

HOME FURNISHINGS

## Whitehall Interiors' Sara Ianniciello: Luxury Woman to Watch 2021

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Sara Ianniciello

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

*Luxury Daily* annually honors smart women executives who show the potential to make a difference next year in the luxury business. This year's list features 26 honorees who have set ambitious goals to achieve in a luxury market that, while growing, is also challenged by rapid changes in consumer behavior and technology.

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Here is one honoree:

Sara Ianniciello, director of design, [Whitehall Interiors](#), New York

*"The design process is all about listening. There are many parties involved and problem solving is at the core"*

What do you most like about your job?

Creating beautiful and highly functional spaces. Really, I could not imagine doing anything else.

There is such a joy in bringing a project from its inception to reality. I particularly love the creative and collaborative process of developing an initial concept and fine-tuning it into a working storyline.

Home is supposed to be a sanctuary, so working through the vision, ergonomics, privacy, functionality and details of it all to bring about a masterpiece is very thrilling.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The design process is all about listening. There are many parties involved and problem solving is at the core of what we do at Whitehall.

I would say the biggest challenge is when there is a client that has a lot of experience in a different sector or region, say they are more familiar with workplace projects on the Pacific Coast.

Coming into the luxury multi-family residential sector in New York is very different and there's an educational approach you need to take.

Recognizing that everyone comes at a project with different ranges of experience and strengths is vital.

Being patient, resourceful, solution-driven, and working through those aspects are crucial to a successful project.

How have you adapted to the new order of things with the public health crisis?

COVID-19 has obviously had a significant impact across industries and ours is no exception.

Transitioning communication to online platforms and keeping the Whitehall teams organized was the biggest priority at the beginning.

Once we were able to figure out a good rhythm on the project team and management front, we have been looking at how to better use technology to our advantage.

Obviously, we require a lot of tactile engagement, so the loss of our material library during this pandemic has been the greatest challenge.

Yet, our Whitehall designers have been incredibly resourceful with creating their own smaller at-home libraries.

Overall, I'd say we've transitioned quite well.

What is your work priority for 2021?

Since I started at Whitehall in 2018, I've always had the aim to push us to greater heights.

We have a very talented team and as a firm our greatest resource is our people.

For 2021, our priority is to recognize, utilize and grow their skillsets by continuing to push the design envelope on our projects and venturing into new sectors and markets, and diversify our offerings.

In addition, of course, continuing to keep my finger on the pulse with respect to new architectural and design products in the marketplace will be critical.

Personally, I would like to see Whitehall add more hotel, restaurant and workplace projects into our portfolio, as well as product development.

Flexing our creative muscles in a wider range of luxe interiors would be good for Whitehall and our team members.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I have gotten to a point in my career where that question starts to become a challenge.

Every year I've grown as a designer and there are certainly milestones that stand out over others.

However, if I look at the arc of my career, I'd say my proudest achievement has been maintaining my versatility and continuing to innovate the end-user experience.

Having a creative vision that draws from my design and client experience in hospitality, workplace and residential has been a significant advantage.

Introducing clients to luxe options that can be done differently, albeit more affordable or via an alternative approach, has certainly given me an edge in the design field and keeps me passionate about my work.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2021?

Due to the public health crisis, we should expect to see a resurgence in luxe interiors that incorporate home office elements and more private outdoor spaces.

We may also find developers prioritizing "smarter luxury" options as well.

Emerging technologies have always been considered during design development, but since the tech space continues to make incredible strides, we could see some exciting developments on the horizon.

Overall, I think the public is craving affordable luxury options.

It seems like a paradox, but with the world facing economic instability, 2021 could be a year of much out-of-the-box innovation.

[Please click here to see the entire Luxury Women to Watch 2021 list](#)