

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

Greater Houston Edition
themetropolitanbuilder.com



Nouveau Luxury Builders Focuses on the New

Hardwood Products Offers
Quality, Service, Pricing

Dialogue with a Designer:
Melissa Snow Designs, LLC

Handcrafted, Elegant, one-of-a-kind wooden surfaces made to perfection



- wide selection of*
- *wood species*
 - *edge treatments*
 - *construction styles*
 - *textures*
 - *distressing*



*When it comes to High Quality Custom Wood Flooring & Rugs
There's only place to go - **International Flooring***



713-895-7562 office
richard@ifhouston.com
www.ifhouston.com



BATHS
OF AMERICA
FINE BATH & KITCHEN GALLERY
bathsofamerica.com

 **713-572-2284**



Come see our live luxury kitchen with fully functioning appliances and fixtures at our Galleria Showroom.

GALLERIA
3005 W Loop S #150
Houston, TX 77027

SUGAR LAND
15345 Southwest Fwy
Sugar Land, TX 77478

SHOWROOM HOURS
Mon - Fri 9AM to 6PM
Sat 10AM to 4PM | Sun Closed

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

An Industry Trade Publication | July 2021



Feature Story

04 Nouveau Luxury Builders Focuses on the New

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

03 Publisher's Note

08 Immerse In These Inspired Home Products!

By Linda Jennings

10 Hardwood Products Offers Quality, Service, Pricing

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

14 Dialogue with a Designer - Melissa Snow Designs, LLC

For Local Information Contact:
themetropolitanbuilder@yahoo.com
832-317-4505
www.themetropolitanbuilder.com

5161 San Felipe St. #320
Houston, Texas 77056
832-317-4505

Owner/Publisher
Giselle Bernard

Editor
Kathy Bowen Stolz

Magazine Layout & Design
Pamela Larson

Website
www.themetropolitanbuilder.com

Printed in the USA
by Seaway Printing

The Metropolitan Builder is a local trade publication published monthly in an informative and positive manner. Copies are mailed, free of charge, to building professionals throughout the greater Houston area. The opinions and facts expressed in The Metropolitan Builder magazine are those of the authors or columnist and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher, nor do they constitute an endorsement of products or services herein. The Metropolitan Builder strives to ensure the accuracy of the magazine's contents. However, should inaccuracies or omissions occur, we do not assume responsibility. The Metropolitan Builder reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. This publication may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, without the expressed prior written permission of the publisher.

Proud member of the GHBA, the Texas Association of Builders and the NAHB.



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Giselle Bernard
Publisher



Dear Readers:

Can you believe that we are already heading into the month of June? June means higher temperatures and humidity – two factors that can stress the body's ability to cool itself.

Heat illness becomes a special concern of mine since I've experienced heat exhaustion before – a pretty scary situation, to say the least. I'm not much on drinking a lot of water and found out first hand that working or playing in the sun's heat while not hydrating is a recipe for heat-related illnesses.

There are three major forms of heat illnesses: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke, with heat stroke being a life-threatening condition.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps or muscle spasms are caused by heavy sweating and affect the arms, legs or stomach. Although heat cramps don't cause permanent damage, they can be quite painful. To prevent them, drink electrolyte solutions such as Gatorade during the day and eat more fruits like bananas.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is a condition more serious than heat cramps. When you don't drink enough fluids to replace what you're sweating away, your internal air-conditioning system becomes horribly overworked. The symptoms include headache, heavy sweating, intense thirst, dizziness, fatigue, loss of coordination, nausea, impaired judgment, loss of appetite, hyperventilation, tingling in hands or feet, anxiety, cool moist skin, weak and rapid pulse (120-200) and low-to-normal blood pressure.

