

CREATING COMMUNITIES THROUGH DESIGN

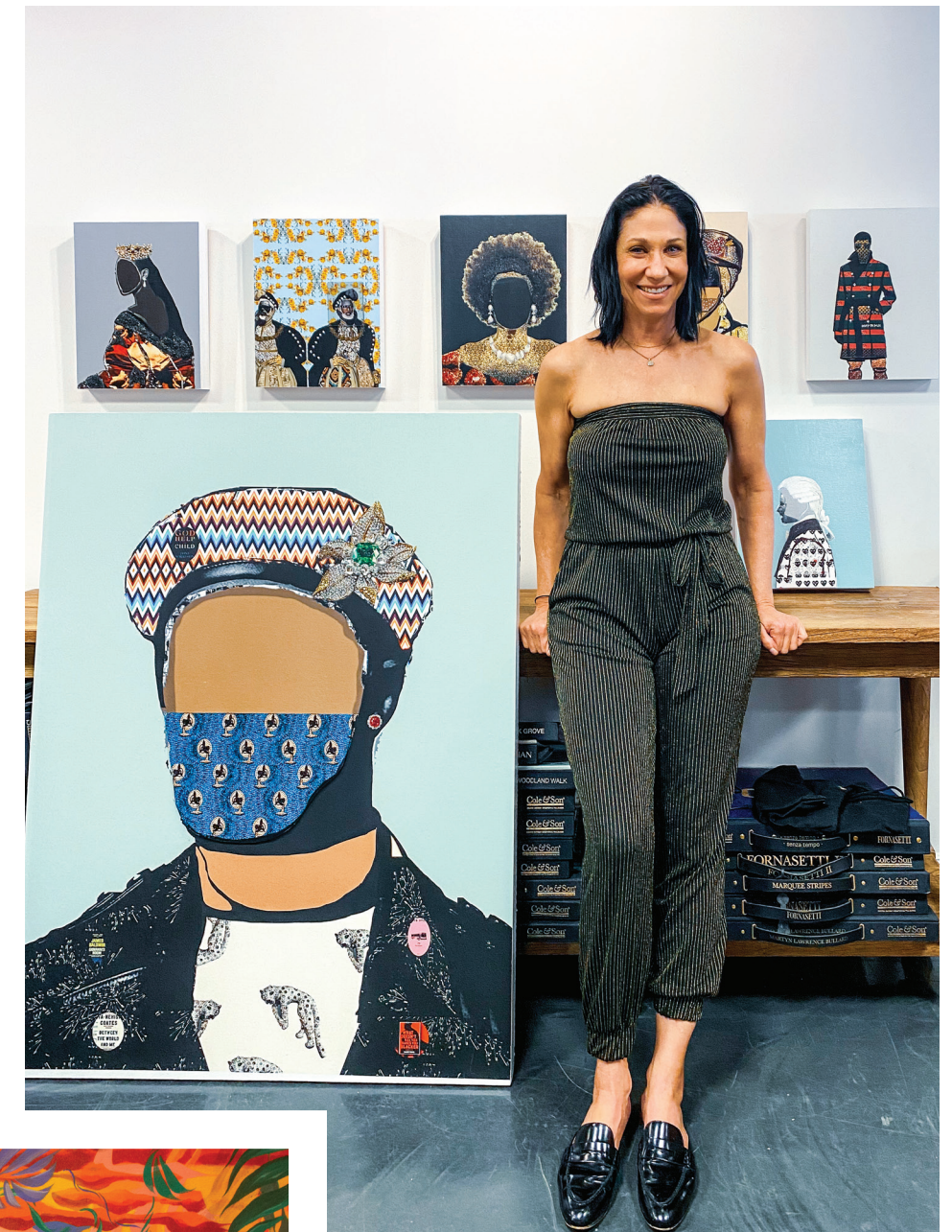
BY JILLIAN BUCKLEY

A glance at Amy Manor's interior design portfolio shows she is not afraid to be bold; Manor will use neon color palettes in one room, while mixing different patterns in an adjacent room. However, Manor has been outstanding even before she developed her current business, the Red Bank Design Center. Red Bank Design Center (RBDC) is the manifestation of Amy's vision of how the design industry can evolve with the times, and thrive in years to come.

The Red Bank Design Center is a hub for designers of all skill sets and talents. Amy especially enjoys mentoring students and shares the importance of empathy and intuition when it comes to designing a client's home. With a diverse background in fashion, cosmetics, and business management, Manor's self-taught interior design skills birthed an innate talent for using colors and filling a space to create a fresh and stylish environment. Amy utilizes her talents, but also ensures that Red Bank Design Center is "a collaborative community putting a spotlight on people's strengths, and filling the gaps and the blind spots with support from others so that we can all be successful".

In 2020, Amy created and trademarked the position of the General Designer (GD) to further integrate interior design into the architecture and construction process. General Designers streamline the design process for any job and work as an advocate for the client's design preferences from start to finish. As a result, clients can work with designers who are vetted and experienced professionals, ensuring the credibility and quality of every project.

Amy's journey in creating the Red Bank Design Center was not a straightforward one. It involved risks and embracing the unknown in order to create an interior de-



sign firm that could be a cornerstone in the Red Bank community. Amy first opened Amy Manor Interiors in 2011, on West Front Street. This was when U.S. manufacturers were still reeling from the stock market crash in 2008. New York City showrooms used to be the prime spot for designers; Amy recalls that the bustle of the city streets provided plentiful opportunities for future customers, as "designers would go to these showrooms and bring their clients, and it would be how we would take care of business". However, the travel to the city was inefficient and expensive. Eventually, the showrooms were not able to afford their high rents as businesses began closing down.



Amy wanted to replicate the formerly personal New York City experience in Red Bank. She realized that “clients didn’t want to go into the city but they wanted uniqueness in design, they wanted accessibility”. The sensory details of design are especially impactful at RBDC; customers are invited to “come in, and sit, touch, and feel in a shop concept”, and leave with a better understanding of their taste in interior design. Amy’s persistence and courage in creating an authentic, New York City-style atmosphere set the foundation for her innovations in Red Bank Design Center.

Reflecting back on the growth of her business, Amy says “I’m very proud, because six years ago, there was nothing on this end of the street. We’re really a destination- we are an anchor of the town”. She then uttered a phrase that she considered to be a cliché, but sounded more like a creative philosophy: “It’s ‘we’, not ‘me’”, stating that while she learns from her clients, she also learns from other designers. She also recognizes the importance of the community in helping her business grow and flourish; making Red Bank Design Center a business where people can drop in with their spouses, families, or friends. The center’s showroom and library is constantly changing and updating with the latest beautiful and contemporary products. Always a delight to visit the showroom.

“I really wanted to give back to the community,” Amy said. “And with Red Bank Design Center, we have created a design community that we all benefit from.”

