

Donna Elle gets “Best of Houzz 2015” interior design award

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Island interior designer Donna Elle exposes her energy to the world through her work with her company Seaside Living.

Recently, that energy was mirrored back when she was awarded “Best of Houzz 2015” from the online design and remodeling platform.

The award, chosen by the Houzz community, is based on the number of times photos are added into user idea books. Users choose the photos that are of particular interest to them and save them.

Elle said this week that the honor was completely unexpected. She has been a member since November 2013.

“I’m not looking necessarily to find a job through this venue as I am to convey my passion and my design direction,” she said. “It’s just a great opportunity to communicate that to the world. It really is remarkable because you never know where the web weaves. So, for that instance, I am humbled at the unexpectedness of receiving an award.”

According to a statement, the Best of Houzz award is given in two categories: customer service and design. Design winners were the most popular among the more than 25 million monthly Houzz users. Winners will receive a “Best of Houzz 2015” badge on their profile, easily identifying them in their respective geographic areas.

After returning home from a morning yoga class, Elle said she saw the e-mail that she was being given an award that only 3 percent of the professionals on Houzz receive.

“I sat there in shock,” she said. “I was dumbfounded because it was something I did not apply for or even understand the rules of engage-



Interior designer Donna Elle

ment. I just was simply presenting myself through my work on the website in an earnest way, wanting to communicate my design sensibilities and it got me an award. It’s pretty cool.”

The name Seaside Living evolved as a result of her Coastal Collection line. She was designing a line of textiles and home furnishings and going to markets in Atlanta, Ga., New York, N.Y., and Miami, Fla., among others. After working in those markets for three years, Elle said she discovered a sensitivity towards interpreting coastal interiors.

“It evolved into letting my name indicate such a passion,” she continued. “So it’s more about designing a lifestyle for people around and about the sea. And it

doesn’t necessarily mean a starfish. Sea life can be interpreted intuitively as well as intentionally.”

Since she was 5 years old, Elle has been visiting Block Island, R.I. She works from Provincetown to Falmouth, and purposely chooses to stay along the south shore of the entirety of Cape Cod to remain close to the water.

“I’m sensitive to the rhythms, and that obviously comes forth in my interpretation of the ocean,” she said.

In June, Elle will travel to Osterville, Mass. for for the inaugural Cape Designer Showhouse as the only interior designer from Nantucket.

The over two-week event will benefit WE CAN (Women’s Empowerment through Cape Area Networking).