

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to the *Design You* podcast with Tobi Fairley, episode number 161.

Welcome to the *Design You* podcast. A show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth and joy. Here's your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hey, hey friends. I hope you are loving spring. We are so close to May, I can hardly stand it. Summer is on the way. And even though I do kind of prefer fall and winter I'm looking forward to being outside this year. This pandemic has had me indoors about as much as I can stand. I know a lot of you, I follow out on Instagram and I see your posts and you all are about some summertime. So it's almost here, yay, so much to celebrate.

Something else to celebrate today is I have a treat for you. Today's episode I feel like is just completely indulgent. Well, it is for me anyway. I rarely have people on that are interior designers that we just purely talk about design and their design businesses. But today that's exactly what we're doing with Joy Moyler. And Joy is a delight. She's a joy as her name says. And I had the most incredible time interviewing her today. And I'm really still kind of speechless about her accomplishments, her wisdom; just her brain is like an encyclopedia of design.

She is just incredible. I don't know if I know anyone in the design industry that has had a dreamier, more glamorous, more successful career than Joy and it was so much fun to hear about it. So I think you're going to totally love it. I think the only thing we didn't talk about – well, no, that's not true. I'm sure there's a million things we didn't talk about. But of the big, big things that she's done in her life the only one I don't think we mentioned is that she is a member of the Architectural Digest AD100, which is that list of that top most accomplished designers really in the world.

And so in addition to that she's going to tell you, and I mean just get ready. You don't even need a paper and pencil for today's episode, you get to just sit back and be indulgent with me and listen to the dreamy life, and

[The Design You Podcast](#) with Tobi Fairley

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

projects, and experiences that Joy has experienced in her life. So let me be quiet and stop this introduction and let's get to the good stuff because here's my interview with Joy Moyler.

Tobi: Hey Joy, welcome to the *Design You* podcast. I am really thrilled you're here today.

Joy: I am thrilled to be here with you. I've been waiting in line for the longest time to join you. So thank you for finally having me Tobi.

Tobi: You're so welcome. So we really got to know each other over the last – I don't know – year or few months. And it came out of all of the things that were happening on social media really around diversity and that conversation I think is how we got to really know each other. And we're still getting to know each other which I'm loving every minute of. And we'll talk about some of that more later.

But if people don't know about you yet or they've heard about you but they need a reminder, I would love for you to just briefly or however long you want to take, give us a little kind of insight into you, and your business, and the incredible things you've done. And then we'll get into some exciting conversations about what you're doing these days in the design industry.

Joy: Very well, without the risk of boring people to tears I will begin by saying I've been in the industry for 30 years. I started working at The New York Times in their home section when I was in college. My first job in architecture was with The New York Times. I'm sorry then I moved on to Skidmore Owings & Merrill, that was my first real architecture job. And literally we worked till 3 o'clock in the morning sometimes. And this was pre AutoCAD. All of our drawings were done by hand.

And even though there may have been a team of six people working on a set of drawings, all of the line weights needed to match. So we need to laboriously just make sure that our pressure point on the pen were creating

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

similar strokes of [inaudible] shades of walls and that sort of thing. And it was one of the highlights of my career, really set the tone for a lot of the practices that I still engage now such as being extremely detailed, and keeping a paper trail, and keeping a telephone log of everyone that I speak to pertaining to a project.

From there I moved on and I was working with John Saladino who was an amazing interior designer, residential projects. I then moved on and was working with Ralph Lauren doing store design for the domestic stores across the country. So Beverly Hills renovations were my responsibility and spent half my life living in California. And to this day I still get mail at the Viceroy Hotel because people think I live there. But it was the most wonderful experience.

After Ralph Lauren I moved on to the office Thierry Despont and did really high end residential interiors for like Bill Gates project, Kensington Palace Gardens in London, The Dorchester Hotel and many residences for Micky Drexler who was then the Chairman of J. Crew and we did the Boca Raton Resort, Harry Winston stores, just a real wonderful balance of residential and very high end hospitality projects.

And then I moved on and I became the Head Designer and Lead for Giorgio Armani's Armani Casa for the domestic US Interior Design Studio. And worked on major big projects, celebrity projects for ambassadors of Giorgio Armani clothing and just had the best time ever before starting my own firm in 2011 with the blessing of Mr. Armani as well.

Tobi: Wow. And that's why I wanted you to share that because you may get tired of it or think that you've said it a million times. But it's just incredible, it sounds like the dreamiest life which we briefly discussed earlier, it's not always as glamorous as it seems but just unbelievable accomplishments. I feel like because I do have a formal interior design degree which so many of our peers don't, that's not the point. But so many

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

of the things you discussed including working at Skidmore Owens & Merrill and all those places.

Those were the things I was learning when I was a student and studying the history of design and the top firms and history of architecture. And so for you to share all of those places, it's just, it's mindboggling to me, your accomplishments and the projects you've gotten to do just I can't even imagine.

