

HOME & GARDEN

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Architectural Digest looked at the work of 250 designers. Three locals really grabbed their attention.

BY CHARLYNE VARKONYI SCHAUB HOME & GARDEN EDITOR

They came from as far away as South America, Toronto and Mexico to line up for hours outside the Design Center of the Americas in Dania Beach.

The more than 250 hopefuls — both professional and amateur designers — carried everything from elaborate portfolios to three-ring binders to show their work.

The prize? To become finalists in *Architectural Digest*'s Jan. 29 open auditions for new design talent so they could appear in a future issue of the prestigious magazine.

When the votes were counted, the panel of editors selected five people. Three are from our area, including one that is not a professional designer. Local finalists include Christopher Yearwood of Fort Lauderdale, Elliot Acosta of Hollywood and **Liliana Korn Custy of North Miami.** (You can see interviews with the designers online at architecturaldigest.com.)

Paige Rense, AD's editor in chief, said the South Florida candidates, like those in the New York auditions, were pleased to sit down with a senior editor of a magazine as opposed to sending submissions in the mail.

"Even experienced professionals feel they don't want to submit their work unless they know someone at the magazine," she said in a telephone interview. "That's what drove me to do this. You don't have to know anyone, but no one believes that."

Although Rense and her editors only spent 5 to 10 minutes with each person, she said it was plenty of time to judge the entries.

"Design is like every other field," she said. "Only a few good ones stick out. It goes back to the old cliché: Cream rises to the top."



INSIDE

South Florida design stars, Liliana Korn Custy and Elliot Acosta, will dazzle you with truck beds and clean style. 4F

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A CLEAR DIFFERENCE: Liliana Korn Custy designed this condo living room with a clean, contemporary look that is not sterile. Photo/Gerald Connell

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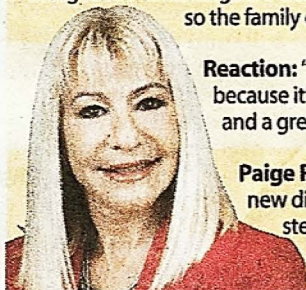
DESIGN STAR

Liliana Korn Custy, North Miami

Clincher: Kitchen/family room in a vacation home for a German couple with two children, ages 1 and 3. It's on the 24th floor of a condo in Sunny Isles Beach.

Back story: An architect in Argentina, Custy did everything from finding the lot to designing the building and selecting the furnishings. She has been in South Florida seven years designing interiors and is a licensed general contractor. Her company, Korn Interior Design, has a lot of European and South American clients.

Details: The wife wanted to see her children while she worked in the kitchen so Custy removed the wall between the kitchen and living room. She installed glossy white Snidero cabinets with stainless steel accents and a white quartz countertop. The living room furnishings are clean contemporary, including a glass coffee table that lifts so the family can eat while sitting on the sofa.



Reaction: "I'm amazed and so happy. It's very important for me because it's a great magazine. It's the best thing that can happen and a great opportunity."

Paige Rense's take: "I think her work is representative of a new direction in Florida design — very contemporary but not sterile. It's plain and minimal without being austere."