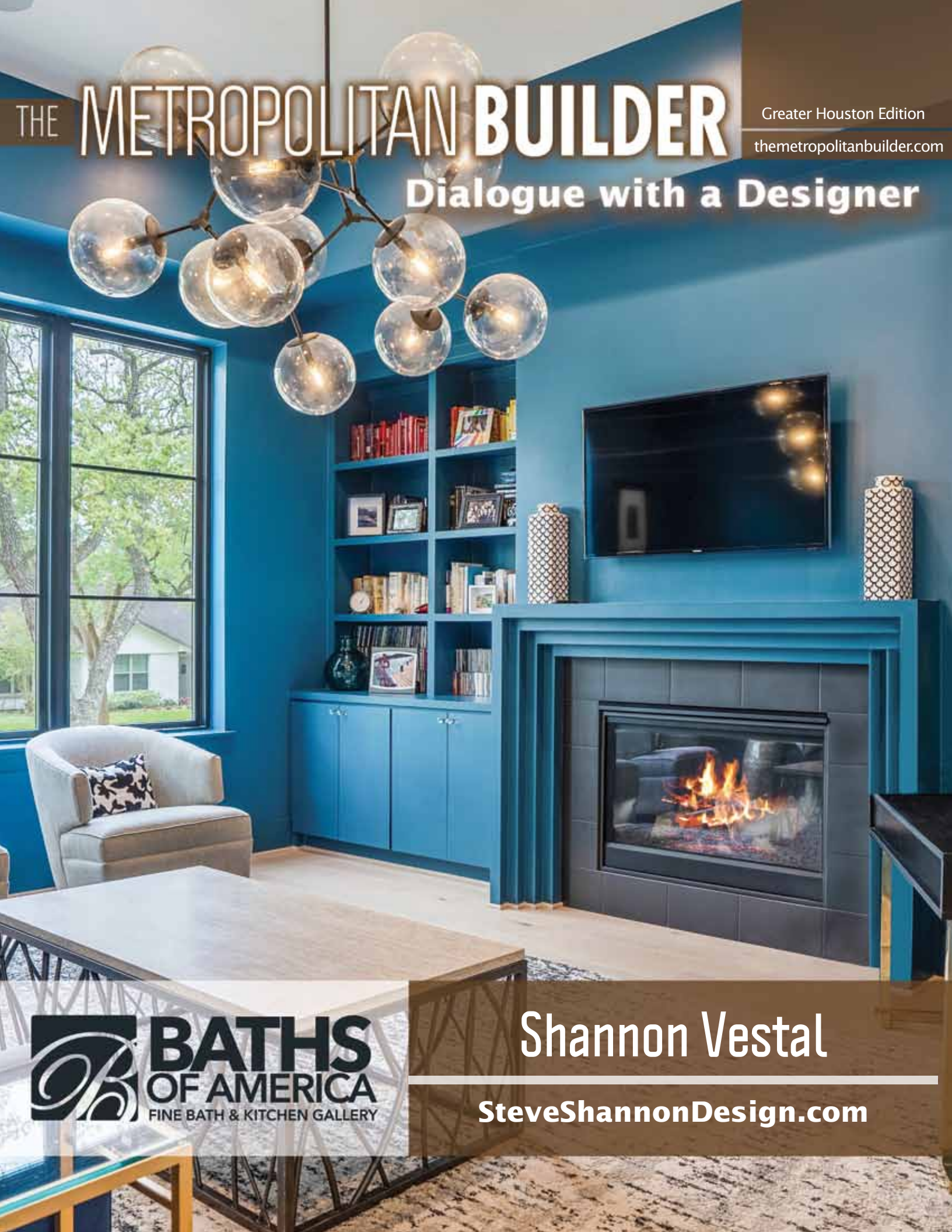


THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

Greater Houston Edition
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Dialogue with a Designer



 **BATHS
OF AMERICA**
FINE BATH & KITCHEN GALLERY

Shannon Vestal

SteveShannonDesign.com



Dialogue with a Designer

Shannon Vestal

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 Shannon Vestal, an interior designer and native Houstonian who has been creating classic designs with her personal touch for more than 25 years. A graduate of The Art Institute of Houston, she spent 11 years in the commercial design industry before deciding her time would be better invested in her three beautiful daughters. After her girls were old enough to navigate life without constant supervision, she dipped her toe back into the business waters she loves – first by staging homes for sale and then by remodeling baths and kitchens. In 2015 she met her business partner, Steve Iltis, a residential designer who has been designing homes for more than 30 years. While working on a model

home project for a custom home builder, they discovered that their team approach would not only be beneficial to a home builder, but also to the clients who needed a bit more direction to achieve their goal of a beautiful and functional home while staying within budget.

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

Shannon Vestal: Growing up, I was fortunate to not only travel in the United States but also internationally. This amazing opportunity provided a glimpse into the history of architecture and design. A weekend stay at Thornbury Castle, which dates back to the early 1500s, was my introduction to the Tudor style. Vast stone walls, an ornate red brick chimney, intricate cast stone fireplaces and massive oriel windows were awe-inspiring for me. A visit to the Vatican provided me an elaborate view of several architectural styles, including Roman, Baroque, Gothic and Renaissance. These experiences, along with my interest, including the functionality of the spaces around me, led me to my study of interior design.

BATHS OF AMERICA: How can an experienced interior designer help custom home builders or remodeling



contractors with their building or remodeling projects?

Shannon Vestal: The key to any successful custom home build or remodeling project is transparency. Budget and timelines are the two words we hear the most. Throw the words “interior designer” in there and most people, builders included, assume that the project will now be way over budget and delayed. Quite the opposite is true. An experienced designer will not only create a beautiful design but will also, after understanding your budget and your builder allowances, make selections that are within those allowances. Making sure that the selections are sent to the builder on or before the time they are needed keeps your project on the targeted timeline. Having an interior designer on board from the design stage can save clients’ money overall in their change-order fees, labor costs and interest paid on construction loans without increasing the overall budget and without affecting completion of the project. My goal to stay in budget is turned into a fun game with my clients many times. If we are under budget in some categories, we have the flexibility to spend more on a particular light fixture or fancy tile! Who says working within a budget can’t be fun?

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

Shannon Vestal: I felt the best way to answer this question would be for you to hear from a client as well as a builder.

“Shannon was always available to travel to various vendors around the city to get the look that would fit our style. She did a great job of accomplishing how we wanted the spaces to look by learning our preferences, but also by helping us





to consider options we would not have thought of on our own to fit within that style. She used her expertise to guide us in our decisions, without pressure, and all the while remaining within budget! Shannon went on site several times and continuously worked with our builder to aid the process through completion.” – B.W.

“I enjoy working with Shannon for several reasons: her organization and ability to stay within budget without sacrificing quality of product. Most importantly, she shows compassion for everyone she works with and not just passion for interior design.” – N.R

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

Shannon Vestal: The selections process for me starts when the home is in the design phase. It’s important that I understand the overall look and feel of the home our clients

are trying to achieve. I ask for inspiration photos of interior and exterior elements of the home that are important to them and why. Understanding what their dream home looks like to them enables me to provide my vision.

For more information contact:

Shannon Vestal,

Co-Owner, SteveShannonDesign.Com

Phone: 832.334.7790

Email: shannon@steveshannondesign.com

Website: steveshannondesign.com



713.572.2284

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