

THE BENCHMARK



SPRING EDITION | 2015

COVER PHOTO
BlueShore Financial Head Office | North Vancouver
Beckville Woodcrafts
Photography | Ihor Pona







27

THIS EDITION



10



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the Spring Edition of the AWMAC BC Awards Benchmark. Inside you will find photographs, accompanied by commentary for ten of the forty-two projects submitted to this year's 25th Annual Awards of Excellence. As you read through the stories you will gain a real sense of the extraordinary challenges our members face in order to achieve the design professional's vision while meeting deadlines and performing work of the highest quality. I am proud to be part of this association and hope to see you on October 1st at the Vancouver Convention Centre.

Moira Rowan

ROGERS ARENA L100 & L300 | Vancouver

ARTEK GROUP | BLT Construction | BOX Interior Design

Scope of Work

When I first sat down to review the Rogers Arena project with Mark Watts, owner of BLT Construction, the architectural woodwork package was already \$200,000 over budget. I was informed the owners wanted to make the project \$200,000 more economical, but didn't want to cut anything from the scope. At first I thought, "It is what it is", but then, "How in the name of Woody Woodpecker am I going to do the same amount of work for \$200,000 less?" And just to make it interesting, another \$60,000 worth of extras were thrown in. This was a challenge, but I'm a glass half full kind of guy. Level 100 of the project was all quarter cut mahogany veneer and in our contract we carried all the metal, black mirror, back painted glass and red tufted leather front panels at the main bar. There was also a dropped ceiling, half mirrored laminate and half quarter-cut mahogany. At Level 300 was ligna quarter-cut walnut veneer, same scope, but with the addition of hot rolled steel plates at the steamers.

Challenges

One of the challenges was that every subtrade in Vancouver seemed to be working on site at the same time, but the biggest challenge was the schedule...impossible and immovable. Soon the whole site was like a bunch of Italians pouring concrete on a hot day. If you have ever seen that site, you know exactly what I mean. Add the fact that the team of very talented, hardworking designers were lying awake at night coming up with new ideas to change things up, while I was lying awake at night trying to figure out how we were going to meet the schedule. As we were building, they were changing. In the end we got it all sorted out. I lost a few years of life and grew more grey hair, but it goes with the territory.

Why this Project?

This project looks dynamic and that's why we entered it into the AWMAC awards.

The Finish Line

The contractor was scheduled to turn over the site to the owners at noon on November 11, 2014. Because of the aggressive schedule we had burnt out our installers, so there I was until 6 pm November 10, with guys from the shop, helping to finish the installation. On November 11 by 9 am we had installed the last piece of ceiling trim.

All in all it was a good project for us. The BLT boys were great to work with and made this job an enjoyable experience.

Lorne Boyle





PHOTOS | Andrew Latreille



Challenges

This job had some challenges.....meeting with the owner and architect, going over their drawings and listening to their vision.....and then turning that vision into reality. For instance taking solid wood and bending it in two directions; we made it happen. Another challenge was finding a lift able to reach 40 feet in the air and then driving it through the front door of the building. There were constant schedule adjustments due to change orders, unforeseen problems and shifting priorities, not just with our trade but with the many other trades we worked with simultaneously, all moving towards a completion date set in stone.



PHOTOS | Ihor Pona Photography



Interesting Materials

Many different materials were used..... flexible slate, backlit onyx, art glass with seaweed, leaves, grass and sticks imbedded in it, bamboo, metal laminates made from real copper and aluminum, curved slate panels and a 36 foot engagement wall with glulam fir columns and sinuous mondrian cherry wall panels.

Frank Beck

Scope of Work

The scope of work for this job covered a wide range of architectural woodwork including metalwork, stonework and glazing. We turned an ordinary concrete column into a piece of art by wrapping it with a wood structure covered in flexible slate (real stone). We covered other columns with multi curved solid wood surrounds. There is a sea of curved art glass suspended from the ceiling, in some cases three stories overhead. Curved walls are covered with wall paneling standing off the wall. There is edge-lit art glass set into the walls and backlight onyx (real stone) housed by curved metal. Structural vertical wood posts exceeding 30 feet in length stand beside a curved staircase accented with a solid curved wood hand rail. At the top of the stairs this hand rail turns into a flat six inch continuous curved drink rail that is over 150 feet long. Throughout the building there are over 1000 handmade VG fir ceiling tiles, hundreds of lineal feet of solid base board both straight and curved. There isn't a single floor, area or room that doesn't have a piece of Beckville in it.

