

# Design Masters

08/30/2019 by [Lee Cutrone](https://www.myneworleans.com/author/lee-cutrone/) (<https://www.myneworleans.com/author/lee-cutrone/>), Photos by [Sarah Essex Bradley](https://www.myneworleans.com/author/sarah-bradley/) (<https://www.myneworleans.com/author/sarah-bradley/>).



(<https://www.myneworleans.com/content/uploads/2019/08/DesignMasters.jpg>).

The following verbs and phrases all refer to the art of mastering something: learning, grasping, picking up, understanding, getting, comprehending, studying, excelling in, knowing backwards, becoming expert in, becoming proficient in, boning up, getting down pat and knowing inside out. This year's Design Masters can be credited with all of the above in their respective areas of design. But the really good news is this: all bring their expertise to New Orleans and we are a better place for it. New Orleans Homes & Lifestyles salutes each of you for continuing our city's long and rich history of creativity, artistry and excellence.

Master of:



(<https://www.myneworleans.com/content/uploads/2019/08/Boa.jpg>)

## Master of ()FURNITURE DESIGN

### BOA

**WHO** My name is BOA, principal of OI Studio. I'm originally from St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands. I've always been an artist. I started drawing before I could even write my name. I eventually studied graphics and fine art at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

**WHAT** I design and manufacture bespoke, eco-friendly furniture and home accessories.

**WHERE** I primarily design all my projects here in New Orleans and my work is produced in New York; available at [oistudio.com](http://oistudio.com).

**WHEN** I started designing furniture in 1999 when I was the buyer for a home furnishings retailer in California and was asked to design all the display units for the store. Even though I had never done anything like that before, the company's owner loved my aesthetic and wanted it extended into the physical space.

**HOW** My work is client driven and collaborative. I create shop drawings and 3D renderings, then select materials and confer with my manufacturers on the best construction methods. Quality is of the utmost importance. I've marketed my work by exhibiting at furniture trade shows. I also work directly with architects and interior designers to create custom pieces for their clients.

**WHY** I think for me, as well as many other artists, creativity is a compulsion. The medium has changed over the years and possibly will again in the future, but I'll never stop creating.

**IN YOUR WORDS** I think my work achieves the right balance between social responsibility, function and beauty without devolving into kitsch.

*OI Studio, [oistudio.com](http://oistudio.com) (<http://oistudio.com>)*

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(<https://www.myneworleans.com/content/uploads/2019/08/PistilStamen.jpg>)

## Master of ( )ECO-FRIENDLY DESIGN

**Megan McHugh and Denise Richter**

**WHO** Megan McHugh and Denise Richter.

**WHAT** Pistil & Stamen Flower Farm & Studio.

**WHERE** We grow flowers right here in New Orleans and use them in our design work, pop-up sales, workshops and deliveries. Beautifying urban spaces for the people of our community and creating habitat for our pollinator friends is a gratifying byproduct of the work.

**WHEN** First seeds sown: October, 2014.

**HOW** We both have backgrounds teaching young people in school gardens, and growing flowers alongside our herbs and vegetables. Over the years, we both felt called more toward flowers and after some time we decided to take the plunge and devote ourselves full time to flowers.



**WHY** Because beauty is the language of caring. As 'farmer-florists,' we have a rare opportunity to show our gratitude and amazement for this one precious earth, while helping people show appreciation for each other. It's natural for us to infuse this gratitude and care into every aspect of our business and employ green floristry practices to minimize the environmental impact of our design work. We're proud to say we produce even our largest events without using the petrochemical based floral foam and all plant materials are composted after our events, creating nutrients for the flowers next season.

**IN YOUR WORDS** We love celebrating the gifts in our gardens that this wild and romantic city gives us, taking our design cues from nature, and sharing that with our whole community, both human and non-human alike.

Pistil & Stamen Flower Farm & Studio, [pistilandstamenflowers.com](http://pistilandstamenflowers.com) (<http://pistilandstamenflowers.com>)



(<https://www.myneworleans.com/content/uploads/2019/08/BekyeVizard.jpg>)

Master of ()TEXTILES

# Rebecca Vizard

**WHO** Rebecca Vizard, pillow maven and owner of B. Viz Design.

**WHAT** Antique textiles and pillows, but since opening our shop, B. Viz Design NOLA Atelier, we've added lagniappe in the form of handcrafted specialty pieces and jewelry.

