

May/June 2019

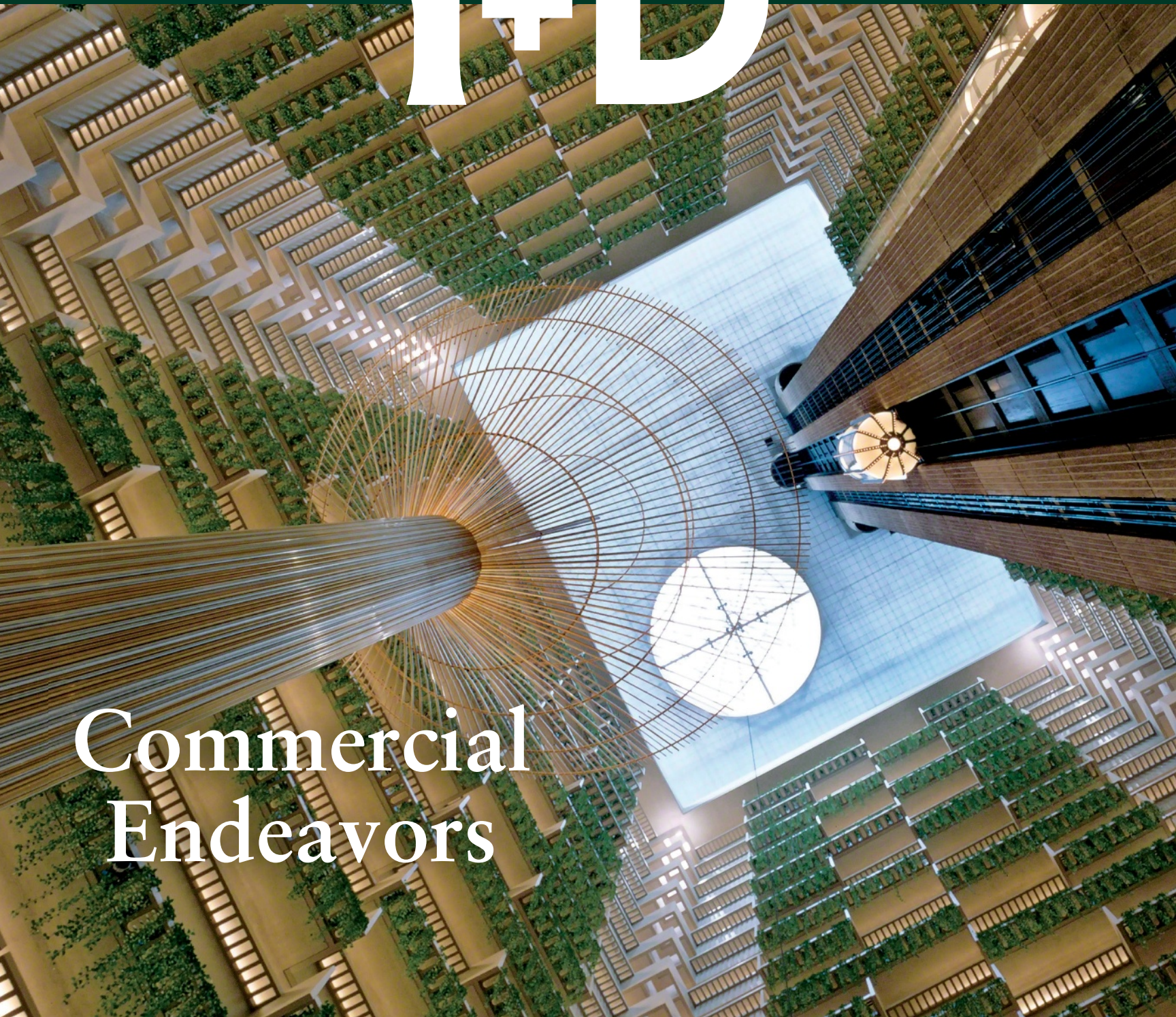
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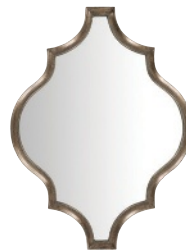
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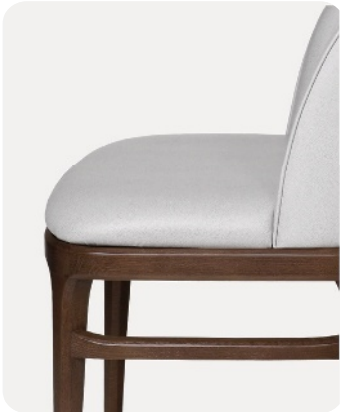
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CUSTOM CLOSETS

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VOLUME 3/NUMBER 3

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SUCCESS BY DESIGN

The best way to ensure a creative business succeeds is to build it on a practical foundation: analyzing profitability, communicating value, and mitigating risks through the all-important contracting process.

BY ROBERT NIEMINEN



Image: Garrett Rowland

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BUILT WITH SOUL

Uniqueness and authenticity are at the heart of any community, but a true sense of place means embracing the input of those using that space, then integrating those ideas into design and development.

BY BRIAN J. BARTH



Image: Green Chameleon/Unsplash

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FLEXIBLE, FUNCTIONAL WORKPLACES

Flexibility, sustainability, and wellness remain at the core of a well-designed office, and are continually refined to maximize occupants' experience and productivity.

BY SHEILA KIM



Image: The Portman Archives, LLC, photo by David Naughton

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The future-forward partners at Felderman Keatinge & Associates constantly search for fresh perspectives and new frontiers, underscoring their commitment to one-of-a-kind solutions tailored to each and every client.

BY AMBROSE CLANCY



Image: Deilos



Image: Danilo Agutoli

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A COHESIVE STATEMENT

Today's discerning apartment and condo dwellers are looking for a skillfully planned address that instills brand identity and character and appeals to a multigenerational marketplace.

BY DIANA MOSHER

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ON THE COVER

Designed by John Portman & Associates, the Hyatt Regency in Atlanta is a towering example of a carefully and creatively developed property.



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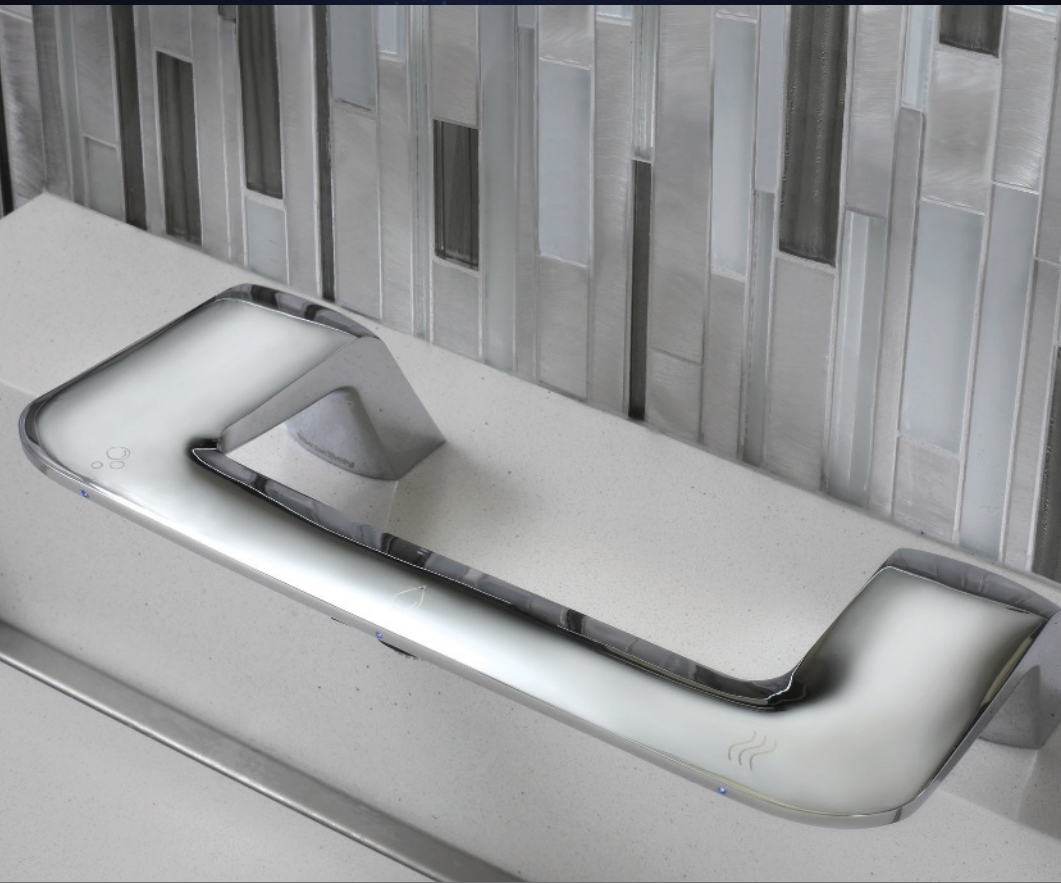
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RAISING THE BAR

Randy Fiser, CEO, ASID, and Tony Brenders, CEO, IDC. (Image: Lindsay Cephas)



The commercial design environment offers up a world of opportunities and challenges for design professionals of every ilk. The chance to create a setting on a larger scale, one that has the potential to influence the identity and pulse of a neighborhood, as well as the health and happiness of those who experience it, allows for a design statement of grand volume, importance, and outcome.

In this issue of *i+D*, we delve into a variety of commercial endeavors, where the right design can make or break a project and fuel passion within communities of all kinds. We examine the current state of office design, and gaze into the future of the sector as well (“Flexible, Functional Workplaces,” p. 34); and we speak with real estate developers who have a reputation for bettering the community experience through the properties and neighborhoods they create (“Built with Soul,” p. 42). We further investigate the many layered

complexities designers face when embarking on a multiunit residential project (“A Cohesive Statement,” p. 52) and uncover the contractual and organizational plans necessary to run a successful design practice (“Success by Design,” p. 24).

