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Q&A with Thomas Hickey and Edward Yedid of GRADE

Architect Thomas Hickey and interior designer Edward Yedid of GRADE, talk about holistic design and their full-service architecture and interior design firm.



Thomas Hickey and Edward Yedid of GRADE.



87 Leonard

NYS: When and why did both decide to found GRADE?

Thomas Hickey: I established GRADE as an architecture firm and was teaching at a number of schools, including [Parsons The New School for Design](#) in 2002. Eddie was one of my students and we immediately connected. We became good friends with similar aesthetic and design ambitions and it seemed like a good idea to add an interior design dimension to GRADE.

Edward Yedid: We both saw the need for comprehensive, holistic design solutions; a place where clients could go for both architecture and interior design services and we were able to fill in those gaps for each other.

NYS: What does GRADE specialize in?

GRADE is a full-service architecture and interior design firm specializing in curating personalized, luxurious design. We work closely with each client from beginning to end in order to understand their personality and lifestyle to craft the most authentic design.

NYS: What are some of the more recent projects you have worked on? Are there any commercial projects we would be familiar with?

Edward: Some of our recent projects in the city include a penthouse pied-a-terre located in [Place57](#)—formerly owned by Oprah, 87 Leonard—a former printing house turned into industrial TriBeCa lofts, and The Twenty1—a ground-up residential project in Chelsea in which GRADE spearheaded both the architecture and interiors including six opulent and expansive full-floor units, two duplex penthouses and one townhouse unit.

Thomas: We're working on a number of houses in Hamptons such as Modern Farm House where the client has brought us on board to design the architecture and interior design. We've also worked on a number of restaurants such as Bidwell at Union Market in Washington DC, Bell Book & Candle in the West Village and Vertigo in NOMAD. We also spearheaded the design for two flag ship stores for Tiffany & Co. in Taiwan and Shanghai as well as Dior and Chanel domestically.



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NYS: How do your respective talents as an architect (Thomas) and interior designer (Edward) contribute to your firm's appeal?

Thomas: What we've learned from our clients is that they enjoy going to one place for all of their design services as it results in an efficient holistic experience.

NYS: What would be a dream project for both of you?

Edward: We've worked on private residences, restaurants, retail spaces, etc. and our next goal is to expand to hotels.

NYS: How have both of your previous work environments influenced how you run your firm?

Thomas: While at Robert A.M Stern's office, I was a part of a team that designed luxurious custom houses for high profile clients. I learned about classical design principles and now translate these with a modern aesthetic for our projects at GRADE.

Edward: While working towards my degree at Parsons, I was also working at the Noel Jeffrey's firm where I was a junior designer. My first few projects were for very wealthy people, so I was introduced to the best millworkers, fabricators, and materials and upholsters in the business. These contacts became crucial when we started GRADE a few years later.



Place 57

NYS: What are the benefits to a consumer to working with your firm?

Thomas: Our firm was formed on the premise that architecture and interior design go hand-in-hand informing each other to make a complete design. While we definitely have projects where we might do one or the other, we always recommend to our clients to work with us on both interior design and architecture as it generally results in a seamless experience.

Edward: We have a unique approach to our projects by getting to know our clients and how they live. From there, we work to find antiques and/or new works by artists rather than items from showrooms that reflect our clients' personalities and lifestyles. We create everything else ourselves for the most part, resulting in a one-of-a-kind design for our clients.

NYS: What is on the horizon for GRADE?

Edward: We have a number of exciting private residential projects including a colorful 3-bedroom renovation on East End Ave. for a young family, an eclectic loft on Waverly Place that reflects the clients travels and adventures, and my new place on the UES with my fiancé. It's essentially a reflection of our life experiences instilled with GRADE's calm, sophisticated principles paired with a number of eclectic pieces.

Thomas: We also have a couple of new houses under construction in Southampton, Greenwich, and Bronxville that have our spin on traditional values. We are very excited about all of these and look forward to their completion.

Direct link: <https://www.newyorkspaces.com/article/Q-A-with-Thomas-Hickey-and-Edward-Yedid-of-GRADE-20170106>