



(far left) Serendipity Home Editor Stephanie Horton and (far right) CEO Suni Unger, with honorees Joeb Moore and Cindy Rinfret

Designer Event

SERENDIPITY'S SIXTH ANNUAL DESIGN MARKET DIGEST PARTY CELEBRATED SOME OF THIS AREA'S TOP INDUSTRY TALENT.

Three innovative design professionals were honored at this year's *Design Market Digest* (DMD) party, which took place at the spacious, bright Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams showroom in Greenwich, CT. The evening and the yearly special issue it celebrates, supports the amazing design culture in our community. *Serendipity* Home Editor Stephanie Horton presented beautiful glass awards from Simon Pearce to the honorees, all of whom have made substantial contributions in their respective fields: interior designer Cindy Rinfret, architect Joeb Moore and creative director Elizabeth Eakins.

Rinfret, the principal designer of Rinfret, Ltd., was honored for her three decades of design excellence and for giving back to the community. "I was so proud to be included in this prestigious group of honorees; it is wonderful for our design community to be recognized in *Serendipity's* annual *Design Market Digest*," says Rinfret. She counts celebrities like Tommy Hilfiger and Regis Philbin among her clients, and was inducted into the New England Design Hall of Fame in 2013.

Joeb Moore was praised for his 30 years of excellence in architecture and his commitment to innovation. Moore specializes

in contemporary architecture. "Our office is committed to the idea that architecture is a material and social art that creatively engages with the visual, social, and political history and culture of which it is an active part," says Moore, who also focuses on historic preservation, adaptive reuse and environmentally-aware design.

Elizabeth Eakins was lauded for 40 years of excellence in textile design and her dedication to global sustainability. "Since 1978, Eakins has been making extraordinary natural fiber rugs by hand, the historical way," says Horton. By establishing her own Kansas sheep farm 15 years ago, she's deepened her supply chain, and become a true farm-to-product business. She has flagship locations in Norwalk, Manhattan and Los Angeles, as well as a fabric line that is sold at showrooms throughout the United States and in London.

Guests mingled while eating gourmet light bites by Marcia Selden Catering & Event Planning, including truffle tater tots and mini sliders. Signature lemonade mint vodka cocktails, as well as a variety of wines, were provided by Val's Putnam Wines.

5 MINUTES WITH OUR HONOREES

We talked home trends and the upcoming summer season with this year's *DMD* experts.

What is the first thing you notice when walking into a home?

Cindy Rinfret: I always look at the outside and the inside of the home, as I like to merge my interiors with the landscape. Next, I look at the layout and flow and the window location and heights. If you get the bones of the house correct, the decorating is the icing on the cake.

Joeb Moore: The play between light and the space. How open and inviting are the living spaces to the outside?

Elizabeth Eakins: Light—I love spaces filled with light. It is cheerful and creates a wonderful relationship between the interior and exterior spaces of a property.

What is a design trend or practice you're loving?

CR: Color is back! Aren't we all tired of gray interiors? Also, mixing metal finishes and furniture finishes, such as nickel and brass, brown wood and light wood. Interiors were all too matchy and bland the last few years. Interiors should look collected not bought.

JM: Smaller, more sustainable, performative building systems and houses.

EE: It is marvelous to see designers exploring color like blues, reds and oranges, adding layers and textures. There is a desire for comfort and personal expression now that is very pleasing.

And one trend you wish would go away?

CR: Bling. A lot of modern interiors have too many luxe fabrics or shiny crystal lighting. I think it looks dated already...quality is timeless.

JM: Consumerist, "cookie-cutter" houses, that look out of scale, flat and lifeless, and not part of a larger, sustainable ecosystem. Houses that just landed there with no connection to their site or ecologies of place.

EE: Maybe we consider moving away from gray and towards beige to lighten things up. The light in the Northeast tends to read gray, and it can be somber having too much gray. A mix would be great.

What do you wish every potential client knew about working with a design professional?

CR: Decorating is a business and is just as much about paperwork, being accurate and completing a home in a timely manner as it is about aesthetics. This requires a contact list of competent trades and craftsmen that takes years to acquire. A designer should make your life easier and the process seamless. Time is

HOME

Fahmida Syed with Gilda's Club's Marjorie Weintraub and Founder Robin Poses Markell



Sandy Ceppos and Betsy Woodall



David Harris, Chris Roughan, Beth Dempsey and Amy Andrews



Whitney Jennison, Elizabeth Reda, and Frank Cohen and Angela Cullinan from Ring's End



Architect Phillip Ceradini and J&H Contractors' Yan Kastrati



Heather Worth and Aileen Neima



Susie Baker, Nancy Carr, Roseann Benedict and Beth Eaton-Koch

PAST HONOREES

2015

Rich Granoff
Dinyar Wadia

2016

Amy Aidinis Hirsch
Douglas VanderHorn

2017

Charles Hilton
Jody Myers-Fierz
George Pusser

money, and a true professional saves you both.
JM: Suspend disbelief just long enough to discover the creative potential in the design process and collaboration. No easy task.
EE: A skilled design professional is trained in scale, proportion and business practice, with a talent for listening to what the client wants and the ability to guide them through the process with a curated eye.

What's your favorite way to update a home and décor for summer?

CR: Bringing fresh flowers into your home. Updating your outdoor furniture with new pillows, throws and umbrellas. I wish people could get back to the days when you have summer/winter slipcovers. At least by changing your pillows and throws you can instantly give a room a lighter fresher feel.
EE: White slipcovers. I am old school; I love changing out the overall colors for the warmer months. Also, lots of fresh flowers. Go to your local farmer's market if you don't have a flower garden. It is economical and lifts the mood of a room immediately.

Do you have a tip for easy summer entertaining?

CR: Get fun, colorful napkins and melamine dishes you don't have to worry about breaking. Put flowers and lanterns with candles on your outdoor table just like you would for an indoor dinner party. Most of all, entertain outdoors and enjoy the summer. It goes by too fast.
EE: Keep it simple: fresh food, a pretty table and good friends. That combination is a winner.

How will you spend your summer months this year?

CR: Summer is a busy time for decorators who are installing and renovating while clients are away on summer breaks with their families. I have some large installations this summer, but between those I will fly off to my place in Greece—just a heavenly place to recharge your inspiration and soul.
JM: Traveling. I love to travel and experience different cultures and ways of life.
EE: Raising our baby sheep. It is a very busy time of year; we lamb now and devote 12 weeks to getting the new flock up to speed. I get very color focused in summer: What colors are inspiring in nature and what do I need to bring to my palette? 🐑

Monique Cahill and Jessica Quezada

