont Blanc
Rainforest

THANK YOU FOR
30
THIRTY YEARS



NEW! Jules Table Lamp

CURREY
& COMPANY

Explore our new Fall collection at
curreyandcompany.com

Atlanta | Dallas | High Point | Las Vegas | New York