

Qualified Remodeler

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September 2017

2017
**MASTER
DESIGN**
AWARD WINNERS

26

QR Outdoors:
Underdecking 64

Product Trends:
Exterior Trim 68



Meet the Panel

The judges of the 39th annual Master Design Awards took on a tall task: Sort and rank hundreds of entries across 22 categories. They fulfilled their formidable duty—bestowing gold, silver and bronze designations within each group—and even honored two projects with a special visionary distinction that elevates them above the rest of the winners. The judging panel this year included *(as shown above from left to right)*:

- Mathew Cummings, owner/principal architect, Cummings Architects, Ipswich, Massachusetts*

- Ellen Linstead Whitmore, director of design, Case Design/Remodeling, Bethesda, Maryland
- Michael Ansel, principal, OA Design+Build, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Michael Menn, principal architect, Michael Menn Ltd., Northbrook, Illinois
- Megan Bratetic, owner/vice president, Bratetic Construction, Kennard, Nebraska
- Tom Graham, president, The Airoom Companies, Lincolnwood, Illinois

We caught up with the judges after they completed their scoring to ask them questions about what they saw during the design competition. Here are their responses:

WHAT WERE THE TOP TRENDS IN WINNING DESIGNS?

Graham: The unique use of materials and textures, whether it was a recreation of a 100-year-old moulding or the introduction of a different material or texture in a totally contemporary design.

Anschel: The reintroduction of color into kitchens and bathrooms. The era of the white kitchen is finally over, and with any hope this stake in its heart will keep it from ever returning.

Linstead Whitmore: There were projects of so many sizes, budgets and styles, but the winning designs all had a strong overall use of space and functionality as well as attention to details.

Bratetic: Having a focal point and letting it shine. In some cases, a sense of simplicity ruled because there was something brilliant that drew you in, and the rest of the design elements were complementary.

Cummings: New ways for people to live within architecture that's designed functionally but different—looking towards the future—and how the aesthetics wrap its art around these new functions.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A GREAT WINNING PRESENTATION?

Menn: Having great before and after photos (professionally done) and great before and after plans is a must. The presentation needs to tell a story in as few words as possible, but definitely telling what needs to be said.

Graham: Presentations that matched before and after pictures along with quick and concise explanations were the best. I also loved seeing people or pets or items that made it look lived in and not staged.

Anschel: The best presentations had the fewest number of words and the fewest number of pictures. They took control of the design of the entry and made sure that they communicated the most relevant information in a super digestible method.

Bratetic: Attention to detail was appreciated and even things like the name of the project, interesting tidbits and standout quotes caught my eye.

WHAT EXACTLY DID THE NONWINNING ENTRIES LACK?

Menn: Following the competing instructions and telling a compelling story, no matter how big or small the project is.

Anschel: Nonwinning entries lacked attention to detail in their entries. Sloppy photography, spelling errors, an overabundance of words, missing floor plans, missing before photos and missing relevant detail.

Linstead Whitmore: Nonwinning entries may have solved some functional problems but created others, such as an awkward kitchen layout. Some did not adequately

demonstrate the principles of good design—flow, symmetry, hierarchy, etc.

Bratetic: The projects that did not win an award typically lacked cohesion, or it seemed like there was too much going on.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR COMPANIES WHO SUBMIT?

Menn: Whether it goes on your website, is featured in your local paper or you use it as printed collateral, there is no better marketing than telling everyone you won a national design competition!

Graham: It opens your eyes to what other people are seeing in your design. Comparing work done by others and hearing constructive criticism about your own work can really help a company develop and grow.

Linstead Whitmore: A chance to reflect on your recent work and look for opportunities to pursue great design in future projects.

Cummings: Awards bring confidence in potential clients that you are talented enough to design or build their project.

WHAT INSIGHTS WILL YOU TAKE BACK TO YOUR COMPANY?

Graham: I shared what I think is a good strategy to help a judge single out one presentation over another, and I also talked about the human element that needs to come across in the presentation.

Anschel: I am reminded of the high bar we need to strive for ourselves when entering any competition; we're not competing against our peers, we are competing with the concept of a good entry and a spectacular project.

