

Interior Design

FINDING THE RIGHT PIECE TO THE HOME IMPROVEMENT PUZZLE

By David Bray



In today's ever changing, highly competitive interior design/home improvement industry, finding the right project manager or interior designer for your lifestyle and budget can be extremely challenging. In some cases that can become overwhelming. Whether you find the right "fit" by word of mouth or trial and error, locating this piece to your home improvement puzzle is essential in bringing rewarding

results to you, the client, as well as to the project manager, designer and all sub contractors involved.

My name is David Bray and I started Landford Thompson Furniture and Interiors in 2000. The name comes from a combination of my great grandmother's married name and my mother's maiden name. In 1940 Grandmother Landford started Landford Realty Company in Atlanta and blazed a trail for women in real estate throughout the city. My father was a builder / developer and my mother, after raising three boys, entered the profession as a wallpaper contractor and interior designer. Growing up in this environment, amongst the many creative trades, shaped who I am today and what I like to see in interior design and home improvement in regards to quality, creativity and ingenuity.

I worked my way through Georgia College in Milledgeville as a carpenter's helper and wallpaper installer where I was active in the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity. Subsequently I moved to Savannah because of the rich architectural heritage, which allowed me to pursue my passion for period design. I then met Noreene Parker, owner of Pinch of the Past Architectural Antiques with whom I still enjoy a mutually beneficial working relationship after almost eighteen years. My initial six month furniture and hardware restoration internship turned into a five year full time position. During this period I was involved in visual merchandizing and helping clients incorporate architectural antique pieces such as columns, pressed tin, ironwork and antique lighting into their interior design plans. I currently do visual merchandizing and consulting work for Ms. Parker's three stores in Savannah, Greensboro and Madison, GA.



Savannah summers being what they are, I elected to pursue an opportunity as an in-house designer with Aloma Crenshaw Antiques in the historic Five Points section of Raleigh, North Carolina. The collaboration taught me the use of new furniture and fabrics from High Point, North Carolina in conjunction with vintage pieces and period antiques to create a classic look for modern living. When Ms. Crenshaw downsized her business, I returned to Savannah and began working, once again, for Ms. Parker as her in-house hardware restoration professional.

In the summer of 1997 I had the pleasure of assisting a brass polishing job for William Boone, then captain of the Forbes MY The Highlander. Upon completion of the job, I was invited to join the crew in New York. While aboard I learned to maximize storage out of the smallest spaces; if a 155 foot FedShip can be considered a small space! However, New York and Palm Beach are not Savannah and the call to my adopted home was too great for a Georgia boy.

Feeling my way into the future I took a general labor position with Tassier Contracting. While there I learned more about equipment, running sub contractors and keeping cool under pressure than anywhere I have ever worked. As a former Navy diver, Steve Tassier taught me a work ethic that is with me today and has become my standard for all who work under me. When Steve closed the business, I decided it was time to begin building my own business utilizing my background, on site education and innate good taste. In my experience good taste is not something you can learn; you either have it or you



don't. Professionals often imitate an admired mentor or worse, themselves. Give me a talented amateur with a small budget any day.

What started out as small 'handyman' and furniture repair/restoration jobs eventually developed into Landford Thompson Furniture and Interiors. I consider myself a contractor's designer. I like to get in on the ground level to incorporate my designs into new construction and renovations rather than push paint, wallpaper, furniture and art around a finished product. To me, the style of the house dictates its interior design scheme. Although, current trends prove, that done well, combining styles can create a dramatic and eclectic look that is quite effective. I also like to repurpose and reuse existing client materials in new and creative ways. In addition, I utilize many of the Tri-State areas wonderful auction houses, particularly Leland Little Auctions in Hillsborough, North Carolina as an outlet for unique and hard to find items. The end result is far more interesting and personal than what you would find in a big box furniture store. If you want a carefully thought out, creative and unique look for your home or office then Landford Thompson Interiors is for you. We can work with almost any budget, timeframe and style.



With the economic downturn, many clients, particularly younger couples, believe an Interior Designer is only for clients with time and money to burn. This could not be farther from the truth. Hiring a good designer or project manager can be a time and money saving endeavor that frees the client to focus on career, home, and family, leaving the work to professionals. With trends moving toward small renovations, SpaceLift redesigns and green remodeling, a good designer with substantial contacts in the industry can be an asset to your project.

Landford Thompson Interiors would be pleased to provide a private in-home consultation in order to see if we are a good "fit" for your interior design/home improvement project. We currently cover Georgia and the Carolinas based on distance and jobscope. For contact information, customer feedback, additional photographs, fee structuring, and a detailed description of our services please visit www.landfordthompsoninteriors.com. I can be reached by telephone at (912) 412-1382 or by e-mail at DavidBray@landfordthompsoninteriors.com. Please also search for us on Facebook at Landford Thompson Interiors and "Like" us in order to receive updates on trends and current interests. I also have a booth at the SouthSide Antique mall in Eastman, Georgia located in the Historic Stuckey Candy Building.



In upcoming articles I will be discussing; Visual Merchandizing and how it can promote products in a small business, home staging and how it can make or break a sale, and finding a design budget and sticking to it in an changing economy.



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