Joy: Well, there were actually more. I mean I worked for Revlon for a bit as well doing package design and doing setups on photo shoots. And I remember doing a photo shoot with Francesco Scavullo for Revlon with what's her name? Cindy Crawford and Linda Evangelista and just things like that. I've had an immense opportunity to be in the room with some extremely talented people. I mean I worked like hell to get there, none of it was a mistake.

And each and every time in my career where I was really gritting, which I'm always grinding and gritting of course, so that's never stopped. But every time when I've said, "Oh my God, this is so hard", a blessing has come out of it. And I have learned so much. And I actually still to this day look for more challenges because the growth is immense, every opportunity, and Lord knows I've seen a lot of disasters. I've actually just had a firm lose a sofa for my Italian project, just kind of disappearing somewhere along Interstate 95, the route to the warehouse.

But there's always something, but each and every one of those challenges creates an opportunity of growth. So whenever someone says, "I want it to be easier." I just say, "Hold up, stop in your tracks. You don't know what kind of blessings you're going to get out of this challenge and what kind of growth factor is there hiding for you if you're ready to accept it."

Tobi: And what was your education before you started those first jobs with SOM or any of those businesses?

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

Joy: I studied architecture. I went to a specialized school here in New York by the name of The High School of Art and Design. And there were six week rotations where you would study photography, fashion design, fashion illustration, illustration, sculpture, fine art. And you would do a rotation so that as a student you could determine what you wanted your profession to be. And all through that I never really wanted to narrow down a true career path because I fell in love with everything. And so I went to school for architecture and my degree is in architecture.

So at SOM architecture is what I started doing. And then there was this black Monday where the stock market tanked. And the architectural projects were put on hold because they were large financial projects for banks mostly, Merrill Lynch, that sort of thing. And the financials just kind of stopped doing business for a moment. And they asked if I wanted to participate in interior design projects. And I said, “No, absolutely”, because that would guarantee me keeping a job when they were really laying people off like mad.

And I really just fell in love with the interiors. And I’ve always been a fan of textiles, and color, and you studied in caustic, versus regular plastic, versus lacquer finishes and things of that nature. And with then Skidmore, Owens & Merrill and the level of projects that they did, that was my real first entry into working on extremely high end projects. And we had this amazing 15 foot Henry Moore sculpture in our lobby. So every day you came to work you were in the presence of amazing, amazing work before you even made it to your desk.

So even though we worked till 3 o’clock in the morning for years, you would walk in the door seeing that – well, this is how I felt about it anyway. I would walk in the door seeing that Henry Moore sculpture just full and just strong. And that just kind of pulled it all in to me. It’s like this is how you have to be to survive this, to go through this, to learn through this. That’s what you have to be. You have to be like this Henry Moore sculpture and just be strong and stand firm. Walk past the sculpture, do your job and at the end

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

of the day walk past it and know that you did what you were supposed to do.

Tobi: That's amazing. And I think you're so right, that we think things are too hard and so hard and that they should be easy. And I definitely hear my own brain say that often. "Why is this so hard?" So I love that you speak to your just your commitment, and your tenacity, and resilience, and all the things that you've done to get there.

The other thing that I am thinking right now is how your genius mind is basically like an encyclopedia of architecture and interior design. Because we've had a 10 minute conversation and just the things that you've mentioned and can recall so beautifully. And there's so much. And I'm sure that's just the tiniest tip of the iceberg of what lives in your brain because of all these...

Joy: I've got a book in here somewhere and people keep asking me to write something and put something down on paper. But my dad always said, "Stop complaining. Later in your career you're going to so appreciate this time. You're going to appreciate the nights you had to work till one, two in the morning and go home take a shower and a quick nap and be back at your desk at 8:15 the next morning. You are sweating now, it's difficult. You can't see your friends on the weekends because you're working on the weekends. There's always a charrette."

The partners were always setting up ridiculous deadlines for us. But he said, "No one will be able to take anything from you later in career because of the work that you're doing now. And just sort of the process that you're learning to really build a strong business and career down the road." And he was absolutely right. And unfortunately my dad passed 20 years ago but he did get to see the beginnings of the benefits of all of the time that I put in to building what is a career and a life.

Tobi: Yes, that's so, so remarkable. Well, and what was the thing, so if you've had your business for 10 years, is that right?

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

Joy: Yes.

Tobi: Okay. So what was the thing that after all of those years for working for all of those other amazing places that you were like, “Okay, now I’m ready?” Because I see people of course start their businesses at all different points of their careers. Some people work for a lot of other people. Some people work for no other people. But what was the thing that at that moment you were like, “Okay, it’s time?”

Joy: Well, I have said this before. But I always consider myself a serial employee because I enjoyed working for other firms. I loved working for John Saladino, which had a very patrician sort of European approach to interior design. I loved Skidmore, Owens & Merrill which had a very modern sort of severe mentality, [inaudible] which is what they were often called, but a very sort of geometric shape to the architecture and surroundings. And then Thierry Despont as well which had a very sort of European approach often to his projects.

