

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

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Dialogue with a Designer



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

Blue Jay Interiors

Carly Filbin and Stephanie Jones



Dialogue with a Designer

Blue Jay Interiors

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 Carly R Filbin, RID. Carly, Co-Owner and Principal Designer of Blue Jay Interiors, and her partner Stephanie Jones launched their successful full-service Interior Design Firm in 2020 after their client relationship transitioned from a friendship to the launch of their business. Carly is a Registered Interior Designer with more than a decade of experience, spanning multiple disciplines, including residential interior design, luxury residential project management, as well as commercial natural stone and tile expertise. Her experience results in extensive knowledge of the industry.

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

Carly: As a young girl I loved to sketch different family members' homes. I recently found some of these sketches and the details I noted in each were pretty impressive! Long story short I took one Interior Design class in my 2nd semester of college and I was hooked. I knew this is what I wanted to do, and I haven't looked back.

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

Carly: Wow, well the short answer would be the Title Act. When I was in school the goal was to get licensed so that I could use the title "Interior Designer". While I was in school that was dissolved. For designers who went to school to set themselves apart, we now use the appellation RID behind our name. This means we passed the NCIDQ Exam and keep up with 12 Continuing Education classes per year, which help us stay abreast of the latest and greatest in the industry.

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



Living Room before above, Living Room After on opposite page.

Carly: At Blue Jay Interiors our goal is to create a “dream team” alongside the client and builder or remodeler. Our goal is to work together seamlessly to bring the client’s expectations and dreams to life. The best way to start the process is early!

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

Carly: Our goal is to make the process enjoyable. We love design and want the client to enjoy the design process, as well as the end result.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What has been your most challenging project and why? This is a hard one... I think that all design projects have their challenges.*

Carly: Today I think design takes patience. If I could tell clients one thing, it would be that “the wait will be worth it”. Whether that is pertaining to waiting on the right builder, the right trades for a remodel job, or the right piece of furniture. Good design is thoughtful and planned out, it is not hurried or rushed.

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

Carly: I typically begin by asking if they have a vision for the space. Every client is different and some have



very specific design goals, while others are unsure, but they know they do not like what they have. We start with discovery questions regarding function, form, and who will be using the space.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?*

Carly: Something that I see often is when a homeowner does not explain the level of materials they are looking for in a job. Material choices can change an entire budget. When you hire a designer early we can help you identify the materials you are looking for so that these can be budgeted/ planned for accordingly.

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?*

Carly: As I mentioned above I have to complete 12 hours per year of continuing education, this helps me stay up on topics of my choice within the industry. As well as taking any opportunity to tour different facilities that build or design products we specify.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What is your favorite design style?*

Carly: When clients ask me this I always say, it does not matter what my style is- what is YOUR design style? I



pride myself on being able to achieve any design aesthetic that the client is looking for. I truly enjoy being able to move from style to style through each design project, it keeps my ideas fresh and my approach unique.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What fascinates you and how have you incorporated that into your designs.*

Carly: I think it is more about what fascinates the client. Is it a collection from their travels? Is it unique lighting or a quirky entry table? How can we use that and create a beautiful space?

BATHS OF AMERICA: *How would you characterize your personal style?*

Carly: My style is eclectic. I adore Mid-Century Modern and have made it a goal of mine to see as many Frank

Lloyd Wright buildings as possible! You can also find family antiques, lots of colors, and anything with caning/ rattan in my house.

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Stephanie Jones and Carly Filbin



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