Regardless of location and project scope, design professionals are rising to the commercial challenge, proving time and again the transformational power design can have on an individual, a household, a workplace, or an entire neighborhood. A common thread runs through such settings, where design gives back on multiple levels through the creation of spaces and environments that support a positive human experience and set the bar higher for projects still to come. ●

Randy W. Fiser
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ENLIGHTENED DESIGN



A 360-degree film by Arup immerses visitors in the full materials life-cycle story. (Image: Matteo Imbriani)

RECKONSTRUCT, AN EXHIBIT DEMONSTRATING HOW SUSTAINABLE DESIGN CAN RESPOND TO THE CURRENT GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS, OPENED IN MARCH AT THE XXII INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF LA TRIENNALE DI MILANO. THE AMERICAN PAVILION FOCUSES ON THE TRIENNALE'S THEME, "BROKEN NATURE: DESIGN TAKES ON HUMAN SURVIVAL," BY EXPLORING THE EMERGING MATERIALS REVOLUTION IN THE UNITED STATES.

RECKONstruct was developed and designed by a devoted group of environmental advocates, including Humanscale, Arup, MIT's SHINE Program, Novità Communications, and NextWave Plastics. Highlighting three innovative concepts conceived by Humanscale's design studio, a simple stool was reimagined through three different approaches to sustainability: one entirely made of waste (circular economy); one using naturally grown materials (bio-fabrication); and one that mimics nature's own engineering solutions (biomimicry).

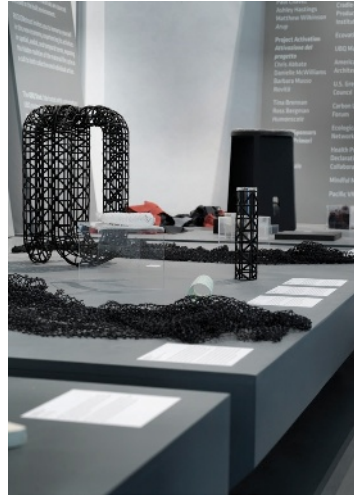
Humanscale then partnered with the Sustainability and Health Initiative for NetPositive Enterprise (SHINE), a joint undertaking of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, to determine the sustainability of each of the three stools. The comprehensive life-cycle assessment (LCA) measured each design's environmental "footprint," or impact, and its "handprint," or how a design can help mend the splintered nature surrounding us. From manufacturing to materials sourcing to transportation to actual use, the LCA confirmed and quantified land, climate, water, and energy impacts, among others.



Made from non-recyclable municipal waste, the compression-molded material called UBQ transformed landfill material into a high-quality, functional stool. (Image: Humanscale)



Pictured is a rendering of the bio-fabricated stool made using mycelium mushroom and agricultural waste. (Image: Humanscale)



Venus Stool Concept utilizes fishing nets removed from the ocean by Bureo. (Image: Matteo Imbriani)

“Most ‘sustainable’ products are a little bit better than the status quo, but still can have negative environmental impacts,” says Jane Abernethy, Humanscale’s chief sustainability officer and RECKONstruct curator. “Usually, this is because sustainability is considered later in the product development process, when many of the decisions about materials [and the] manufacturing process have already been made. From the beginning of this project, sustainability was the starting point, before any other decision, to really push the limits of sustainable design.”

Using bio-fabricated mycelium from Evocative Design, plastic from fishing nets removed from the ocean by Bureo (a member of NextWave Plastics’ collective of materials suppliers committed to reducing environmental contamination and non-recyclable municipal waste), the stools are able to absorb carbon dioxide, reduce ocean plastic waste, and circumvent landfill methane emissions. New York-based lighting manufacturer Stickbulb designed the pavilion’s lighting installations, which make use of 300-plus-year-old redwood recovered from a dismantled Brooklyn water tower.

The exhibit also displays an immersive film, produced by a Los Angeles-based group of engineers and designers from the global engineering firm Arup. Using innovative 360-degree filming and audio recording technology, the film tells the full materials life-cycle story. Viewers experience the reality of supply chains and materials sources that make possible the design of the stools on display.

“The central challenge at this moment in nature’s history on Earth is for one of its creations—humanity—to consciously adopt one of its core creative principles: reciprocity, taking but also giving back,” says Gregory Norris, director of SHINE@MIT. “Our footprints are the taking that we seek to minimize through efficient design. Our handprints are the giving back that we seek to maximize through enlightened design.”

RECKONstruct runs through September 1, 2019, in Milan. ●

—Cara Mitchell



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SAFE, STYLE-FORWARD CERAMICS

CERAMIC TILE IS BY NO MEANS A NEW PRODUCT IN THE DESIGN WORLD, BUT THE ADVANCES BEING MADE WITHIN THE CATEGORY, COUPLED WITH THE PRODUCT'S INNATELY SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE MAKEUP, HAVE BROUGHT THE MATERIAL TO NEW HEIGHTS AND OPENED THE DOORS FOR DESIGN PROFESSIONALS TO TURN TO TILE FOR INCREASINGLY VARIED APPLICATIONS. Proving the leaps being made by the category in both creativity and production capabilities, the recent Coverings trade show offered a visual and technological immersion into a product grouping that increasingly knows no bounds.

Advances in digital imaging clarity have allowed for re-creations of everything, from elements of nature to cityscapes, artwork, and more, while advances in textural techniques have brought iconic design elements, like tin ceilings, patinaed metals, and even cross-stitching to life. Also making an impact are massive slabs that mirror natural marble and other stones and gemstones that allow for bookmatching, as well as re-creations of myriad species of wood that have moved beyond the simple plank into parquet and inlaid pattern options that fool the eye even when up close.

In addition to new product and technological advances, a new video campaign has launched to promote the benefits of ceramic tile. Produced by Ceramics of Italy, "Ceramic. A safe choice." details the sustainable, environmentally friendly nature of ceramic tile and dives into additional benefits many may not realize, like the fact that ceramic tile will not burn, doesn't release harmful chemicals, and is hypoallergenic and fully recyclable. The informative video can be viewed on the Ceramics of Italy website and will be promoted by additional industry partners as well. ●

—Jennifer Quail



1.



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3.



4.

1. REALONDA CERAMICA. Textural designs have reached new depths, re-creating everything from time-honored tin ceilings to dramatically sculptural relief looks, as shown here in the Ivy Mist line from Realonda.

2. CERAMICA SANT'AGOSTINO. Wood looks have moved beyond the basic plank to include parquet-like patterning, as well as more detailed wood inlay designs. Primewood from Sant'Agostino, shown here in Mix, calls on Nordic and Danish design influences for a lighter wood look with softened veining and lightened knots.

3. COTTO D'ESTE. Advances in digital clarity and scope have allowed for the creation of dramatic, multi-panel re-creations of singular scenes from the natural world, from varied cities and their skylines, and more. Shown here is Dream from the Wonderwall collection at Cotto d'Este.

4. FLORIM. Re-creations of natural stones like marble are proving a driving force for the ceramic category, while an increasing number of dramatic gemstone options, like the very believable Etoile Illusion from Florim, are gaining traction.



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SUCCESS BY DESIGN

BY ROBERT NIEMINEN

LuAnn Nigara,
Window Works



Thriving in interior design requires more than talent; it demands business acumen

THERE'S A REALITY INTERIOR DESIGNERS NEED TO FACE IF THEY WANT TO OPERATE A PROFITABLE BUSINESS: CREATIVE TALENT SIMPLY ISN'T ENOUGH TO SUCCEED IN THIS INDUSTRY. CREATIVITY MUST BE COUPLED WITH A SOLID BUSINESS PLAN AND A STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO STICK TO THAT PLAN AT EVERY TURN AND WITH EVERY NEW CLIENT. THE CULMINATION OF SUCH AN APPROACH CAN LEAD DESIGN PROFESSIONALS DOWN A PATH THAT IS BOTH CREATIVELY SATISFYING AND FINANCIALLY REWARDING AS WELL.

While 80 percent of small businesses will survive the first year, the number drops to nearly 50 percent by the five-year mark, and down to merely one in three in just 10 years, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. The reasons creative firms fail are many, but perhaps the most obvious is the fact that they were never designed to succeed in the first place. No one understands this better than LuAnn Nigara, co-owner of Window Works, author, and host of the top-rated interior design podcast, *A Well-Designed Business*. Having successfully managed her window treatment and awning retail business with her husband and their cousin, Nigara decided several years ago to launch a podcast to help design professionals operate profitable and productive businesses.

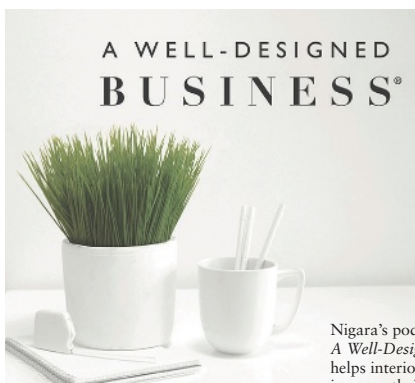
Over the course of more than 30 years, she has seen firsthand how many highly talented designers have failed to turn a profit while others who enjoy decorating as a hobby have flourished in business, often turning six-figure salaries. “Sadly, it was often clear that the ones who were successful had less to do with their talent as an interior designer and more to do with their expertise as business owners,” she observes. The reason so many design practices struggle is “because they’re not well designed—and this harsh truth drives my passion to help them be better business owners,” she says.

Running a Profitable Business

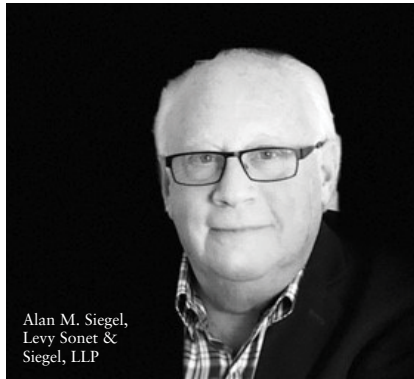
Among the first and costliest mistakes many designers make when starting a new venture is not recognizing there is a business that needs to be run first and foremost and “being an amazing designer is secondary,” according to Nigara.

Nigara notes that practitioners must take the next step and pair their creative talent with running a smart business. The logic isn’t hard to follow: “If you cannot complete a project on time, on budget, if you cannot communicate your value to your client, if you cannot earn referral business, none of us get to know and appreciate the amazing talents you have as a designer, and that’s the saddest part of all of this.”

Because at the end of the day, it’s what you take home that matters, according to Alan M. Siegel, a partner at Levy Sonet & Siegel, LLP, and an author as well. With 40-plus years of legal experience representing the interests of interior designers, architects, product designers, and resources within the design industry, Siegel says he often hears from designers who disclose that their take home salaries were not reflective of their high gross revenues and wonder why. “Well, it’s for a number of reasons, but in order to determine the answer to that, you need to have a full appreciation of whether the fee that you’re charging is adequately compensating your firm and is adequate such that you walk away with some money at the end of the project, rather than saying at the end of the job, ‘I spent too much time on the project, my staff time was extraordinary, and my overhead was extraordinary,’” he explains.