People suffering these symptoms should be moved to a cool location, such as a shaded area or air-conditioned building. Have them lie down with their feet slightly elevated. Loosen their clothing and apply cool, wet cloths or fan them. Have them drink water or electrolyte drinks. Have them checked by medical personnel. Victims of heat exhaustion should avoid strenuous activity for at least a day, and they should continue to drink water to replace lost body fluids.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke kills and happens when the body has been depleted of its water and salt. The body's temperature rises to deadly levels. Someone usually experiences heat cramps and/or heat exhaustion before experiencing symptoms of heat stroke, but not always. Heat stroke is sometimes mistaken for heart attack, especially in a work setting.

The early symptoms of heat stroke include a high body temperature (103 degrees F), an absence of sweating, hot red or flushed dry skin, rapid pulse, difficulty breathing, constricted pupils and any/all of the signs or symptoms of heat exhaustion. In an advanced state of heat stroke, the victim may exhibit bizarre behavior and have high blood pressure, seizures or convulsions, collapse, loss of consciousness and a body temperature of over 108° F. It is vital to lower a heat stroke victim's body temperature. Seconds count. Pour water on him/her, fan the victim, or apply cold packs. Call 911 to get an ambulance on the way as soon as possible.

To prevent heat-related illnesses take the following health tips into consideration:

- Condition yourself for working in hot environments. Start slowly, then build up to more physical work. Allow your body to adjust over a few days.
- Drink lots of liquids. Electrolyte drinks are good for replacing both water and minerals lost through sweating. Never drink alcohol and avoid caffeinated beverages like coffee and pop.
- Take a break if you notice you're getting a headache or you start feeling overheated. Cool down for a few minutes before going back to work.
- Wear light-weight, light-colored clothing when working out in the sun.
- Take advantage of fans and air-conditioners.
- And, believe it or not, get enough sleep at night.

A little knowledge goes a long way in avoiding heat illnesses....

Giselle Bernard, Owner/Publisher



Nouveau Luxury Builders Focuses on the New

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

It's no wonder that Nouveau Luxury Builders' owner John Liu chose to include "nouveau" (French for new) in his company's name, for his vision for building focuses on the new -- new style, new ideas, new concepts, new technology -- innovation with a creative flair.

"Custom homes should be different from other homes. I want my homes to stand out. A lot of so-called custom home builders still do cookie-cutter homes. You have to spend a lot of extra time walking in untested waters to build the unique, luxury custom homes that I build. But I like to take that challenge. We are the one for those who want to build trendy and timeless homes sporting new designs and new techniques," Liu stated.

A builder with 20 years of experience, Liu uses speculative homes to showcase his creative designs, trendy style and quality craftsmanship. "I use a spec home as an identity.

With a spec home, the customer can see, can touch our work." His 2017 spec home was sold at \$7.8 million and his 2021 spec home was sold at \$8.7 million; both were recognized as the most expensive new home of the year by Houston Business Journal.

"The design of a house is like a fashion. It changes over time. Starting a few years ago, the trend is turning to a clean, modern, minimalist style."

To achieve a minimalist look in the interiors, Nouveau Luxury Builders eliminates crown mouldings, baseboards and window and door casings. "A lot of time trims and mouldings are used to cover imperfections. To get rid of trims, the workmanship must be perfect," he continued. "I always encourage my subs to try new things and expand their skill set," he added.

Many elements of this minimalist style came from Europe,



where Liu loves to travel to pick up ideas for design, materials and technology. One of his innovations was emulating the white mortar that encases the brick and stone exterior of the Design Museum Denmark in Copenhagen, which he visited with his family in 2013. “People here admire European chic. With Instagram and Pinterest you can see a lot of stuff without traveling.”

Inspired by the exterior of Design Museum Denmark, in 2016 he built a spec house with a white exterior that looks like stucco but it is actually brick fully sacked with mortar. It is a traditional home but has a modern, clean feel, he said. A few clients have hired him to build custom homes for them because they liked the look of that particular house and wanted a finish just like it. Now that look is everywhere in Houston, Liu noted.

