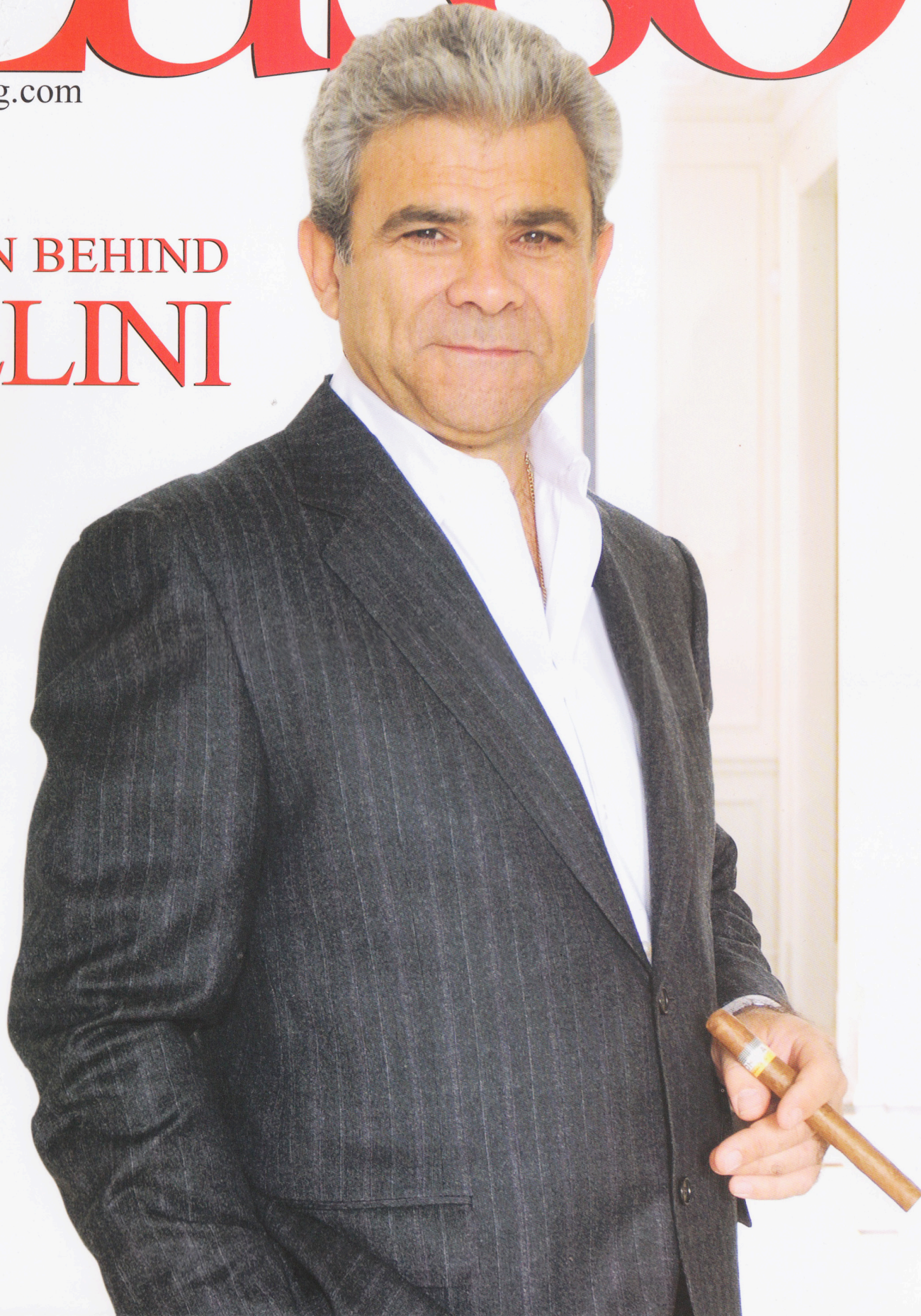


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# PHILIP MITCHELL

WORDS: Sharon Devellis

## A Reflection Of A Man

"I'm extremely passionate  
about design.  
I love what I do. I live it.  
It's a part of me."