Nigara’s podcast, *A Well-Designed Business*, helps interior designers improve their businesses with real, quantifiable results—thanks to useful topics and practical insight.



Alan M. Siegel,
Levy Sonnet &
Siegel, LLP



Denise Robertson,
Mills & Mills LLP
(Image: Irina Photography)

It's not necessarily the size of the project that matters either. Siegel notes that big projects aren't always as profitable as smaller ones. The difference is carefully analyzing profitability at the close of each project and making the necessary adjustments. Because—again—it's not merely a question of talent, but of understanding the numbers. "You can be the greatest designer in the world, you can have a great portfolio of clients, but the only way you'll know how to improve upon your profitability is to actually analyze every project to see, 'Well, what did I really earn on this project?'" he says.

Likewise, Nigara emphasizes the need for designers to create a system that can be repeatable by anyone in the firm. Otherwise, it's technically not a business. "It is imperative and nonnegotiable that each designer must establish a finite, duplicatable system for running their business," she explains. "Because if you are the only one that knows how it's done, then that's a 'you'—that's not a business."

Managing the Risks

Of course, every business faces myriad risks, and identifying and taking steps to mitigate them is crucial. "I certainly see that success and avoiding disputes are closely tied to risk management, and so I think one of the first things that design professionals need to do is understand what are the types of risks that they might be facing in running their business," notes Denise Robertson, partner with Mills & Mills LLP, a full-service Toronto law firm.

Among the many potential risks design professionals may face, Robertson says, include the following: working outside the scope of their ability; failing to outline the scope of a project, which could lead to disputes with clients; not defining obligations when working with others; offering personal guarantees; lacking proper insurance policies; and investing too much time and capital in a project and failing to get paid. "The biggest one I'd say is the impact on the reputation," Robertson observes, noting its significant effect on business. "Aside from earning and collecting money, it's crucial to protect that reputation in order for the business to really survive and thrive."



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The All-Important Contract

Contracts obviously are essential to mitigating such risks, but prior to signing any documents, it's an ideal time to determine client expectations and whether a project is even worth pursuing. Siegel says the pre-contract phase or "contracting process" is among the most practical ways to educate a client on what an interior designer's roles and responsibilities are and sets the tone for the rest of the relationship. Because if the client's expectations are too exacting, it might be best to walk away. "One very important result of the contracting process is you'll learn an awful lot about what your client's expectations are and requirements that may be totally unreasonable and unacceptable—and it's the first time and probably the last time that you can easily bow out of a project without legal entanglements," he explains.

Robertson agrees and says while many designers shy away from pushing too hard on the terms of the contract for fear of turning off a client, negotiation is the professional approach and serves as a litmus test for future business. "If a client or a potential client refuses to sign or takes issue with terms that are important to the designer, it just might be a red flag, and consideration should be given to maybe walking away from this project," she advises.

Assuming both parties agree to move forward, the contract itself is essential to a successful working relationship. An expression Robertson repeats often is, "If it's not in writing, it doesn't exist." While emails and verbal agreements may seem enough initially, designers are vulnerable without a contract if a project goes south, she says.

While law firms and professional associations like ASID offer contract templates for a fee (see "ASID Updates Commercial, Residential Contracts," p. 28), they are not one-size-fits-all tools. "You can't simply change the name and date and address," Robertson explains. "You have to really turn your mind to the key terms, the scope, the fees, the expenses, client responsibilities, limitation of liability—all of the key terms to reflect the actual project."

Intellectual property (IP) is another provision designers will likely want to include in the contract, Siegel says, especially if they engage in frequent custom work they'd like to license to third-party manufacturers that will require proof of ownership. If a client objects to IP stipulations on the basis of duplicating a residential design elsewhere, for example, Siegel says the answer is simple: "I could agree by contract not to do that, and you'll have better rights than you would on IP rights."



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ASID Updates Commercial, Residential Contracts



The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) recently updated its commercial and residential contract packages, which are available to both members and non-members for differing fees. The new and improved *ASID Commercial and Residential Contract Packages* are key to crafting comprehensive, customizable contracts that will help design practitioners protect their businesses and mitigate risks.

The enhanced commercial contract package features comprehensive, easy-to-understand individual schedules covering key decision point topics, such as: interior construction-related design services; project furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) selection and specifications; project administration; purchasing services; compensation and fee structures; termination rights; claims and disputes; and important clauses to protect intellectual property and limit liability.

The enhanced residential contract package delves into topics, including: design concept services; designer compensation and fee structures; merchandise selection; purchasing services; administration services; contract termination; and dispute resolution.

For more information, visit www.asid.org/resources/asid-advantage/contracts.

Business of Design Contracts

Communicating Your Value

The reason many designers struggle in business is because they fail to communicate to clients the importance of what they do and charge accordingly for it. Nigara says designers must have a process in place to do so “because if you can convey your value, then I will give you money for that.”

The problem, she explains, is that designers today erroneously believe because clients can source and purchase products online that their role is diminished somehow. Nothing could be further from the truth. “It is even more incumbent upon the design professional to consistently express the value that they bring to the table—the intangible things that cannot be clicked and bought on the internet or walked in and duplicated by watching a TV show. That’s the secret.”

As designers convey their worth, they should bill correspondingly. On the residential side, Siegel says the industry is moving away from the cost-plus and list-pricing discount models toward fixed-fee arrangements based on the size and scope of projects. This payment structure gives clients upfront pricing and has the advantage of giving designers predictable cash flow. And, because savvy clients can find product pricing online, it’s not as if they can’t determine what a designer’s fees will be based on the budget.

Rather, Siegel says the fixed-cost structure “adds clarity, and predictability, and it’s a fee arrangement that ought not to scare off the designer. The designers ought to embrace them because, in many ways, this is where I believe the profession is heading.”

Ultimately, Nigara encourages designers to stand up for their strengths and realize that the work they do is significant and needed. If they’ve successfully communicated their worth to a client who doesn’t (or refuses to) understand it, it’s time to cut ties. “You can’t worry about that person because there’s thousands of us [who] understand the value,” she concludes. ●

ROBERT NIEMINEN

is a freelance writer and regular contributor to *retrofit* and *Retail Environments* magazine, as well as the editor-at-large of *interiors+sources*.

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Contributors

Writers can truly relate to the development process. Not unlike an architect or designer, they start with a blank slate—and the final “product” unfolds as they use their talent and experience to capture just the right outcome. It’s no surprise then, that the authors in this issue of *i+D* can grasp the special nuances of community development, one of our featured articles (p. 42). They reveal what they think works and what doesn’t, as well as some surprises they encountered while “developing” their own assignments.

1. Sheila Kim, *Flexible, Functional Workplaces*

As a Brooklyn-based design journalist, Sheila regularly attends media openings of heavily publicized projects—whether those developments are welcomed by locals or not. “No one can truly know the motivations behind these developments, but the cynic in me thinks profit and tax credits. I can’t ignore, however, that some developments or their tenants have the ability to create jobs, beautify, or breathe new life into underutilized sites,” she says. Sheila’s thoughts—and her wishes for the future—also tie in well with what she uncovered when researching her article on office workspaces (p. 34). She explains: “I’m particularly interested in seeing how workspaces will turn out as the more progressive employers increasingly prioritize occupant wellness through office design.”

2. Brian J. Barth, *Built with Soul*

Brian is an American journalist living in Toronto, who writes about culture, design, technology, ecology, infrastructure, and more. He’s certainly seen and covered his share of development, which made him particularly appropriate to author his article on “soulful” projects (p. 42)—but, it also offered up some interesting insights. “Here in Toronto, a massive waterfront development by Sidewalk Labs, a sister company of Google, has faced enormous opposition. It’s supposed to be a ‘smart city’ project, a neighborhood built ‘from the internet up.’ But, like the recently derailed Amazon HQ2 project in New York, the proponents have not been very smart about building trust with the public,” he shares. “What impressed me about the developers I interviewed for this story was their willingness to truly listen to the communities where they worked, without preconceptions, and proceed accordingly.”

3. Robert Nieminen, *Success by Design*

Robert believes now is an interesting time for real estate development. “We’re seeing new players enter the market who aim to not only provide nearby housing for employees, but also improve their relationships with surrounding communities,” he says, adding “which could be a good thing (time will tell). Ultimately, I think smart development that utilizes technology to more efficiently operate and organize infrastructure and capitalizes on amenities and services that is also sustainable is a winning ticket.” In writing his article on contracts (p. 24), Robert was struck by one observation that so many businesses in this industry fail because they were never designed to succeed in the first place. “In creative work, such as interior design,” he notes, “it’s a common and easy mistake to assume that success can be realized through talent alone. More often than not, it isn’t.”