He tries very hard to generate unparalleled design using different materials and colors. He puts special emphasis on kitchens, bars and master baths because those areas are highly visible and frequently used. They need to be uniquely stylish and have practical function, in his opinion. In addition, he pays special attention to powder rooms because they can trigger compliments from the guests on the owner’s style and taste. “Extra time and money invested in these areas are highly perceived.” Liu said.

“I’m not a typical builder by any means. I stumbled into
Continued on page 6





Continued from page 5

this business by chance,” Liu said with a chuckle. While working as a finance professor at the University of Houston and Our Lady of the Lake University, he got involved in commercial real estate development through consulting. He found that he liked the construction and design aspects of the consulting. He started learning home building and became a full-time residential builder in 2002 with Joy Homes, a small production homes company that developed subdivisions and built homes in the \$150,000-\$250,000 market.

The economic meltdown in 2008, however made him turn from building track homes to custom homes because “when the market is crashing, the value of luxury homes in prestigious neighborhoods sustain well.” He changed the company name to Nouveau Luxury Homes to reflect its new focus. “It’s not a big company, and I don’t really want to get bigger, just want to get better. I’m personally involved in every project.”

John’s primary functions in Nouveau Luxury Builders are in marketing, customer development and design. He is assisted by two project managers who focus more on building process, scheduling and supervision of workmanship and material control. Each of them handles no more than three projects at a time to maintain the quality of each.

Nouveau Luxury Builders constructs 4 to 6 houses each year in the \$2 to 9 million value range. Their size is usually

5,500 to 14,000 sq. ft. Although the company will build in other neighborhoods, the company currently focuses on the Memorial and West University areas of Houston where the real estate is not impacted by economic downturns, according to Liu, who was a banker at one time with the San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington, D.C.

Building a custom home is “highly individualized” to each client and each builder. It’s important for the customer to have a “click” with the builder, this native of China stated. “We cater to discriminating customers who desire to build their style and value into their homes and who want to let their home make a statement of their taste and lifestyle. We are where inspired design meets with unrivaled craftsmanship.

“My clients all want to upgrade their homes, to bring everything to a higher level. They want to build something better than their previous homes, something more trendy and more comfortable,” he continued. His clients typically are business owners, executives or medical professionals between the ages of 40 to 65 who are building their second or third custom home.

The company motto of Integrity, Quality and Reliability sets Nouveau Luxury Builders apart from other contractors, according to its owner, who emphasizes honesty and transparency with his clients. He said he and his staff are perfectionists and certainly try to avoid mistakes, but they will admit and correct mistakes. Quality, to them, means



good building process, good workmanship, good materials and good style.

“A good builder needs to watch the back of the customer,” Liu stated. “We always try to save every possible dollar for our customers while adhering to the highest quality standard. We also pledge to deliver on-time and on-budget during construction and provide unwavering warranty service after closing.”

To contact Nouveau Luxury Builders, call John Liu at 713-410-3927 or email john.nlbuilders@gmail.com or visit www.nlbuilders.com.

The office is located at 1111 Katy Freeway, Suite 910, Houston, TX 77079

Immerse In These Inspired Home Products

By Linda Jennings

In today's economy, savvy builders and homeowners are thinking carefully before spending money and looking for fresh yet smart products that will enhance the value,

beauty and enjoyment of their homes. Let's take a look at some thoughtfully appointed fixtures, fittings and hardware with longevity!



MTI Baths Bowie freestanding tub

PRETTY IN PLEATS

MTI Baths celebrates innovative design with the unveiling of its stunning new Bowie freestanding tub. Immediately eye-catching for its unique “pleated” exterior, the Bowie adds unexpected texture to the bathroom with an exciting style that is chic, fun and amazingly versatile. Bowie is a sculptural masterpiece destined to be a standout in any bathroom setting. The tub measures 70” x 35” and is offered as a soaker or air bath, it is made to order and hand-crafted from MTI’s signature SculptureStone material, a mostly organic mixture that gives the look and feel of molded stone. Bowie is available in white or biscuit with eight different exterior color options as well as a choice of matte or highly polished gloss finishes.