**WHERE** Everything's designed at my studio on Lake Bruin. Our NOLA Atelier houses the largest collection of pillows, followed by our 'global headquarters' in St. Joseph. We're also online.

**WHEN** After an exhaustive and unsuccessful search of Manhattan, I created my first pillow in 1994.

**HOW** Using the metallic tape from a well-worn vestment and an antique curtain panel I found at the 26th Street Flea Market. Thankfully I had the foresight to employ seamstresses with far greater talent than my own and together, we created several pillows in addition to my client's commission. Gerrie Bremermann took the remainder and launched me on the spot.

**WHY** I think of myself as a 'dysfunctional perfectionist.' In an individual [pillow], or pair of pillows, I'm able to achieve the perfection I crave whereas I was never able to fully satisfy that feeling when working with a house.

**IN YOUR WORDS** I love history, art and hand craftsmanship. Working with antique textiles ignites all of these passions and I'm able to find a level of zen when rearranging, measuring and figuring costs. Additionally, what I do provides me the opportunity to live in two worlds — the fast and the slow lane — because of this, I don't take either for granted.

B.Viz Design, [rebeccavizard.com](http://rebeccavizard.com) (<http://rebeccavizard.com>)

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(<https://www.myneworleans.com/content/uploads/2019/08/NomitaGupta.jpg>)

## Master of ()INTERIOR DESIGN

### Nomita Joshi-Gupta

**WHO** Nomita Joshi-Gupta, principal and proprietor, Nomita Joshi Interior Design NJID + Spruce Wallpaper.

**WHAT** A multidisciplinary interior design studio offering interior architectural services for residential and commercial projects. Custom millwork, furniture design, wallpaper, upholstery, drapery and modern antiques [are] in our private collection.

**WHERE** Our design studio, wallpaper/fabric showroom/furniture collection are located at Spruce [on] Magazine Street.

**WHEN** December 2008 Spruce was established as a modern goods store. With big box and internet shopping, Spruce evolved to a service-based business in 2016 with a focus on interior design, wallpaper and fabrics.



**HOW** I draw my design from the city that I live in, New Orleans — its deep historic architectural fabric and the city that I grew up in, Bangalore, India, which unlike other Indian cities has a large inventory of International style architecture and a modern lifestyle. Also, the strong influence and work ethic of my architect father led me to study architecture and design.

**WHY** I love design. Let's just say — obsessed. Ideas and inspiration come from color, geometry, culture, fashion, travel and literature. If I was born again I would do it again.

**IN YOUR WORDS** Design is a slow, well-crafted process and a deeply personal experience. Each space is imagined as a 3-dimensional art installation. Each decision, choice and vignette is deliberate and part of a larger story executed to imperfect perfection – wabi-sabi ... a stage for life to happen.

Spruce, [nomitajoshi.com](http://nomitajoshi.com) (<http://nomitajoshi.com>), [sprucenola.com](http://sprucenola.com) (<http://sprucenola.com>)



(<https://www.myneworleans.com/content/uploads/2019/08/BryanBattTomCianfichi.jpg>)

## Master of ()HOME GOODS

Bryan Batt and Tom Cianfichi

**WHO** Bryan Batt and Tom Cianfichi, who along with Katy Danos are the co-owners of Hazelnut.

**WHAT** We started with the New Orleans toile fabric and products. We have since added New Orleans-themed items including decoupage platters, guest towels, totes, Tervis tumblers and more.

**WHERE** Exclusively available at Hazelnut, our designs are mainly produced by American artists and manufacturers.

**WHEN** We introduced the New Orleans toile when Hazelnut opened in 2003 and we have introduced some exclusive design [or] product for Hazelnut almost every year since.

**HOW** This is the 'leg work' and researching and finding artists and manufacturers for your designs can be as much fun as designing itself. Once you've developed a network, you can keep going back to it and it inevitably leads you somewhere else or opens new opportunities.