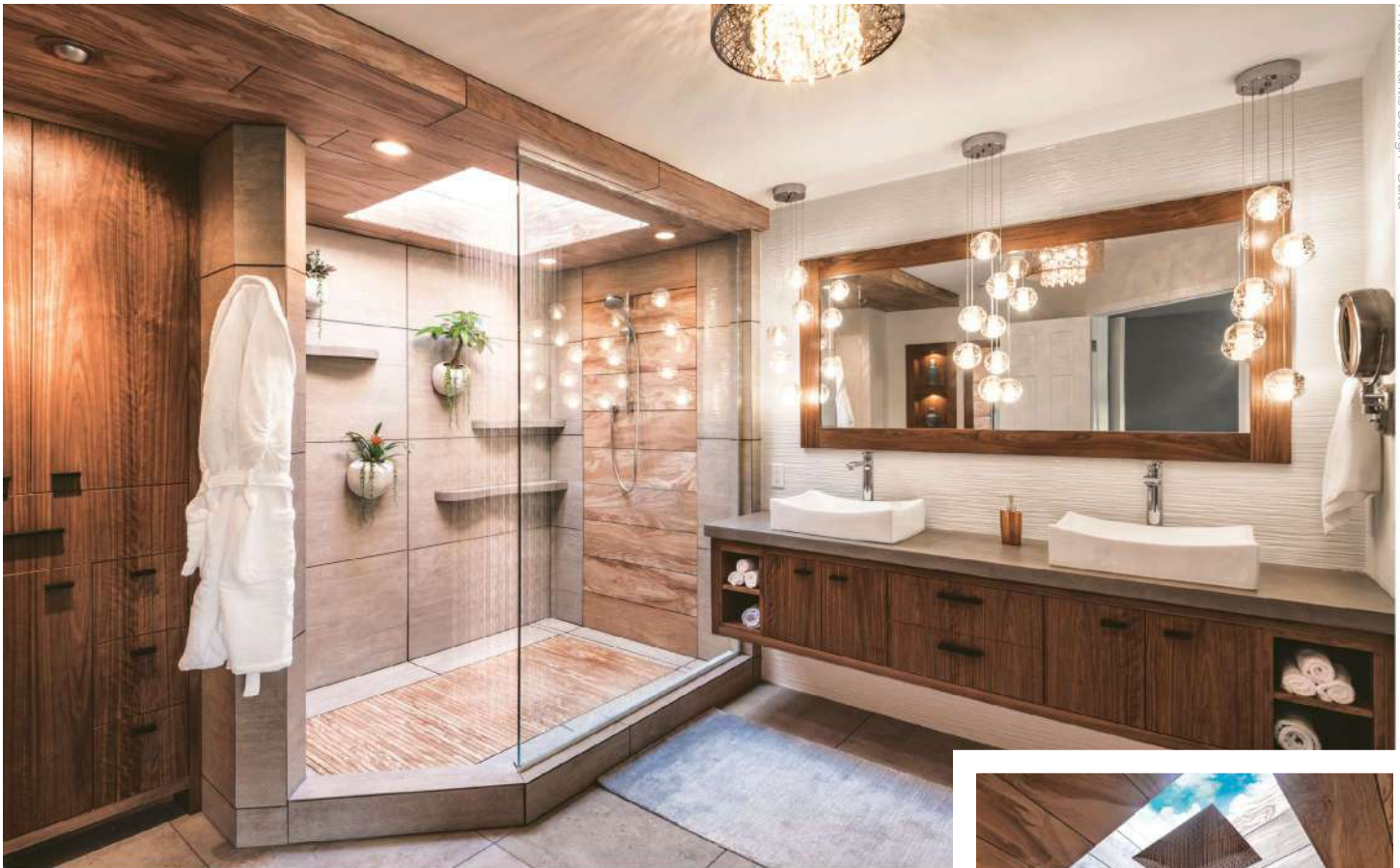
Linstead Whitmore: I am always inspired by seeing the variety of great design being built all over the country, in different styles and budgets. Seeing the creativity and care of others always makes me want to work harder for our clients.

Bratetic: After looking at so many photos, I've realized the ones that have chosen a couple key design elements and executed them exceptionally well get noticed. With the evolution of design and trends changing all the time, people are searching for something to make their project stand out.

Cummings: How to communicate with clients and anyone else in one minute your point in written words and photos. I also learned what is hip and popular in other parts of the country from the other judges.

**Mathew Cummings recused himself from judging for the categories in which Cummings Architects entered to avoid any conflict of interest or bias.*

Continue to see this year's award-winning projects ►



Bathroom \$50,000–\$75,000

GOLD

MANTIS DESIGN + BUILD
 Minneapolis, Minn.
mantisdesignbuild.com

Project name: The Resplendent Bathroom
Project location: Minneapolis, Minn.

Square footage: 125
Project cost: \$69,000

The owner of an urban residence wanted to maximize the usable space in her master bathroom while maintaining the same footprint. Removing a large, unused corner bathtub and deleting a small wall that divided the shower and toilet from the rest of the room established a more open layout. A bigger shower placed below the existing skylight creates a new, luxurious experience.

Installed within the skylight, a 16-inch rain shower generates the illusion of water falling from the sky above. Adding “wood” tile to the shower floor, walls and ceiling gives the space a rich, organic feel and complements the large-format concrete tiles. A ceramic artisan constructed the wall-mounted planters to hold a suitable level of water and bring living elements into the space.

SILVER

CUMMINGS ARCHITECTS
 Ipswich, Mass., cummingsarchitects.com

BRONZE

S&W KITCHENS
 Longwood, Fla., sandwkitchens.com