SENSATIONS OF WATER AND LIGHT

Gessi combines ethereal elements of water and light to create a spectacular shower system known as COLOUR. As part of the brand’s signature Private Wellness Program, Colour employs refreshing waterfalls, stimulating hydro-massage, soft nebulized mists, and mood-changing hues to produce a sensory shower like no other. Users may select and adjust water jets and program their own chromatherapy



COLOUR chromatherapy shower collection by Gessi

LED display by means of a digital keypad. The pairing of flowing water and glowing lights promotes an aura of harmony and helps to refresh and restore the body, mind and spirit. The COLOUR Collection is crafted from stainless steel and available in a variety of finishes.



Viaggio’s Quadrato Leather Rosette with Quadrato Crystal Knob in Titanium Gray

GOING GRAY

The color gray is having a moment as one of the most in-demand hues in interior design. And Viaggio Hardware’s

newest finish option meets this trend head-on. Called Titanium Gray, this beautiful shade is a unique choice for door hardware that has warm undertones and an effortless blending of gray and bronze. Viaggio offers the Titanium Gray finish on their entire line of luxury door hardware, including the textured Motivo Collection, interior, and exterior sets, and even coordinating deadbolts. Each piece is carefully crafted from forged brass using a time-tested that is precision polished and then lacquered for amazing durability. Viaggio Hardware is produced in the heart of Europe by combining the best of engineering and artistry to create a truly exceptional product line.



Libra tub from BainUltra

SOPHISTICATED SYMMETRY

The latest freestanding tub design from BainUltra exudes balance and symmetry. Named in honor of the celestial constellation depicting weighted scales, the Libra tub is generously sized to comfortably accommodate two bathers with identical sloping interior walls. It is offered in two configurations with the brand’s full spectrum of luxurious therapy options for a true sensory bath experience. The Libra tub is crafted of 100% pure acrylic and polished to a beautiful glossy white. This non-porous surface is extremely durable, resistant to stains and scratches, and easy to clean and maintain. This tub is sure to bring balance to any bath design.

SIZE MATTERS

Easy Sanitary Solutions has revolutionized drain installations with their new super-slim design Xs Series Shower Drain. The Xs is the world’s smallest linear drain that combines state-of-the-art technology with a super-slim design for a minimalist aesthetic. The Xs design features a subtle small frame on all four sides. This revolutionary drain guarantees easy installation and a 100% waterproof result for residential and contemporary applications. It

Continued on page 13



12902 Mula Lane
Stafford, TX 77477
P. 281.495.2800
www.wrwatson.com
wwatson@wrwatson.com



COUNTERTOPS

Laminate | Solid Surface | Granite | Quartz



W.R. Watson's State-of-the-Art Granite & Quartz Fabrication Plant Utilizes Computerized Saws, Edge Profilers, Crane and Vacuum Lifts



713 Lehman
Houston, TX 77018
713-695-2001
www.arkconcrete.com



- A Texas Based Cast Stone Manufacturer
- Over 40 years of industry experience
- 30,000 sq ft warehouse
- Trained Craftsman
- Custom Cast Stone Products
- Natural Stone

Residential & Commercial
Large & Small
Exterior
Interior - Fireplace & Vent Hoods





Hardwood Products Offers Quality, Service, Pricing

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Despite Hurricane Harvey, the COVID-19 pandemic and the international shortage of lumber, Hardwood Products' Chris Gibbs reports that his family-owned warehouse lumber and custom milling business is up to each and every challenge.

"We take a lot of pride in keeping a lot of inventory. We've got the material to cover just about everybody. Despite the current shortages in the industry, we haven't run out of our main items. That's a point of pride for me," Gibbs, who is general manager and vice president, said.

"We try to bring in quality products with higher grades of lumber and plywood at a competitive price than you might find in a big box store," Gibbs emphasized. "We also have a lot of different sizes and widths available. And we deliver to Houston, Spring and Pasadena areas, usually the next day at no charge."