4. Ambrose Clancy, *ICONic Profile: Stanley Felderman & Nancy Keatinge*

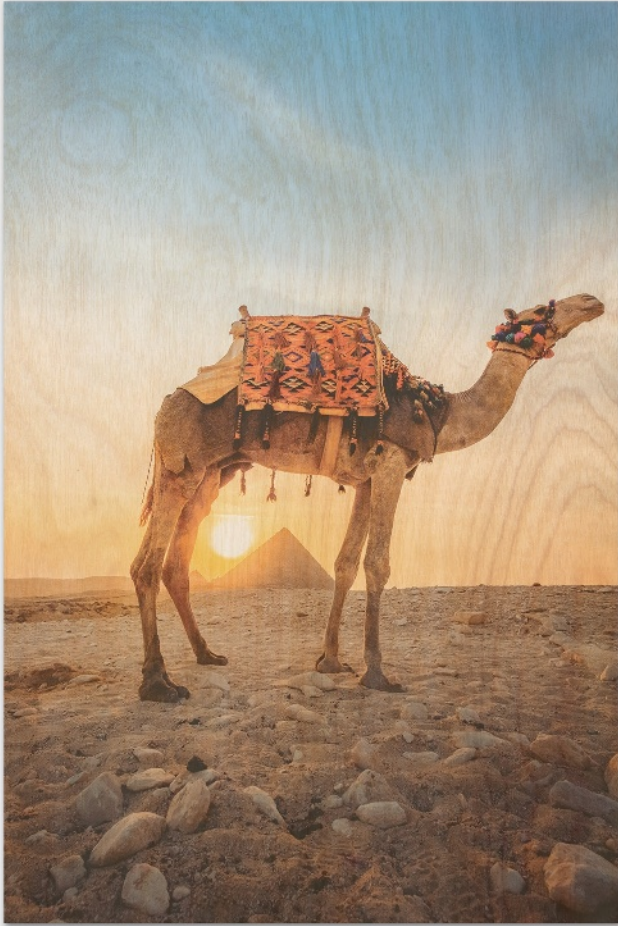
A personal glimpse in to the lives of renowned designers, the “ICONic Profile” series can be inspiring, informative, and even laugh-out-loud comical, including the one on the dynamic duo at Felderman Keatinge & Associates (p. 50). Ambrose, who pens each “ICONic Profile” installment, recalls this issue’s enjoyable interview experience. “I liked the idea of opposites attracting each other—Nancy Keatinge is from L.A. and Stanley Felderman is from New York—and how passion, one of their often used words, is the key to a relationship in life and business.” Likewise, Ambrose displays *his* passion when discussing developments he feels have gone awry. “The new Hudson Yards development on Manhattan’s west

side seems to be a project that was doomed from its inception, with the concept of turning lots of open space that could have gone to affordable housing and thriving neighborhoods into a millionaires’ mall that apes the frozen modernity of Dubai. Don’t get me started...”

5. Diana Mosher, *A Cohesive Statement*

Having spent more than 10 years covering the multifamily real estate industry as editorial director at *Multi-Housing News*, Diana has had a front row seat to the complex process involved in any development. “I think that, in some cases, the final outcome does fall short (especially obvious when we talk about affordable housing issues); [rather,] the best development outcomes happen when the team is comprised of like-minded individuals,” she says. When writing her article about multiunit residential design (p. 52), Diana was reminded of the tremendous exposure that results when an interior designer’s brand is associated with a rental or condo building. “For this reason, and with their reputation at stake, they should choose wisely and only take commissions that are compatible with their design standards,” she cautions. “Some residential buildings display an unfortunate disconnect between the exterior and the interior. But, more than ever before, developers are aware that their best return on investment will result when they put together a united and compatible creative team with architects and interior designers who are on the same page from the initial building concept.” ●

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OPENING KEYNOTE

Shantell Martin
*Artist, Innovator,
Cultural Facilitator*
Walk Like an Artist

Below the surface of Shantell Martin's signature black and white drawings is an artists' inquiry into the role of artist and viewer, where a work of art is more than an object of admiration disconnected from its inception. Exploring themes such as intersectionality, identity, and play, Martin is a cultural facilitator, forging new connections between fine art, education, design, philosophy, and technology.

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By Sheila Kim

Designing for today's office wants—and planning for the future of such spaces—are very much one and the same

Flexible, F Workplace

Last year, two Harvard Business School researchers sparked a debate within workplaces when they reported that open-plan offices might be impeding team communication and collaboration. But, office designers and architects learned of the potentially compromised productivity of not only teams, but also individuals—even before these findings were published—whether it was through their own research, own experience, client feedback, or the “Quiet Revolution” brought about by champion-of-introverts and author Susan Cain. Whatever the case, many A&D professionals and their forward-thinking clients have concluded that offices require flexibility that empowers individual staff members with choices in how and where to work. Essentially, one work style does not fit all.

Each floor of Shopify's Elgin Street headquarters, which is located in the central business district in Ottawa, Ontario, is designed around a specific theme: Canadian, Transportation, Gangster, Urban Street, Back Alley, and Cottage Retreat. (Image: Shopify)

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As is true in all its locations, Shopify's Montreal work environment focuses on flexibility, allowing productive employees to find a comfortable setting, from a couch to a bean bag chair—and anything in between.
(Image: Claude-Simon Langlois)

For the North American headquarters of consumer-product behemoth Unilever, Perkins+Will applied similar tactics. On Unilever's Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey campus, the project team renovated five existing buildings, four of which feature "neighborhoods" on every floor with different levels of openness and vibes—from lounge-inspired furniture clusters with working fireplaces to open spaces with long communal tables. The team unified the same four buildings by enclosing an underutilized courtyard between them, creating a central atrium-like structure with stepped floors that follow the natural rock-cliff terrain of the site. Dubbed the "Marketplace"—as it offers shops, services, and refreshments and is always bustling—the bright and airy volume offers employees an escape, a change of scenery, or an alternative place to meet when all the conference rooms are booked. Comprising brands that are vastly different from each other, such as Dove, Ben & Jerry's, and Q-tips, Unilever also relies on this space to host town halls and foster communication—and maybe even impromptu collaboration—between disparate teams that would otherwise never work together.

If there is one concept in flexible offices that divides architects, it's ownership versus hoteling. Unilever, whose locations throughout the world implement agile working, introduced the unassigned-desk practice in the New Jersey office (although buildings and neighborhoods still are designated for specific brand divisions). All desks are sit-stand to accommodate users of different sizes and their personal work styles. Lockers on every floor further facilitate the desk swapping by securing personal belongings and desk accessories overnight.

Linebox's Ferguson, however, is of the opinion that "there's enough of the unexpected in this world to have to worry about where you're going to sit every day. Whether it's a desk or cubby, people crave a sense of place and belonging—a home base!"

Workplace Diversity Now Has a Second Meaning

Designed by Ontario- and Québec-based firm Linebox Studio, a trio of offices for e-commerce company Shopify is an exemplary portfolio, each site offering variety to help workers "get away from the daily grind," according to Amanda Ferguson, a partner at Linebox. Immediately adjacent to workstations, for example, one might find a living room-like grouping of leather couches and a coffee table. "Nooks and 'back-alley' spaces allow every staff member to find a spot where they can tuck away, feel refreshed, and keep their minds flowing with ideas and creativity," she explains. These include wall niches with sound-dampening upholstered cushions and power access, as well as fully enclosed phone rooms and other semi-private spaces.

A variety of working environments and amenities at Unilever results in more productive employees.
(Image: Garrett Rowland)





For Unilever, the central atrium-like “Marketplace” offers employees a change of scenery—for a brief respite or for collaboration. (Image: Garrett Rowland)

Just like sustainable design, which grew from a niche category into a universal one, occupant wellness is rapidly becoming a norm.

Sustainability Is the Status Quo

Green design of yore used to be a specialty and—let’s be honest—aesthetically unappealing. But, thanks to breakthroughs in manufacturing and forward design thinking, sustainability is encountered almost everywhere and is no longer an eyesore. Now, it’s more a matter of just how green the client is willing to go.

Perkins+Will and Unilever went so far as to stipulate and guarantee certain energy-use levels in a contract with the site’s developer. The architects employed several strategies to ensure these numbers, such as retrofitting all lamps to LED light sources, replacing exterior-facing windows with high-performance double-pane products, installing skylights in the new Marketplace roof to reduce the space’s need for artificial lighting, and implementing some 15,000 sensors across the buildings to track occupancy patterns. The latter move uncovered that the majority of employees worked from home on summer Fridays, so Unilever realized it could open just one of the buildings and the Marketplace on summer Fridays, enabling its facility managers to shut down heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) and lighting in the remaining buildings. For transparency, real-time energy usage always is displayed on screens in the main entrance and reception area. Together with mindful specification of products, these strategies earned the project the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Platinum certification and an award from USGBC’s New Jersey chapter (USGBC NJ).

In Tysons (a community in Fairfax County, Virginia), financial concern Capital One achieved LEED Gold for its recently completed office tower using similar means as the aforementioned. Its daylighting strategy pairs LED lamping and expanses of high-performance glazing with automated window shades, for example. The project also boasts centralized trash and recycling bins, as well as dedicated receptacles for composting. And, rainwater harvesting supplies unpotable-but-reusable water for site irrigation and toilet flushing.



Comfortable seating areas, rich with natural light, offer more casual meeting and working spaces for Capital One employees. (Image: Jarrett Hendrix)

Wellness Is Gaining Momentum

Just like sustainable design, which grew from a niche category into a universal one, occupant wellness is rapidly becoming a norm. It's a logical transition given there's a major LEED category encompassing air quality, thermal conditions, and acoustic comfort, all of which impact the occupant experience. In 2014, more than a decade after the launch of LEED, the International WELL Building Standard from the International WELL Building Institute was established, encouraging architects and their clients to go further in designing people-centric workplaces. WELL proposed such elements as biophilia, lifestyle amenities, and healthy cafeteria menus to improve an employee's overall health. Although WELL trails behind LEED currently (LEED is 14 years older, after all), WELL is no slouch, reporting 174 WELL certified projects and 1,514 WELL registered projects at press time. And, according to some firms, that number will likely grow with changing workforce demographics.

"The focus on wellness is an outgrowth of interest in a sustainable workplace, but it is also a result of the demographic priorities of millennials who are more focused on health and wellbeing," says Paul Eagle, the Perkins+Will principal who led the Unilever design team and gleaned information from internal research. (At the time of this writing, the Unilever project is tracking WELL Gold certification.) In addition to the environmental factors, the project promotes physical and mental health via a revamped cafeteria offering healthier choices, a professionally staffed fitness center, and private rooms anyone can use for a video-led stretching session or meditation.

The Marketplace, meanwhile, helps replenish energy and also creates brand awareness among the Unilever family: A kiosk serves Lipton and Tazo tea beverages; hair-product brand TIGI runs an on-site salon; and an employee shop sells reduced-price products, such as Dove body wash, Bed Head hairspray, Knorr seasoning, and Seventh Generation paper towels. As the world's biggest ice cream producer, the company, of course, treats staff to complimentary products that help take the edge off a hard day's work. An open and unmanned ice cream parlor-like station in the Marketplace rotates the selections, so an employee can snatch up a Fudgsicle bar or Klondike ice cream sandwich one day and a classic Breyers strawberry or loaded Ben & Jerry's Boom Chocolatta Cookie Core another.



