



A SYMPHONY OF DESIGN

Like a maestro directing an expert ensemble to a unified higher purpose, designer **Madison Taylor** draws on talent, experience and a trusted troupe of master crafters to achieve unique homes with a signature style. *Continued on page 58*

BY KATHLEEN DUNCAN // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY



The loft above the garage is a playroom, theatre room and a great space for family and friends to gather. **OPPOSITE: TOP FAR LEFT:** The waterfront view is spectacular. **LEFT:** Madison Taylor enjoys the sunshine on the back deck. **BOTTOM FAR LEFT:** A rolling door made of barn board opens to the master bedroom on the first floor. **LEFT:** The bridge on the second floor is cleverly designed and has a wine cellar, foosball table and a sitting area overlooking the great room below.

The granite-topped island with its exclusive slice-stone circular pattern was the jumping off point for the impressive kitchen by Absolute Cabinets. Madison offers exclusive granite slabs through her company.



"I'm not opposed to risk-taking with materials just to stand out a bit," says the high-energy entrepreneur, who pushes the edge of design with each new renovation or custom home. "I'm always looking for ways to change things up."

In the first in a series of waterfront homes she's building in Barrie's Tollendal area, Taylor achieves symphonic resonance with texture combinations that could be cacophonous in less deft hands. Here, rustic barn boards harmonize with industrial chrome in a hybrid riff she terms modern-funky.

"It's about balance – regardless of the desired style," she explains. "If it's too modern, it goes out of date too quickly. If it's too traditional, it doesn't look new."

This calculated eclectic approach is evident right from the curb. A state-of-the-art Clearview Security system opens a gate constructed from 100-year-old planks salvaged from an Oro-Medonte farm. Installed by **McCowan Carpentry**, the repurposed lumber is also employed as exterior cladding alongside board-and-batten siding (from **United Lumber Home Hardware**) and Permacon Lafitt stone (installed by **Lutes Masonry** from **GP Masonry & Landscaping Supplies**).

Continued on page 60



A dry-stacked fireplace surrounds a gas insert from Napoleon Home Comfort. The naturally-shed elk antlers adorn the fireplace in the great room.

Up top, **T. Simpson Roofing** shingled the intricate roof design. Inside, the weathered wood re-appears as a featured door or accent elements; but becomes more the exception that proves the rule throughout 5,300 sq. ft. of finished living space.

Having spent her early career in restaurant and resort design, Taylor applied inventive techniques for punctuating her ultra-modern personal preferences with rich textures and extraordinary highlights that ground large-scale projects and infuse them with charm.

“When I started doing residential, I thought why not create these feature pieces inside the home,” she recalls. “I usually get my inspiration from a natural element, and draw the non-natural materials from there.”

In this home, the instrument of such insight was the kitchen-island countertop.

“It’s a semi-precious grey agate slab,” describes Taylor, having chosen it from her self-named company’s **Madison Taylor Collection**. Other selections show up in the onyx slabs flowing across the master-bath vanity, bookmarked in a vein-cut wall display and back-lit on the wine-wall transoms – as well as in many other limestone, marble, granite and stone applications.

The island-top’s high-gloss finish enhances the overhead sparkle of four chrome pendants (from **Glass Lighting Gallery And Home Furnishings**) even as its sliced-stone circular pattern softens the edginess of the room’s many straight lines: the shaker-panel cabinetry (by **Absolute Cabinets**), Piasentina porcelain floor tiles (installed by **Tile Everything**) and adjacent whitewashed Brushed Oak Boulder hardwood by Kentwood (supplied by **North Country Wood Floors**). *Continued on page 62*



The main floor master suite has a masculine vibe but unique touches, especially in the en suite. The barnboard on the wall around the vessel tub is a surprising touch. His-and-her dressing rooms are located on opposite sides of the hallway leading from the bedroom to the en suite. The entire home is wired for sound.

RIGHT & BELOW: The nursery was a labor of love for Madison. Her son has a special place in which to play. The giant chalk board fills one wall. **MIDDLE & BOTTOM:** The quest room across the bridge upstairs received a feminine touch from Madison. The room's en suite has intricate tile work. Every bathroom in this home is luxurious and uniquely designed by Madison.