From Start to Finish

This project took approximately 10 months. Shop drawings and construction of the architectural woodwork were sequential, but installation occurred in a very abbreviated period and required collaboration and flexibility from all parties due to the complexity of the themed design.

Why this Project?

This project used a wide variety of materials in very innovative ways. There were so many elements within this project and Beckville saw this as a great way to showcase their versatility. We are about so much more than just "cabinets".

Stories

During this project there was a specification for onyx which is essentially a rock sliced into slabs. No two pieces are the same and they come in a wide variety of colours and shades. The owner, architect, and Beckville took a trip to the stone wholesaler, spent half a day going through the wide variety of slabs and finally picked out 4 slabs that were "perfect". Everything was good....the project was heading towards completion. Two days before the onyx was to be delivered we received a phone call informing us that one of the forklifts in the stone fabrication plant had knocked over the 4 slabs and they were now unusable. Needless to say this generated panic in all parties due to the set-in-stone move in date. However, we were still able to meet our deadline.

Comments from Atelier Pacific Architecture... "We sketched the compound curved "tulip" columns for the boardroom and sent them to Beckville. We knew this design would be a challenge. Frank's response was his usual "Ah, leave it with me for a couple of days. I'll come up with something." His 'something' was beautiful laminated, hand-sanded and stained cherry wood column shrouds that are stunning!

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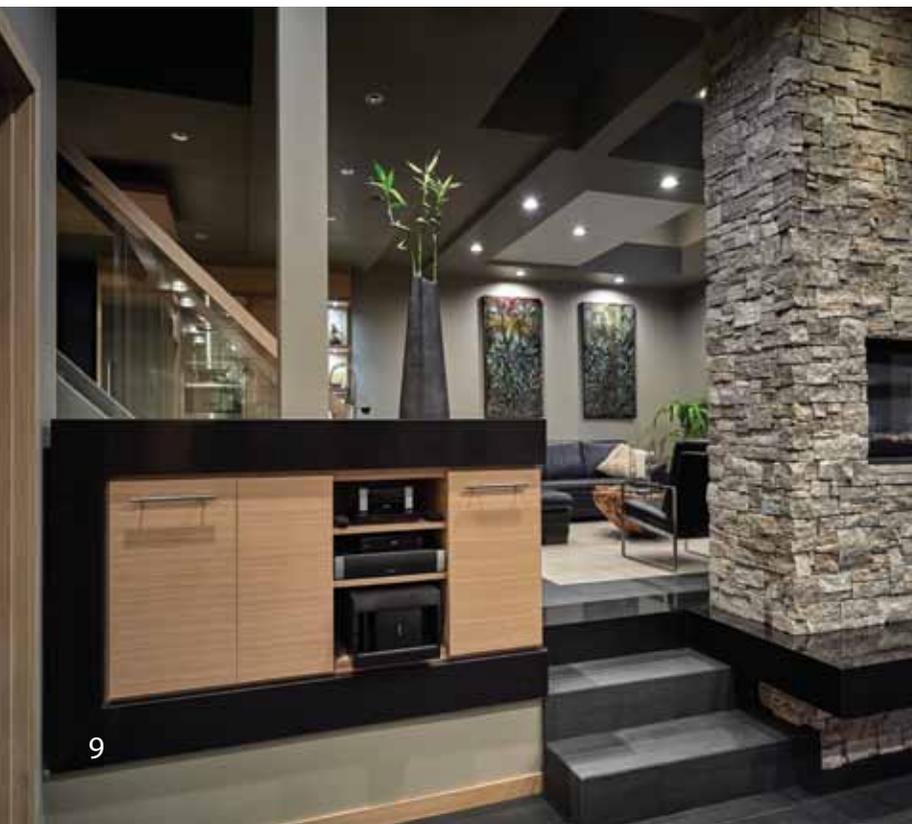
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PHOTOS | Ihor Pona Photography