Among the many Unilever amenities is a tea bar kiosk that provides employees with the company's name-brand beverages. (Image: Garrett Rowland)



At Capital One, even staircases allow natural light to pass through, while natural materials further the concept of bringing the outdoors in. (Image: Jarrett Hendrix)

Neither Capital One nor Shopify are pursuing WELL certification, but both certainly emphasize occupant wellbeing. Capital One actually has an in-house design team that utilizes employee surveys to help devise new building or renovation plans aimed at keeping staff happy and healthy. These findings informed the new Tysons tower. "Design choices, programs, and facilities that foster wellbeing are becoming an expectation instead of a nice-to-have feature," says Erin Mical, the company's senior director of workplace solutions. "We recognize when people have balance in their lives, they are better equipped to bring their whole selves to work and provide the best products and services to our customers."

Working with HKS and CallisonRTKL, Mical's team implemented the flexibility that workers require, along with wellness-oriented programs and spaces: Cafes offer healthier meal options at a lower price compared to other foods; a large-scale fitness center also hosts classes and personal training; "mindfulness rooms" provide quiet for meditation or prayer; lactation rooms afford new mothers the privacy to pump; a fully furnished outdoor roof deck offers tranquility and a connection to nature; and a regulation-size basketball court promotes group fitness—and, perhaps, even camaraderie. The abundant natural light and views of treetops add a biophilic element, while original artwork, such as a vibrant site-specific installation by mixed-media artist Gabriel Dawe, presents views of a different nature.

"The health and wellbeing of employees is extremely important today," agrees Linebox Studio Founder Andrew Reeves. "Employers are competing globally for skilled individuals, and the companies committed to the wellbeing of staff have a better chance of attracting and retaining top talent." The Shopify offices achieve this not only through providing workspace variety, but also by imbuing a comfy residential feel—carving out spaces with incredible natural light and views and presenting recreational areas, such as a yoga studio and meditation rooms. Truly inventive, whimsical settings also help employees unwind and restore creative juices. In the Elgin Street location in Ottawa, Ontario, for instance, there's a 1920s speakeasy-style library defined by a dark moody palette, an outdoorsy floor with cedar-and-copper "tents," and a sauna-inspired meeting room with multilevel seating platforms of slatted wood.



Meeting spaces at Shopify's Montreal office meet the needs of both private and more open conversations. (Image: Claude-Simon Langlois)

Workplace of the Future?

Gazing into the workplace crystal ball, Eagle, Ferguson, Reeves, and Mical agree that the flexible office isn't going anywhere anytime soon. And for that reason, walls probably won't make a comeback in the near future. Although, notes Ferguson, "For some of our clients, the walls never left. Not all work typologies are geared for open concept—and information sensitivity plays a large role." In such cases, Linebox Studio encourages clients to pursue a balance of both privacy and openness.

Ferguson makes one intriguing prediction: "I think the line between work and home may bleed further into one another and companies will explore elevated campus-style living accommodations and temporary-stay units for traveling employees." This doesn't seem so far-fetched considering there already is a project in Europe exploring this. Called Station F, the new Paris incubator is constructing a housing project—a mere 10 minutes away by bicycle—with co-living accommodations for up to 600 of Station F's entrepreneur members. Flexible short-term leases enable visiting entrepreneurs to take advantage as well.

The flexible office isn't going
anywhere anytime soon.
And for that reason, walls probably
won't make a comeback
in the near future.

Eagle believes there will be more agile working "as industries recognize the benefits of efficiency, workplace effectiveness, and employee empowerment that this program creates." He also predicts we will see a resurgence of the "Free Agent Nation" that Daniel H. Pink proclaimed in *Fast Company* more than 20 years ago, and that will lead to growth of coworking offices.

Mical suggests, "We'll continue to see emphasis on flexibility as it relates to both physical workspaces and hours, experience-driven offices that put people first, and an increased ability for employees to customize their own workspaces through connectivity in devices and everyday objects."

With technology constantly advancing and improving on keeping people—especially telecommuters—connected, will any of this matter? All four design leaders believe the physical office will not become extinct. "Regardless of industry, every company has the need for some level of collaboration, face-to-face interaction, and personal connection as part of the delivery of their work," says Eagle.

Linebox's Reeves adds, "Even if workers can connect remotely, there is something important about being physically present with other people. Being with others in the same space fosters a real sense of connectedness and community—and leads to a strong sense of company culture." ●

SHEILA KIM
is a Brooklyn-based design journalist who previously held positions at *Architectural Record* and *Interior Design* magazines, among others. Now a freelance writer and editor, she has recently contributed to *Azure*, *Metropolis*, *The Washington Post*, *AD Pro*, and *Contract*, and continues to write for *Architectural Record*.



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Built with Soul

Creative design and a willingness to forgo the status quo are the keys to real estate development with a sense of “*there there*”

Real estate developers sometimes get a bad rap. Are they greedy agents of gentrification? Or, civic-minded city builders? *i+D* talked with three developers with reputations for the latter to find the pulse behind development that honors a location and manages to propel it forward with respect, enthusiasm, and carefully planned design. Such developers are not out to merely build a building, they seek to make an impact on a community and its current and future residents by listening, learning, and creating long-term goals that set a neighborhood on a positive path for progress.



Community DNA

In the early aughts, when the city of Toronto decided to redevelop the Regent Park neighborhood, a large public housing project built on the outskirts of downtown in the 1940s that had fallen into disrepair, they chose The Daniels Corporation as their development partner. Known for partnering with the neighborhoods where they work, Daniels' vision was to both preserve community character and enhance it—in an area where million-dollar condos were beginning to encroach—without allowing the sort of gentrification that makes long-time residents feel out of place in, and ultimately priced out of, their own community. Strict controls were built into the plan to ensure long-term affordability, with market-rate units helping to subsidize shared public space improvements. But, a question remained. Even if existing residents could afford to live there, how do you ensure they continue to feel at home?

One answer that emerged from the community consultation process, says Heela Omarkhail, Daniels' senior manager of strategic initiatives, was food. Or, more specifically, growing food. "I manage a community partnership team here at Daniels. We actually spend time in communities. In Regent Park, we learned from the community that there is a passion for gardening and urban agriculture," she says.

The very first condo building Daniels built in Regent Park included a 10th-floor terrace with one large communal garden plot and nearly 20 individual plots; these were instantly claimed, with a waiting list of 30 residents hoping to get in on the fun. On a subsequent project, sensing the demand, residents were given wooden planter boxes for their patios upon moving in, rather than more traditional gifts like baskets of wine and cheese. But, these planter boxes weren't ordered from Amazon. They were made by youth as part of a skills development program at Dixon Hall Neighbourhood Services, a nearby nonprofit. "Dixon Hall employed eight youth from the Regent Park community for a summer, teaching them carpentry skills and helping them get into the trade," notes Omarkhail.

A local urban agriculture organization was hired to facilitate communal garden projects, an approach Daniels has since repeated throughout its portfolio. "We provide two years of garden facilitation," explains Omarkhail. "It's not something we rely on the condominium association for; we've actually built that into our project budget." Daniels' urban agriculture program is about much more than simply providing an amenity, she adds. "The social interaction around gardening created a bond where people's sense of ownership and stewardship extended into the common areas. That building started performing really well from a maintenance and cost perspective because residents were taking care of the place beyond the four walls of their unit."

The Logan, a six-story, boutique residence in Toronto, developed by The Daniels Corporation, carefully blends with its historic, village-like streetscape while offering unique features like a rooftop oasis. (Image: The Daniels Corporation)

Cultural Diversity

This is but one angle Daniels has found to create a sense of “there there,” as Gertrude Stein famously put it. Another angle directly involves interior designers. The company has developed an extensive network with local artists and artisans in Toronto that its interior design consultants are asked to collaborate with. Whether it’s a painting for a lobby space, a sculpture for an outdoor patio, or even practical items like benches and wayfinding signage, the idea is for the interior designer to work with local talent to craft objects that support overall design objectives, while creating interesting spaces that would not be possible with mass-produced products.

Daniels also invites local artists to set up shop within the communities it builds. For the Daniels Waterfront City of the Arts development along Lake Ontario, the company partnered with Artscape, a local group that works to provide affordable studio space in this astronomically expensive city (See “Combatting the SoHo Effect,” *i+D*, January/February 2019, p. 44). The organization now has a permanent home in the City of the Arts development, where Daniels has dedicated an entire floor of one building to offices for arts organizations. These spaces are made available at below-market rates. The Weeknd, the acclaimed Toronto recording artist, is supporting one of the groups that has set up shop there.

“The idea is all these groups will work together to give this neighborhood a soul,” says Omarkhail. “How do we use our business to drive social change and to build the types of communities we’d like to live in? That is our fundamental premise.”

Just as “soul” means different things to different people, it can mean different things in different places. Uniqueness is, arguably, a synonym for soul. Asbury Park, New Jersey, a seaside resort community established in the late 19th century, has never lacked in this department. And, while today, the oceanfront town is bustling with new businesses and a renewed passion for the rising up of this iconic spot along the coast, it has taken several decades and a complete understanding of the past, present, and future potential of Asbury to get there.

Music lovers may know the town best for the historically high-spirited performances of Bruce Springsteen, a local kid who found stardom playing at venues like The Stone Pony, now a forum of global renown where what came to be known as the Jersey Shore sound can still be heard today. The roots of the town, however, are much deeper, and a bit darker, than just that. In the summer of 1970, the city was ravaged by race riots and, in the ‘80s and ‘90s, the community slipped into an increasingly derelict state. Just as the Great Recession was threatening to make matters worse, however, Washington, D.C. developer Madison Marquette stepped in with a plan.

Kevin Patterson, the company’s real estate development manager, explains that many developers have fallen in love with the charming historic buildings and expansive beach views of the Asbury waterfront. But, for decades, none were successful in turning around the blight. “They tended to dream big and employed an approach of, ‘if we build it, they will come’.” But, their grand visions were out of context and too much about making Asbury Park look and feel like any other resort destination,” according to Patterson.

Madison Marquette took a phased approach, focusing on incubating local businesses and creating jobs within the community, rather than relying on outside investment. The company even opened its own operations arm to fill and manage the myriad entertainment, hospitality, and retail spaces—a fairly unprecedented move for a real estate developer. Above all, Madison Marquette focused on cultivating the intangible qualities of the place: Everything from the spaces created to the food on the menus, the products in the stores, and the acts on the stages all were carefully curated.



A flurry of activities—from impromptu playtime to regular movie screenings under the stars—appeals to the community in the Regent Park neighborhood in Toronto. (Image: Arthur Mola)

“How do we use our business to drive social change and to build the types of communities we’d like to live in? That is our fundamental premise.”

