

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

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Dialogue with a Designer



A Deep Passion For Design
And A Wealth Of Experience



Dialogue with a Designer

Christine Cook / EP Interior

MWG INNOVATIONS - With a passion for designing and working with glass, Esvin Tista founded MWG Innovations in 2018 on the idea that offering custom bath glass and mirrors for new construction and remodeling projects should fall in the line of an exquisite art job. Esvin takes great pride in creating unique pieces of art designed to bring life to the ideas given to him by the builders, designers, and trades he partners with. His work includes intricate designs of fabricated unique custom metal, wood, and glass pieces for shower doors, vanities, mirrors, handrails, and more. MWG Innovations is committed to providing all clients with high-quality products and services which yield outstanding customer satisfaction.

This month **MWG INNOVATIONS** speaks with Christine Cook, a seasoned Interior Designer with a deep passion for design and a wealth of experience gained from living and working around the world. Christine shares her journey from earning a Bachelor of Arts at Iowa State University to building a successful design firm, EP Interior, driven by her love for diverse design styles and the unwavering support of her family. Join us as we explore Christine's inspiring story and the unique approach she brings to her clients.

MWG INNOVATIONS: What motivated you to enter

interior design?

Christine Cook: I remember at a young age I would stay up late rearranging my furniture and artwork in my room until everything felt perfect. I was obsessed with making my space beautiful and functional. This passion followed me all the way through college and after I graduated, I quickly jumped into the design field. I always say that my love for interior design led me to where I am at, but my husband and two daughters (Emerson and Parker) keep me motivated to reach for the best. I want my girls to see they can have it all; being a dedicated wife, mother, and successful entrepreneur.

MWG INNOVATIONS: How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?

Christine Cook: Since graduating college in 2008, the Interior Design Industry has undergone some pretty remarkable transformations. The shift towards digital tools and online platforms has streamlined our design process. These technologies have allowed us at EP to create a more immersive experience with our clients and better visualization of our ideas and design concepts. Of course, social media has also played a huge role in the way we are able to showcase our work and brand for potential clients.



Social media offers increased access to client inspiration, quickly changing trends, and allows us to have a much more direct connection with our clients and followers.

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

Christine Cook: By partnering with an interior designer, custom home builders and remodeling contractors can benefit from our expertise in space planning, material and finish selection, preliminary design concepts, and lighting design. We can help a home builder create homes that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also highly functional, marketable, and aligned with the needs of target buyers. Ideally, we like to be brought in prior to construction starting so we can collaborate with all members of the team and establish a cohesive design vision moving forward.

MWG INNOVATIONS: What sets you apart from other designers?

Christine Cook: At EP Interior we set ourselves apart from other design firms by going above and beyond for our clients. Besides the years of experience and expertise I have gained in the industry, I pride myself most on my team's dedication to communication with our clients. From the moment a client walks in our doors they are met with a team who make sure their needs, desires, and vision are meticulously planned and executed. It is very





important to me to cultivate genuine relationships with my clients because collaboration with them is how we achieve stunning results. We provide great customer service, a sharp eye for detail, and a deep understanding of all things' design and construction. We help clients in all stages of the design/building process from beginning concepts with an architect, through selection of materials, and finally furnishing and accessorizing their home. Our team is made up of a diverse group of talented women who are passionate about design, which allows us to help ANY client with ANY project!

MWG INNOVATIONS: *How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders' and remodelers' clients?*

Christine Cook: The materials selection process is a crucial aspect of our work when collaborating with builders and remodelers to bring their clients' vision to life. We always begin this process by conducting a thorough consultation with the clients to understand their style preferences, budget constraints, and desired outcome for the project. This initial step allows me to establish a clear direction for the materials selection, ensuring that the final design reflects the clients' unique taste and meets their specific needs. Once we have a good understanding of the clients' requirements, we then start researching and

sourcing a range of materials that align with their aesthetic and practical requirements. This may involve visiting showrooms, consulting with suppliers, and exploring the latest trends in the industry to identify the best options for the project.

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

Christine Cook: To make sure we stay in the loop I make it a priority to attend industry events, such as design shows, exhibitions, and conferences. It has proven to be invaluable time and time again. Staying involved and present in the industry has been the key to our networking success, connecting us with new endeavors and opportunities we could have never imagined. These events not only give me the opportunity to see the latest products and innovations firsthand but also allow me to network with other professionals and gain insights into emerging trends. We love to refer other professionals to our clients when needed, so we appreciate it when they return the favor. Continual engagement frequently leads to new referrals and opportunities.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *How would you characterize your style?*

Christine Cook: Another element that sets EP apart from



other designers is that we do not have one specific design aesthetic and rather, customize every project to our clients' wants and needs. If you look at our website or social media you will see everything from traditional, modern, eclectic and everything in between. Our goal is to provide our clients not only with a home they love, but one that their personality is reflected in. We invest many hours in understanding and collaborating with our clients. Often our professional relationship turns into a genuine friendship. The continuous stream of new clients and projects is a testament to the satisfaction and trust of our current clients, who frequently refer us.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What are some common mistakes builders and homeowners make?*

Christine Cook: Rushing through the design planning phase initially can set a project up for future stressors, like change orders or delays. A common mistake I have seen is neglecting to consider the flow and functionality of a room. It can tend to feel awkward to navigate some spaces with no natural flow. Another one is overlooking the importance of lighting in a room. Proper lighting can drastically influence the mood and ambiance of a room yet is often an afterthought of the design process. Small details may seem unimportant at the moment but looking back it might snowball and affect other elements of the design.





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