Scope of Work

Extensive millwork throughout a new, three story house:

- The basement has an entertainment kitchen, built-in entertainment wall and bathroom vanity.
- The main floor, with its open plan, features a beautiful stained white oak kitchen and dining room with a large island. These have stone countertops with a combination of stainless steel fronts, matching built-in appliances and lighting throughout.
- The main floor also has a games room with bar and entertainment unit.
- Centered on the main floor is a walk-around fireplace and open stairway, featuring white oak stair treads and glass railings with wood handrails.
- This staircase leads to the third floor and master bedroom with wall-hung veneered side tables, dresser and large walk-in closet. The main ensuite has vanities and built-in storage units with stone tops and tile accents.

From Start to Finish

Four months.

Why this Project?

This project has a mixture of veneers and solid wood, designed and built to exacting tolerances. The choosing of the veneer and stains to match throughout the entire house makes the architectural woodwork one of the main features of a truly beautiful home.

Challenges

Manufacturing and installing an extensive amount of high quality architectural woodwork within a fixed budget for a very knowledgeable client who was the designer, builder and owner.

Interesting materials

Materials used were horizontal grain rift-cut white oak, stainless steel wrapped cabinet door fronts, combined with stone counters and glass shelves.

"It is not very often that you get to perform your craft on a project where the client is not only the owner and end user but is also the designer and builder and has the talent and vision to put it all together. The finished home is a beautiful flowing showpiece that is both functional and worthy of standing beside the best of what design has to offer. We were honoured to be a part of this project."

Kevin Tierney

CRANBROOK INTERIOR WOODWORK

Living-Stones Developments | Brenda Crago's Interior Design

Scope of Work

The scope of work for this project was the design, supply and installation of custom residential cabinetry for kitchen, nook seating, bathrooms, laundry and sewing room.

From Start to Finish

The initial consultation with the owners and their home builder began in August 2013 and included a basic review of the home plans and fundamental design ideas. Once a preliminary budget was set, a number of meetings took place during the next few months with review and revisions to shop drawings and design details. Final details were completed a number of months prior to the home being ready for installation in early spring of 2014.

Why this Project?

We felt this project portrayed an excellent balance of design, materials and budget.

Challenges

During the framing stage of the home, Cranbrook Interior Woodwork and Living-Stones Developments worked closely together to ensure all details, including angled wall framing areas and intricate lighting/electrical details incorporated into the architectural woodwork, would be framed and roughed-in perfectly.



Blair Cooke

PHOTOS | Sunrise Photography Company





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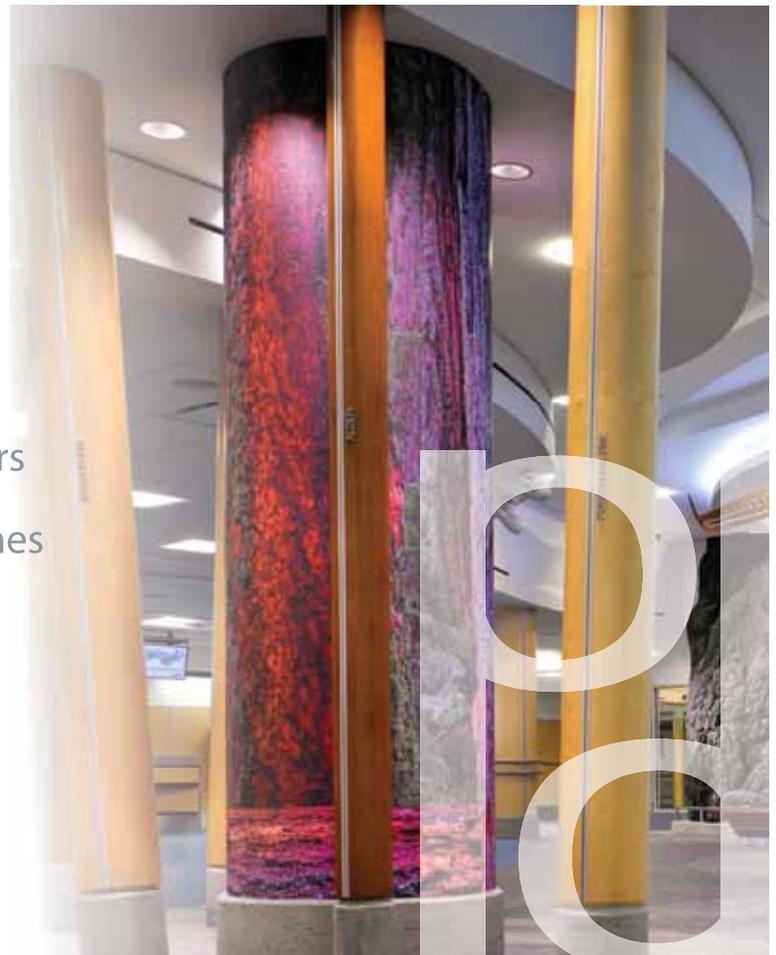
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Scope of Work