—HEELA OMARKHAIL, THE DANIELS CORPORATION

“There is an epidemic of homogeneity in places all around America. ... We’re finding that the consumer response to all this cookie-cutter sameness in the built environment is a desire for unique and authentic experiences—a ‘sense of place.’ That means you have to offer guests something they can’t experience anywhere else.”

—KEVIN PATTERSON, MADISON MARQUETTE

As part of recapturing the charm of the Asbury Park, New Jersey, waterfront, Madison Marquette is working to protect and restore the legendary Convention Hall. (Image: Madison Marquette)

The results of this highly tailored approach speak for themselves. Over the last decade, beach pass purchases have increased by 15-fold and city parking revenue has grown 23-fold. The municipality no longer requires aid from the state, recently producing a balanced budget for the first time in ages. The annual summer music lineup, which highlights the town’s Jersey Shore heritage, draws fans from around the world, and Asbury itself has morphed into a positive example of multiculturalism.

“There is an epidemic of homogeneity in places all around America,” says Patterson. “At Madison Marquette, we’re finding that the consumer response to all this cookie-cutter sameness in the built environment is a desire for unique and authentic experiences—a ‘sense of place’. That means you have to offer guests something they can’t experience anywhere else.”

To that end, Madison Marquette, which in 2018 received the Honor Award from the National Building Museum for its achievements in preserving neighborhoods, maintaining historic authenticity, and inspiring communities, has a partnership with the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, which has helped diversify cultural programming in Asbury Park. Options for children have grown and, today, adults can attend lectures from a noted physicist, perhaps, or other intellectual heavyweights. But, the big draw remains rooted in the past: T-shirts seen all over town express the common sentiment that “Music Saved Asbury Park.” Patterson adds that, while many factors contributed to the renaissance, when the sound of rock and roll “is wafting down the boardwalk from the open-air performance space on a warm night, anyone would have to admit that music is integral to the soul of this place.”



Local artists contribute to the unique vibe of Asbury Park, New Jersey. (Image: Madison Marquette)



High-Rise Soul

In the center of most large modern cities lies a forest of glassy buildings, home to Fortune 500 businesses and five-star hotels. Walking at street level often feels like being in a wind tunnel, where horns blare, smog chokes your lungs, and garbage swirls in the urban gales. But, a designer's touch can instill a bit of soul in even the grungiest of concrete jungles.

John Portman & Associates, an Atlanta-based firm with an office in Shanghai, specializes in exactly this sort of transformation. Its founder, John Portman, was the rare architect who endeavored to build a major real estate development company. He's responsible for many skyline-defining projects worldwide, including Peachtree Center in Atlanta and Embarcadero Center in San Francisco. Portman passed away in 2017, but the firm continues with both its real estate and architecture wings.

The Portman philosophy, says Gordon R. Beckman, the firm's design director, is to focus as much on the space between buildings as on the buildings themselves. "As objects, buildings are what fills the city, but it is the streets, the squares, the intersections, the public open space where we feel we have the most to contribute to the urban environment. These things are not mutually exclusive; in fact, we believe they are mutually inclusive."

Portman's buildings are typically set back from the sidewalk to create small plazas that artfully integrate the structure with the streetscape. These "public rooms," explains Beckman, often extend into grand ground-floor lobbies, meant not as exclusive zones for CEOs and their armies of businessmen, but as canvases on which civic life can unfold. "These are gathering spaces for the whole community, not just the people occupying the buildings," he adds. In addition, he notes that Portman projects often carve out quiet off-street space by fitting plazas and parklets in the center of a block where the buildings provide a sense of shelter from the gridlocked traffic a stone's throw away.

Such an effect was employed with great success at Coda, the firm's recent project in Tech Square, a bustling innovation hub in Midtown Atlanta. In San Diego, the firm recently completed a pair of 400-room hotels where adjacent green space was carefully carved out to create a two-blocks-long corridor to view the harbor, drawing pedestrians to engage with the waterfront. "The approach makes our site smaller, but it gives much more back to the city," says Beckman.

Beckman identifies two key elements for successfully integrating these internal open spaces—the soul of any project, in his view—to ensure they become animated with people, rather than dead zones filled with grime and rubbish.



The philosophy at John Portman & Associates is to place as much focus on the space between buildings as on the buildings themselves. Shown here is the Marriott Marquis in Atlanta. (Image: The Portman Archives, LLC, photo by David Naughton)

The first is to engage with the community. In San Diego, the firm convened a half dozen public meetings with 200 to 300 participants each. "There was a time when community meetings were seen as something that you just had to endure," states Beckman. "But, we embrace them. We embrace the input of all the different people that are going to use the space, because we feel the success of the project hinges on integrating their ideas and addressing their needs."

The second is to assemble the right design team. With more than a half century of experience integrating design and development in a unified process, Portman is a pioneer in this regard. Beckman describes it in poetic terms. "It's like an orchestra. It's not just about hiring a high-end landscape architect or interior designer; it's about how you choreograph the group in a holistic way to produce a more thoughtful and integrated environment for the people who will inhabit it." ●

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He has written for a range of publications,
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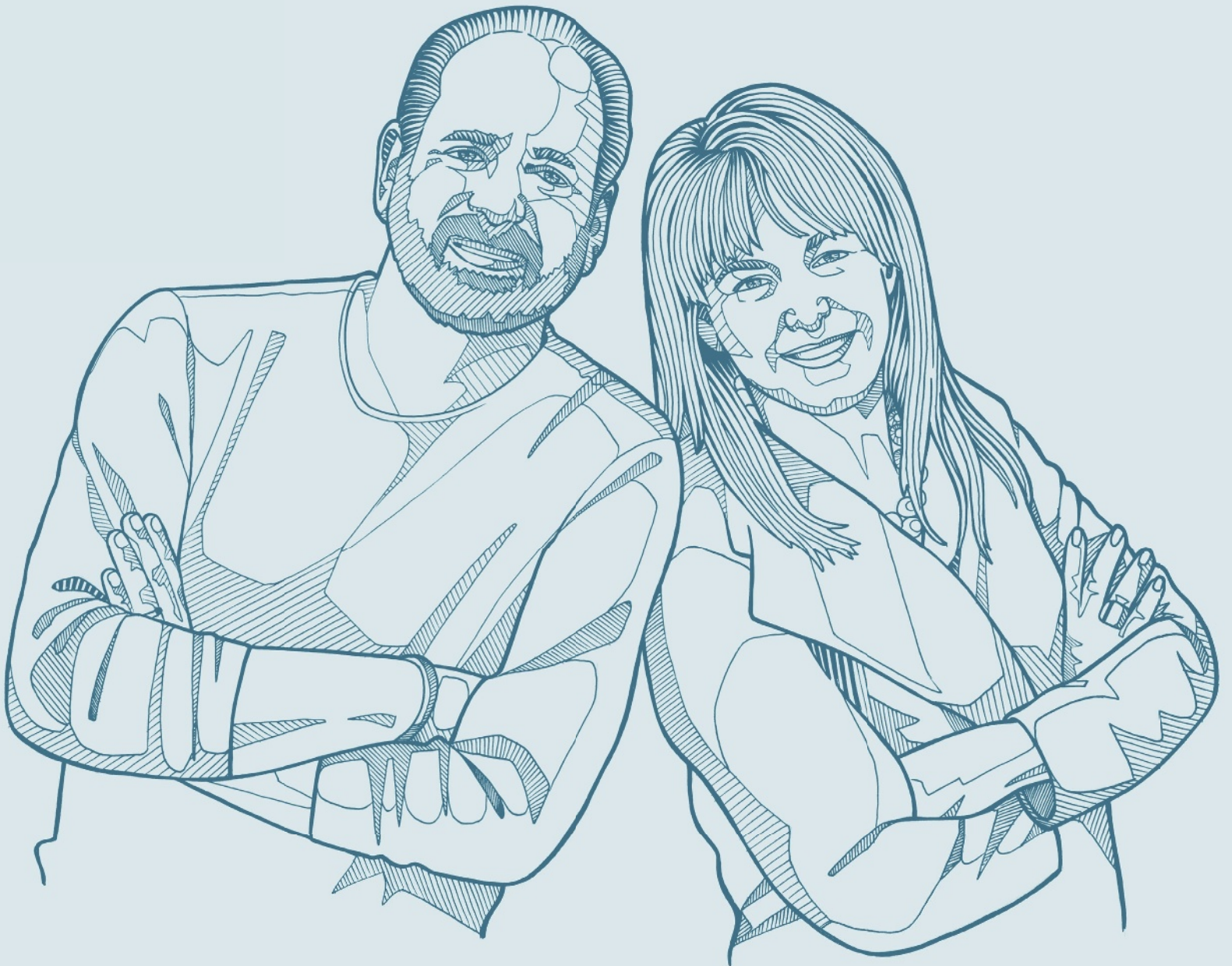
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ICONic Profile



**Stanley Felderman
& Nancy Keatinge**

The Los Angeles-based firm of Felderman Keatinge & Associates covers design and architecture in all its forms. Known for a distinctive, innovative style, the firm has no boundaries, working in residential as well as commercial design, including large corporations, such as Disney, Samsung—they designed the headquarters in Seoul—and Sony, to name a few of many. Nancy Keatinge, a child of southern California, and Stanley Felderman, a New York kid, have blended styles and concepts into a beautiful, organic unity of design with groundbreaking and often-copied work, as diverse as the MTV network offices and the Shibuya train station in Tokyo. The married couple are winners of numerous awards in the field, and their work has been showcased in The Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

i+D spoke to the couple from their office in Culver City, California.

i+D: You're known for your design of offices. Can you speak about the feeling of entering an office and having a sensation that the design is screaming at you?

Felderman: Some spaces are loud acoustically, but also visually. In life, we need balance and a sense of calmness, and that's what we want to bring to offices.

Keatinge: We focus not just on the visitor, but also the employees, understanding what's important to them. We hear, "I love coming to work," and others talking about a sense of security. It's been a focus of ours for 20 years, since the MTV network.

i+D: Have you ever received pushback from executives for being too employee-centric in your designs?

Keatinge: Yes. And, we've said, "If you can't find the money in your budget, we can change things and make the experience for your employees a better one."

Felderman: We have an expression: Spread the wealth. We ask clients, "How can we enrich the employees' experience? How can we help them be more productive?"

