



## Rae Duncan Designs The Path For Her Business By Staying True To Her Passions

*ESTATENVY sits down for Q&A with Chicago interior designer and business owner*

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Rae Duncan had always had an eye for design. When she graduated from school she knew she had the passion, grit and skill to start a business for herself. She founded her firm Rae Duncan Interior Design back in 2010 and never looked back. Duncan's style is unique and she pulls her inspirations from science, the biology of people and the organic nature of things. She was also recently featured as a trailblazer in Chicago Woman and a "force in interior design" by Chicago Business Journal. She recently spoke with ESTATENVY about her success and background in the industry.

How did you get started in interior design?

I started in real estate development. I was developing properties and I wanted to take it to the

next level. I received my graduate degree in interior design from Harrington College of Design and started my firm shortly thereafter.

How do you stay motivated?

I'm often motivated by anxiety and pressure. Pressure from clients, pressure to create the next big thing. I love what I do and that is the best motivator of all.

Do you have any advice for up and comers in interior design?

Figure out what about design motivates you and gets you going. For me, it's biology. It's the way people live, work, and play. How we do what we do and how we make spaces to enhance our lives better drives me. But for you, it may be something entirely different. I would say, figure it out.

Is there a specific designer or company that you look to for inspiration?

There are so many wonderful designers. In Chicago alone, there are many people I admire. One of my biggest and best mentors has been Tom Marquardt. He is brilliant and his work is stunning. I love working with him.

How do you spread the word about your business?

A lot of it is a good PR person, a lot of it is through Google, [online] reviews and consistently doing good work. Being the person people want to hire again and again.

When did you first opened your company and how do you make yourself stand out in a saturated market?

That is interesting. I think you have to have a good solid brand. Something that says who you are, something not wishy washy, but firm. This is who we are. This is what we do. Everyone will come up with a different reason for doing design and a different aesthetic- I think the best think you can do for yourself is find that thing- press on- and don't look back.

What is the biggest challenge your industry is currently facing?

I think our biggest challenge is time and money. Good design takes a lot of both.

What's exciting about the future of interior design?

I had a mentor and teacher in college, Daniela Ghertovici. She taught me about Parametricism, which I really took to. As technology allows us to create more and more natural and organic shapes, the landscape of design is changing. I am incredibly excited by new organic forms and objects that delight us and surprise us.

What are some trends are you seeing in interior design or 2019?

Wall coverings are back and it's [a huge trend]. Gold, rose gold, bronze- let's play with metal. Using light in fantastic and different ways. Getting bold with color. Being courageous and dangerous with it. Bold patterns. Mixed materials.

Where can people find you? (i.e. website and social media)

My website is [www.raeduncanid.com](http://www.raeduncanid.com). My Instagram is @RaeDuncan. You can find us at 2544 N Clark- come on in! And call us at 312-796-1228.