The company offers a variety of hardwoods, including

alder, basswood, beech, birch, cherry, mahogany, red and white oak, poplar, teak and walnut. Its softwoods include cedar, cypress, Douglas fir, ponderosa pine and yellow pine. Its wood-based products include veneers, particle board, laminate, medium-density fiberboard (MDF) and melamine.

Unlike big box home improvement stores, Hardwood Products also sells 25 species of exotic and semi-exotic woods, such as African mahogany, afrosomia, lacewood, leopardwood, purpleheart, wenge and zebrawood.

Hardwood Products also covers contractors' needs by selling Pionite®, etch tape, glues and drawer hardware. However, it doesn't sell doors and framing materials, Gibbs pointed out.

Ten years ago the Gibbs family expanded its services to include custom milling and moulding. "We started out with one small moulder, and now we have four," Chris said. "We have a line-up of common moulding profiles in stock



and can fill custom orders within seven business days.” It offers moulding in a variety of hardwoods in addition to decorative wood products, such as corbels, posts and columns, table legs and feet and fireplace mantels.

Among its customers are residential and commercial contractors, remodelers, cabinet shops, schools districts and universities, but it will help anybody who walks in the doors.

Gibbs explained that the company places a high value on taking care of people. “Our customers say that they prefer Hardwood Products over many of our competitors because of our attention to service, product knowledge and the way orders are managed.

“Customers can actually pick out individual pieces of lumber and plywood from our warehouse. We are transparent. We have nothing to hide here as far as our grade,” this second-generation lumberman explained. “We will deliver that hand-picked lumber in bundles or stacked.”

Customer service is key to the company’s success. “We try our best to make everybody happy. It’s a pretty challenging industry. It’s a very competitive industry. We measure our success by the number of accounts that we acquire and hang on to. It’s tough to maintain and retain accounts. We’re know we’re successful because we’re taking

Continued on page 12

Family Owned & Serving the Market for over 30 Years says it all.

- Custom Milling
- Hardwood Plywood
- Decorative Woods
- Wood Appliques
- Hardwood
- Exotics
- Hardware
- Moulding

HARDWOOD
— PRODUCTS —

1585 W. Sam Houston Pkwy N. Bldg. A | Houston, TX 77043
713-984-8904 | www.hwp.us

Delivery Services Available



Continued from page 11

business away from the other guys. That speaks volumes for us.”

Gibbs recognizes that his employees are critical to the company’s success. A total of 29 employees work in outside and inside sales, warehousing, production, delivery



and the office. “I have a great crew that’s been with me a long time -- 15, 16, 20, 21 years. They are very capable and set the foundation for our success pretty well.”

That success got its start in 1977 when Chris’ dad, Cy, and his brother, Bob, bought a rail-car-full of plywood that another lumber company had refused. Chris has worked for the company since he was 11 years old, becoming a full-time employee 31 years ago after stints at two other lumber companies.

“I thought for sure I’d be doing something different, although I had no idea what it would be. Working with wood gives me a good feeling. It makes me happy. We’re not interested in going anywhere, and we’re not interested in selling the company,” Chris stated. “We’re producing good numbers and good products. In fact, we may add a branch in Houston.”

***To contact Hardwood Products,
call 713-984-8904,
email chrisgibbs@hwp.us
or visit www.hwp.us.***

***Its warehouse is located at
1585 W Sam Houston Pkwy N, Building A,
Houston, TX 77043.***

Demand for Homeownership is Strong While Affordability Challenges Remain



As the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) celebrates National Homeownership Month in June, more Americans now indicate they are actively trying to buy a home than compared to a year ago. These efforts however are slowed down by escalating bids from other buyers and challenges

finding homes they can afford, according to survey results from NAHB's most recent Housing Trends Report.