Ralph Lauren, the home of lifestyle, so I loved working there within store development and creative services and creating environments that would literally change every six months depending upon the fashion and the influence of the fashion. And so, you would be designing a sports environment for RLX one day, a ranch country farmhouse vibe for RRL another day, women’s collection with the most wonderful creamy dreamy limestone with minimal pouring with the most exquisite fanciful metalwork, with metal mongers.

And then the next day just doing something else, so I just love all of that Purple Label to Chilterns within one umbrella. So you were never bored because there was always something that was being influenced by the current fashion. And that’s what I always loved about working with different firms, having the opportunity to do different styles whether it’s brutalism one day to a very Beaux-Art the next or sort of a country application. And

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

working for these different firms just allowed me that opportunity to design custom [inaudible] and this sort of thing to a carbon fiber chair.

And because I spent so much time moving about that sort of world I never had to select one thing. And so to this day I don't design with one particular style because number one, I feel why should I? A designer designs, I don't want to be limited. And it's what I do now in my own business. And in answer to your primary question, I was a serial employee. I was working at Armani.

I had no intention of starting my own business but Roberta Armani who's the Head of Worldwide Entertainment and her ex-husband said to her, "It's time for you, you've got to do your own thing. You're being limited here just working with an Armani Casa sort of product." And I went kicking and screaming, I really did because I was just loving it so much.

I mean come on, I was getting a phone call like, "Leo DiCaprio's coming to your office in 20 minutes." And spending the whole day with him and going through movie premieres and going to his house and working on projects, and John Mayer and flying to Montana and working on his apartment in Soho, all of these different things and going to Nix Games and working with Pat Riley and going to Miami and sitting courtside watching basketball.

Tobi: I mean I feel like I'm listening to a movie. That's so incredible.

Joy: It was all just so much fun. So I really kind of didn't want to leave that and do that. But I still do it now of course in my own business because...

Tobi: Right, well, what's coming to my mind when you're talking about being a serial employee and so often we start to think, well, if I had my own business things would be so much better. I'd have more freedom or whatever.

But what's coming to my mind is that by working for so many incredible companies for so long you actually got to do a lot more work than even sometimes owners of companies and CEOs do. Because there's so much

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

time required of us to run the business and to deal with team members, and to manage people, and all of those things, so that's really fascinating to think about. Because a lot of times what we think we're getting into when we start our own firms is all this freedom. And I used to say, "Yeah, you get the freedom of working whatever, 18-20 hours a day, you choose", and so yeah.

Joy: You're so, so right about that. And most of the work that I do is actually international, it's London, it's Milan, it's Portofino now. And I work on projects in Russia. And it makes for an incredibly long day. It means the 3:00, 4:00am emails with Moscow that become the London projects later in the day and those sorts of responsibilities. And anything pertaining to domestic projects, not including just trying to keep a home together, but domestic projects with working with domestic vendors, that sort of thing. It makes for a very, very long day.

So again when I say a lot of the process that I learned at Skidmore, Owens & Merrill with respect to buttoning things up, the power of the paper trail, the power of the telephone logs, that really keeps a project in check. Because I do not like hiccups, I do not like hiccups in a project. I think that if you plan correctly and accordingly there shouldn't be any. Of course who in the world would have ever predicted a pandemic?

Tobi: Exactly. I was about to ask you, since you do primarily international work now and we're going to talk in a second about, you told me you were super excited about this project in Italy. But when it's not a pandemic, are you traveling a lot to Russia, and to London, and to Italy? Or how much of that pre pandemic was done remotely or on Zoom meetings or other things?

Joy: My husband hasn't seen me this much since we got married 15 years ago.

Tobi: He's like, "Would you go back to work please?"

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

Joy: I know, I think he's, you know, during this pandemic he's been scratching his head a lot and kind of looking at his watch like oh my God. I've driven him so crazy. But for better or worse, I'm still here. He's still here. We have a great time together and it's great. But pre pandemic I was literally flying to Europe every two to three weeks for three and a half years. And I mean I love it. I mean I'm so used to being there. It's like my second home, London and that sort of thing. And I absolutely adore it. And I miss it greatly.

But what it has created was a slowdown of course. And movement for projects that are now on the board. But a lot of that travel and that opportunity, and working for clients like Peter Getty in London, have afforded me an opportunity to make connections. And have relationships with some of the top tier vendors in that industry and makers, and craftspeople who are wholly responsible, wholly creative and wholly about delivering.

And so as a result I can do a sketch. I can give them an idea about something and they can continue to produce works because I know that they're going to get it right. So even though things have slowed down, they haven't completely – at a standstill. It isn't like oh my God I don't know what to do. I don't know where to shop because I have good relationships with these shop mongers and artisans, yeah.

