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DESIGN

From Latrines To Lampshades

Interior Designer Kasey

aw: How did your love of design begin?

KM: While growing up, my mother Jovita McCarty was always remodeling our house. When I was 10 years old, I made my own platform bed, using two wood palettes, painted them pink and balanced my bed on them. I didn't realize that there was an actual profession for my design passion until I attended Texas Tech University. I enrolled as a pre-med student, took a shortcut through the Human Sciences building and stumbled across the exterior of an interior design student's work. The next day I changed my major and have never looked back.

aw: What is your process when working on a new project?

KM: At first, I get as much information about the client as possible. Some questions that I ask include: What are their goals? What do they like and dislike about their current location? How do they want to use the space? This is called the programmatic phase. Once all this information is gathered, we begin design schematics and present layout options based on the collected data. After a scheme is selected, we enter the design development phase. This is where we start to design the space in 2D while also working with

3D sketches in order to make sure that all the parts and pieces fit and that codes are met. Construction drawings are drawn with all the pertinent details, and once we get permitted, the fun begins in construction. It's always great to see 2D become a reality. It's always a nerve-racking process but it never ceases to amaze me when I see something that I sketched-out on paper come to life.

aw: Describe your favorite room in your house.

KM: I live in Barton Hills in an apartment with six units and my place juts out of the hill. The living

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When Elizabeth Gibson Serrato, owner of Eliza Page, moved her boutique to the 2nd Street District, McCarty jumped at the opportunity to design the space. It was one of McCarty's first solo projects and she called Serrato the "dream client," due to her boundless energy and enthusiasm about the design. McCarty approached the boutique as a gallery space, keeping it simple, with a clean backdrop that showcased jewelry and other merchandise.

After graduating from Texas Tech University in 1992, McCarty joined the Peace Corps in Bolivia, where she worked as a rural sanitation and health volunteer. McCarty showed up for her first day wearing a dress and heels and stood out among the anthropology, agriculture and international business degree graduates. She continued to wear dresses, but traded her heels for French combat boots, while helping the locals design latrines and water systems. McCarty said that she is still doing the same work, just back to wearing her heels.



Story by Autumn Rhea Carpenter
 Photos by Scott Ramsay

McCarty Knows Good Design

Simple Tricks to Improve Your Living Space

room is my favorite space and it is where I work when I am home. I have a great floor-to-ceiling corner window that looks onto the trees. My landlady has been great and very tolerant of "changes" that I have made. I removed the carpet and skim-coated the concrete floors with a leveling material that gives me that natural concrete floor look. I have started to collect local artists' work, including work by Sodalitas, Barry George, D'Ette Cole and Paco.

See INTERIOR DESIGNER on page 12



Owner and creative director of Loft, Kelly Judd Schwartz and her husband, Offir, were excited to work with a designer who was also striking out on her own and who understood the challenges associated with the venture. Schwartz wanted a space that was "loft-like," with an open, bright and airy feeling. She wanted the space to be easily reconfigured, similar to a stage set that could be used to create room-like spaces for the furniture. McCarty accomplished their vision.



Women Are More Sensitive to Pain than Men

For centuries, it has been generally believed women are the more sensitive gender. A new study says that, when it comes to pain, women are in fact more sensitive.

“Because women have more nerve receptors, they may experience pain more powerfully than men, requiring different surgical techniques to help manage their pain and make them feel comfortable. Women averaged 34 nerve fibers per square centimeter of facial skin while men only averaged 17 nerve fibers.”

- Robert Caridi, M.D.
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INTERIOR DESIGNER from page 11

aw: Where do you go for inspiration?

KM: I love to travel. When I visit a different city, I love to explore hole-in-the-wall restaurants because there is always something creative happening with color palettes. Magazines, books and movies are also influential sources.

aw: Who are some of your influences, including artists, architects and designers who have impacted you?

KM: Michael Hsu - I have worked with Michael on various types of projects for a little over five years. He's an amazing designer both on paper and in process.

Tina Syring - an interior designer I worked with in Dallas who taught me what it means to be able to draw what you design and the value of that skill.

Barbara Barry - I respect her detail and classic approach. She is also a great business model.

aw: How did you land your position at Dick Clark Architecture and what projects did you complete while employed there?

KM: In 2000, I interviewed all over town and just didn't feel the right fit. Dick Clark Architecture was my 13th interview, and the last one of the day before I got in my car to drive back to Dallas. I walked in and knew it was where I belonged; there was a great energy.

While there, I worked on Fino Restaurant, Maiko Sushi Lounge, Maudie's Hacienda, the '04 Project on South Congress, a number of residences, the lobby of the 555 and a few pediatric clinics.

aw: Do you believe architecture is still a boys' club or have more women joined the ranks?

KM: It's unfortunate - I think there are still some areas of the boys' club mentality, but I think it's also waning because of the fact that so many women are in the business. There have always been a lot of male designers and I think interior design is a profession where men and women stand on equal footing.

aw: What spurred you to venture out on your own?

KM: Leaving the nest is a natural process in this industry. I was ready to take a chance on myself. At the



same time, two other designers from Dick's office also felt it was their time and now we (Michael Hsu and Jamie Chioco) share an office space together. We're collaborating on Satellite Café, a restaurant from the Flipnotics group, Anne Kelso Salon and Spa and a few other projects.

aw: Whom do you credit for a successful first year?

KM: I have been very fortunate to be very busy this first year. I'm comfortable with the design element, but am still learning the business aspect. I've had tremendous help from my support staff: my intern Megan, bookkeeper Virginia Adkins, accountant Katheryn Biel, business development guru Clair Mealy, graphic artist Kathleen Sakurah Harrison and attorney Amber Vasquez. All of these women are running their own businesses. I also have the good fortune of sharing my days with Jamie Chioco of Chioco Design Studio and Michael Hsu and his great staff, which includes Jay Colombo, Jenny Tarn, Kevin Stewart and Sheryl Jordan. ★



One of the biggest challenges in designing Loft was the expanse of space and finding a good location for the wrap desk that could be both a focal point as well as a good location from which to view the entire store without any big blind spots. Schwartz and McCarty were able to collaborate to develop the perfect balance.

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McCarty's 3 SIMPLE TRICKS To Improve Your Living Space On A Budget

PAINT

Freshen up those walls. Is the paint too dark? Dirty? Serious? Lighten up. Does your space feel too big and empty? Darken the paint. Boring and neutral? Add some color.

LIGHTING

The most important yet most overlooked aspect of design is lighting. Someone can have the most beautiful room and ruin it with bad lighting. Amazing progress has been made with the color temperature of fluorescent lighting but this type of lighting should be limited to utility areas. No one and no piece of furniture looks good under cold. Instead of using that big overhead light, use table and floor lamps.

PILLOWS

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