



# BUILDING THE FUTURE

A master class with California design icons

by **LINDSEY SHOOK** photography by **DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN**

As the design industry continues to evolve, we all want to know: What does the future of design hold? What styles will emerge? What color will dominate 2018? How will technology advance the design of homes and change the way we do business?

The simple principles of design are intended to answer these questions while creating a more efficient and beautiful world. Whether responding to the demands of tech-savvy clients or building structures that will withstand impending environmental issues, we have confidence that the great design minds of our time will persist with the development of innovative ideas, materials and methodologies.

We asked a group of iconic California style pioneers, whose work has stood the test of time, ignited trends and inspired up-and-coming talent, to share insights on what it takes to make it in this industry and what tools they are using to shape the future of design.

**TOP ROW, FROM LEFT:** Jeffrey Alan Marks, Jay Jeffers. **MIDDLE ROW:** Paul Vincent Wiseman, Madeline Stuart, Martyn Lawrence Bullard, Barbara Bestor. **BOTTOM ROW:** Orlando Diaz-Azcuy, Peter Dunham, Jamie Bush, Silvia Kuhle

**MADELINE STUART**  
madelinestuart.com

**What does it take today to be a success in the design industry?**

Patience and fortitude. There is a difference between being a design “success” and being a great designer. Too much of what passes for design today is merely sourcing. Truly original design requires more than collecting Pinterest images and having a resale certificate.

**Do you see a day when to-the-trade showrooms will be no more?**

I certainly hope not. There’s a reason people hire designers. It’s hard work. It takes knowledge and experience to walk into a showroom and be able to incorporate all the disparate offerings, not merely so they make sense, but so they make magic.

**What does luxury look like in the future?**

For me, the concept of luxury doesn’t change. It’s the ability to surround yourself with furnishings that are beautiful, distinctive and highly personal.

**What makes California design different from the rest of the world?**

The weather and our climate certainly plays a large part in how we design for our California clients. But there’s also an adventurous spirit here, a need to break away from convention and traditions. I think that attitude encourages complex design ideas and trends that ultimately find their way to the East Coast and beyond.



**MARTYN LAWRENCE BULLARD**  
martynlawrencebullard.com

**What does it take to be a design success today?**

You have to be versatile. I believe the designers of old used to make their living creating the same style for each client but using a slightly different theme. To be successful today, you must be able to do a multitude of styles. You have to understand people’s changing needs and how they want to live in the 21st century.

**What do your clients consider the ultimate luxury right now?**

Modern luxury is comfort. Nobody wants to live in a room that they cannot touch, sit in and play with. They want inviting rooms that people are not afraid of. It’s about making use of all the space in your home.

**How has social media helped your business?**

Instagram is the most unbelievable tool. It is easy to use and it

brings immediate results. For instance, I posted a photo yesterday of a new product from my Frontgate collection and the vendor called and said they received four orders within a day. It is vitally important not only as a selling tool but for establishing your brand, connecting with people and receiving feedback about your work.

**What will homes in California look like in the future?**

I believe homes will be designed to grasp more technology and feature much more relaxed interiors. If you think about it, the iPhone changes every year, offering a new feature to make your life easier. That will translate slowly but surely to other forms of design. For example, recently while I was shopping at Snyder Diamond I was shown a new refrigerator that has a camera inside allowing you to check what is in your fridge while shopping at the supermarket.

**What is your prediction for the 2018 color of the year?**

Green. I was into emerald, but now we are using all shades of green. And of course, gray is the new white.



**PAUL VINCENT WISEMAN**  
wisemangroup.com

**What does it take to be a design success today?**

It takes a firm that has a non-designer to run the business side of the company and empowering your design staff so that they enjoy their work and want to stay with you.

**What past trends do you see coming back to the forefront?**

After Woody Allen’s movie, *Interiors*, you’d think gray would have died by now, but it has come and gone so many times that it’s back.