Tobi: That's amazing. How many people are on your team?

Joy: We have really three to four depending upon what's going on. I get yelled at a lot and I yell at myself a lot because I really need to be better at delegating work. And every day I say I'm going to get better about it. But I have clients who like to talk to me. They don't like to talk to staff. They're used to having a direct relationship with me. They don't want to talk to a senior designer or a junior designer. They want to talk to me.

And unfortunately early in my career or rather early in my own business I didn't put the clamp on weekends off. And so clients know that I have a

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

habit if the phone rings I'm just going to pick it up. They don't understand nor have I really implemented the rule that Friday at 4 o'clock do not call me until Monday morning. But they are people who are used – when they want an answer they want an answer. So they really just kind of don't understand the sort of weekend approach.

And I feel like this, if they're working I'm working too. What's the big deal? What's the big deal if I pick up the phone? Of course what it does is I might be in the middle of a kayak ride and the phone rings. So then my ability to actually be in a tranquil environment has now heavily dissipated. So the sort of idea of woosah has now become damn, often. And it's like okay, let me get back to shore, I've got to take some notes before I forget or whatever. But I promise this year that I'm going to get better about that.

But I mean if I have a client who's sitting on a movie set and 3 o'clock in the morning they're in freaking, I don't know where, and they think about a sofa, yeah, whatever. And they send me a text I hear it go ping, ping, ping because that's what they're thinking about. So if I hear the ping, ping, ping and I know someone's on the set and they want an answer, or a studio, or whatever, I might table it for a few hours but I'm definitely going to respond to it within four to six hours because that's just the level of crazy that I am.

Tobi: Well, I was going to say the most important thing I hear there is that you're okay with it. I think where the suffering happens in our lives is when we're allowing something to happen but we're not okay with it. And it's like this resistance to it. And that's what actually, it's not the thing that burns us out or creates the suffering, it's our thoughts about it. And so what I'm hearing you say is, "Yeah, maybe I'll change it. Yeah, I think I might want to occasionally. But at the end of the day what's the big deal?" And so I think that's your attitude about it that makes it work for you it sounds like.

Joy: Well, I think the reason why it works for me is I have a sense of guilt about it. That's what it is. I have a sense of guilt.

Tobi: Guilt, shame and all of the wonderful negative emotions.

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

Joy: No. Yes, because I mean my clients they treat me so well. I travel so well it's ridiculous. I never have to want for anything. They go way out of their way above and beyond anything in my contract. And a friend of mine is like, "Your writer is worse than Leo DiCaprio's in terms of what you want." And I say, "I don't ask for these things. No, I don't have a lot of these details in my contract with respect to travel." But clients, they feel that I'm part of the family. They feel that they don't want me to experience something that they're not experiencing themselves.

And because it's beyond design, even on my cards it says 'Joy Moyler Interior Designer, Lifestyle Concierge'. So they feel that they cannot make me take a taxicab if they're in a chauffeur driven layback. Or I'm not going to take the train if they're flying in a helicopter, I'm going too.

Tobi: Yeah. So this is, is the guilt and shame goes both ways.

Joy: Yeah, it does.

Tobi: They feel just as guilty as you do, so it's a mutually effective relationship.

Joy: Guilty clients can be a really, really good thing especially when you're traveling, yeah. So I guess it works out, it balances out.

Tobi: Yeah, that's great. So tell us about this dreamy Italy project that you alluded to earlier to me that you're just really excited about. What's so exciting about the Italy project?

Joy: Oh my God, it's in Portofino, that's what's exciting about it, seaside villa, 19th century villa that's being renovated by some of the most delightful Italian craftsmen there are. And there are these little old Italian men who do plasterwork; some of it still has horsehair in it because that's just the way they work. You'll never see a piece of sheetrock anywhere. There are hand painting friezes on one of the new structures which is a new guesthouse on the property. The foliage it's just some of the most divine foliage I have ever seen.

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

And the lemon trees are different there, the orange trees, the fig trees, everything. It's just, I love Italian food anyway. And it's just the environment, seeing the seaside, those beautiful flotilla yachts just dotting the sea. And it's just beautiful.

Tobi: I agree. Italy is my favorite place that I've probably visited by itself, not counting the fact that you are also getting to work in this dreamy experience.

Joy: Yes. And the food is better. I don't even feel like I'm working when I'm there. It's always such wonderful food everywhere. I speak a bit of Italian, so it's so comical sometimes talking to the craftspeople. But I don't speak Russian either so I've learned very early in my life the power of a nod. But you have to just also respect hand gestures.

And one of the things I learned very early in my life when my parents would take us to different neighborhoods around New York, just to become accustomed to different cultures and mastering hand gestures, the ones to use and the ones not to use. Definitely know the ones you're not supposed to use first. But all of these sort of languages help to convey a story. And people understand sketches. And I can draw upside down and I'll draw on anything anywhere to help convey to a contractor a design intent.