**WHY** We are often inspired by our travels (museums, new cultures, shopping) and figuring out how a great find elsewhere in the world can translate to New Orleans.

**IN YOUR WORDS** We've always loved to design and to create beautiful, elegant and whimsical things for the home. With Hazelnut, that desire is a reality. Another passion is shopping, so we have tried to create a fun and welcoming environment at the shop ... great gifts and great tunes ... great combination.

Hazelnut, [hazelnutneworleans.com](http://hazelnutneworleans.com) (<http://hazelnutneworleans.com>)

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## Master of (R)ESTORATION

**Will Erikson and William Wolf**

**WHO** William Wolf and Will Erikson, owners of Yazoo Restorations LLC.

**WHAT** Boutique commercial and residential construction company.

**WHERE** Uptown, Garden District, CBD, French Quarter and Old Metairie.

**WHEN** Since our founding in 2006, Yazoo Restorations has grown to become a full-service design and construction company specializing in renovations and additions.

**HOW** Will and William have been friends since college. After graduation, Will went on to start Yazoo as a mostly design firm while William went on to work in commercial construction management. In 2013, after a few drinks and a long discussion at Fat Harry's, they decided to team up. Their combined knowledge and experience have transformed



Yazoo into a full-service firm. From concept to construction, Yazoo can manage all aspects of a project. We frequently assist our clients with selecting stone, tile, plumbing fixtures, flooring, lighting, hardware and occasionally paint colors.

**WHY** We like transforming spaces and seeing happy clients. It's exciting turning their vision or their design team's vision, into a reality.

**IN YOUR WORDS** We enjoy doing renovations and additions that appear as if they have always been a part of the original building. Old buildings are sensitive, and problem solving to ensure renovations are seamless is our specialty.

Yazoo Restorations, [yazoorestorations.com](http://yazoorestorations.com) (<http://yazoorestorations.com>)



(<https://www.myneworleans.com/content/uploads/2019/08/KaranGundlach.jpg>)

## Master of ()TABLETOP CERAMICS

Karen Gundlach

**WHO** Karen O'Meallie Gundlach, Karen Gundlach Ceramics.

**WHAT** Ceramics. My signature is a porcelain orchid flower.

**WHERE** I produce my pieces at Earth & Fire Studio.

**WHEN** I have worked with clay off and on for over 20 years but began making my porcelain orchid pieces almost five years ago.

**HOW** My friend Grace Kaynor, who is an interior designer and owner of Sotre, encouraged me to display pieces in the shop for Art for Art's Sake in 2015. I was shocked and overwhelmed when all three pieces sold.

**WHY** I was very lucky that my parents exposed me to art at a very age. I took a ceramics class in high school with a wonderful teacher and that was the beginning of my interest in clay. I am truly inspired by my incredibly, talented friends at Earth & Fire every day. They bring great energy and creativity to life in the studio. And, I have always admired Bradley Sabin's beautiful ceramic flower installations.

**IN YOUR WORDS** Flowers are certainly not unique in ceramics, but I think my interpretation of an orchid is different. Orchids have always been my favorite flower. I love what I do because I enjoy getting my hands dirty and it has a calming, healing effect.

Karen Gundlach Ceramics, Instagram @karengundlachceramics

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## Master of ()PRESERVATION

**Nicole Webre**

**WHO** Nicole Webre, owner, Webre Consulting and Webre Construction and developer, Bakery Village.

**WHAT** My area of design is redevelopment; from conceptual to construction to completion.

**WHERE** Examples of clients' projects are adaptive reuse of historic buildings and vacant lots which brings new life to neighborhoods. We utilize economic incentives and zoning to accomplish their goals. In developing Bakery Village, it was a unique opportunity for me to take a blank canvas and recreate houses that once stood there.

**WHEN** I began in my early 20s working at City Hall. I saw so many opportunities for redevelopment. In 2013, I started my own consulting business and my own construction projects. This led to me becoming a general contractor as well. **HOW** I begin with a concept and then I take it from paper to life.