The scope of work for the new food services cafeteria at the University of Victoria was as elaborate as the textures and curves used throughout the design. Now called Mystic Market, the room consists of eight distinct areas, all featuring their own design flavours. Douglas Fir was used throughout to represent the local forests and the soft flowing lines were designed to reflect the ocean that surrounds us on Vancouver Island. Vertical grain fir wall panels, both textured and flat, line the walls throughout the space. Custom contoured solid fir wraps the curved bar backs, depicting the rolling waves of the ocean. The contoured fir is the dominant feature with over 8000 custom-profiled and individually finished pieces in the project. Other bar back panel finishes include back-lit translucent resin panels overlaid with 3/4" fir strips, custom textured weathered oak panels, quilted stainless steel, weathered metal and even a slab of driftwood. The centrepiece of the project, the Condiment Island, features custom contoured fir, several concealed roll outs and an expansive 32 branch canopy with a circumference of over 50 feet. The bi-radius branches are made up of over 300 pieces of steam-bent solid fir strips laid up to join the outer ring of the canopy.

From Start to Finish

The shop started working on components for this project in January 2014, with the bulk of the installation completed in July. Many jigs, carts and other 'shop systems' were created specifically for this project. Research and development was a huge part of the process.

Why this Project?

The unique design was the original driving force for the submission. As the project progressed we received great feedback from everybody involved, and at the end of the day we are really proud of the finished product and all the work that went into it. Everybody in our company stepped up their game to make this project a success.

Challenges

There were many challenging parts to this project. The sheer mass and diversity of the scope required strict planning and coordination. But overall scope, scale, new and unique construction methods all came together at the Condiment Island. Everything on this piece was a custom creation, challenging us all the way from construction to installation.

Stories

It's sounds funny now, but it was pretty sad then.....we had several large finished pieces staged for shipping, and then.....the domino effect. Let's just say we worked all weekend to be back at the same spot we were the week before. That hurt.



Interesting Materials

Interesting materials are everywhere in this project; it's almost overwhelming. I love going back to the space. I find a new appreciation on every trip.

Jason Howlett





PHOTOS | Ken Sanders

JSV ARCHITECTURAL VENEERING & MILLWORK

Bird Construction Company | Dialog BC Architecture Engineering Interior Design Planning



Scope of Work

Supply and installation of acoustic wall and ceiling panels, cabinets, bars, seating, upholstery, handrails and restaurant architectural woodwork. This was a very large, complex and varied project. For instance the size and elevation of the acoustic panels throughout the job varied tremendously. There are 6 restaurants contained in the Student Union Building and none of them are rectangular! Each includes a variety of curved angles.

From Start to Finish

Shop drawings began the week of July 30, 2012 and installation started the week of February 3, 2014.

Why this Project?

JSV decided to submit this project for the Awards program because of the complexity of the project. The Nest Lounge's distinctive design sits above the main concourse on three columns.

Challenges

The most challenging part of this project was building the Nest Lounge because of its unique shape and design. It was difficult to come up with the design engineering and to determine the radiuses with all the other trades involved. The different heights in the Nest were also a challenge.