Tobi: I love that so much.

Joy: And so that's really, really important, knowing how to draw is something that, yeah, I learned how to hand draw and do architectural drawings a 100 years ago. And that really is truly my super power when working on international projects and not speaking the language. Because a real architect, a real contractor, it's a universal language. So I can build a wall section, a foundation section, curtain wall section, roof section, any of that. And that really is what helps get a project built.

Tobi: Incredible. Well, as if you had time which you do to do other things, because there's a lot of other things that I've seen you doing. I've followed

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

you on social media and you've also shared with me that you're doing a couple of charity things, one was this week I'd love for you to talk about. And then we're going to talk about this other cool more cutting edge kind of digital platform that you're working on which is amazing. So you've talked about a lot of more old school and traditional ways of working. But I love that you are also doing progressive things.

And then I also – you didn't mention but I remember seeing the other day some gorgeous China or tableware that you're doing. So I don't know if you have other product lines too.

Joy: Yes I do.

Tobi: But you have many, many things happening. So of all those things start with either the charity stuff, the expert, the product lines, so what do you want to tell us about next, because there's so much to talk about?

Joy: Okay. So one thing that has come out of the pandemic is – I get bored really, really quickly. And I just thought, oh my God, the first couple of months into the pandemic my head was spinning. What do I do? So I saw someone had an IG Live. And I thought wow; I'll start doing IG Lives. I'll do them Monday to Thursdays, so it'll be four days a week and it'll be an hour long. And I was like, "Yes, I want to chat." And I did that and it was great fun. I had first week Alexa Hampton, I think Margaret Russell, a bunch of people in the design industry.

And then I said, "Okay, I'll do a second week." So I was having chefs, journalists, entertainers, all sorts of things. Then I said, "Okay, I'll do three weeks." Long story short I ended up going eight weeks to four times a week having to prepare questions, get guests on and all this. It became maddening, I absolutely loved it, absolutely loved it. I think I'm going to be a top show host in my next life. But it was just so much fun. And I'm always all or nothing. So I thought I'll just go big, how difficult can this be?

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

Anyway it's called High Tea with Joy. It's my IG Live. I absolutely love it. Work has gotten a little busier so it's been sporadic. But I'm going to do two next week, one with Pamela Jaccarino from Luxe Magazine and another with Tichina Arnold who is an actress, with a television show called The Neighbor. So I absolutely love that. And also I started doing my dinnerware collection from Joy Moyler Atelier. And I designed nine pieces. I produced 50 pieces each of everything and I just have four pieces left.

Tobi: It is exquisite. I mean I saw, I mean it's just – and I think the – I don't know if it comes in other colors. But what I saw was red and white.

Joy: Red.

Tobi: And which red is your signature color. When you wear red it is like your color.

Joy: I love red. It is my color indeed. And the designs are based upon architectural motifs and details on some of the historic, or rather landmark residential structures along Central Park West here in New York which are the Beresford, Majestic and Dakota.

Tobi: Interesting, yeah.

Joy: Yeah. So they are little motifs from each of those buildings which has influenced the design. And I've got more product coming in about three weeks. So I'm really looking forward to it. And I'm also working with a manufacturer in Italy in Venice whose doing samples for me for the linen line, for tabletop linens which is incredible, the samples are absolutely stunning. And I can't wait.

And also through the pandemic I was approached by Veranda Magazine to be a contributing design editor. And I have my own column in Veranda called The Joy of Design which I absolutely love doing. And I interview various makers and people in the design industry about their trajectories, and their influences, and basically why they do what they do. And I absolutely love that. And through my work with Veranda this past year I

[The Design You Podcast](#) with Tobi Fairley

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

was the design co-chair for Kips Bay Palm Beach which opened just last week. So it was a wonderful opportunity to work on that.

And I'm also the design co-chair for Housing Works Design on a Dime in May, May 20th the 22nd of this year. And I'm also doing a vignette there. And I'm just so excited by the incredible donations that I'm receiving from Ralph Lauren, Yves Braun, Bungalow 5, Arteriors, Serena & Lily, and so, so many, many more.

Tobi: I'm so glad you trained yourself not to sleep a long time ago.

Joy: Well, yeah, I mean, see, that was again another benefit of working at SOM and not sleeping, it just became my norm.

Tobi: Yeah, there it is.

Joy: There it is. That's just the way it is.

Tobi: Who cares what people say about sleep, it's working for you, right?

Joy: Yeah.

Tobi: And there's one other thing that you're doing that I know a lot of people are very curious about that are in the design industry which is this platform called The Expert that you're working with.

Joy: Yes, The Expert.

Tobi: So tell us about that. It's very new. I think it's popped up in the last what, six or eight weeks at the most?

Joy: No, it's about three months.

Tobi: Three months, okay.

