

CONTENTS
VOLUME 20, NO 4

METRO
SOURCE



36 A COUPLE OF DESIGNERS

ONE DESIGNS FASHION. The other, interiors. Together, they are a happy couple; so why have Chris Coleman and Angel Sanchez decided to go into business together?

COVER PHOTO BY JOHN RUSSO
PHOTO THIS PAGE COURTESY CHRIS
COLEMAN AND ANGEL SANCHEZ





Couple of DESIGNERS

BY THE NATURE OF THEIR WORK, Christopher Coleman and Angel Sanchez are one of New York's most stylish couples. Coleman's design firm, Christopher Coleman Interior Design, has transformed everything from Tribeca apartments to country cottages into chic spaces, and his work has been featured in design bibles like *Metropolitan Home*, *ELLE Decor* and *House Beautiful*. Meanwhile, Sanchez' designs have been at home on red carpets and strutting down the aisles of celebrity weddings: The Venezuelan native's eponymous couture line has dressed Meryl Streep for the Golden Globes and Sara Ramirez for the SAG Awards; Eva Longoria Parker and Sandra Bullock both wore pieces from his bridal collection on their respective wedding days.

In the tradition of Simon Doonan and Jonathan Adler, another couple of designers — Angel Sanchez and Chris Coleman — take their partnership from personal to professional in a quest for divine design.

BY ERIN DEJESUS



Having already established their names in their fields and spent 12 years as a couple, Coleman and Sanchez recently decided to combine their talents, joining forces in a formal interior design partnership. "We found there are a lot of connections between fashion and interior design," says Sanchez. The couple's

four personal residences — in Miami, Caracas, Venezuela and New York (including a new loft in Brooklyn) — showcase their collaborative style, which pairs Coleman's eye for bright colors with Sanchez' elegant, architecturally-influenced structures.

Coleman and Sanchez celebrated their "coming out" as a design team at the 2009 Kips Bay Decorator Show House, an annual New York City fundraiser that also serves as one of the premier professional showcases in the design world. When Coleman received an invitation to participate, he immediately thought it would be a great opportunity to work together with Sanchez.

The project ended up being the perfect catalyst: Coleman and Sanchez' Kips Bay Loft Lounge (pictured on pages 36 and 37) was a sleek, masculine space infused with a playful sense of modernism. The room featured green and blue walls with floating shelves; metallic linens and fixtures stood out above an aquamarine Astroturf carpet; a \$65,000 chrome steel ping-pong table designed by Rirkrit Tiravanija served as the centerpiece. To add a sculptural element, the pair hung a black decorative fixture from the ceiling and covered the skylight in a delicate black cutout pattern of dress-maker's lace, which Coleman proudly points out as one of Sanchez' ideas.

Among contributions by 30 other designers, the New York Post named the pair's Loft Lounge one of the "Best in Show" — an impressive accomplishment, considering the whole room was conceived and constructed in only five weeks. "The thing about show houses," Sanchez says, "is that you don't have to listen to anybody else [i.e. a client]. It's like when you do a fashion show: in a collection, you try to do a concept. So the show house for me was very fun."



Coleman (left) and Sanchez, a couple of designers. (Opposite) The offices of Angel Sanchez.

Though making the transition from life partners to business partners could be tricky, Coleman and Sanchez complement — and compliment — each other perfectly, wisely tailoring their roles to accommodate each other's strengths and weaknesses. "It's a nice balance," Sanchez says.

"When Chris is tired, I take control; ... it's nice to work in a team when you have the time to help the other person." For the Kips Bay project, Sanchez developed the initial layout while Coleman suggested materials; they shopped for pieces and furnishings together.

While many non-design-professional couples squabble over whose taste takes precedent when designing a room, Coleman and Sanchez good-humoredly tackle the few differences they face. "We're comfortable with each other," Coleman says. "Our tastes are very similar, but the other thing is, I think your taste grows similar. When I met Angel, he was very... beige," they laugh, "very Armani, very monochromatic."

With a couple of show houses already under their belts and their own homes serving as portfolio material, Coleman and Sanchez are looking to expand their business among both commercial and residential clients. Sanchez also mentions his desire to collaborate on a housewares line — "some tables, bedding collections, table collections," Sanchez says. "I want to introduce Chris to the fabric side [of design]."

It's an ambitious goal: As separate entities, both men have full plates. Sanchez is currently working on his 2010 spring resort collection and developing a ready-to-wear line of cocktail dresses for Beco, the Venezuelan equivalent of Macy's ("My passion is fashion; so I'm not planning to leave," Sanchez says.) Meanwhile, Coleman Designs is completing several apartment projects throughout Manhattan, including a four-bedroom apartment on the Upper East Side and a loft space on lower Fifth Avenue. ■

Get more information about Chris and Angel's designs at ccinteriordesign.com and angelsanchezusa.com.