

Married to DESIGN



Interior designer and owner of Nashville's The Iron Gate, Rozanne Jackson and architect Glen Oxford not only live together as husband and wife, but also frequently collaborate on projects. *MILIEU's* Executive Editor, David Masello, spoke to them to find out how they work together—and why it works.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Chris Little* INTERVIEW BY *David Masello*

WHAT IS A FAVORITE PROJECT YOU'VE WORKED ON TOGETHER?

Glen: The next one. Don't you hate when architects say that? We are currently working on two modern-style homes.

Rozanne: I would have to say our own home in Alys Beach, Florida. It was such a rewarding and personal experience that we now are lucky enough to enjoy together.

DO YOU EVER DISAGREE ABOUT STYLE AND, IF SO, HOW DO YOU RESOLVE THE PROBLEM?

Glen: No, not really, since Rozanne lets me do my thing, and then she does hers. She, however, makes suggestions.

Rozanne: Not usually, but I can remember when we first met, Glen had this black leather sofa and he loved me enough to let it go, thankfully.

GLEN, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PERIOD OF ARCHITECTURE?

Mid-century Modern—1930s, '40s and '50s. I like organic architecture as well—as in Frank Lloyd Wright, Bruce Goff, and E. Faye Jones. I also love Le Corbusier's work. We visited his last built project in Zurich, which was designed for Heidi Weber, who established a museum dedicated to him. He passed away before its completion in the mid '60s.

IF YOU COULD BOTH CHOOSE ANY PERIOD IN WHICH TO DESIGN AND LIVE IN A HOME, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Rozanne: I appreciate good design from all time periods, but I would have to say the present. While I always love incorporating an antique, my personal preference leans more toward a modern style with lots of glass and light, with neutral and organic materials.

Glen: Again, I am torn between the styles I've already cited. I guess if the site was a wooded one, I would lean more to organic design; if the site was more urban, then Mid-century would be fun.

GLEN, WHAT LED YOU TO YOUR CAREER IN ARCHITECTURE?

Wow! Do you really want to know? It was quite by accident. In high school, I got a job just a few blocks from my school that made electronic boards that the factory used in cutting fabric patterns. I was so fascinated by



Opposite: Few couples can claim to work and live together as well as Rozanne Jackson and Glen Oxford. Above: When not working in Nashville, they retreat to their second home in Alys Beach, Florida, much of which Oxford designed.

the engineers designing the boards, that I made the silkscreens to make the boards. From there I attended our local junior college and received a degree in architectural engineering. A lot of graduates were planning on going to get a five-year professional degree, so I chose Auburn [University] and the rest is history.

AND ROZANNE, WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO INTERIOR DESIGN?

Growing up, I was always rearranging my bedroom as a child to create a new space. My mom and her sisters were also great influences. They each made their homes special, with a different style, but they all shared a passion for



The public living areas of their Alys Beach home manage to remain private. Upon arriving at the house, guests pass beneath a vaulted roof line and into a discreet pool area. Wooden louvers over the sitting area control sunlight.

antiques, so I was exposed to beautiful and timeless pieces at an early age. That has stayed with me.

YOU BOTH LOVE TO TRAVEL. WHAT CITY OR COUNTRY CONTINUES TO INFLUENCE YOUR STYLE AND SENSE OF DESIGN?

Glen: Italy, France, and Switzerland, although you really can't tell by our designs. However, in a small town in the Mougins region of France, I found a beautiful fountain on the corner of a building, and so I incorporated a corner fountain in our house in Alys Beach.

Rozanne: France. I love anything that is Parisian. Most of the antiques we collect for our retail locations or our clients are going to be from somewhere in France.

HOW DID YOU BOTH MEET AND WHAT BROUGHT YOU TOGETHER AS A WORKING TEAM?

Rozanne: After meeting briefly at a friend's birthday party, we were set up on a blind date a few months later and have been together since.

ROZANNE, YOUR STORE, THE IRON GATE, HAS BECOME A DESIGN DESTINATION, AND NOT JUST IN NASHVILLE. CAN YOU SHARE ANECDOTES ABOUT SOME OF THE CUSTOMERS/CLIENTS WHO'VE COME THROUGH YOUR DOORS?

I respect our clients' privacy, but I can tell you that being in such a creative and music-based city, it's always so amazing to look up and see that one of your favorite country music or television stars is a customer. Getting to work closely with some of these people has always been such a fun and rewarding part of this job.

GLEN, DO YOU PREFER COMMERCIAL WORK TO RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS?

These are totally on opposite sides of the spectrum. Commercial work tends to be more fast-paced, with quicker turnover dates, whereas, residential projects take more thought. With commercial projects, you are usually working for a corporation or developer that know exactly what they want. In residential design, for the most part, less thought has been put into what they want or require in a home. Yes they know how many bedrooms they want, but it takes a lot to get the client to open up as to their daily routine, which helps an architect to design the home with them, not for them.

THE MOST MEMORABLE COMPLIMENT YOU'VE RECEIVED FROM A CLIENT?

Glen: Most recently: "You nailed it!"

Rozanne: We have clients who we have worked with for over twenty years on every house they move to or build and we have customers who have supported us for more than twenty years. That to me is the greatest compliment.

IF YOU HAD TO EACH WORK ON ONLY ONE PROJECT FOR THE NEXT YEAR, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHAT MIGHT REPRESENT YOUR DREAM COLLABORATION AS A TEAM?

Glen: If it were to happen, our next home.

Rozanne: A project that really plays into our creative sides and allows us to think outside the box. Architecture and design can be imagined in so many different ways, so I think having a client who is not afraid to do something that they have never seen before would be a dream. ■