*P*assion is a soul on fire and within moments of meeting Philip Mitchell one is swept away by the passion within him. Philip is passionate in every aspect of his life - food, family, friends, travel, and of course, design. Philip doesn't design to live or live to design. Design is his life.

"I'm extremely passionate about design. I love what I do. I live it. It's a part of me. Every little aspect of my life influences what I do. Any travels that we have, a new restaurant that we eat in...it sounds crazy but from a piece of silverware to the way a piece of food is displayed on a plate to the cornice moulding in a restaurant can influence me."











Born to Patricia and Wasyl, it was Philip's parents who instilled in him his work ethic and passion to be the best he could possibly be, no matter what his aspirations. "My father was somebody who pushed us to do the best at whatever we were doing. There would be no reason to do it if you weren't going to do the best job you could possibly do. My mother is somebody I admire. She has sophisticated taste and is an elegant person and comes from a very artistic family. I get a lot of my design abilities from her.

So it comes as no surprise that Philip's parents are also his mentors.

"I always have my dad in the back of my head pushing me just a little bit further which makes me a little bit crazy sometimes too," he adds with a chuckle.

Philip admittedly is not a great sleeper and becomes so entrenched in his design work that he often wakes up at night to sketch. "I have so much going on in my head that I have to get it out." His love of design is palpable, eyes lighting up when speaking about the details of a project, peppering the conversation with words like texture, colour, bush-hammered stone and hand-forged hardware. But it's when asked how he gets his inspiration for each project that his passion ignites.

"I love to get inspired by travel and experiences to start on a project, especially if it's something of a large calibre and needs a lot of detail put into it. There's such incredible design not just in Italy or Paris, but London, Australia... all over the world. New York is one of his favourite jaunts, not only because of the close proximity, but because of the wonderful architectural elements found throughout the city. "You can literally get lost in the streets and photograph details on townhouses and buildings for days on end." One gets the impression that Philip could get lost in the beauty and details of a city forever.

Whether he's working on a cottage, a place in the city or a place in the country, travelling combined with the hundreds of design books and magazines that Philip pours through helps him incorporate an international sophistication to all his projects.

Renowned for his traditional style, this doesn't prevent Philip from embracing projects of a different nature. Currently on his dance card are projects that range from a contemporary glass box house to a SoHo inspired apartment. One project of which he is particularly proud is a traditional apartment designed and decorated using almost all of the client's pre-existing furniture. Whether traditional or contemporary, classic or casual, one thing is clear, Philip's design expertise is in demand and his portfolio is growing with projects currently underway in Canada, United States, Europe and the Caribbean.

*...continued on page 48*





Philip's design philosophy isn't about creating a project, so much as it's about working with the client to design something together. "I like to look at it as something I create with somebody. I want to give them the opportunity to have something they would never have had in their wildest dreams."

He does this by working closely with each client to get a complete understanding of their needs, and more importantly, their personality. "Even if a project is starting from scratch, I like to see if we can find something in the attic or the cellar... a grandparent's inherited piece. Something they are attracted to that can inspire the design. It's very hard to put a personality into a space when you start with absolutely nothing."

Philip is about creating calm, tranquil living spaces and when asked about trends, he hesitates momentarily "I'm not a huge trend fan. I'm actually probably the worst person to ask about trends." In keeping with his casually, elegant style Philip prefers to use a subtle approach to trends incorporating them into the design using fabrics and finishes rather than designing around a trend. "The most beautiful interiors you'll ever see are

classically detailed, refined, simple interiors." he says.

But it's not only Philip's masterful ability to create warm, inviting, comfortable living spaces that makes him a great designer. It's his innate understanding of people. "Everybody today works so hard and they really don't stop to smell the roses or enjoy themselves. I have clients who travel less because they really love going home now. I think it's very important to be able to come home to an environment that you're comfortable in, that you love and that you like to spend time in."

In a time of economic uncertainty, Philip has a unique and refreshing insight into his business focussing not on a bottom line but on the idea that if you believe in what you do, are passionate and put something out there, you'll always get it back. "If you wake up every day living it like it could be your last, where you appreciate all the elements and aspects, it reflects in who you are and in what you do." **L**