



THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

Greater Houston Edition

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Dialogue with a Designer

Cynthia Cannizzaro | One Design Place

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Welcome to The Metropolitan Builder, Houston's premier trade publication, dedicated to showcasing the finest building professionals in the industry. Each professional featured has been personally referred by trusted vendors and subcontractors who collaborate with them, selected for their unmatched talent and unwavering integrity.

As Houston's leading resource for consumers looking to build, buy, or remodel, we provide a window into the exceptional craftsmanship, innovative designs, and unparalleled quality that define our city's top builders. Let The Metropolitan Builder inspire your next home or renovation project and connect you with the experts who can make your vision a reality.

This month THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER speaks with This month, The Metropolitan Builder sits down with Cynthia Cannizzaro, owner of One Design Place, to talk about her passion for transforming homes and the lives of the people who live in them. With more than 20 years of experience as both an interior designer and contractor, Cynthia has built a reputation for creating kitchens, bathrooms, and living spaces that are as functional as they are beautiful. From her belief that the heart of the home deserves thoughtful design to her hands-on approach in every project, Cynthia shares what inspires her, how she brings clients' visions to life, and why making a house feel like home is at the core of everything she does.

TMB: What sets you apart from other designers?

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: INTEGRITY-I care deeply about my clients and giving them a home that they love to live in. I closely examine the lifestyle of my clients, as well as their preferred style. I think it's very important to do your best to immerse yourself in your client's world and understand how they live and what they do in each space. I conduct a lifestyle survey at the very beginning to learn what activities are important to them and determine how to best support them in the design of the space.

I believe, function is as important as aesthetics in creating my designs.

I am actually in the business of transforming lives.



For example, when we design a new kitchen for someone, we consider every person in the household. When we get it right, each person's life should be transformed, and there should be easy entrance and exit from their home. Many people live in chaos in the morning as they try to get out the door. Our designs eliminate this chaos and many more.

TMB: *What motivated you to go into the interior design field?*

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: When I was choosing my college major, I was looking at the things that I was passionate about, and they were architecture, fine arts, psychology, and dance.

I enrolled in the School of Architecture at LSU, and in our second year, they offer an option to continue in architecture or interior design. I chose interior design because I felt it combined art, architecture, and psychology —three of my passions—into one career. Later, I realized that at a young age, I was constantly building Barbie “living rooms” and drawing floor plans of the homes where I was babysitting. It was just a natural progression.

TMB: *How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?*

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: The field of interior design has changed quite a lot, mostly in the technology arena. The fundamentals and principles of design remain the same. When I became an interior designer, the profession was only about 10 years old, so it certainly has developed over the years.

Technology has made communication with clients significantly easier. In the actual design, there are cooktops that you can't see, often in your island, until you turn them on. Refrigerators that can keep your grocery list, timers that you can set by voice, faucets that you don't have to touch to turn on, and coffee pots that you can program to make your coffee before you wake up and much more. Much of the technology is useful in the arena of aging in place and ADA compliance. Creating a home that is more accessible for individuals with disabilities is a remarkable option.

TMB: *How can an experience Interior Designer help Custom home builder or remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?*

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: An Interior Designer can help builders and contractors by having all choices made in advance and making sure Product is delivered to the job site prior to when it's needed. The art of interior design mitigates many risks for both the builder and the Remodeler.

TMB: *What has been your most challenging project and why?*

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: I believe that my most challenging project was immediately after the pandemic,



when we were experiencing supply-chain issues every day. We were remodeling a kitchen and many of our items were backordered for long periods. We waited for Cabinets for almost 8 weeks and the job had to just come to a halt until they arrived

Many of the other products were also delayed. This delayed delivery disrupted the workflow and caused anxiety for everyone.

TMB: How do you begin the material selection process?

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: I'm working with Builders and remodelers clients. I would find out where the builder or Remodeler likes to purchase their products. I would familiarize myself with the product and then have a meeting with the client to determine their goals and objectives, as well as their preferred style. Most clients do not know how to articulate what they like and dislike with words; therefore, I help them express it through photographs.

Once we know the clients objectives and what they're drawn to we can begin the selection process.

TMB: What are some common mistakes made by Builders and homeowners?

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: I think the biggest common mistake is a lack of communication or the assumption that the other person knows what you want or expect. Speaking about stay current, how do you keep yourself up-to-date with all of the design trends happening in the industry today?

As a designer, your education does not end when you graduate from college. Every year, you must stay up-to-date with the latest trends and innovations.

I take CEU classes for interior design, architecture, and real estate.

Many of the products we specify also offer yearly updates, or their representatives bring new products or services, so that we remain current. The trick is just to make time to meet with them.

TMB: What is your favorite design style?

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: I don't have one favorite



design style. If you look at my projects, you'll see that they cover a wide range of styles, because I believe a great interior designer should get into the mind of the client and design something that feels like an extension of them. One of my greatest joys is when a project is complete and the client tells me it truly reflects who they are—that's when I know I've done my job well.

TMB: What fascinates you and how have you incorporated that into your designs?

CYNTHIA CANNIZZARO: Two things come to mind, technology in smart homes and how beauty creates peace on earth.



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