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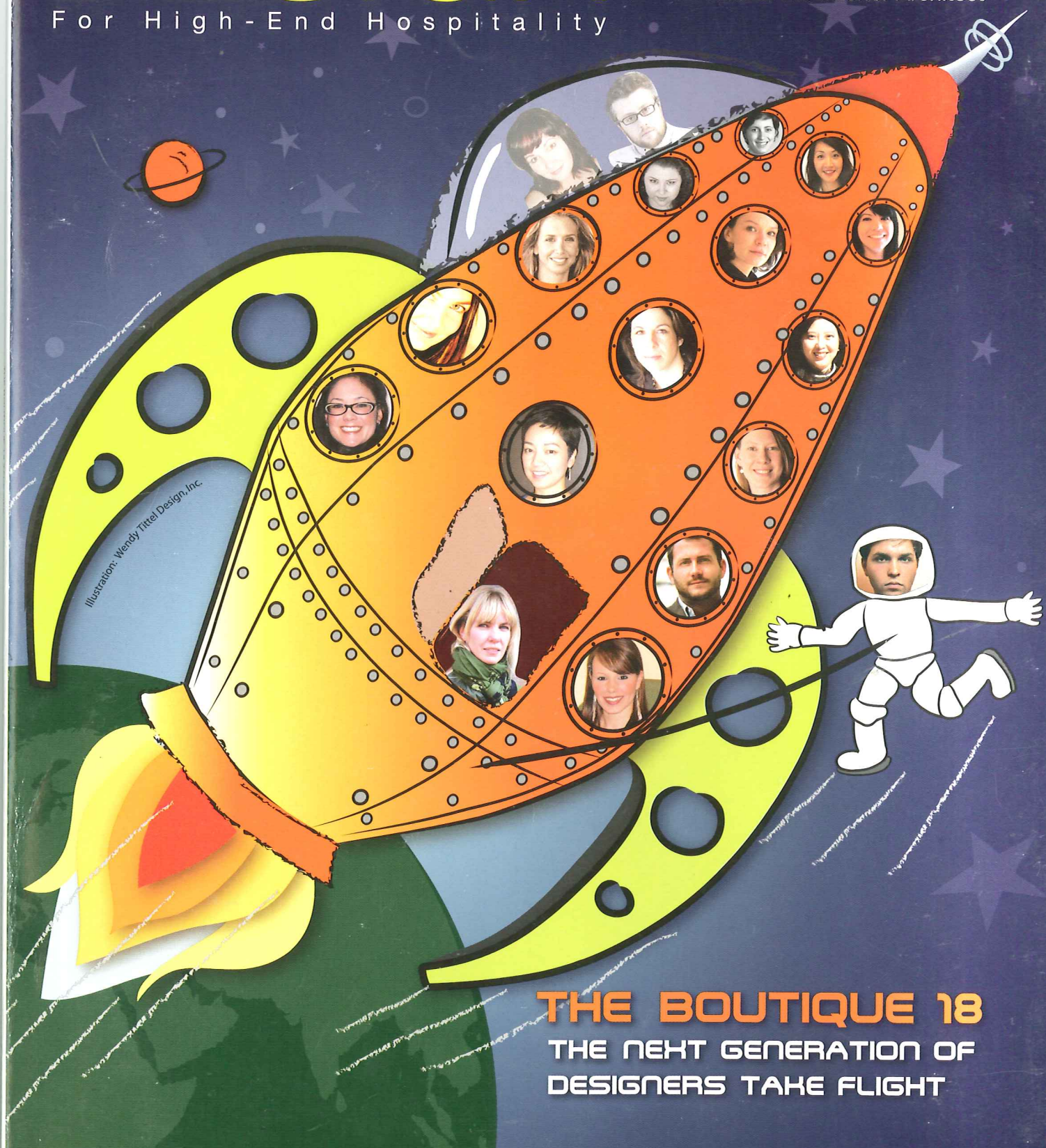


Illustration: Wendy Titrel Design, Inc.

**THE BOUTIQUE 18**  
THE NEXT GENERATION OF  
DESIGNERS TAKE FLIGHT

# The Designers' Designer

BY ANN MARIE MARANO

These folks are the ones who make it "pop." They're the designers who can add that special something to any project, for any market. Their pieces are sought after because they represent that "out of the box" thinking

that everyone desires and that keeps customers loyal. We spoke to this international group of product designers to see what makes them tick, what keeps them motivated and what we can expect from them next.

## Adam J. Pollack, Fire Farm, Inc.

**Q: What do you design and why?**

**A:** I work primarily with light. I find the range of opportunities and continued challenges unending and immensely satisfying.

**Q: What are your favorite materials?**

**A:** The newest ones. I love to explore new materials. We do so much one-of-a-kind custom fabrication now that I find having knowledge of a wide range of materials means having a wide range of solutions to the challenges of each unusual project. My friend laughed at me the other day when I held up a sheet of Nori to see how the light played through it. You never know where you will find the next interesting material. Our designs are very material-sensitive. Our focus is not just on the shape and look



Fire Farm's innovative lighting



of a lamp, but what it does with the light and the environment around it.

**Q: What are you working on now?**

**A:** There are two projects I am very excited to be a part of right now. We are developing a 12ft x 14ft chandelier inspired by a lotus flower for the Canyon Ranch Spa and Inn located in the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas which should be very beautiful and calming.

We are also currently developing the lighting plan for the renovation and new addition of the First Unitarian Church of Madison, Wisconsin designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

In both of these projects we are exploring some of the newest technologies available to lighting. It is very exciting to be able to merge ecological solutions with artistic and sculptural expressions.

