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Hazard assessment

Designer Roger Hazard from 'Sell This House' talks up Texas, TV and interiors

By Rich Lopez

Let's face it. There are two reasons to watch *Sell This House*. The second would be learning how to stage your home to sell better. And in this market, anything helps. The first, well, that should be easy enough.

For obvious reasons, Roger Hazard has attracted a big gay following over the eight seasons the show has been on. A handsome, bearded musclebear is hard to resist. But get past the exterior (as difficult as that may be) and discover an artist at heart.

After finishing an episode, Hazard spoke about his time in Texas and how it led to him being an unexpected pioneer in both television and even the real estate and design industries.

Sell This House airs Saturdays at 8:30 a.m. on A&E.

Dallas Voice: You actually grew up in

Texas. Hazard: Yeah, I grew up in Houston mostly, but went to school for a year at Highland Park.

I studied landscape architecture at Texas A&M. I worked for a landscape company in Houston and then began flipping houses there. We did shoot a show in Dallas about, I think, three or four years ago.

Then you moved to Atlanta. How was it there?

I started flipping homes in Atlanta and did very well. I was flipping about four homes a year. I started staging them to sell quicker and I sold with the furniture I bought for it. That brought in a lot of people. I developed quite a following then but I needed more of a challenge. So I moved to New York.

Is that where you switched to more interior work?

I took a position with a top interior design firm. In three months, they said I was overqualified. But now I'm doing some more commercial work in New York.

How was it to go from exteriors to interiors?

It depends on the project but there is more of a demand for interior work. You know, a lot of it's the same as when I was studying architecture: light, form, color. All the same principles are applied.

Your career just seems to ascend.

How did the TV show come



Roger Hazard not only knows how to fill a shirt, he can fill a room with just a few touches as he did in these before and after comparisons.



about? One of my clients that worked in TV was bragging about me at a pitch meeting. Someone said, "I see a TV show." About a month had passed before they called, then they sent a film crew came out and that's how the show started.

Were you ready for TV? Oh no. I was not ready. I pushed cameramen out of the way. TV is very structured in going about achieving a goal. You have to think backwards almost and also get the camera to catch what you're doing.

I was excited to see how it took off like wildfire. I was the first person to introduce home staging on TV and this was the only show of its kind to be

nominated for Emmys. I was very proud.

OK, so what are some things people need to know on their own about the design of their home? People get an emotional reaction to it. People react to furniture style and how it's arranged. If it's arranged around the TV in the living room, it makes it feel like Mom and Dad's house somehow. Know what I mean? Simple accessories and lighting are good to work with, too.

What do you say to the person reluctant to color? Ha! Is beige selling your house? Do you only buy beige clothes? People *do* have a reaction to color and it doesn't make a room smaller, it makes it more interesting.

Are there common mistakes you find? Yeah, buying furniture too big for a space. Be careful of covering up wall space with furniture. So many people use walls as an outline to place furniture. Rooms feel more open or larger when you have to walk around furniture. And you need a free wall for the eye to rest.

Are you working on anything else right now? I'm putting my Web site together, which should be about a couple more weeks. I've been asked several times to write a book, but I wouldn't do one about staging. I'm more about mistakes in designing. I'd call it *Design Hazards*.

Damn, that was gonna be my headline.