Joe Vieira



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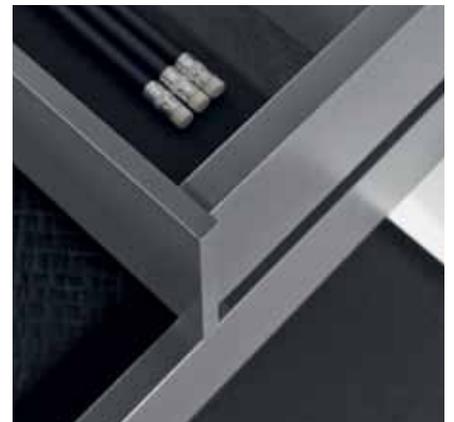
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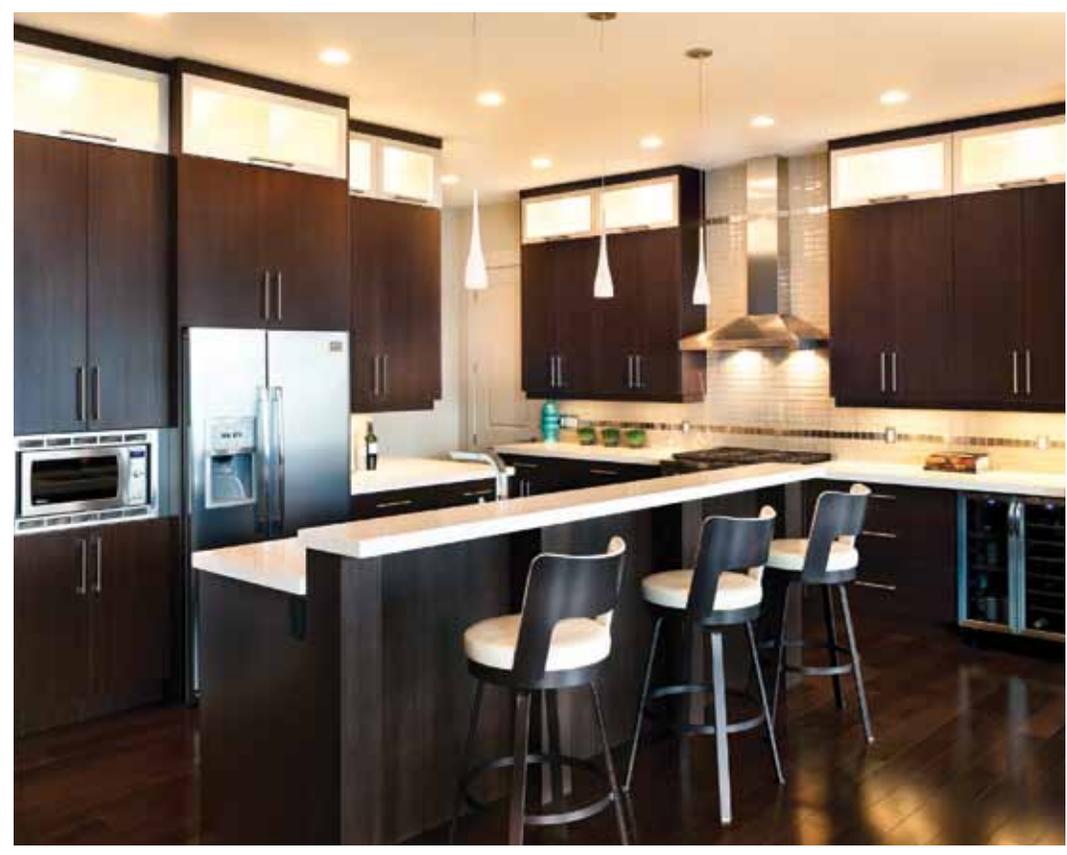
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Scope of Work

1818 Cornwall Avenue has been the corporate headquarters to lululemon since 2010. The yoga-inspired athletic apparel company hired Gustavson Wylie Architects to refresh the exterior of the building located in the Kitsilano neighbourhood. Morinwood had two areas to work on.

- The wall and soffit around the employee entrance was clad with 3,600 square feet of linear fir panels, capped with a fascia of panels in a curved pattern.
- At street level the side of the parkade was turned into a 60' x 20' feature wall and covered with weathered wood block panels that incorporate backlit LED light boxes.

From Start to Finish

We were first contacted about the job in the spring of 2013. By January 2014 we had done a number of renderings, finish samples and mockups of wall panels. By the summer of 2014 a final shop drawing was approved and we were ready for fabrication. The actual work took 1084 hours of shop labour and 837 hours site labour spanning June and July 2014.