The myriad of colour of this significant slab reverberate throughout the kitchen and great room, as demonstrated in the dado-detailed baseboard (painted by **Prime Pro Paint and Painter** with Benjamin Moore Aura Winter Snow), the rich blue of the dining-room walls (Aura AF-565 Mysterious), and the browns of the naturally shed elk antlers displayed on the floor-to-ceiling dry-stack fireplace (insert by **Napoleon Home Comfort**), and the walnut of the island base, range hood and live-edge dining-room tabletop.

As designer and general contractor, Taylor enlisted the “extra brains” of John Raimondi (**Meridian Design Build**) and **Phil Lemadelaine** of **Custom CADD Inc.** to ensure every main room has a bay view – including the great-room loft that benefits from an **RCM Custom Glass & Mirror Ltd.** curved glass rail; and that quality and practicality were uncompromised.

“You want to do it once and do it right,” she says. “If you do it right, you can do it on budget – knowing where you can get a pop for big impact with little investment. I call it smoke and mirrors,” she laughs, revealing an ability to orchestrate dramatic balance in both aesthetics and functionality. “I want it to be unique, but it has to last. I have a baby, four dogs and a husband who leaves his outside shoes on indoors, so I understand my designs have to stand the test of time.”

The Georgian College grad who landed senior design opportunities right out of school had an early focus. Her singular career path began at age five after an adverse reaction to the wallpaper her mother chose for her childhood bedroom. By 12, the Orillia native was painting her own room.

Today, her company **Madison Taylor Design Inc.** offers interior design, custom home design and build as well as project management. Madison also has a stone showroom called **The Gallery** in Barrie's south end. Taylor focuses on floor plans, hard surface finishes and functionality, and typically refers specific décor queries to other specialists. “My passions are the things fixed to the house – those things you can't take

Continued on page 64



Design your dream.

Providing original quality home designs throughout Ontario since 1999.



www.custom-cadd.com
705.725.7724



Custom **CADD** Inc



Designers Plus
KITCHEN & BATH
Since 1976

DESIGN • RENOVATION • CABINETRY • FURNISHINGS **Discover Our Showroom** | Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm Sat by appt.

35 Cedar Pointe Dr, Unit 33, Barrie, ON | 705.726.9861 | www.designersplus.ca



TOP: The exterior of the home mixes barn board on the dormers and front window with stone and board-and-batten.

ABOVE & RIGHT: The ultimate man cave is pristine, housing a Ford GT and a Porsche. Madison and her husband love to ride in their spare time.

with you when you go,” she explains. “If a house can’t stand up to its everyday purpose, what’s the point of décor?”

Well aware of her unique perspective as a female builder, this visionary is also intent on raising the bar in the renovation and construction industry. As a result, her business approach includes pricing schedules that are 100 per cent transparent, and a project-management software program that allows clients to track progress online. “It’s intuitive, organized and efficient,” she says. “We are so honest with our clients, we create trust from the offset.”

This collaborative leadership is music to the ears of many local residents, as confirmed by the growing number of Madison Taylor followers. Business has doubled in the last six months at the Barrie-based design firm, and the staff numbers have tripled since the company’s incorporation two years ago.

As the curtain rises on each new creation – like this one-acre masterpiece humming with innovation on Kempenfelt Bay’s south shore – higher standards in functional artistry are set. **OH**



madison taylor
THE GALLERY



gemstone - granite - marble - travertine - onyx - quartz

The Gallery
(705) 792 2132

info@mtdgallery.com
www.mtdgallery.com

41 King Street, Suite 5, Barrie ON L4N6B5
By appointment only, 9am - 5pm Mon - Fri

ABSOLUTE CABINETS



Jasmine Hemsworth: 705-220-0766 jasmine@absolutecabinets.ca | Troy Paterson: 705-727-6542 troy@absolutecabinets.ca
www.absolutecabinets.ca www.facebook.com/absolutecabinets