

7 W New York® and IFDA Host Outstanding Designer Day
IFDA's Rising Stars Uplift and Inspire Attendees

(New York, NY – November 18, 2009) On the evening of November 10, 7 W New York partnered with the International Furnishings & Design Association (IFDA) for a very special Designer Day led by interior designer extraordinaire Jamie Drake. Each year since 2007, IFDA New York has recognized up-and-coming designers through “Rising Stars of Interior Design” events. IFDA’s 2009 Rising Stars: John Willey, Sara Story and Shawn Henderson took center stage on 7 W’s 11th floor as they shared their inspirations, aspirations and discussed the future of interior design.

The evening kicked off with a buzzing cocktail reception during which Rising Stars, both past and present, mingled with design industry devotees, experts and students. Former honorees, Vanessa De Leon, Brad Ford, and Kristen McGinnis came to support their colleagues and hear from 2009’s stars. At the very start, panel moderator Jamie Drake rhetorically asked, “What makes a rising star?” His answer was simply “timelessness and sparkle.” These characteristics were clearly exhibited in the portfolios of the rising stars who presented their work to a rapt audience. A lively discussion and Q + A session followed.

The presentations and discussion offered attendees a look into the *Stars’* rich and distinctive design worlds. John Willey’s motto, “Life’s too short for an all-beige room” was evidenced in the projects he showed, which were infused with light and subtle pops of color. Born in Japan and raised in Texas, Sara Story spoke of her love for both cultures, using touches of each in her work. With a penchant for embellished walls, she plans to one day start her own line of wall coverings. Fellow star Shawn Henderson shared his signature aesthetic and vivacious personality in a video of his portfolio synched to music. During the discussion that followed, Henderson noted that his clients often want to recapture special moments they have had in special places, like requesting “Tuscan kitchens” and “Parisian boudoirs.”

The trio agreed that a “good” client - one who lets the designer go with their vision - always gets the best results. Toward the end, an audience member inquired about the future of the industry. John Willey’s response seemed to poignantly sum up the event.

He remarked, “We are looking at a big question mark at the moment. We are not sure what’s next, but we must focus on moments like this. Coming together as we are now - as a design community - is encouraging and inspiring.”

About the IFDA

IFDA (the International Furnishings & Design Association) is the only organization whose members represent the total design and furnishings industry in all its aspects. With 16 chapters nationwide, plus a chapter in Japan and members in Australia, the Middle East, Caribbean and United Kingdom, IFDA provides a professional forum for communication and interaction among its high-profile members. Celebrating its 62nd year, the association is structured to increase public awareness of the furnishings and design industry.

For complete and updated information about 7 W New York visit www.7wnewyork.com or find 7 W on Facebook and Twitter.

7 W NEW YORK® is a wholesale mart building, catering to the buyers of Home Décor, Table Top, Giftware, Textiles, Decorative Accessories, Fine Arts and related industries. Its daily hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 9 am to 5 pm with extended hours during special market weeks. 7 W New York is a trademark of MMPI.

MMPI is the world's leading owner and operator of showroom buildings and trade show facilities, bringing buyers and sellers together in more than 300 market events, trade and consumer shows and conferences each year.

MMPI manages The Merchandise Mart and 350 West Mart Center in Chicago; Market Square, the Suites at Market Square, Hamilton Market, Plaza Suites, Furniture Plaza and the National Furniture Mart in High Point, N.C.; the Architects & Designers Building and 7 W New York in New York; the Boston Design Center in Boston; the L.A. Mart in Los Angeles; and the Washington Design Center and Federal Center Southwest in Washington D.C.

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