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The Maestros



1. Christopher Pagliaro, 2. Melisa Adams, 3. Karen Berkemeyer, 4. Diane Durocher, 5. Charles Hilton, 6. Kate Gelfand, 7. Lauren Vallario, 8. Anthony DeRosa, 9. Diane Rath, 10. Nicky James, 11. Courtney Chesson, 12. Brenda MacLeish, 13. Christopher Shea, 14. Jan Hiltz, 15. Jonathan Gordon, 16. Christine Hiltz, 17. Lisa Davenport, 18. Douglas Graneto, 19. Prudence Bailey.



PRUDENCE BAILEY





D +D: How did you get into interior design?

Prudence: I pursued interior design later in life, when I went from being a stay-at-home mom to joining the workforce. I didn't have a background, formal training or even connections in the industry, but I had a gift and a desire to start my own business.

It began when my ex-husband and I bought a home in Darien, CT, and I worked with a designer to develop three of the core rooms in the home. It was an enlightening experience: I discovered I had this strong perspective and perception for design, as well as a keen sense for color, pattern and spatial awareness. I pushed the designer's usual approach and infused my own aesthetic into the design.

In the family room, I selected a set of green chenille sofas—it was a true statement moment. The design came together so beautifully. The dining room was even featured in East Coast Home + Design's "Amazing Transformations" issue in 2013—that was a remarkable moment for me. With my newfound confidence, I continued and completed the remainder of the home on my own, which was no small feat at 6,000 square feet, and I enjoyed the process.

As it all came together, I found that many of our friends and guests were asking me to help them in their homes. Whether it was styling shelves, moving furniture, or redoing a room that just didn't feel right and they couldn't figure it out, I would help them. Around this same time, I was looking to start working again, and while I had a strong résumé in sales, it was hard to find a position after 10 years of raising children. It was then I thought that maybe I could put my sales and design experience togeth-





er, and so began Prudence Home & Design.

D+D: Interesting! Was something creative always in the cards for you?

Prudence: I was always an artist—since I was young. In college, I majored in graphic design and illustration, and received a minor in business. When I lived in New York, people would come to my apartment and tell me how much they loved the space, but it didn't occur to me that creating spaces like that could be a career—I was far more into fashion and things of that nature.

D+D: How has your background influenced your process and approach to design?

Prudence: The actual design process is informed by my experience in finance and software sales. It's quite structured and creates a systematic workflow to create these spaces in a way that works well for all team members. This is quite important to the experience; interior design is a luxury business, and it should feel luxurious each step along the way.

The design aspect is inspired and influenced by the artistic side of me—the visual designer within is brought to life when I'm looking at space and can visualize it with my mind's eye. I have an innate sense for color and what I would call a near-photographic memory for it. I can look at a fabric sample, for example, and without having it in front of me, I am able to pull together the colors and patterns that work with it. While I think much of this is intuitive, it was certainly honed as I studied color theory and other aspects of art during school.

D+D: What do you look forward to achieving as you progress through your career?

Prudence: There are so many things I'd love to accomplish. Someday having my own fabric and wallpaper line would be a dream—to bring color and pattern to life in my own unique way. We're in the works of starting an ecommerce site this year. It's very boutique and curated with some of my favorite things—maybe in 10 years or so that becomes a brand unto itself. Maybe those two dreams speak to one another. Other than that, continuing to build our team is on the horizon, while ensuring our work is just as high quality with aesthetic integrity as it is today. ♦

Resource: Prudence Home & Design: Prudence Bailey, Founder & Principal Designer, New Canaan, CT, 203.859.9499; prudencehomes.com