## Barclay Butera, Barclay Butera Inc.

**Q: What do you design and why?**

**A:** I design for lifestyle and I design seasonally; it depends what's influencing me that season, just like fashion. For example, this season I'm focusing on a well-traveled, European-colonial, seasoned look (Johannesberg in the 1920s) with English nobility influences in a raw environment. I had been watching the movie "Out of Africa" again and it sent me in that direction.

**Q: What are your favorite materials?**

**A:** Leather, linen, animal prints, embroidered silk — I like the natural elements of heavy linen, and then the fashion elements of animal print. Right now I'm into zebra and leopard prints, and crocodile-stamped leather.

**Q: If you could re-design anything in the world, what would it be?**

**A:** I love vintage Mercedes convertibles. And taking a 190SL from the 50s and bringing it into 2007 with the engine capabilities and the comfort would be a fresh choice to the current selections out there, much like the Volkswagen Beetle was brought back and updated.

**Q: What are you working on now?**

**A:** L'Auberge del Mar has hired me to be the creative director for the remodel and branding of their 140-room hotel.



Butera's  
Madison Chair

## Susan Woods, Aswoon/Susan Woods Studios

**Q: How did you get started in the interiors industry?**

**A:** By chance. I studied until 35 years of age in the fine arts, winding up in the classical figurative sculptural field, building life-sized sculptures in a very reputable American Academy. While I loved studying, it seemed to have nothing to do with my further reality. Along my way, I built and co-operated a bronze foundry, made prototypes for the design world, and eventually became aware of my skills outside of the fine art industry. This gave me another attitude toward where I came from and where I could go. Thus, after finally dropping out of the fine art circuit showing in NYC, while working out of my studio for designers, this work emerged.



Woods' seating and room divider

**Q: What do you design and why?**

**A:** I delve into what I am passionate about.

**Q: What are your favorite materials?**

**A:** At the moment I am working with upholstery springs and bent poplar plywood.

**Q: What would you like to do that you still haven't done?**

**A:** I would like to have the opportunity for collaboration in manufacturing a design meant for a different market, perhaps through a larger company.

**Q: What are you most proud of?**

**A:** That I am continuing to grow, to develop, to risk, to seek ideas and ways to find and support them.

## Jim Mischel, Electric Mirror

**Q: How did you get started in the interiors industry?**

**A:** I guess I am not your typical product designer. I studied physics in college and then went to law school. A couple years after school I started a manufacturing company. I received a request for a mirror with integrated lights. Once I started exploring the idea, things just started to flow.

**Q: What do you design and why?**

**A:** I design back-lit mirrors and mirror TVs. I design because I enjoy working with other people. When I'm creating new designs, I get to partner with interior designers and hotel owners. They give me a design concept, a few adjectives, and I get to put it all together to create something totally unique.



**Q: What are you most proud of?**

**A:** Collaboration. I am undoubtedly most proud of the collaborations I've been a part of. Two heads are always better than one. I work with some amazing people and get to work with my Dad and brother on a daily basis. How many people can say that? Working with your family defi-

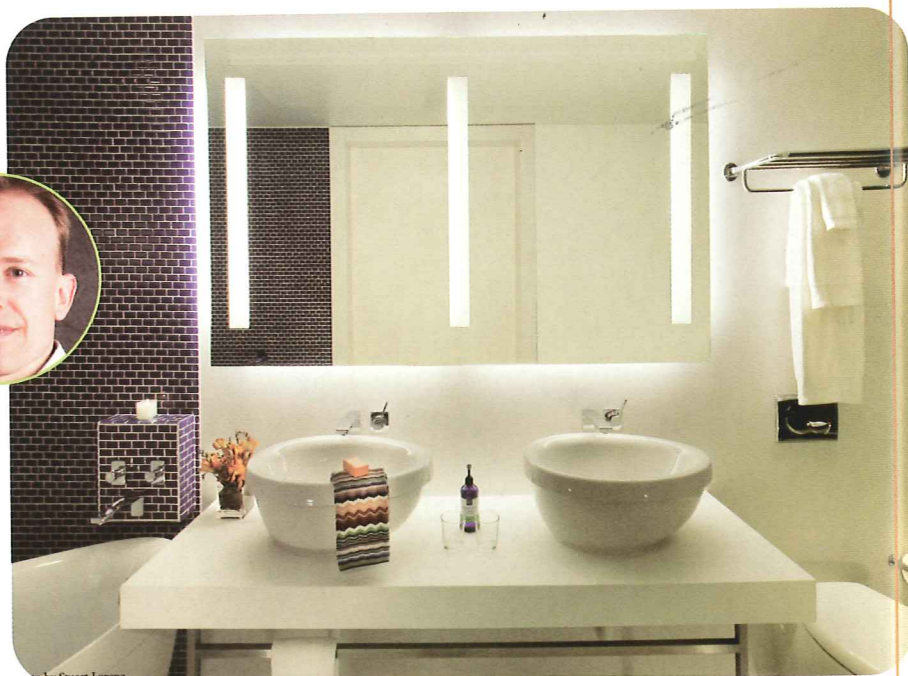
nitely keeps you in the right perspective.

**Q: If you could re-design anything in the world, what would it be?**

**A:** I would re-design the White House. When you think of its historical significance and how many guests and dignitaries visit there each year, it is one of the most hospitable places in the world.

Obviously a lot of the design is driven by history, by tradition. It would be a fun challenge to keep the tradition and history while also incorporating new, more modern pieces. Plus I hear they need some mirrors.

**Below: Back lit vanity mirror in W Dallas**



by Stuart Lorenz