Keatinge: Retention of employees is so important, when today they're always looking to see what else is out there.

i+D: The trend in offices is lots of open space to encourage collaboration. Do you ever consider making the talented introvert comfortable?

Keatinge: Always. There are people who need privacy. It's critical, for example, to provide places where you can go and have a phone call so you don't have to go outside. And, quiet places for quiet conversations.

i+D: You two are living proof opposites attract. Nancy, you're from L.A. What's interesting to you about New York besides the pace?

Keatinge: Seeing what's going on in art, in the galleries and museums. It's inspirational.

i+D: Stanley, what do you like about L.A. besides the weather?

Felderman: (Laughing) Let's see. The weather?

i+D: At least you didn't say, "Nothing."

Felderman: Oh, okay. There's a real sense of community here. There's that idea that in Los Angeles there's this *laissez-faire* attitude, but it's really quite the opposite. I find it invigorating. When I go to New York, it's nonstop explosive. I love it. But here, I see the Pacific Ocean every day. It's a nurturing place. My brain functions in a more quiet way.

i+D: Are you collectors, besides art?

Keatinge: We collect chairs.

Felderman: In our home, we have chairs by Frank Gehry, Hampton, Maya Lin, and others. We feel the presence of the designers.

Keatinge: It's like having a conversation with them.

Felderman: I also collect coffee cups and re-purpose them. Go to my Instagram page. Other designers are now collecting my cups.

i+D: How often do you travel for work?

Keatinge: About once a month.

i+D: Any guilty pleasures to soothe the experience?

Felderman: My weakness is chocolate. In airports, I'm always buying specialty chocolates. Or, ice cream.

Keatinge: And, if we can get it, a more comfortable seat.

i+D: You've spoken about the concept of "total design."

Keatinge: We design everything for our clients, down to customizing furniture, light fixtures, the artwork, so it reflects who they are and their brand. We've done industrial design for different companies over the years, so we're looking at the total space, not just one piece of it.

i+D: What are you reading?

Keatinge: "Grit," by Angela Duckworth, a book that says sometimes it's not just about talent, but it's perseverance that moves you forward, and having passion for what you do. Not standing still, but reinventing, looking forward to what's next. The people who are the creative ones are the ones who won't be replaced.

i+D: Paper or screen?

Keatinge: Paper. I enjoy sitting in my Knoll womb chair and reading books.

i+D: It's all about chairs?

Felderman: I'm with that.

i+D: Stanley, you designed one of the first ATMs.

Felderman: Back then, the future was that you'd have a card and were going to get money from a machine—very Flash Gordian. Mosler was in the bank business and they were thinking that way. I was hired to develop the ATM. People said,

"Nobody will ever get money from a machine." People wanted someone to handle it, holding on to it physically. And, someone to talk to.

i+D: No one thinks about it anymore, getting money on any street corner in the world so quickly and efficiently.

Felderman: The design had to change the status quo. And, it did.

i+D: Running a business, what's the essential tool for a successful leader?

Keatinge: Integrating your employees into what you're doing. We bring our team into client meetings so they hear and understand what's going on in the project. Nothing is lost in translation. People know they have value.

Felderman: Delegate to empower.

i+D: What's the worst advice you ever received?

Felderman: A high school teacher told me I wasn't good in math so I shouldn't pursue architecture.

Keatinge: Coming from a family of attorneys, I was told not to be an artist of any kind, you'll never make money. Wrong.

i+D: Stanley, you're known for sketching by hand.

Felderman: I can't get through dinner without a pen in my hand. I'm always drawing. My mother was stabbed in the hand with a pen when I was a little kid when she reached in my pocket for something.

Keatinge: Our kids, Kate and Sara, do the same thing. When we go out to dinner, we're all drawing.

i+D: Better than staring at your phones.

Felderman: Our kids complain we're on our phones more than they are.

i+D: You're obviously doing something right.

Keatinge: They're at Rhode Island School of Design. Kate's a jeweler and Sara's a painter, an activist who wants to use art to make a change.

i+D: What do you always have with you?

Keatinge: A small notebook. I like to write and always carry one with me.

Felderman: I have a necklace that Kate made when she was nine-years-old. A silver twist. It's about togetherness. At nine, to come up with that concept...I never take it off.

i+D: Living together, raising children together, and working together—how do you keep from killing each other?

Felderman: (Laughing) We have a deep love of each other. We enjoy being with each other. It takes being a good listener and having a passion for what we do.

Keatinge: And, a sense of humor.

Felderman: (Laughing) That, too. ●

AMBROSE CLANCY
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Living by
Design
Multiunit
Residential

**The right multiunit
residential project can raise
a designer's profile
and create new demand
for their services**



A Coho State

All images page 52:
A peaceful oasis, offering equal
parts contemporary elegance and
urban chic, 88 Morningside Ave
is an iconic multiunit residence
with sweeping views of
Morningside Park, Central Park,
and the Manhattan skyline.
(Images: Frampton Co)



All images page 53:
Diamond Schmitt Architects
has applied many of the
same concepts it follows for
multiunit residential buildings
to the design of state-of-the-art
student residences.
(Images: Lisa Logan Photography (top),
James Brittain Photography (bottom))

When real estate at the luxury Harlem co-op known as 88 Morningside Ave goes on the market, an amenity that's mentioned is the "superb Elena Frampton design." Frampton Co designed the lobby of the 12-story, 73-unit multiunit project, as well as its amenity spaces, corridors, and the fixtures and finishes in the apartment homes.

Creating a comprehensive identity for an entire building puts the interior designer front and center. The opportunity to build brand awareness is hard to beat when your interiors are constantly visible to passersby. But, there are challenges, too.



esive ment

By
Diana Mosher

If the interior design team doesn't feel inspired by the exterior architecture, they may take a totally different direction, resulting in a disconnect whenever residents enter the building. Even worse, it can negatively impact occupancy in these condo or rental properties. Sometimes, the developer spends the lion's share of the budget on the exterior and then wants to skimp on the lobby or units. This can lead to frustration for the designer, whose name will be used to market the final product that doesn't live up to its potential.

"The architect and interior design team connection is crucial in developing a cohesive residential building and ensuring aesthetic and pragmatic goals inside and out," says Frampton, founder and creative director, Frampton Co. While working on 88 Morningside Ave, Frampton and her team interfaced weekly with GF55 Partners (formerly GF55 Architects) and David E. Gross, a partner in the firm.



Living by
Design
Multiunit
Residential



Blank Canvas

For residential designers, walking into a blank slate on this scale might seem daunting. The challenge is to create a cohesive look throughout, while also including moments of specialness that every other apartment building does not share. The first step in the process, according to Frampton, is to study the brief from the sales and marketing team and building ownership.

“Then, we go into the mysterious world of concept development, where the intangible design process unfolds,” she states. After editing and refining the concepts into a developed rendered idea, it’s pitched to the client team. “Too often multiunit housing interior design leans too vanilla and the team’s goal of attempting to please everyone prevents aesthetic risk-taking,” explains Frampton. “We’re experienced in walking that tightrope to deliver a design vision suitable and sellable. We distill the building identity into evocative and welcoming spaces designed to attract potential buyers.”

Whether located in a city or suburban environment, the lobby is the first impression for potential buyers/renters. According to Frampton, the spatial expression, color and materials palette, and lighting story establish the design vocabulary for the rest of the public spaces, such as corridors and amenities, as well as the units. “We might consider an added layer in the public-to-private sequence in a city environment where a sense of respite and calm is in high demand,” she notes.

1. Designed by Builders Design, a multiunit common space is created to feel like an extension of a resident’s home.
(Image: David Madison)

2. DARWIN home wellness technology (see sidebar, p. 55) has been installed at the Lateral Estates Park Blakehurst multifamily residence in Australia.
(Image: Delos)

A Holistic Approach

Like many North American cities (and suburbs too), Toronto is enjoying a multifamily construction boom. Local firm Diamond Schmitt Architects, with offices also in Vancouver and New York, has been riding the wave and took a big step into the interiors world about five years ago when it brought this function in-house by hiring a director of interior design. With a few projects on the boards—both condos and rentals—the decision to have complete authorship for multiunit residential projects is proving successful.

“Generally speaking, all of our projects are designed with the potential of a LEED and/or WELL certification,” says Bryan Chartier, director of interior design at Diamond Schmitt Architects. And, the firm has recently taken on an initiative to have all its interior designers become WELL Accredited Professionals (WELL APs). Their holistic approach produces a unified result by having all design members of the team collaborate at key moments in the process, rather than having interior designers take on the project late in the design development stages.

“Multitenant housing is often compared to a vertical town, which will require the resolution of many of the complexities of small town planning,” says Chartier. The generational spectrum is changing, with empty nesters buying more downtown property and young families looking for family-oriented amenities like in-house daycare.

“The more elaborate the lobby, the more likely an empty nester or young family will want to take up residency,” he continues. Multiunit lobbies range from basic areas that have little to no security to very elaborate urban living rooms—complete with 24-hour security and concierge service.

According to Chartier, corridors should be simple and well lit, and lobbies that have a security presence often are designed to have a hotel feel. Many times, the front desks provide secured storage for the tenants for food deliveries, Amazon packages, and dry cleaning. “The lobbies act more like a hub than a front desk, and we tend to design these areas accordingly by not emphasizing the desk but by providing ample space for tenants to meet friends, wait for an Uber, and pick up packages in a warm lounge-like environment,” he explains.

Diamond Schmitt Architects strives to be contextual to the neighborhood and often will draw from a building’s location to provide inspiration for its interiors. Currently, the firm is designing an apartment community in Midtown Toronto that is adjacent to a park. The interiors are purposely designed to incorporate nature in many of the common areas throughout the building.



Tried and True Amenities

"If I look back five to 10 years, the community and location were once truly secondary to our design process, but now it's integral from the initial charrettes and programming," says Britney Gilley, vice president of design, Builders Design. According to Gilley, who has specialized in multifamily design for 10 years, the location and community are equally as important as the interior amenities and units themselves. Everything needs to work together in a cohesive way.

"There are ways in design to find the commonalities between millennials and boomers," says Gilley. "But, interestingly, if you tour these apartment communities after they've leased up, you'll find millennials living in a space that may have more boomers (because they're seeking a quieter, more relaxing lifestyle). Or, conversely, you may find boomers living in a more high-energy and prominently millennial apartment community."

