



Elements of Design

By Ellen Nielsen

This year's Edmonton Fall Home Show will feature the best of the city's interior designers

Interior designer Jennifer Woch's first-ever design project was an ultra-modern ziplock waterbed. Her Barbie doll didn't pay well, but she did offer plenty of room for exploration and innovation. When Woch wasn't doing that, she was busy rearranging the living room furniture. Fortunately, she had a mother who supported her interests.

Born and raised in Edmonton, the Woch family spent a lot of time in England. There she noticed details – gold bling, regal things, crown molding, decorative trims. Clearly design was already part of who she was. But when it came to getting an education, she opted for psychology, believing interior design only happened in far-off places like New York and London, certainly not Edmonton. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in applied psychology, with distinction. However, Woch's heart was already leading her down other hallways. "I had a desperate need to be creative," she says.

She approached local interior designer Lori Elms for suggestions on how she might get into the industry. Elms told her to absorb everything she could from multiple sources, including books. She



allowed Woch to shadow her for three months, providing an intensive one-on-one education. With Elms' reference, Woch got work with Ethan Allen Fine Home Furnishings. Following extensive training, she provided design services to their customers based on what was sold on the floor. There she fine-tuned her craft until opening her own business in 2002. One of Woch's most exciting projects to date has been RGE RD restaurant, an Edmonton eatery. In 2014, RGE RD (pronounced Range Road) was named the fourth best new restaurant in Canada by enRoute magazine. But her services are not just for the ultra-chic; anyone can use an interior designer, she says. "If you're going to spend \$5000-10,000 to renovate a room, what's a few hundred more for a clear sense of direction to pull it together?" This coming October, Woch and her company, House of J Interiors, will be part of the "Ask a Designer" showcase at the new Edmonton Fall Home Show. Visitors can bring their photos, colour swatches and ideas for a free 15-minute design consultation with Woch or any of several additional designers who will also be available.

Other highlights of the Edmonton Fall Home Show will include the Ultimate Upcycle Challenge, where some of Edmonton's top personalities and designers will renew a pre-loved item which will later be auctioned to raise funds for Habitat for Humanity; M(art) ket, featuring local curated artwork and photography suitable for home décor; Kitchen Craft, all about eating and entertaining in a modern kitchen; Flower & Wreath Works by Cory Christopher presented by 630 CHED on floral arranging and wreath building, and; Crafted, showcasing uniquely Edmonton giftware by local retailers and artisans. Over 200 exhibitors will also provide products, ideas and inspiration. The main stage, furnished by Urban Barn, will include celebrity presenters Leigh-Ann Allaire Perrault of Hue La La and Janette Ewan of Parker Barrow. Allaire Perrault previously worked as a corporate colour and design specialist for Benjamin Moore Paints and now acts as Canadian spokesperson for Rust-Oleum. Ewan has written for House and Home and Chate-laine, before co-hosting Inside the Box with Ty Pennington. Ewan also designed the FLOFORM Lounge presented by Western Living. The lounge is within view of the main stage and provides a place to take a break with a meal or a glass of wine. For those lingering home renovation questions, a help desk will be available as a go-to resource for expert advice and ideas. As for current design trends, Woch says the 1960s and 70s are back. "Wallpaper is trying to make a comeback," she says. "Black walls with pops of colour are a favourite. Think of added accents like pillows in teals and hot pinks. Think layering." Burnished brass and gold is also popular for both light fixtures and plumbing. "Basically, the minimalist trend is over," she says. "Now it's a cross between modern and mid-century with clean simple details."

The Edmonton Fall Home Show runs October 23-25 at the Expo Centre at Northlands. edmontonfallhomeshow.com.

For more information on Jennifer Woch and House of J Interiors visit: houseofjinteriors.com

Interior photos by Ellen V Photography, www.ellenvphotography.com
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