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Chandler designers
partner to launch Jewels—
an award-winning, mix-
and-match window rod
and finial line with
sparkle and ooh-la-la

By Noelle Coyle

Jewels

What does an award-winning designer do when she can't find what she needs for a project? Innovate. While helping clients design their homes, Debra May Himes, ASID, IIDA, NCIDQ, of Debra May Himes Interiors in Chandler, realized the choices of window rods and finials were few and far between. Inhibited by the lack of creative options, she partnered with Jay Helser, owner of Helser Brothers in Chandler, to design and produce custom drapery hardware.

Himes had been a client of Helser Brothers for many years before they were encouraged to partner on the project by a mutual friend. After two years in the making, Jewels has already won an ADEX Platinum Award and was released to the public at the International Window Coverings Expo in Washington D.C. in April.



*Debra May Himes and Jay Helser,
creators of Jewels.*





"Designs start getting knocked off and then you just see the same look from everybody," Himes says. "I wanted something with a little more fun to it, more whimsy, and up-to-date."

Himes has been in the residential and commercial design field for more than 30 years. In addition to the newly released Jewels line (named for its jewel-toned color scheme), she has two custom furniture lines. Helser has owned Helser Brothers for more than 10 years with his brother Mark. The duo has transformed the company into a custom iron and distribution center, and they hope to become a "one-stop shop for designers looking for drapery hardware," Helser says.

Once Himes and Helser discussed the project, it became a "no-brainer" that they should work together. Himes got to work designing the concept, integrating aspects that had not been used previously.

"I like to think out of the box," she says, "rather than what everybody else is doing. I knew I didn't want to do just glass or just metals—I wanted something more interesting."

Helser says they collaborated and amended Himes' initial design, stressing Jewels wouldn't be possible without Himes' design.

"Creatively, it was all Debra," he says. "She opened up a whole new world of options by breaking the finial into interchangeable components," allowing customers to mix and match colors, shapes and patterns.

To help clients design their own finials, a Web site has been set up with hundreds of options and can be accessed from either company's Web site. Clients can select the size and color of their rod and then choose from a large selection of crystals and metals in many shapes and colors.

The metals have different designs etched into them, allowing clients to create any style they want, whether it's contemporary, traditional or Old World. If a room's theme is changed after placing the rod and finial, the crystals and metals can easily be changed to match the new room.

"The beauty of the line is it can go all ways," Himes says.

Helser agrees, adding, "Everything is an individual component and that's the groundbreaking concept...there is no other line that can do that. We can completely change or increase their options by adding ten parts.

"Designers are going to have fun with it," Helser says. "Any kind of addition you can make to any industry to make someone's job more fun, they're all over it. Designers are in the business because they are creative and they need that ability to be creative with the product."

Himes agrees and adds that the consumers will be excited about Jewels, too.

"I've been doing this for 30 years, and there has always been a segment [of consumers] who like custom," she says. "Today, consumers are more educated, know design better and want to have an individual look."

The union of Helser Brothers' iron work and Debra May Himes' creative product design results in glamorous glass finials that sparkle with color and can complement many interior styles.

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