

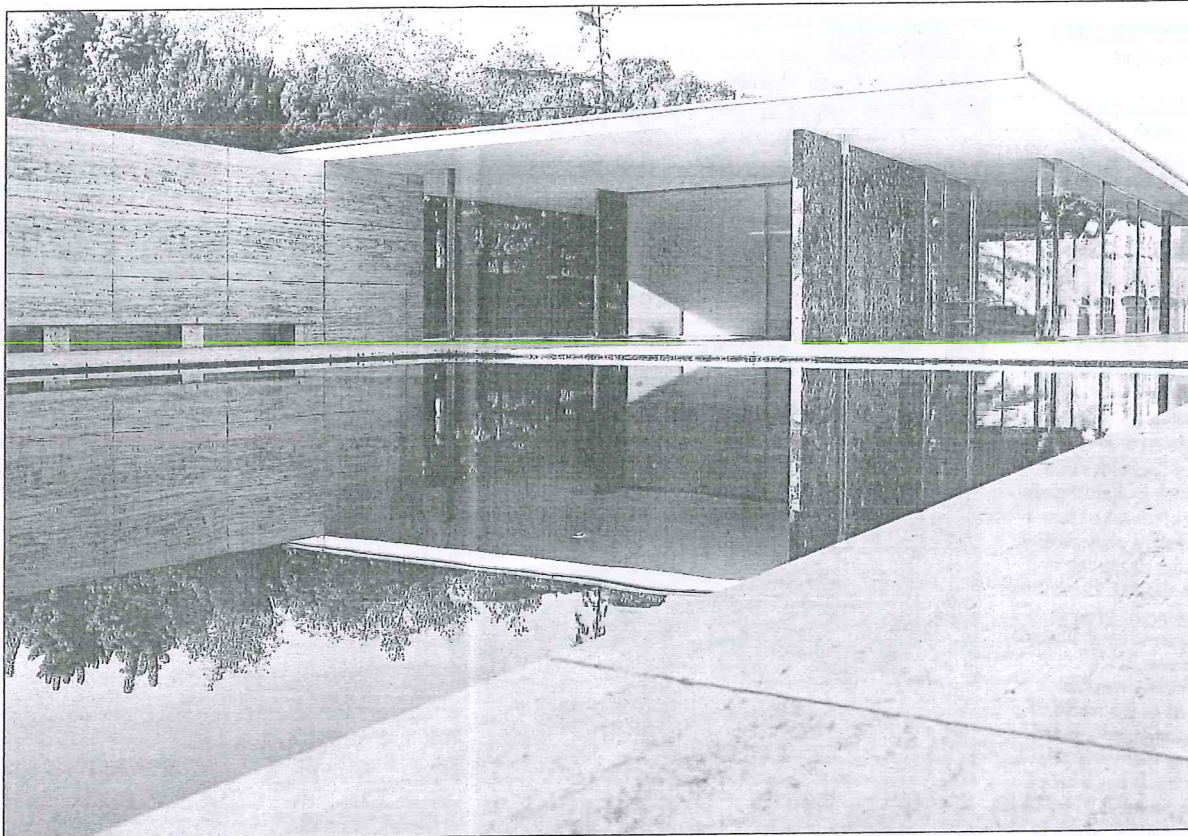
# Understanding the interior designer's process

BY JOSEPH PUBILLONES  
Creators Syndicate

Unbeknownst to many, some of the most influential interior designs have come from architects and not interior designers. Take, for example, Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion or Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling Water residence: these are the works of professionals trained as architects, and commissioned to do interior design. As a designer with a Bachelor's and Master's in architecture, I am often asked how I approach a project, and whether discipline overrides another. Describing the thought process of a designer is complicated, but here goes.

When one is involved in the world of the design, you quickly realize that every selection made has a bit of your personal style. That nervousness, which is natural and primitive, invades us at the moment of considering an idea, and is nothing more than the fear of rejection of a creation. Although we know that fear is irrational, we cannot avoid the butterflies in the stomach feeling of the big day when the design is presented to a client and more so, when the design installed or delivered.

In my opinion, there are several paths to build a theoretical basis for any selection, proposal or project: something that will give us an arsenal of arguments and tools to defend it, and just not



Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion is one example of influential interior design by an architect.



## Art of Design

as a whim or an abstract creation based on inspiration, but with the coherence necessary of a well-articulated good debate with a lot of logical reasoning behind it.

This theory cannot be developed after the fact, but should be laid out before any ideas. This process entails a thorough study and analysis of the client's needs, the place and the

clients themselves; it is of utmost importance to collect the most relevant data to face the creative process that best fits the client's needs with all that collected information. This knowledge is especially important if it is a residential project. As a designer, one needs to be able to connect with the clients and to see beyond what they are able to imagine. This is intense work and a challenge for any designer that is virtually priceless, and an unknown terri-

tory to most clients.

We are well aware of some of the work involved in the design process: brainstorming, mental maps, precedents and referential searches, and when working with a seasoned designer, the designer's own signature style. A crucial factor is to know how to sort through each of these and then choosing the most appropriate and to be faithful to an idea from the moment of inception. During the

process of analysis, the designer is tempted to convert what I call a project goal into a leading idea. Certainly not all designers work within such a structured framework, but this article deals with those designers with an architectural training. These methodologies can make the designer feel that their creation is inferior to a signature style, but that is not the case. A great design should be able to respond to all the ques-

tions and parameter set forth by the initial concept or conceptual design ideas. In the end, if all decisions are guided by these design guidelines, all the components of the design: structure, finishes, and furnishings should be in a harmonious dialogue or contrasting contemplation.

*Joseph Pubillones is the owner of Joseph Pubillones Interiors, an award-winning interior design firm based in Palm Beach.*