Why this Project?

We don't do much outdoor work except for the occasional bench. Usually the architectural woodwork is inside a climate controlled building. Developing a product that would be appropriate for outdoor Vancouver was a novel challenge. The wood feature wall had to be able to stand up to exposure to rain and sun without falling apart or looking terrible. We proposed a finish that would pre-age the fir to look like barn board. This way the appearance wouldn't change too much as it aged. The wall had to be turned into a panelized system for easy installation and maintenance, but still appear to be completely random.

Challenges

We volunteered to supply the LED lighting boxes in a moment of electrical ambition. However it became more complicated when the client wanted the light boxes to glow with multiple colours. It took several rounds of light-box revisions to get the boxes to glow with the desired effect at night. Plus we had to wait until after dark to see how any modifications looked.

Vivian Au and David Cheung at Gustavson Wylie were very collaborative to work with. They had great ideas that helped move the development of the product along. Peter Bzowski from lululemon was also very accommodating. Wood supplied by Al Small at Beaufort Forest Products. Support from Power Pros Electrical.

Tom Morin

Morinwood team:

Project management – Chris Strasbourg

Renderings, shop drawings and engineering – Sean Tucknott

Old-time stain master – Neil Martin

Installation – Ted Huchison, Dan Brachacek, Rob Perdue

Interesting materials

It was important to the client that the materials be locally harvested from a sustainable source. A Vancouver Island mill supplied windfall that they collected, cut and dried specifically for this project. Our project manager, Chris Strasbourg, who was on site to see the logs being milled said, "when lumber arrives on the back of a truck you forget where it really comes from. It was great to meet the guys who were actually harvesting the trees."



Stories

The stain we used was an ancient vinegar-based recipe that we mixed ourselves. Something went wrong with one batch and turned all the boards purple. We had to power-wash the planks and re-stain with a new batch.





PHOTOS | Ihor Pona Photography



Scope of work

Platinum Millwork provided all the custom architectural woodwork for the main kitchen, wok kitchen, powder room and vanities, the master closet and bar as well as many other architectural woodwork items in this home.

From Start to Finish

Shop drawings were started in early January, 2014 and project installation commenced in April, 2014.

Why this Project?

This project is an excellent example of how the designer, homeowner and architectural woodworker worked together to produce a stunning end product.

Challenges

Some of this project's challenges:

- Ensuring we met the designer's needs and vision while keeping within the set timeline and ensuring the highest quality.
- High gloss finish on the powder room vanity.
- In the master closet where the millwork was extra tall and the run was long, we had to ensure the cabinets were installed perfectly plumb and level in order for all the doors to line up flush, close properly and have even gaps between them.
- We created a custom grey paint to cover the rift cut oak for the basement bar and yet still have the grain definition visible.

Interesting Materials

The designer specified a crotch mahogany for the powder room vanity with a high gloss polished finish.

Victor DeFazio

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PRIVATE RESIDENCE | Kamloops

TOP 40 WOODWORKS | Murray Baron | Terry Noel

Scope of Work

This private residence project is a kitchen in a beautiful post and beam home situated on the South Thompson River in Kamloops, BC. The cabinet doors are raised panel alder with mitered frames, painted and eroded to tie in with the rustic post and beam structure. The perimeter finish is painted antique white and the two islands and alcove are painted black. The countertops are Cambia quartz “Cantebury” on the perimeter and “Laneshaw” on the islands. This project was a new build so we also provided custom millwork in the ensuite, master bedroom, laundry room, loft snack bar and four custom alcove units with raised panel fronts and quartz countertops.

From Start to Finish

The overall time frame including shop drawings, building and installation for this project was approximately 8 weeks.

Why this Project?

We chose this project for the AWMAC awards for a few reasons. Number one, the clients were tremendous to work with. Number two, the fit and finishes were so well matched to the style and quality of the home and finally, all the beautiful custom features we were able to incorporate into this project were a designer’s dream.