Joy: Yeah, maybe it's longer than that. I jumped on very, very early in the game. I think when I got on there was probably 15 designers, now it's considerably more and there's a wait list for 600 designers.

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

Tobi: Wow. That want to be part of it. Amazing.

Joy: Yes. And it is absolutely phenomenal. It's an opportunity for the consumer to have either a 25 minute or 55 minute design consultation with one of the designers who are on The Expert. Also Martyn Bullard is on there, Michelle Nussbaumer, Robert Stilin, there are a bunch of different designers who work on different styles and that sort of thing. And yeah, you decide whether or not you want to do a 25 minute or a 55 minute consultation. It's a Zoom call.

You sort of prior to the call submit any drawings you might have or imagery. It might be a Pinterest board, it might be a furniture layout, it might be some sort of mood board, CAD drawings, whatever. And then you sign into your Zoom and you just have a lovely conversation and solve problems. And the consumers, they are just so pleased that they have someone who is just focusing right in on your problem in a concentrated amount of time. And they're saving money, they're getting top tier design advice, they're saving money because they're focusing on exactly the things that they need to do.

And we're also being very respectful of their budgets, so they sort of give us an idea of what the budget might be ahead of time. It's so much fun. I had one the other night and they just sent the loveliest note to say, "The only thing we were missing was a glass of wine." Because we had so much fun, it was an hour consultation, literally they said, "An hour's up already." And I literally thought it had been six minutes really. And we went through five major rooms through their home. And I mean Jake Arnold, the idea that they set this up, I don't know why this didn't happen before.

It is just amazing. And so many designers are doing so well financially with this.

Tobi: I was just about to ask you, so even though the client's saving money, it's not like a super, super low cost, I mean it's of huge value but it's not a super, super low cost because it has to be worth your time. And you also want to attract at least a certain caliber of clients so that you can really

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

do kind of your magic because you know people aren't invested in that level of finishing it. But tell us a little bit more about how that part works.

Joy: Okay. So the fee structure works like this. Depending on which interior designer you're working with, they might charge \$300 for 25 minutes. It might be \$500 for 25 minutes. It might be a 1,000 for 55 minutes or Steve Corney in Australia; I think he charges \$2,000 for 55 minutes. So you kind of set your own fee. But you have to be careful about where you price because you don't want to price yourself out that it's too expensive for people. So I just made sure I'm kind of in the middle there. And I'm doing really, really well with it. I just really love it.

You book your calendar in advance so people know when you're available. And you just get an email from the expert, "You've got a consultation." And they let you know the length of it. And I always like to check the email content early to make sure that they have sent some images so I can kind of get a head start because I don't want to not see what I'm getting into and then sit there and take extra time, wasting their time. Because I know they're being, it's like, "Oh my God, this is \$500 25 minutes."

I don't want to take time for me to sit there and start looking at pictures, eating up their valuable time. So I let them have something extra by jumping in ahead of time and doing my due diligence on their effort.

Tobi: I love this so much. And what I love about it is I've been teaching for a couple of years in the consulting I do with designers that even before the pandemic, of how they could create what I would call a scalable product, something more like this that's virtual or other things. And for so long before the pandemic people didn't want to believe that the work of interior design could be done this way virtually or long distance. And so now we have a different opinion of that because we were forced into it with the pandemic.

But I love knowing that coming from the very traditional and architectural design background and the way that you have really been at the heart of

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

how design has always worked in the past. I love that you think it works so well, this very progressive model that is outside of the realm of how we've typically done business as designers. So did you have reservations? Have you been surprised? And what could you say to people who even in their own businesses if they're trying to do virtual consults and things in the future, what makes this work when we didn't used to think it would?

Joy: Well, I have indeed been surprised because I've not been someone who's really supported sort of eDesign, I really, really haven't, I guess just because I'm old school and I believe in being in the room. And because I want to know what the profile is on the baseboard and the crown molding. And I don't want someone to just sort of teeter their iPad and say, "Look at it, there it is." I want to know exactly what the profile is and sketch it on trace and study it and make sure it's the right proportion in the room and all of this sort of thing.

But I think this sort of effort; this opportunity is something that's really helping people right now. I don't think that I would want a 100% of my business to be done this way because I really like being in the room and getting paint on my hands and sawdust and working with the contractors and that sort of thing. But every project isn't going to work this way. The clients who are really in the midst of a real construction project who needs some specific plumbing or electrical questions answered, it's not going to be done virtually.

But something that's decorative or a layout for a room, that sort of thing, it works perfectly in this platform.

Tobi: Yeah, I love that so much, so exciting. Well, we've covered a lot of ground. Gosh, my summation of this is I want to work for you. Can I come work for you Joy? It's so, so incredible.

Joy: It's so funny though because there are some days when I just think oh my God, I'm exhausted. I really just kind of want to be someone else's creative director and not have to deal with all the other stuff. I don't know.

