

# THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

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## Dialogue with a Designer



**POSH**  
INTERIOR DESIGN  
EST. 2021

Adding Value And Enriching Lives  
Through Well-Curated Interiors



# Dialogue with a Designer

## Marisol Jimenez-Aranda

*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 Marisol Jimenez-Aranda ASID, RID, owner of POSH Interior design, a seasoned interior designer with over 30 years of experience. A graduate of The University of Texas at Austin, she became a Registered Interior Designer in Texas and founded POSH Interior Design in 2021, specializing in residential design while also working on light commercial and hospitality projects. Marisol is a professional member of ASID, GHBA, and NAHB, and her work has been featured in multiple publications. She is involved in every aspect of the design process and serves as an adjunct professor at Houston Community College, mentoring the next generation of interior designers.*

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What motivated you to enter interior design?*

**MARISOL:** I have always appreciated the built environment and how we interact within it. Our interior environment can either enhance our sense of well-being or hinder it. Growing up, I knew that certain environments I would walk into changed my mood for better or worse. I realized that a well-curated interior added value to all of my senses, while an interior that was not well-designed made me feel uncomfortable. I would think of ways that I would make that space better, so Interior Design was a way for me to enrich lives through our surroundings, since we spend most of our lives in and out of them.

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

**MARISOL:** Interior Design has changed by the use of advanced technology, the advent of social media, and having a lot more design shows. These new developments help us, as interior designers, in several ways. Advanced technology allows us to communicate more efficiently with our clients, especially with those that live in another city or state. We can prepare images of selections, furniture,



spatial expectations before the project even begins. We also take the selections process off their “to do” list. We make the selections, source materials, deal with vendors and suppliers, while working well with budgets, and timelines keeping the project on schedule. Professional Interior Designers bring value to the builder/remodeler by helping prevent costly mistakes and providing efficient solutions when issues arise. We provide creative input adding to the home’s value and allow for marketing to the discerning client. We also alleviate a lot of the stress by taking on this portion of the process. This allows builders and remodelers to understand how valuable we are to the flow and completion of the project.

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

***MARISOL:*** I have a strong work ethic and strive to provide great customer service that allows me to do a professional job for my clients. I am very meticulous and bring my clients solutions that they may have not considered before. A client can be easily persuaded by something they see on social media or on a tv show somewhere. I will take their inspiration and add a different take on it to fit the lifestyle that they really want to have, so that their environment is truly tailored to them. I also don’t just design to fit the client’s current lifestyles. I had a client once that did not want to meet at her current home after I said that I wanted to see how they lived and to get to know their lifestyle. She let me know that she did not want me to see their current

and fixtures for our clients and send them through internet communication methods more effectively. The advent of social media helps us promote our work and has become a top marketing tool. Finally, design shows have influenced how people perceive the interior design profession. It has become more accessible, fascinating, and has made Interior Designers more sought-after.

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

***MARISOL:*** We can help by making their job easier. We help keep the project organized, provide construction drawings that include furniture layouts to provide realistic



lifestyle, because that is not how they want to live in their new home. That really made an impression on me, so I've carried that with me on my subsequent projects. Instead of designing to fit their lifestyles, I start by asking, "How do you want to live in your new home or space?" Then I offer creative solutions to achieve that goal and either enhance or elevate the way they live.

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

**MARISOL:** My most challenging project was a new build that I worked on two years ago. It was challenging because the builder was adamant about not working with a designer. My clients sought me out through referral because they wanted the professionalism that I bring to my projects. The builder never wanted to speak to me because he said that the designers he had worked with before just slowed him down. Once he saw the value in having me, an actual professional Interior Designer, he realized that I did, in fact, prevent costly mistakes and helped the project run smoother.

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

**MARISOL:** I begin by understanding the scope of the project. I discuss timelines and budgets with the client and start asking discovery questions. If the project is a new build, I select the items in order of their stage of construction and installation. When everyone has signed off on the final selections, I begin to order the products that will need to be ordered first, i.e. exterior selections. Then we move toward the interior where the plumbing and appliances are ordered next. I try to get all the selections made and signed off on, before construction starts so that the products are ordered early enough to account for delays and back orders. This avoids disruption to the flow of the project and allows the timeline to stay on track.

**ATHS OF AMERICA: What are some common mistakes builders and homeowners make?**

**MARISOL:** A very common mistake made by builders and homeowners is not bringing in a Professional Interior Designer at the beginning of the entire process or not at all. Some builders think that an Interior Designer will slow down the process, but they do not realize that on the contrary, our job, as professional Interior Designers is to provide the programming (planning) of a functional home, making the selections on products and finishes,



and making sure of their availability. This actually saves them time and overall cost. As industry insiders, we have access to products and availabilities that others may not. Some builders want to rush to finish a project and move to the next one. This causes the homeowner to make rash decisions that may create issues in the future. Another common mistake that I have come across is not having a realistic view of the budget and timeline. A client needs to allocate the budget according to the aspects of design that are most important to them. I often hear of clients spending a substantial amount of money on a product or element that is not a top priority and that uses up the budget. They end up not having enough left to spend on something that they really wanted or needed. As professionals, we can use our education and experience to help safeguard against those “costly” decisions.

**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?**

**MARISOL:** I stay current by attending forums and seminars provided by the associations to which I belong; ASID (American Society of Interior Designers) and the GHBA (Greater Houston Builders Association), and by taking continuing education courses (CEU’s) that are offered by industry partners. This allows me to be exposed to new products and their applications.

Wow! That’s a hard question to answer because I like some elements of different styles for different reasons. I like the clean, sleek lines of the Modern style, yet I

like the grandeur of the Traditional style with all its embellishments, scale, and patterns, and the romanticism of the Neo-Classical style. These could actually work together in unity if used in an intelligent way.

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

**MARISOL:** What fascinates me are the elements and principles of design. I try to incorporate as many of them as possible in every design. I love using pattern, texture, scale, hierarchy, color, harmony and balance. They’re all fascinating to me because that defines Interior Design at its core.

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

**MARISOL:** I would characterize my style as Transitional. I like the opulence of the Traditional style but with the cleaner lines and silhouettes of the Modern style. Marrying those two makes for a classic timeless style.

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

**MARISOL:** What should be done first is to hire a Professional Interior Designer. We help set clear expectations of the budget, products, and the timeline. That sets the stage for the kind of design, finishes, and selections that this project can expect. Then, set up a plan on how to implement the ideas based on these aspects.



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*Improving homes, enhancing lifestyles  
in Greater Houston and beyond*