**What do your clients consider the ultimate luxury right now?**

After you’ve had enough of private planes and V’Soske carpets, a home that exudes quiet simplicity is the greatest luxury. In that simplicity, clients often want to enjoy the latest technology, as long as they can be spared constant updates and instructions.

**What advice would you give young people entering the profession?**

Be sure that it is your passion, and the rest will fall into place.

**JAY JEFFERS**  
jayjeffers.com

**What does it take to be a design success today?**

With anything, it takes talent and hard work. Interior design is not waving your arms around and yelling out colors. It is a job. I think some people don’t realize this. But we love it, so it doesn’t seem that hard.

**What does luxury look like in the future?**

Sumptuous materials and sunlight. Space is not a luxury element as it was in the past. Domains are getting smaller. Living with high-quality fabrics and finishes that feel great in your hands and to touch along with natural light are truly luxurious.

**JEFFREY ALAN MARKS**  
jam-design.com

**What does it take to be a design success today?**

Initiative and understanding, I believe that in today’s world where everything is a click away, I must continue to look for inspiration in new places and create unique content for my clients.

**What does luxury look like in the future?**

Expansive spaces that are tailored for comfort and full of bold color.

**What is your greatest source of inspiration in California?**

Northern California; the rugged coastline continues to be my greatest source of inspiration.

**Where in California is your greatest source of inspiration?**

I have a place in the Napa Valley where I am happy every second I am there.

**What is your prediction for the 2018 color of the year?**

I like the color Stone Blue by Farrow and Ball. It’s a little bit green and a little bit blue.



**What does the future of California design look like?**

Fashion and functionality. Interior design is becoming more interactive with an emphasis on individuality. And while luxury will always be important, I see interior design taking more cues from the fashion world’s philosophy of mixing high and low.

**What is your prediction for the 2018 color of the year?**

Jade green.

**BARBARA BESTOR**  
bestorarchitecture.com

**What does it take to be a design success today?**

Using social media to informally get your ideas out to the world.

**How has technology changed the way you work?**

We love to pre-visualize structural concepts and natural lighting with our modeling software, which gives us all sorts of insight into the buildings we make.

**What will California homes look like in the future?**

Open and incredibly

energy efficient with strong material palettes in the architecture.

**Does the potential impact of global warming on the California coastline affect how you are designing?**

We work with the coastal authorities a lot on the coordination of energy-conscious solutions for our projects near the beach. We always try to make our carbon and building footprints as compact as possible by using fewer resources.

**What is your prediction for the 2018 color of the year?**

Yves Klein Blue.



**SILVIA KUHLE**  
Standardarchitecture.com

**What is one way you feel the design industry can change for the better?**

We need to go to bookstores more often. The endless stream of images on the internet is exhausting in its equivalency. Books on design and architecture, especially used ones, are immersive and full of inspiration.

**What will California homes look like in the future?**

On the outside, we will see more solar panels integrated seamlessly into roofing systems, making them invisible. Also, maybe fewer garage doors. On the inside, our homes will retain their relationship to the outdoors and to natural light.

**What makes design in California different from the rest of the world?**

In California, especially in Los Angeles, there is a sense that context doesn't limit design. We've got a diverse history, a forgiving climate and educated, enterprising clients.

**What is your prediction for the 2018 color of the year?**

Pantone 16 1108 Twill.

**JAMIE BUSH**  
jamiebush.com

**What does it take to be a design success today?**

Flexibility is key. After designing for over 20 years, we are constantly trying to reinvent the way we do business. We have to be flexible to the consumer and their needs and adjust to the climate of the times.

**How has technology changed the way you work?**

Definitely in the way that we build homes. Especially in California, the homes are becoming smarter so we use technology even when designing lighting. On the office side of the business, we are becoming more involved with bigger projects that are experienced virtually with 3-D

flythroughs and advanced architectural animation. It's very seductive.

