



GEORGIA

INDESIGN

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GEORGIA'S

Fresh Faces

Interview by Joanna Hebb

Karen Hott, ASID, an award-winning Atlanta designer, specializes in helping clients define their personal style by taking cues from their environment. She recently left her position at Robert Allen to focus on her work as an independent interior designer.

What's the best way for a designer to establish a healthy relationship with a client?

Be approachable and keep the lines of communication open as with any good relationship. Learn about your client's interests, hobbies and lifestyle so you can create a space that reflects their personality.



How do you typically get started with a project?

Moving and repurposing furniture is always a good place to start. Identify items of priority, what to reuse and what to buy. I believe in making something old and perhaps tired, new again. I love to use objects with an interesting story as art. One of my projects involved a Hawaiian Tappa Cloth that belonged to a client's grandfather. It was nearly 100 years old and became the artwork in the dining room serving as a focal point as you entered their home.

Do you think "Do It Yourself" shows are setting new expectations for interior design?

I find DIY shows to foster unrealistic expectations. I believe that a project should evolve naturally and over time. That being said, a project can be completed quickly or over several months. It's important to work with a client to set priorities and determine realistic deadlines.

Do you feel that your NCIDQ training has been beneficial to you and your clients?

Yes, I most definitely believe that the NCIDQ training has proven to be beneficial for my projects. Interior designers are responsible for the safety



and welfare of their clients more than one might think. The NCIDQ prepares you for that kind of responsibility and the knowledge and experience to make sound design decisions.

How has ASID proven beneficial for your career as a designer?

ASID offers a tremendous source of support for independent designers. The ASID referral service is an excellent source of referrals for me. One of my most successful projects was an ASID referral that led to more referrals and repeat business.

Have new developments in technology helped you market your business?

Clients are doing more research online, and it's incredibly important to have an on-line presence with a website. Five years ago potential clients interviewed a few designers. Recently I find that potential clients narrow down their choice through on-line research.

What do you enjoy most about your career in interior design?

It is refreshing to help someone make a house a home. When people relate to their space and love where they live, there is no better feeling than helping someone achieve this level of happiness. It truly is a gift to do what you love and love what you do!

