

Miami Herald

June 23, 2013



JOHN STILLMAN

DYER'S DESIGNS

HE STUDIED ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN, THEN CREATED A LINE OF COOL, COMFORTABLE FURNITURE

BY CHARLYNE VARKONYI SCHAUB
Special to The Miami Herald

When Eric Dyer was 11 years old, he sat inside his aunt's house reading her books and magazines on architecture while friends played outside.

"She wanted to be an interior designer but never followed through," he said sitting at his desk in his sleekly modern office in Hallandale Beach where he is design director of Trend Design + Build and CEO of the Arthur Collection. "I knew then I wanted to be an architect and felt I should follow through for her."

And follow through he did, studying architecture at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, Calif. But soon he learned his ideas and those of his professors were totally at odds. He was way ahead of the mainstream and they urged him to change or get out of the business. He did neither; he diversified.

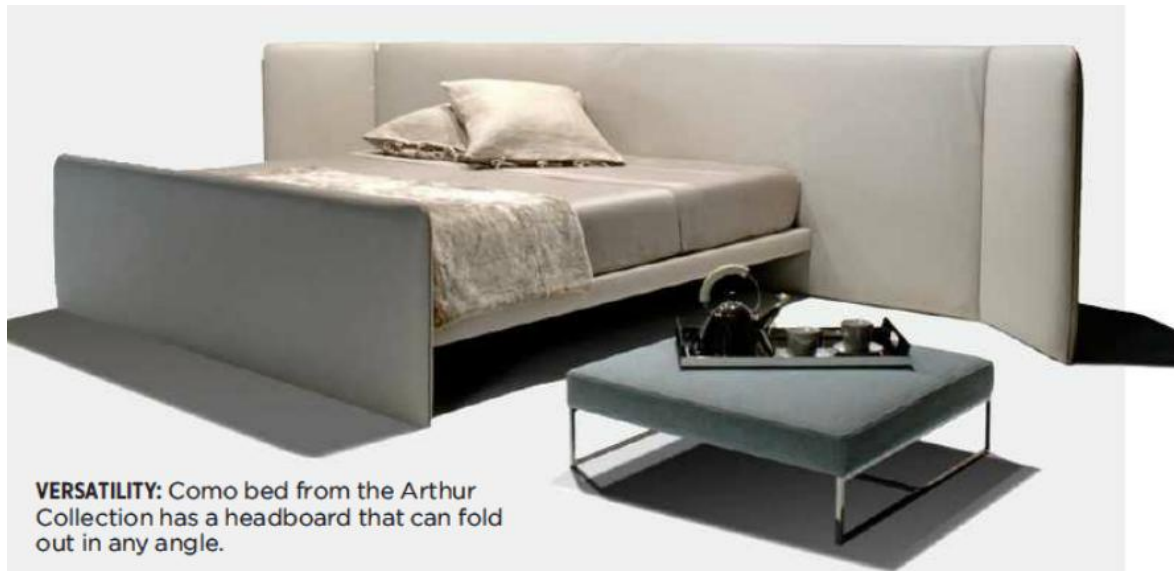
"I noticed that most architects had no idea how people actually lived, so I got a degree in interior design from the Interior Designer Institute [in Newport Beach, Calif.]. The exterior blends into the interior and the design becomes more sculptural."

He admits that he knows what he wants and doesn't stop until he gets it. He's a perfectionist



CHARLES TRAINOR JR./MIAMI HERALD STAFF

CLEAN LINES: Eric Dyer, a South Florida furniture designer, on his sectional, 'Paris,' in his Hallandale Beach office. Above, a Boca Raton condo features an oak Marseille cocktail table from Dyer's Arthur Collection.



VERSATILITY: Como bed from the Arthur Collection has a headboard that can fold out in any angle.

DYER'S DESIGNS

Furniture all about comfort, quality

• DYER, FROM IH

with an eye for timeless design. It was this way of thinking that led him to create Arthur, a 35-piece furniture collection inspired by the simplicity of Asian design, architecture and our culture's desire to declutter. (Arthur is his middle name and also an ode to his grandfather, who designed footwear. See www.arthur-collection.com.)

