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Custom Commissions Expand Fire & Water's Designs and Capabilities

Over the past two years, a growing number of custom and large scale lighting commissions has enabled Fire & Water to explore new variants in its designs while gaining expertise in demanding and difficult installations.

“Because so many of our fixture designs spring from our architectural work,” David Bergman, architect and founder of Fire & Water, explained. “it makes sense that we would have the flexibility to design for specific architectural settings, whether it be one of our own or working with another designer.”

Those settings have ranged from commissions for individual residential fixtures to fifty foot tall installations for shopping centers. Recent collaborations have been with Montroy Andersen, Concepts 4, Ehrenkrantz and Ekstut, and Leslie John Koeser. In most of these collaborations, Fire & Water had been sought out because their vocabulary and designs had points of similarity with the designers’ ideas. Bergman then worked with the designer’s starting points to propose designs that evolve out of combinations of their ideas. “Being a practicing architect makes it much easier for me to understand where the project’s architect or designer is coming from. It’s actually a lot like being a studio instructor [which Bergman is] in that you are trying to find and bring out and expand upon the core of the designer’s idea. It’s a stimulating process.”

As the commissions have become larger and more complex, they frequently have required onsite installation as well. For Indianapolis’ Circle Center, this meant leaning out over the three story atrium to install three foot high “lily” shades. A recent installation for Treetops Restaurant in Philadelphia’s Rittenhouse Square meant working virtually through the night, field bending and arranging the fixtures without disturbing the hotel’s guests, in order to meet the restaurant’s opening deadline.

Transparencies available on request.



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