According to Gilley, despite all the cool amenities we hear about—such as a sea salt spa or cigar lounge—the most in-demand amenities are still the fitness center and pool. "However, no matter what amenities you have, creating a great environment by the management group is key," she explains. "It's all about encouraging use of the space through planned events and offering service amenities."

"The common spaces should really feel like an extension of their home, so it's important to understand the personalized aspect of design, as well as the codes and guidelines," she adds. One of the reasons Gilley loves multifamily design is because she uses commercial skills—there are so many safety and accessibility considerations in every project—but having residential experience also is key.

Gilley sought LEED professional accreditation because she believed there would be a strong push for LEED and WELL buildings. While she's seeing it occasionally in new Class A product, it's not as common as she thought it would be. "I believe it could be the ongoing concern in this industry about the upfront costs vs. the long-term savings. Usually, you have two separate budgets: your development component that covers the initial build-out, then it transfers to the management budget," she explains. "So, the developers don't seem to want to make the investment, as they may not be the ones to see the savings. As we continue to see innovation in that market, we will likely see affordability level out and hopefully see a bigger push for these types of healthy spaces for both the residents and the planet."

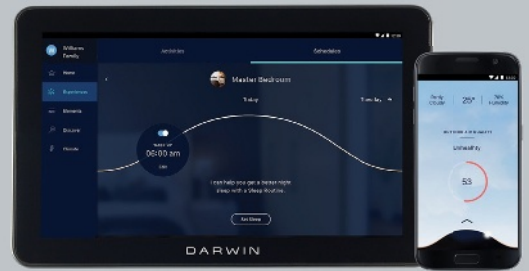
In order to succeed in the stimulating and competitive multifamily market, interior designers must have the right mix of talent and business acumen. Those who can envision life through the lens of apartment residents—and are able to articulate this vision to developers—have the opportunity to shine in multiunit residential design. ●

"As we continue to see innovation in [the sustainability and wellness] market, we will likely see affordability level out and hopefully see a bigger push for these types of healthy spaces for both the residents and the planet."

— BRITNEY GILLEY, BUILDERS DESIGN

DIANA MOSHER, Allied ASID, is a New York-based interior designer and media consultant. She also is the 2017-2019 communications director for the ASID New York Metro chapter.

Meet DARWIN, the World's First Home Wellness Intelligence Network



Delos is a technology and solutions company focused on health and wellness in real estate. One of its latest innovations, DARWIN, is the world's first Home Wellness Intelligence network. DARWIN monitors, detects, and responds to the changing conditions of the home to help enhance occupants' health and wellness needs throughout the day.

"Delos is particularly excited about this new technology, as its intuitive regulation occurs automatically in the background without you lifting a finger, and you can also choose from a range of mood-specific wellness experiences. In addition to single-family homes, multifamily residences have already begun to integrate DARWIN," says Paul Scialla, CEO and founder, Delos.

DARWIN is a technology solution for private residences, not a building standard. "Base buildings and common spaces absolutely can and should pursue WELL certification for the most holistic approach to wellness for the people who move about these spaces," adds Scialla. However, DARWIN can play an important role in enhancing private family spaces by offering a personalized and customizable wellness experience within each home environment.

"While developers and building owners could pursue DARWIN without WELL, they would be missing an opportunity to holistically impact human health and wellbeing beyond the components that DARWIN addresses," adds Scialla.

The International WELL Building Institute (IWBI) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Delos. IWBI delivers the WELL Building Standard and offers WELL certification, plus the WELL Accredited Professional (WELL AP) program. IWBI works independently of Delos to administer WELL, which is third-party certified through IWBI's collaboration with Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI), the same organization that certifies LEED buildings.

According to Rachel Gutter, IWBI president, since the launch of WELL certification in 2014, there are now about 200 multifamily projects WELL certified or currently pursuing WELL certification. As people across the globe increasingly become aware of the impacts that their home environments can have on the health and wellness of themselves and their families, it has become progressively important to verify the performance of the places where they live.

Gutter notes that, according to the 2018 Global Wellness Institute report "Build Well to Live Well," homebuyers are willing to pay more for spaces that can improve their health and wellness, including proximity to green spaces, walkability, healthy home features, and environmental sustainability features. Gutter adds: "Multifamily project owners tell us they are seeking WELL certification to attract and retain residents, maximize rent potential and building resale value, differentiate their properties, and promote optimal health and wellbeing for residents."

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Jane Abernethy, LEED AP, Humanscale and *RECKONstruct*

Gordon R. Beckman, AIA, John Portman & Associates

Susan Cain, Quiet Revolution

Bryan Chartier, BEDS, M.Arch, ARIDO, IDC, Diamond Schmitt Architects

Paul Eagle, LEED AP, Perkins+Will

Stanley Felderman, Felderman Keatinge & Associates

Amanda Ferguson, Linebox Studio

Elena Frampton, Allied ASID, Frampton Co

Britney Gilley, ASID, IIDA, LEED Green Associate, NCIDQ, Builders Design

David E. Gross, AIA, GF55 Partners

Rachel Gutter, International WELL Building Institute

Nancy Keatinge, FIIDA, Felderman Keatinge & Associates

Erin Mical, Capital One

LuAnn Nigara, Window Works and *A Well-Designed Business*

Gregory Norris, PhD, SHINE@MIT (Sustainability and Health Initiative for NetPositive Enterprise)

Heela Omarkhail, The Daniels Corporation

Kevin Patterson, Madison Marquette

Andrew Reeves, Linebox Studio

Denise Robertson, Mills & Mills LLP

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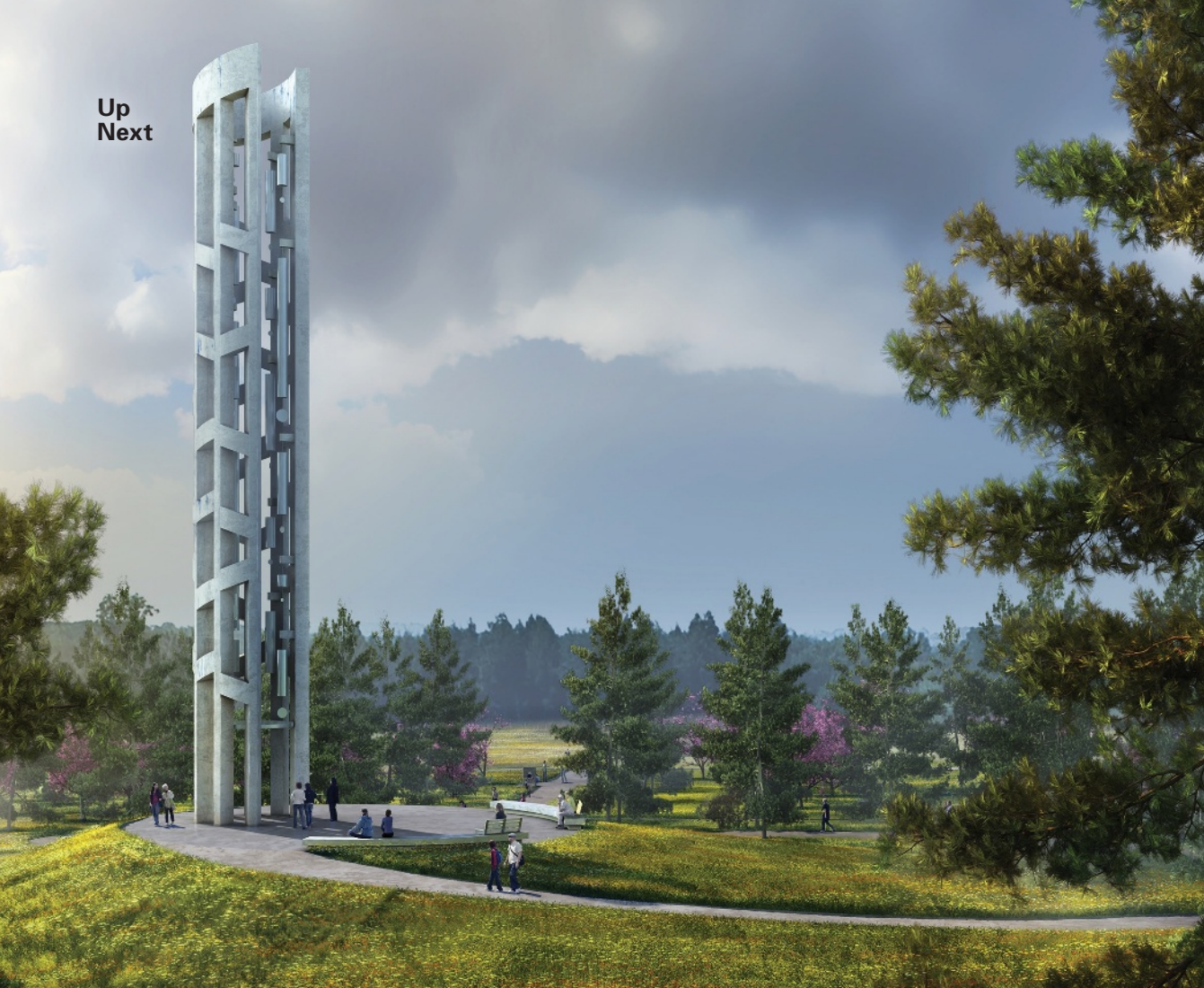

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In memory of the victims of United Flight 93, which crashed into an open field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, during the 9/11 terrorist attacks, a one-of-a-kind memorial—the Tower of Voices—was conceived as the embodiment of a musical instrument, 93 feet in height, holding 40 wind chimes to honor the 40 victims. (Image: Rendering by bioLINIA and Paul Murdoch Architects)

DESIGNED IN REMEMBRANCE

It is a fact that all design work requires careful contemplation, creative solutions, and consideration for surroundings, subject, and those who will spend time in a given space. But, how is that thought and design process applied when the project itself intends to memorialize an event or individual of historic, and sometimes tragic, proportions?

When a designer or architect sets out to create a memorial, the traditional questions of site and subject are met with a necessity for respect and understanding on amplified levels. Included in such a plan must be an extensive comprehension of the event being memorialized; consideration for the fragility of human life, and sometimes sacrifice; sensitivity for the emotions of survivors and visitors of all kinds; and an element of respectful education that will inform generations to come.

In the July/August issue, *i+D* will examine the challenging task design professionals face when they endeavor to memorialize an event through permanent, creative expression and the paths some professionals have taken to achieve effective, artistic, and lasting results. ●

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