“The value of homeownership has never been greater as evidenced by the increase in active buyers this year,” said NAHB Chairman Chuck Fowke, a custom home builder from Tampa, Fla. “Home builders are eager to meet this demand, but are hamstrung by high lumber costs. Policymakers must seek out solutions to resolve the lumber price problem to help more families achieve the American Dream.”

Soaring lumber prices that have tripled over the past 12 months have caused the price of an average new single-family home to increase by \$35,872, according to an analysis by NAHB. Further adding to housing affordability challenges, building material prices have by and large been steadily rising since 2020.

Millennials are the most likely generation to have moved on from just planning a home purchase to actively searching for a home to buy: 73 percent of this generation's prospective buyers were already active buyers in the first quarter of 2021, up from 54 percent a year earlier. Several



factors are driving this trend, including the fear of missing out on still relatively low mortgage rates, desire for more space due to COVID-19 and the desire to move out to outlying suburbs.

Geographically, larger shares of prospective buyers in every region are actively trying to find a home to buy compared to a year ago, but the increase is most notable in the Northeast (56 percent to 74 percent) and in the West (51 percent to 69 percent).

As the share of prospective buyers actively searching for a home continues to increase, the length of time spent searching continues to grow. In the first quarter of 2021, 64 percent of buyers actively engaged in the purchase process have spent three months or longer looking, compared to 56 percent a year earlier. This marks the ninth consecutive year-over-year gain in the share of active buyers looking for three-plus months for a home to buy.

Continued from page 9

is offered in an exciting array of contemporary finishes, from brushed black steel, brushed cyprum, brushed gold, brushed oiled rubbed bronze, brushed stainless steel, chrome-plated stainless steel, and even popular matte finishes including matte black, and matte white.

For more information visit:

www.bainultra.com

www.easydrainusa.com

www.gessi.com

www.mtibaths.com

www.viaggiohardware.com



Easy Drain Xs Series linear drain



Dialogue with a Designer

Melissa Snow Designs, LLC

BATHS OF AMERICA opened its doors in January 2005 when brothers Ali and Zeeshan Sultanali decided to start selling plumbing and tiles to the Houston market. Baths of America focuses on customer service and partners only with brands offering quality products and customer service. In addition to plumbing, Baths of America now offers door and cabinet hardware, major appliances, cabinetry, and countertops. It has turned into a one-stop shop for designers, builders, and architects, offering the latest designs and trends in the market.

This month BATHS OF AMERICA speaks with Melissa Snow, owner of Melissa Snow Designs, LLC. Melissa started the company wanting to bring a personal touch to an often cookie cutter process. Recognizing a need to make consistent, timeless designs attainable for those who seek the services of a qualified professional that will work with clients wants. Because of her unique background and expertise, Melissa is able to execute original distinctive, yet timeless designs while also delivering solid, reliable service to her clients. The company strives to bring their clients' vision into reality, giving their clients the highest level of quality in their design while providing the best return on

their design investment. All of their clients have a unique vision. Melissa Snow Designs embraces each project individually, providing fresh, innovative ideas and creative concepts for all project types regardless of the project size or budget. They deliver a custom professional approach to meeting both commercial and residential interior design needs.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What motivated you to go into the interior design field?*

MELISSA SNOW: I enjoy the creative challenge of walking into the space with a client and they describe to me what they want and then we make it reality. I love several aspects of design, anything from the various finishes to selecting the perfect accessory for a client. I enjoy rethinking the space with a client whether it be selecting a new piece or knocking down a wall to open up a space. I enjoy each challenge because it is unique. There's always new problems and new successes. We take on the challenge and that's a lot of our motivation.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?*



MELISSA SNOW: Absolutely, the interior design field has changed a lot. Trends like colors and styles of the interior and exterior of homes have changed dramatically. The use of technology in order for our clients to visually see spaces in 2D and 3D perspective has been a great asset in showing the final desired design for their spaces. Another change has been how we interact with clients. Zoom, texts and emails drive a large part of the ways we now interact with our clients. I also think the expectations and the education of our clients has increased. We love when they come to us with a lot of the key concepts they want to integrate into the design of their home. They expect us to make their dream space come to life and we accept and love that challenge.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *How can an experienced interior designer help a custom home builder or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?*