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

There's got to be a firm out there who wants me to be a creative director and just kind of take care of all the creative stuff. And then they have a whole team of somebody else who deals with the financials and all that other sort of thing. That's a dream project. Yeah, so maybe I'll do that with my talk show host career in my next life.

Tobi: Well, it sounds like that you do love change because you've changed a lot over the years. So I think that's even beautiful, not that you're saying that you're exiting your firm. But I love that it's even just on the table that there may be a day where you're like I've kind of checked this item off the list. I've felt that need fulfilled and let's do something different. I love that about you.

Joy: I'm all about let's see what happens. I always believe in doing something till you decide you don't want to do it anymore. And I think change happens, but sometimes change is slow. I've unfortunately lost quite many loved ones in the last three years. And if nothing else it's taught me that you've got to keep it moving. And it's my same mentality about design. I don't want to do one style of design because I don't have to. I don't just want to do one job because I don't have to.

I've got 30 years in into my career of fashion, photography, illustration, painting, my New York accent comes out sometimes, all sorts of things. And so I don't know what's next. And this has truly been my year of saying yes. And I don't know what opportunities are going to come my way that I say, "Yes." Will I move to Europe? I don't know. Will I stay in New York? I've been here forever. It's my home but I've always traveled somewhere else. I don't know. I'm always open to opportunity. I'm not limiting myself to anything, be it a design style, a residence or anything.

Life is for the living. If anything, this year with so much death, the only infinite thing is life itself while we're in it.

Tobi: Yeah, so good. Well, anything else before we wrap up you want to share? I know you had mentioned earlier that you were so proud of some

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

of the things you were able to accomplish with the Kips Bay House. We didn't really talk about that. And you've also been very active on social media and a lot of conversations about diversity in our industry and even just social justice things. I know those are important to you aside from the traditional work that you do. Is there anything about any of that that you want to share that's really important?

Joy: Kips Bay has been going on for many, many years. But the Palm Beach show house, this was the fourth iteration of that. And it was so important when I came on as design co-chair, that there be more inclusion in the show house. And I am so beyond blessed that Veranda and Kips Bay wanted that too. And as a result we secured four, five color, design firms of color to come in and work their magic. And it just created such a wonderful balanced home. And I hope there's never a day where a person of color is not involved.

And it really just kind of changed the mood of Palm Beach and it felt great and everyone responded to it incredibly well. And it was just a wonderful thing to really have a hand in doing that. And I remember calling up some of those designers like Nicole White and Nina Magon and saying, "I would love to invite you to participate in Kips Bay this year." And they were just like, "What?" Screaming like, "What, Kips Bay, Palm Beach?" And I was like, "Yes, I'd like to invite you to participate." They said, "For what?" I said, "To design a room."

And it was just like pins dropped for a minute because you have to – really it took a moment to digest because it's just something that's never happened before. And to see that come to fruition and I really just kind of walked in the room and was almost tearful because I just hope that this is the beginning of many, many things. And I just think that change comes and change happens but change is often slow. But if people are open to it and they understand the beauty of change and the beauty that could come out of change everybody wins.

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

And this is something that I hope that our design field continues to realize because I mean Black design has always been here. Black designers have always been here. And throughout my career no one has ever walked up to me and has ever said in 30 years, “You’re a Black designer.” And I think I would have heard it in some of these firms that I’ve been at often.

I mean it’s just interesting to me, people will often say, “I’ve been the only Black person in the room.” And I say, “What year is this?” “Five, ten years ago.” And I just say, “Are you kidding me? 30 years ago I was the only Black one in the room.” If you were the only Black one in the room 10 years ago, that’s a real problem because I know what it was really like to go to some of these events in the industry of being the only Black person in the room.” I don’t think anybody said, “There’s a Black person in the room.”

Often I was aware of it of course, because I was the only one that looked like me in some of the showrooms and some of the responses that I would often receive from some of the young salespeople in some of our wonderful showrooms. Because their response towards me was a little different and pretty damned disrespectful sometimes too until I passed them a card and showed them what firm I was representing, then the whole mood changed.

So I got a whole lot of that but nothing ever really nasty, nasty, nasty. Just people jumping in front of me on a line or something like that when I had to put them in their place because I don’t play like that, I’m not the one for that stuff. But you just have to, you have to stand up for yourself or people will run all over you.

Tobi: Well, you’re such a beautiful leader for all of us in the design industry, every human. And I think it’s such an exciting time. And I’m so thrilled that you’re one of the people involved in this change and leading this change. But it’s just also a reminder how much we miss out on when we’re not open to all people’s gifts and talents. Because I mean my gosh, the things we’ve talked about today which are the dreamiest experiences.

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

And you are such a wealth of knowledge and information and to not have your voice heard, there's so many, many people that are missing out on that. And so I love to remind people, I think about it in my own life, even when I consciously make the decision even in my own community to expose myself to other people, or places, or things, or part of my city. I'm just so much more enriched, and fulfilled, and exposed to things and smarter. And so I just, I love that you are helping bring that to the world because I mean there's just so much.

