

DESIGN

Duo specialize in timeless style



SPECIAL DELIVERY: Judi R. Male, left, and Alison Cahlin say they work together to interpret clients' desires and create spaces that go beyond those initial expectations. This is a client's home on Tahiti Beach in Coral Gables.



STEPPING INTO STYLE: The designers behind Male Cahlin Design Partners draw on their travels and knowledge of art and furniture history to deliver interiors such as this entryway in a Coral Gables home.



DETAILED ELEGANCE: From a farmhouse kitchen to a butterfly-adorned staircase handrail, the designing duo try to reflect clients' taste and style in a dateless fashion.

■ Designers took different paths but came together to create comfortable and graceful interiors for clients in Florida and beyond.

BY DAISY OLIVERA
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Sometimes when a mother interferes, it is for the best. Judi Male and Alison Cahlin, who have worked together for over 10 years, were introduced by their mothers, who had been best friends at Miami Beach Senior High School.

Cahlin says Male, who had been a designer for two decades, "had been decorating my cousin's house and I loved the direction the house was taking."

The mothers talked and Male met with the younger Cahlin.

Male and Cahlin are alike in many ways, yet how they came to design is very different. The Pittsburgh-born Male grew up surrounded by interior design — her mother Muriel Rudolph was a well-known interior designer in Miami Beach during the 1960s.

"I started working for my mother before finishing design school at Stephens College in case in local and national publications and has been featured locally and internationally on television.

Their high-end residential clients include luxury apartments, historic homes and waterfront estates throughout Florida, Maine, New York, Boston, Aspen and Puerto Rico.

"We came from the same place emotionally and similar backgrounds — we were fortunate that our parents trav-

eled, because our clients are collectors and have other homes, they are cultured and sophisticated and you need to Missouri. In the old days you learned by example because there were very few design programs," Male recalls.

"I was an art history major. I understand art, antiques, where things come from, how they began."

Cahlin's route was more roundabout. She considered architecture in college but ended up in public relations and marketing.

"After college I worked at a small ad agency for about a week and realized this was not for me," Cahlin says. She went on to work for Burdine's doing special fashion events, yet always loved art and the history of furniture.

"When my two children were little I enrolled in the interior design program at Miami-Dade and got an Associate Degree," she says. "Then I met Judi."

The two now work together out of South Miami.

"We don't end up having one look or one approach," says Male. "What we do is provide the appropriately scaled and styled surroundings for our clients to live in, as influenced by their tastes and desires in a timeless style."

Their work has been show-understand that to be successful," Male says.

"One of us is usually the lead designer on a project, but we work all the jobs together," Cahlin says. "We sit down and bounce ideas off each other. One takes the lead and the other focuses on background details, fabrics selections, furnishings," Male says.

"We try to break clients out of a mold — we're good at taking what they say and translating that into much more than they could have expected. That's what it's about — making our clients happy, it changes their lives."



SMART BOX

Names: Judi Male and Alison Cahlin

Company: Male Cahlin Design Partners, 7520 SW 57th Ave., Suite K, South Miami; 305-667-8666.

Personal: Male, born in Pittsburgh, grew up on Miami Beach. Cahlin, born in Miami Beach.

Education: Male, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Stephens College in Missouri. Cahlin, Bachelor of Science in advertising, University of Florida; associate degree in interior design at Miami-Dade College.

Design philosophy: to create comfortable, livable spaces with timeless design

Inspired by: Male — I love to create lasting, beautiful things. This really fulfills me. Cahlin — To be able to change people's lives with your vision.