**WHY** I love historic preservation because it is not just renovating existing buildings but using available land to preserve neighborhoods with thoughtful development. I witness firsthand the love and passion clients have for New Orleans and the transformation they want to make in the business and residential communities. They are willing to jump over hurdles to make their dreams come true. It is fulfilling to be part of that process.

**IN YOUR WORDS** The work I do is focused on historic preservation, permitting, licensing, zoning, construction and utilizing various incentives for development.

Webre Consulting and Webre Construction, [webreconsulting.com](http://webreconsulting.com) (<http://webreconsulting.com>),  
[webreconstructionnola.com](http://webreconstructionnola.com) (<http://webreconstructionnola.com>)



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## Master of ( )WOODWORKING

Greg McGavran and Garrett McGavran

**WHO** Greg McGavran and Garrett McGavran. (Father and son.)

**WHAT** We offer wood products for flooring, paneling, decking, indoor and outdoor furniture and accessories. We specialize in reclaimed woods, French oak, European chestnut, domestic selections and Shou Sugi Ban.

**WHERE** We import from Spain and France and source from select mills in the United States. Our atelier furniture partner, Wood South Revival — a fabrication and design company located in Hollygrove — has a business model to make beautiful furniture. Our work can be seen at venues throughout New Orleans, including the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, NOMA, Aquarium of the Americas, Justine and private residences.

**WHEN** Greg started as an installer 40 years ago and has vast knowledge in the wood world. Vision Wood is a culmination of his passion and pioneering work in the industry.

**HOW** Clients come to us with their design intention and we work with them to create the desired look. We also have our own furniture line and outdoor elements; we love to play and create.

**WHY** Greg finds inspiration in the science and beauty of wood [and has] always been inspired by plant life and trees, mainly their natural beauty and ability to warm up a space.

**IN YOUR WORDS** Greg: My career has blessed me to travel the world and work on projects throughout the U.S. We believe that New Orleans needs a source for premier wood products at a price that can meet everyone's budget.

Vision Wood, [vision-wood.com](http://vision-wood.com) (<http://vision-wood.com>)

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## Master of ( )ARCHITECTURE

### Leslie Raymond and Richard Albert

**WHO** Richard Albert and Leslie Raymond of Albert Architecture.

**WHAT** Albert Architecture is a full-service architecture, engineering and interior design firm. Recent projects include custom residential, mixed-use multifamily, commercial, retail, hospitality, healthcare and governmental.

**WHERE** Albert Architecture is based in New Orleans. Our practice is involved in a number of projects throughout the country, including Louisiana, Georgia, Oklahoma, Florida, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Maine.

**WHEN** Richard Albert founded Albert Architecture in 2001 and serves as firm principal. Leslie Raymond joined the team in 2014 and leads one of the firm's studios specializing in custom residential projects.



**HOW** We consider ourselves great listeners and problem solvers. As we get to know the specifics of how our clients live, work and entertain, we search for expressions of form, material and light that give something extra. It is important that our projects offer opportunities of discovery and joy for each of our clients.

**WHY** For us, the greatest reward is to return to a project a year or more later to witness the space being used as it was envisioned, and to see the inhabitants enjoying it.

**IN YOUR WORDS** Understanding a client's needs and the many possibilities of how space can be utilized are key components to how we begin. As the project develops, we look forward to collaborative work sessions with our clients. Here, we gain valuable insight and offer recommendations that enhance the aesthetic value. Our close involvement continues throughout the construction phase to ensure the project's success.

Albert Architecture, [albert-architecture.com](http://albert-architecture.com) (<http://albert-architecture.com>)



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# Master of ()LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

## Brian Sublette

**WHO** I'm Brian K. Sublette, ASLA owner and partner of Daly-Sublette Landscape Architects Inc.

**WHAT** We provide landscape architectural services for residential and commercial clients. Most projects are comprised of planting and irrigation, swimming pools, cabanas, outdoor kitchens and other site design features.

**WHERE** The majority of our projects are located in the New Orleans metro area, including the Northshore. Additionally, we have multiple projects in Baton Rouge, Houma, Natchez Mississippi, Montrose, Alabama and Alys Beach, Florida.