Joy: Well, it's my pleasure because I've got so much to talk about it, it's absolutely ridiculous. I mean I'm beyond loquacious. There are few things that actually keep me quiet. So I just want to talk about it. I would love to do when we can some real kind of speaking engagements and talking to students and people in our industry about so much that can happen.

Tobi: Yeah. And you're just an example, such a shiny example of what's possible. I mean look at your life, it's just – I don't know, like I said I want to work for you. I feel sometimes I've done a lot and had amazing experiences, which I have and they pale in comparison to this incredible life that you just described to me. So I think that the inspiration there of what's possible for anybody if they're willing to take advantage of those opportunities, it's just so powerful.

Joy: Well, it may sound like I'm lucky and I have been lucky but I've worked my ass off.

Tobi: I can tell.

Joy: I have so worked my ass off.

Tobi: I would not have considered it luck at all. I mean we just heard how you got there. That's incredible. And I think you still run circles around most everybody, myself included. I feel like now I need to get to work.

Joy: Well, I like to say there's still a whole lot more in me to do. And I'm up for it. I'm up for the task. I'm writing a screenplay which I've been dancing

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

with for over a year trying to get that done. And just so many other things that I just want to do. And I just want to do it.

Tobi: So if people want to find you, and your product lines, and of course you've now told them they can find you on The Expert if they just want to get a little piece of working with you or whatever. Where are the best places for them to enter the world of Joy? I guess they can find you in Veranda Magazine, there's just so many places. Where do you think are the best places?

Joy: Yes. I'm in Veranda Magazine and my column, The Joy of Design. I want to ramp up my High Teas with Joy again which are on Instagram. But they're archived, so you can always go to my IGTV there and have a look at those things. And I want to continue doing philanthropy as well because I just want to be a blessing to people. And I think if my experience and connections have an opportunity to raise someone else's life, I really want to be a part of that. This isn't the time in life to be selfish. This is the time when people really need attention and support.

And I want to just be able to continue doing that. So I told James Huniford from Housing Works that I couldn't possibly do Design on a Dime this year. But you can't say no to Jim. And I've been supporting Housing Work for years. I had friends during the Aids epidemic when even Skidmore, Owens & Merrill [inaudible] where one day a colleague would be there, a friend colleague would be there and the next day, next week they were coming to collect someone's possessions from their desk because people were just dying like crazy.

So I remember those days, I remember that darkness. I know what that dread felt like and how much we just cried at the office constantly. So I want to be able to continue supporting Housing Works for my friends, for Steve and for Bruce and for just so many other people that we lost during that time and if good design can change a life that's what I want to be able to do.

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

Tobi: I know it absolutely can. Well, thank you so much for sharing all of this. It was such a pleasure, a joy for me. And if people can't find you in the world they're not looking very hard because it is not hard to find you. You are everywhere and I love that.

Joy: Thank you. Thank you so much Tobi.

Tobi: You're so welcome. Thank you for being so open and it just – I look forward to talking with you more and getting to know you more. And I just – I already was in awe of you but now I'm just – I don't know, I'm just completely speechless. I'm like I've got to go learn some – I've got to dig into some more of this amazing-ness of this unbelievable woman. So thank you for bringing this to us.

Joy: I am just trying to still make my parents proud, that's all. They're no longer here but every day I just want to make them proud.

Tobi: So good. Well, thank you, I'm super grateful and I just enjoyed it so much.

Joy: Thank you Tobi.

I mean seriously is she not such a joy? Her name is perfect. I loved that. That was so much fun. And now I'm feeling like I need to kick things in gear a little bit. I'm feeling like I'm slacking over here because Joy was just running circles around me with her accomplishments. And she's not slowing down any time soon. If you want to check her out and find her please head over and see her on Instagram.

As she said, she'll be having those High Teas with Joy on Instagram Live again soon. And she's got a whole slew of them you can watch already that are in her IGTV highlight or that part of the app. And you can also go check her out on her website, just Google Joy Moyler, my gosh, you'll find way more than you ever imagined about all the things we talked about and

Ep #161: Running a Thriving Interior Design Business with Joy Moyler

seriously do not miss her tableware. I bet she's got it – probably the easiest place to see it is in her Instagram feed. But it is remarkable.

I'm on the edge of my seat waiting to see these table linens that she's talking about that she's creating. But check out Joy, the world of Joy, there's a lot to see. And I will see you back here next week with another great episode of the *Design You* podcast. Bye for now.

Thank you so much for listening to the *Design You* podcast, and if you are ready to dig deep and do the important work we talk about here on the podcast of transforming your mindset and creating a scalable online business model, there has never been a more important time than right now. So join me and the incredible creative entrepreneurs in my *Design You* coaching program today. You can get all the details at TobiFairley.com.