

Spencer



BROOKE LYNN HYTES

MARK BELFORD

A Journey Through Couture

WILLIAM HUFFMAN

Building Community with Inuit Art

NEEMA NAZ

Comedy, Culture, and the Power of Consistency

DKSTUDIOS ARCHITECTS INC.

Building Global Spaces and a Legacy

ANTONIO TADRISI

Unorthodox Approaches to an Orthodox World

+ Introducing Spencer's Real Estate Showcase

VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 3

ISSN 2563-6386 \$25.00



5 772663 638606



Written by **Sara Duck**

Photography by **Stephani Buchman and Mike Chajecki**

LIFE BY DESIGN *with*

JESSICA CINNAMON

The award-winning principal designer and founder of Toronto-based Jessica Cinnamon Design Inc. has become synonymous with thoughtful, elevated and deeply personal interiors. With a portfolio spanning Toronto, Chicago and Los Angeles, Cinnamon's studio is known for creating curated spaces that fuse aesthetics with everyday function – homes that don't just look beautiful, but feel like home.



Jessica's journey into design began far from Toronto's bustling energy. Raised in a small rural town in Illinois, she recalls a childhood rooted in tradition, family values and an entrepreneurial spirit nurtured on her grandparents' Christmas tree farm. "We would work together during the holidays at the Cinnamon Christmas Tree Farm," she said. "Those crisp mornings, the smell of pine, the sense of tradition – they're still with me. And yes, we always have a real Christmas tree."

As a child, Cinnamon gravitated toward creative expression. "While other kids played with their Barbies, I was busy designing their dream homes," she said. "I wasn't playing with the dolls, I was curating their environment." Her early fascination with magazines like *Elle Décor* and *Architectural Digest* stoked a passion for design that would guide her life's direction.





"Every detail reflects who we are and how we want to live. The level of care has been unlike anything I've done before"

That passion brought her to New York City, where she attended the New York Institute of Technology on an NCAA athletic scholarship. Balancing a rigorous design curriculum with the demands of collegiate sports was no small feat. "I was told I was the first athlete at the school to complete the interior design program. It pushed me to the limits, but it also taught me discipline, time management and resilience," she said.

Cinnamon's career began in the heart of Manhattan when she designed a frozen yogurt shop and its brand identity while still a student. It wasn't until she moved to Toronto in 2009 that her journey as a business owner truly began. With no local connections and amid a recession, she secured mentorship under two influential designers, learning not just about aesthetics but also about running a business, managing clients and leading a team.







When her first daughter was born, Cinnamon made a pivotal decision – to launch her own firm. “I was three weeks postpartum, in a one-bedroom apartment, with a newborn and a full client roster,” she said. “I was exhausted, but I was determined. I worked during naps, in the evenings, and on weekends – whatever it took to make it work.”

That tenacity paid off. Today, Jessica Cinnamon Design Inc. is a thriving, multi-disciplinary studio known for timeless, tailored interiors that elevate everyday life. “Over the years, I’ve built a talented and established team of designers, each bringing their unique expertise and perspective,” she said. “Their diverse backgrounds and skills have enriched my approach, allowing me to push boundaries and experiment with new materials and concepts. We work harmoniously to bring our client’s visions to life, creating custom interiors.”

That team has helped the firm expand beyond residential interiors into restaurant and condo

projects and bespoke furniture design. In the midst of that growth, Cinnamon is also overseeing the largest project of her personal life: designing her family’s forever home. “I’ve poured my heart into this house,” she shared.

Even with her full plate, Cinnamon remains committed to mentorship and leadership. The most rewarding part for her is watching her team grow. “Incredible people mentored me, and now I get to pay that forward,” she said, “creating an environment where others can thrive – that’s everything.”

Parenthood, too, has shaped her leadership and creativity. “Balancing motherhood and business is one of the hardest, most rewarding things I’ve ever done,” she said. “It’s a constant dance of time management, focus and flexibility.”



"My approach to design is deeply rooted in a philosophy of authenticity. I believe every environment has a unique narrative, and it's my job to uncover that story, weaving it into the design"



Juggling family life with work Cinnamon with her beautiful family.

Being a mother has made her more empathetic – not just to her clients' needs, but also to her team's. "Parenting taught me patience, adaptability and the importance of being present," she said. "There are days when my family needs me first, and I've had to learn how to work smarter, not harder. That mindset has changed how I lead and how I design."

Cinnamon's evolution as a designer has been intentional and ongoing. "It's been a continuous journey of refinement and growth," she said. "Over time, I've expanded my understanding of materials, techniques and global trends, while staying rooted in timeless elegance and functionality."

What began as a focus on classic luxury has matured into a distinctive blend of tradition and modern sensibility. "I've learned how to merge the sophisticated craftsmanship of the past with today's clean lines and efficiency," she said. "This has allowed me to create spaces that are not only visually striking but deeply aligned with how people actually live."

As the industry continues to evolve, Cinnamon embraces innovation while staying grounded in the values that built her firm. "Design has historically been male dominated, but that's changing," she said. "There's more voices, more diversity, more innovation." **S**