**WHEN** After obtaining my Landscape Architecture degree from LSU in 1990, I began working with my previous partner Bill Daly, ASLA, who retired about 15 years ago. Since then, my current partner George Bridevaux and I have been operating the company.

**HOW** We're extremely fortunate to have a dedicated team of designers, construction managers and long-term relationships with numerous skilled subcontractors to assist in executing our designs.

**WHY** It's incredibly gratifying to develop designs for clients which exceed their expectations allowing them to entertain family and friends (in some cases multiple generations), creating lifelong memories, in addition to enhancing the aesthetics and value of their homes.

**IN YOUR WORDS** In general, it's a collaboration between a very talented and conscientious team of employees — design and construction — and a concern that we have a 'whatever it takes' attitude to live up to our 30-year reputation of excellence and service.

Daly Sublette Landscape Architects, [dalysublette.squarespace.com](http://dalysublette.squarespace.com) (<http://dalysublette.squarespace.com>)

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## Master of KITCHENS

**Jimmy Lagarde**

**WHO** Jimmy Lagarde, founder of Lagarde's Kitchens and Baths.

**WHAT** Design-led kitchen and bathroom creation, and the procurement of the finest materials available at multiple price points.

**WHEN** Jimmy founded Lagarde's in 1970; daughter Katherine Lagarde Bernard joined in 2006.

**WHERE** From St. Charles Avenue, Audubon Place and Boulevard, Esplanade Avenue, State Street, First through Eighth Streets in the Garden District to Metairie, Texas, South America, Europe and beyond, Lagarde kitchens can be found in the homes of the most discerning homeowners. Our Old Metairie Showroom features our handcrafted furniture-quality cabinetry from our exclusive manufacturers in Pennsylvania, Iowa and Canada.

**HOW** Unconstrained by the limitations of kitchen design software which too often puts cabinet placement at the mercy of “making it fit,” we start with pencil and draft paper and begin sketching an ideal space given the needs, vision and aesthetic of each individual client. The designs are executed by Jimmy and Katherine Lagarde, drawing from over 50 years of design expertise to yield a kitchen, or bathroom, that is as beautiful as it is functional. Our work is truly custom-made furniture for the home.

**WHY** The kitchen has evolved over the decades to become the new heart of the home. It is the centerpiece of daily life where memories and meals are enjoyed. A Lagarde kitchen is a kitchen for a lifetime.

**IN YOUR WORDS** The intersection of form and function inspires us. In other words, the endless pursuit of creating and redefining spaces that both enhance a client’s life through functionality, but also equally inspire through beauty.

Lagarde’s Kitchens & Baths, [lagardes.com](http://lagardes.com) (<http://lagardes.com>)



(<https://www.myneworleans.com/content/uploads/2019/08/TritonStone.jpg>)



# Master of ()STONE AND TILE

Rachel Jones and Katie Peralta

**WHO** Katie Peralta and Rachel Jones, president and vice president of Triton Stone Group.

**WHAT** We are committed to providing the highest level of customer service, the best quality marble and granite products and the most competitive price in the market. We also supply natural and engineered stone, kitchen and bath fixtures, tile for all applications and more.

**WHERE** The New Orleans showroom and design space is located on River Road in Harahan. Our stone is superbly installed all over the city.

**WHEN** Triton Stone Group of New Orleans was opened by Katie and Rachel in 2006, and has been expanding throughout the Southeast ever since, with branches in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and Florida.

**HOW** After Katrina, we saw the need for more resources for people to have somewhere to go to select everything they need to re-create the house of their dreams.

**WHY** We are inspired by other female owners that have been successful prevailing in a male-dominant industry. Our ability to provide for so many people as a family company is one of our biggest inspirations for doing what we do. Through our Triton Cares program, we are able to give back to our Triton family and our local communities.

**IN YOUR WORDS** No two pieces of natural stone are exactly the same, which makes every design completely unique. Knowing that a piece of our brand is incorporated into so many designs throughout New Orleans makes us feel like everywhere is home.

Triton Stone, [tritonstone.com](http://tritonstone.com) (<http://tritonstone.com>)

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