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A New Take on the Modern Mountain Home

by Martinique Davis

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TELLURIDE – The style of decorating company Tweed Interiors is beyond a single label. How does one define a modernist Saarinen Tulip table paired with grandmother’s antique upholstered chairs? Or a mountain town interior design company that doesn’t hang elk-antler chandeliers?

Tweed Interiors owners Vic Crawford and Robyn Shaw are also somewhere outside the standard label of “interior designer.” Neither went to school for interior design, coming to the decorating business via routes dictated more by heart than by mind. Crawford fell into the career by accident, originally working as a design assistant for Margaret Carter of Telluride’s Carter Home Interiors.

“I realized that this is what I should have been doing all my life,” Crawford says of being a decorator. “It just clicked.”

When the opportunity to purchase the Carter Home Interiors business emerged early last summer, Crawford jumped at the chance. She hired Shaw, who had worked for the high-end Swiss furniture company Vitra, in New York City. Within a few months, Shaw became an operating partner of the newly named Tweed Interiors.

Friends working together as business partners, Shaw and Crawford have discovered they have more in common than just a love for fashion. Both boast a natural aptitude of being able to see the possibilities for distinction, and possess the enviable ability to transform a lackluster space into something outstanding.

“And we love wallpaper,” the duo say, in unison – further supporting the idea that these business partners share more than just ownership of a

company, but also a cerebral connection that is manifest in their approach to home decorating.

Both Crawford and Shaw grew up in fashion-forward families – Crawford’s mother was a children’s clothing designer, and Shaw’s mother was a professional decorator. Yet neither came to Telluride with the intention of bringing their fashion senses to local homes. Crawford, who first arrived in 1990, worked many years as a ski coach for the local alpine race team and as a waitress at Honga’s Lotus Petal for nearly a decade. After the birth of her daughter four years ago, Crawford began searching for another job. When she was hired to do design work with Carter Home, she realized she had stumbled on what would become her “dream job.”

Shaw lived in Telluride from 1994-1998, but then spent six years in Manhattan working as a design consultant and sales manager for Vitra, overseeing such sophisticated design projects as the headquarters of USA Today. When she returned to Telluride in 2004, pregnant with her second child, she dabbled in design work locally, her most notable project being a line of women’s clothes for the Telluride AIDS Benefit.

Tweed Interiors offers design that is outside the traditional “mountain home” box. It is modern and minimal without feeling stark. Striking accents – both contemporary and antique – add originality.

The Tweed style could be considered contemporary, Shaw says, but shies away from labeling the company as such. “We love white,” she says, but is quick to counter that they are just as comfortable using orange. Their decorating medium runs the gamut, from furnishings to fabrics, windows to paint, and tile to carpeting. “We can do it all,” Crawford says.

Crawford describes the Tweed decorating method: “We start by looking at a property and getting a sense of that client’s style – we don’t want to push our style onto someone else.” “But we also don’t want to compromise our style either,” adds Shaw.

“We have a lot of fun with it, too,” Crawford says, explaining that interior decorating can be more approachable than many may believe.

“Sometimes all you need is a new set of eyes, and to be shown some different options. It may be something you hadn’t thought of before but could really end up liking,” says Shaw.

Tweed Interiors keeps a finger on the pulse of the decorating industry, utilizing a diverse collection of brands including Oly, Madeline Weinrib, Romo, Bob Williams, Design Within Reach, and more. Tweed also incorporates “green” design when feasible, and brings in local talent whenever possible.

“Interior decorating shouldn’t be intimidating – we want to be available to everyone,” Crawford says of her company’s business ethic, which allows for even the smallest design projects, like reupholstering a couch, as well as the major whole-home design endeavors.

Tweed Interiors is located at 168 Society Drive, above Cindy Bread in Lawson Hill, 728-8186.

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