MELISSA SNOW: Definitely an experienced interior designer can help a custom builder or remodeling contractor. We need to be on the same page. We attempt to create a functional design space that represents the beauty the client wants to see. Budgets are a top priority. We can assist them to suggest items to the client or builder that are within the budget allotted. Also an interior designer can keep the project on track to meet the set deadlines for when the selections are necessary for the homebuilder or contractor.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What sets you apart from other designers?*

MELISSA SNOW: Melissa Snow Designs is a customer service business. A key characteristic that sets good customer service apart is not to just hear but listen to what the client needs, wants and desires for their space. It is important to have a beautiful functioning space. I feel the client should have the final decision since they will be the one spending the most time in the space that is designed. The client truly leads the process in the way we approach each aspect. Our company is very flexible in the process when working with a client. The client may desire to work hand in hand with Melissa Snow Designs. The client may allow our company to select and then bring options to them to view. Sometimes we put a space together and show the client the final space completely designed. It is all up to the client.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What has been your most challenging project and why?*

MELISSA SNOW: We designed a 20,000 square foot restaurant project that was a historical property and truthfully that was the most challenging. As the design team on site daily between balancing what we could rehab compare to what needs to go in new – think mechanical, electrical, plumbing, structural – and to keep it within the historical landmark guidelines it took a lot of patience and we acquired a lot of knowledge. As always the most challenging things in life and in design end up being the thing that brings us the most joy. We face challenges daily, from possibly items not being installed correctly to a paint

Continued on page 16



MELISSA SNOW: The client and Melissa Snow Designs usually have an initial meeting to discuss their budgets and show their inspiration photos usually saved on Pinterest, Houzz, etc. After formulating a priority and a plan we will then set out to select the perfect design elements to complete the space. The builders and remodelers have many working relationships with several locations and vendors. This keeps the material selection process dynamic allowing us to see what is fresh along with seeing what is consistent good quality. As the design process evolves and a similar pattern of choices emerge from the client, one can hone in on specialized vendors really developing their vision.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *Speaking about staying current, how do you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?*

MELISSA SNOW: Our company attends design seminars and trade shows, we receive several publications and discuss trends with our working partners. The web and TV have a host of resources. Clients bring new things to the table as well. It may not be a product or a finish, but a concept that is completely out of the box and we have to turn it into reality. As in any business there is a need to keep educating, growing and being exposed to the newest trends in the market.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What would be your recommendation for “what to do first” in a decorating project when working with the builders and/or homeowners?*

MELISSA SNOW: For the client or builder – visual references such as pictures are one of the best. Think of a collage – you may not like everything in the pictures but by bringing several pictures together they end up having an overlapping continuity that can take a lot of the guesswork out of it. Besides saving ideas and pictures of what the client would like the space to become I would also suggest to take some time to educate yourself on some of the costs. For example, view some granite slabs at a supplier to get a gauge for what the material costs per square foot of what the client might prefer. This also helps to know that sometimes what we want just isn’t in the budget.



Continued from page 15

color that needs to be tweaked a bit. In the end how you handle your challenges tends to say worlds about you.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders’ and remodelers’ clients?*

Melissa Snow Designs
7941 Katy Freeway #430
Houston, TX 77024
281-639-0039

Melissa @melissasnowdesigns.com
www.melissasnowdesigns.com



DOORS THAT SUIT YOUR DESIGN STYLE.

HOUSTON'S FINEST HOMES CHOOSE THOMAS GARAGE DOOR.



Building or Remodeling? Choose a Custom Door.

Get the Strength of Steel & the beauty of wood handcrafted from the finest cedar, cypress or redwood. Smooth & rough finishes available. Custom doors made to fit your home with over 30 years of experience. It's an affordable way to update your curb appeal.