Stories

The custom mantel-style range hood was an add-on as this alcove space was initially planned for a wood burning pizza oven. During the design stage, it was changed to house a replica antique cook stove. When these ideas were scrapped, the owner asked me to stop by and provide some input on the space. At this point, the kitchen was already installed so I came up with the idea of building a feature piece to tie in with the island finishes. It was a bit tricky as we had to wrap our cabinetry around framed walls and connect up to the previously installed cabinets and quartz countertops.



This project was a pleasure to work on from start to finish and no doubt this is why everything worked out beautifully. I did have some concerns however recalling my first site visit when I met the owner’s “pets”. I remember arriving on site that first day, getting out to open the gate to drive my truck through and looking up to see a pack of large dogs heading my way! Suffice it to say, this put a bit of a jump in my step to get the gate closed and back into my truck! As it turns out, the dogs were every bit as laid back as the owners. I thank this family for the opportunity to work on their home as well as allowing us to use their kitchen as an entry in the AWMAC awards.

Terry Noel

Interesting Materials

The materials for this project were fairly mainstream but the use of the large commercial black and stainless range unit really added a very high-end feel to the project. It was a fundamental feature to this kitchen that really set the tone for other design elements.



PHOTOS | Ihor Pona Photography



Challenges

I would say the most challenging part of this project was the size of the kitchen and coming up with a design that would fill the room with enough features to make it stand out. My goal was to create some interest. I think this was achieved with features such as the glass curio cabinet, glass doors above the uppers and by bumping out some spaces including the sink, fridge, cook top area and the commercial range.





Interesting Materials

Once the veneer was sourced, a representative finished panel was laid up, and it was an exact match to the designer's "sample", which was actually part of an existing display in a downtown Vancouver retailer. At that point, the decision was made to try and add some visual excitement to the veneer work by clipping the veneer so that some of the sapwood was still visible on the edges of the veneer components, and the matching of the veneer was changed from slip match to random match. The effect is eye-catching, and unique.



Challenges

The design team wanted as much of the hardware, including five automatic door actuators, to disappear. Adding to this was the sheer size of the doors, with the largest centre hung leafs being 4'-0" wide and 10'-3" tall. At one point, after a mock-up showed that the doors were too big to fit in the elevators, the concept of moving the doors up to the space on top of the elevator car was investigated. In the end, the roof of the elevator car was disassembled to make it possible to get the huge slabs delivered without damage.



PHOTOS | Ema Peter Photography



Wanes was honoured to be chosen as a significant contributor to the Grosvenor Americas project. Square One's vision, Grosvenor's dedication to seeing that vision achieved, and the General Contractor's commitment to perfecting even the smallest of details made this an insanely challenging project, but it's a project that the entire staff at Wanes Custom Woodworks is proud to have been a part of.

Martin Berryman

Scope of Work

The architectural woodwork on this project included horizontal grain walnut veneer conference room paneling, massive full height doors and unique casework, all derived from a single FSC certified veneer log. In addition to the woodwork, Wanes Custom Woodworks fabricated and installed plastic laminate casework, porcelain coated stainless steel panels, as well as a limited amount of stone and glass where those materials were directly integrated into the woodwork.

From Start to Finish

6 months.

Why this Project?

The General Contractor approached this project as a hallmark opportunity to create something very special for a long term client. He had previously built offices in the same space for this client fifteen years ago, and had completed a major renovation in the interim. Grosvenor Americas raised the bar by bringing in Square One Interiors as the design authority and giving Jennifer Hamilton and her team a great deal of latitude to reach for the stars with the design. The GC brought together an amazing team which was focused not only on the outcome of their own installation, but also understood the importance of a successful marriage of each of the different finishing materials wherever they came together. The result is quite simply stunning.

Stories

In the elevator lobby and reception seating area the tile contractor installed 3'-0" x 9'-0" sheets of 1/8" thick porcelain tile to the walls and directly onto both sides of our washroom entry doors. First they had to parge the walls, so that they were dead flat. Some places on the walls required a full 7/8" of mud build-up to bring them into perfect alignment with the rest of the surface. Literally thousands of pounds of mortar were hand troweled onto the walls so that the finished product would be perfect. Whilst this only indirectly affected our scope of work, it demonstrates the level of commitment that the design team, the general contractor, and each of the individual subtrades brought to the project.

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