"Most contemporary furniture looks good, but it feels like you are sitting on rocks," he said as he sat on "Paris," a comfortable sectional from the collection that is in the company's lobby. "We want to give people quality and comfort. Quality is number one and we do what it takes to obtain it."

Quality means high end construction — kiln-dried frames with strong mortise and tenon joints and little connecting hardware. It means comfort — double elastic webbing, three layers of multi-density memory foam that springs back into shape and a top layer of either down or Dacron. The fabrics are reminiscent of menswear suiting and are accented with fashion details such as buttons, zippers and strapping.

This love affair with menswear details harkens back to when he was putting himself through school and worked at Gucci and Giorgio Armani.

"Armani won't release anything until it is perfect and neither do I," Dyer said, noting he sent the collection's catalog back for revision. "I work 18 hours a day and he still does."

Working hard in his profession for the past 25 years has earned Dyer a following of design and building professionals such as Joy Eber, owner of Inside Out, a high-end European outdoor furniture business with showrooms at the Design Center of the Americas in Dania Beach and at the Miami De-



PHOTOS BY JOHN STILLMAN

LIKE A TRENDY HOTEL: Eric Dyer designed this bedroom with hidden storage behind the wall and filmy curtains.



SPACESAVER: This bar in a Boca Raton condo is next to a wall that hides storage and a door to the kitchen.

is an architect," Permuy said. "He was able to understand the construction of my unit and impact how we furnished it. One of the things that is really nice is the design is comfortable as well as being cool."

Sandi Morris heard about Dyer from a friend and hired him to design her Boca Raton condo. He gutted it and

Prize, was the main figure in the "New York Five," which included Post-Modern movement leaders such as Peter Eisenman, John Hejduk, Michael Graves and Charles Gwathmey.

Meier's designs, known for the use of white, is echoed in Dyer's office space. But when someone asked Meier at a conference Dyer

day's dust off of you. You want to leave the clutter behind. We try to clean up life through the integration of design. You look at one of our rooms and don't know where the storage is or where the doors lead to other rooms."

Troy Dean Ippolito, company founder and president of the Arthur Collection,

sign District. Dyer helped furnish her Mediterranean-style home in Boca Raton. Pieces are from top Italian manufacturers and include his coffee table. Eber said she loves Dyer's large wood and stainless table because it is the perfect height and allows her to put her feet up.

"He is without question the most talented person I have ever met in my life," Eber said. "He sees things that no one else sees. He understands how people want to live. He made our home livable rather than formal."

Dyer also get accolades from builder Mitch Permy, CEO of Power Design, who hired him to design his St. Petersburg penthouse.

"He understands how a building is built because he

created a minimalist design in taupes and grays that is warm, sophisticated and comfortable. Morris isn't easy to please because she designed other homes in Greenwich, Conn., before she moved to Florida.

"I had tremendous experience and he pleased me," she said. "When I met Eric I knew that he understood everything I liked and came up with a design that my husband and I liked instantly. He was very talented. I can't sing his praises too much. He is a genius."

Dyer is influenced mostly by Richard Meier, who designed the Getty Center in Los Angeles and Manhattan's Perry Street Towers. Meier, who won the prestigious Pritzker Architecture

attended why everything he designed was white, Meier answered: "None of my work is white. It is a reflection of all the surrounding colors." Dyer seconds that notion.

Another influence is Rodolfo Dordoni, a Milan architect who also designs products for companies such as Artemide, Cappellini and Dornbracht.

One of the keys to Dyer's designs is simplicity without clutter. The rooms are minimalist. Life is too hectic, Dyer said, and home should be a restful haven.

"Your home is your temple," he said. "Look at the design of a church or a mosque and they are minimal in form. When you go home you want the same feeling so you can unwind and get the

said he hired Dyer because it is difficult to find someone who thinks in the same direction. He said Dyer creates timeless, modern design that captures architecture in its true form and reduces it to simple forms.

"When we met we completed each other's design sense versus competing against each other," Ippolito said. "His talents and his innate ability to see things in their true form are hard to come by. When you meet someone you can tell right away if they have it or they don't. It is unequivocal. He has it and shows it every day."

*Charlyne Varkonyi
Schauß can be reached at
charlynedesign@aol.com.*