**Can you share one success story of how social media helped your business?**

Houzz is a great channel to utilize; we once had a client who was a Facebook executive hire us after seeing just one image of our work on the site.

**What is one way you feel the design industry can change for the better?**

I believe our design process could improve if information and data categorizing was unified and simplified. I have been rallying for one single platform that allows you to categorize products and inventory and tag products from different online vendors in one central hub.



**ORLANDO DIAZ-AZCUY**  
odada.net

**What does it take to be a design success today?**

Be honest, be smart, know the sources, do not market yourself beyond your abilities and challenge the status quo.

**What past trends do you see returning to the forefront?**

I do not like predictions, and I do not follow trends, but the disappearance of 19th-century furniture from today's interiors will reverse.

**What do your clients consider the ultimate luxury right now?**

The ultimate luxury is comfort. More meat and less sauce.

**What advice would you give young people entering the profession?**

Pay your dues, take the time to learn every aspect of the business and do not believe that design talent alone will make you a success.

**What will California homes look like in 2025?**

The trend will be for houses to be sold to the public fully furnished. This will profoundly change the interior design profession.

**PETER DUNHAM**  
peterdunham.com

**What does it take to be a design success today?**

Twenty percent psychology skills, 10 percent marketing, 25 percent business skills, 25 percent design vision and 20 percent charm.

**Do you see a day when to-the-trade showrooms will be no more?**

Brick and mortar in general is fading. If almost 35 percent of people meet their spouse online, buying a sofa online seems unchallenging.

**How has technology changed the way you work?**

From the perspective of the left side of the brain, technology has made us all much more productive. It's so much easier to do things like drafting, billing, creating proposals, expediting and sourcing and it gives us more time to service clients faster. From the perspective of

the right side of the brain, the information and communication overflow and constant hunching over a computer can erode the creative process.

Technology has also made the relationship between client and designer much more distant. In many cases the clients want options emailed to them. We just did a successful project in Century City without ever meeting the client until the reveal.

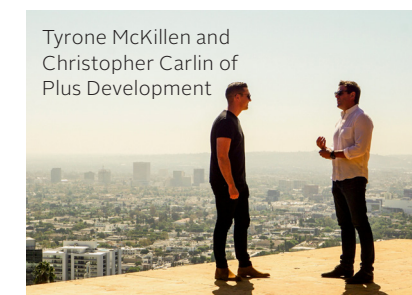
**What does the future of design look like in the California?**

The movement of the past decade has seen developers creating cold and bland modern architecture. The big resistance against this I see happening in both residential and commercial spaces is what I call the Silver Lake style—artisanal, authentic, eccentric, eclectic, organic, composting, home-grown vegetables, and slow-cooked food.

**SETTING THE SCENE OF OUR COVER SHOOT**

With this photo shoot and story, we pay tribute to the pillars of our design community whose countless contributions have pushed the limits of how we build and design. It was important for us to choose a location that is redefining the architectural landscape while embracing the dialogue between the interior and exterior lifestyle in California.

The perfectly positioned site, located at 1471 Forest Knoll Drive, offers sweeping views from Downtown L.A. to the Pacific Ocean. The work of Standard Architecture, this modern farmhouse is one of many high-profile projects represented by Mercer Vine, a luxury powerhouse real estate agency, and cultivated by Plus Development, a real estate development



management firm whose design-focused portfolio includes the Hotel Bel Air, Ace Hotel and Swim Club in Palm Springs and much more.

Founded by Tyrone McKillen and Christopher Carlin, Plus Development's unique hands-on approach sets their work apart from the rest. Both founders work closely with their teams in hiring international architects to formulate styles not seen in the local landscape. In partnership with the design savvy Mercer Vine, their acclaimed work has transformed the local real estate development culture by creating spaces

with unparalleled quality in finishes and craftsmanship paired with architectural significance.

Get more information on this property at californiahomedesign.com.