Short Lead Times

Great Pricing

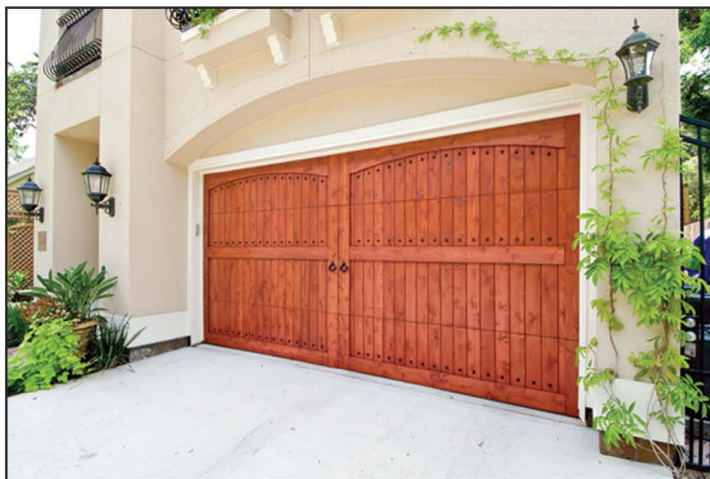
Professional Installation

(We don't buy 'em, we BUILD 'em!)

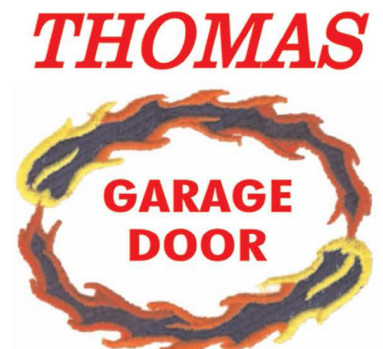
Handcrafted in Houston by the
**Master Door Maker
John Thomas**

713-725-8787

FREE ESTIMATES



Visit our photo gallery & shop door styles at:
www.jthomasdoor.com | jthomasdoor@hotmail.com



The Metropolitan Builder
5161 San Felipe Street #320
Houston, Texas 77056



Community HOME GUIDE

7 Reasons to Advertise on Community Home Guide.com

1 Cost Effective

You work hard for your money. That's why we keep our advertising rates as low as possible. A listing on our directory website is much less expensive than other advertising methods giving you more bang for your buck!

2 Measurable Results

Unlike traditional marketing methods where it's hard to track success, we offer key metrics and real-time traffic stats so you know exactly how many people are seeing your listing.

3 Locally Focused Marketing

By focusing exclusively on the local market, we're able to target the customers that matter most to you - local customers.

4 Get More Traffic

A listing on our directory website is a great way to get more visitors to your website and more customers to your business.

5 Increase Brand Awareness

Let's face it - the more exposure your brand gets, the better. That's why a listing on our directory website is a critical component to an overall healthy marketing strategy.

6 Always Accessible

Our mobile-friendly website allows potential customers to search and find your business 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from any device - including desktop, tablets and smartphones.

7 Your Competitors are Advertising

If you're still on the fence about advertising on our directory website, consider this one very important fact: your competitors are doing it. Each day that passes when you're not taking advantage of advertising on our site is another day you're losing market share to someone else.

Finally...a fast, easy and affordable way to grow your small business online.



Welcome to the Community Home Guide

Houston's newest digital marketplace; connecting homeowners with the local home builders, remodelers, renovation specialists & small home service companies.

We believe that Small Business is the backbone of our great country; therefore, the directory focuses on supporting our local, small

businesses. The very same businesses that are often the character of our neighborhoods and communities.

It is time to make buying from small businesses a conscious part of our routines, just like physical exercise — something you do because of the many benefits it brings.

Get Started Today: www.communityhomeguide.com

Phone: 832-317-4505 • Email: Gbernard43@aol.com

Sponsored By: The Metropolitan Builder

