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Work of Art

The complete reformation of a
special space at the San Jose Museum of Art.
Gentry reports.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RIO COSTANTINI



“The room had to serve many functions, but I wanted it to feel open and inviting.”

People always enjoy a good makeover story. Whether it's a personal transformation or the metamorphosis of a space, there's something about the positive changes that garner our attention.

Some are so dramatic and inspiring that they fill us with our own personal thoughts of change and new beginnings. Such is the case with the complete reformation of the San Jose Museum of Art employee break room.

The Museum's Director of Marketing, Doniece Sandoval, in a casual conversation with Gentry's Stefanie Lingle Beasley, asked if she knew any designers who could help with the disaster of a

paint and some furniture from IKEA. I thought they might be able to get something far better than that.”

Beasley approached Miller/Dolezal Design Group (MDDG) who agreed wholeheartedly to take on the task. “Of course, we never do anything in a mediocre way,” recalls Douglas Dolezal with a grin. “When Bob Miller and I saw the space, we couldn't believe that this was what the employees called their break room. Paint and a few new pieces just weren't going to be enough, and we knew a major renovation was in order.”

The room was dark, dingy, and filled with a hodgepodge of equipment and makeshift storage. “It was such a dreary space,” Miller agreed. “And when we found out that this is also where brides change for their wedding receptions (held upstairs in the Museum's glamorous galleries), we knew we had to create a better impression for the Museum.”

Dolezal quickly had a vision for the space. “The room had to serve many functions, but I wanted it to feel open and inviting.” He conceived of two French doors opening to a floating wall with a glass insert. Custom cabinetry would line the perimeter, complete with a kitchenette and a grid of mail cubbies. A huge conference table would serve for lunches, meetings, and mail sorting.

With literally no budget, the dilemma was how to deliver on Dolezal's vision. Both MDDG and Gentry recruited an “A-List” team of companies and special-



Form and function marry well in this space that serves as a kitchen, conference room, mail room, and special events room

space they considered their employee break room. “We were looking for someone to help us spruce it up,” said Sandoval. “We had no budget but hoped a talented designer could show us creative ways to clean up our act.” Beasley recalls, “Doniece was hoping for one of those quick fixes that you might see on a DIY television show—a fresh coat of







Clean surfaces and sophisticated finishes bring this room to life

ists willing to donate everything necessary to get the job done. Sindhu Peruri and Alia Richards from MDDG stepped in as project managers. R.J. Dailey Construction took care of all the carpentry, plus covered the cost for all the electrical work. And David Baeza of Woodenbridge, Inc., created the custom

Kolkka forged a table base and console—beautiful ironwork—topped with black granite from West Coast Marble & Granite. Randy Smith from Advanced Glass & Mirror Co. sandblasted a piece of glass for the floating wall, providing the perfect solution to let in light but allow for privacy. Finally, Cowtan & Tout

“Now we have a room we can be proud of and I know our employees feel so special that all these companies did this for us. The room is a work of art.”

cabinetry throughout with modern knobs and pulls from Belmont Hardware. West Coast Marble & Granite fabricated and installed the creamy stone countertop in the kitchenette. Standards of Excellence agreed to supply all the appliances, and Mary Jo Camp brought Whirlpool, Inc., and Water, inc. on board for the latest KitchenAid products and the Everpure water purification system (so long stacks and stacks of five gallon water bottles!).

Unattractive commercial floor tiles were replaced with laminate wood from Golden State Flooring. Artist John

donated yards of embroidered silk framed from floor to ceiling by Atherton Gallery. These hang in the hallway leading up to the break room for both visual interest and noise abatement.

The project took a year and a half to complete. “It was worth it,” says Sandoval. “Now we have a room we can be proud of and I know our employees feel so special that all these companies did this for us. The room is a work of art.” How fitting for space in a museum where exploration of the creative spirit is celebrated every day. ■

Miracle Workers

The companies who donated products, time, and talent

Miller/Dolezal Design Group

650.261.2000
www.mddg.com

R.J. Dailey Construction Co.

650.948.5196
www.rjdailey.com

Standards of Excellence Appliances and Decorative Plumbing

408.907.3800
www.soesupply.com

Whirlpool, Inc.

360.802.2599
www.whirlpool.com

Water, inc.

800.322.9283
www.waterinc.com

Woodenbridge, Inc.

Cabinetry
408.436.9663
www.woodenbridgeinc.com

Golden State Flooring

415.522.5120
www.goldenstateflooring.com

Cowtan & Tout

415.863.3955
www.cowtan.com

Kolkka Furniture

650.327.5001
www.kolkka.com

Belmont Hardware

650.591.0345
www.belmonthardware.com

West Coast Marble & Granite

408.971.1074

Atherton Gallery

650.321.5759

Advanced Glass & Mirror Co.

408.748.1591

Special thanks to Sindhu Peruri, Alia Richards, Roger Allen, Mary Jo Camp, David and Tammy Baeza, John Kolkka, Ed Freeman, Mark Gallagher, Jodi Murphy, Randy Smith, Mike Ortega, and John Renzel.



AT HOME

Abbondanza!

Furniture Aplenty

Gentry's Jodi Murphy reports on a bounty of resources for the home.

From Bunny Hutch to Bella Casa. The Bunny Hutch, a popular home store for over 25 years, has outgrown its name. What began as a cute country gift shop has evolved into a high-end home store, complete with a huge selection of accessories, furniture, framed art, lamps, seasonal décor, and gifts. This summer the store changed its name to Bella Casa, to better reflect the store's inventory and ambiance. **Open Monday – Saturday, 10 AM to 6 PM and Sunday, Noon to 4 PM. Bella Casa, 14926 Camden Avenue, San Jose. 408.371.1555. www.bellacasa1.com**



High-Tech Custom Cabinetry. When searching for a company to create your custom cabinetry, consider Woodenbridge, Inc., a first-rate firm that prides itself on its personal diamond-rated service. They use both hand craftsmanship and the latest in technology for every phase—design, manufacturing, fabrication, and installation. Design sessions can be held online in 3D renderings, where clients, in the comfort of their own homes, can watch as the plans are created. “We once held a session with a client where the wife was at home in Los Altos Hills, the husband was in Europe, and the designer was in his office in San Francisco,” says Owner/Partner David Baeza. **Woodenbridge Custom Cabinetry & Granite, 408.436.9663. www.woodenbridgeinc.com**



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