

Hill brings Hollywood flare to job as design director

When you talk to Michael Hill about his life, one thing is clear: He's passionate about it.

He loves design, loves his Mom, loves art, loves wine, loves to travel, loves movies, loves animals, loves politics, loves to ride horses, loves to eat at fine restaurants, and loves to help other people.

And, he absolutely loves his job as Executive Vice President and Director of Design for CMI.

"As much as I like to kid around, I'm really the luckiest guy in the world," said Hill, reflecting on his 15 years with CMI. "I can't imagine working anywhere else. Jorge (Canamero) and Michael (Novick) are so good to me. They believe in me and they let me do my job the way I want to do it. It's really remarkable."

Hill came to CMI Enterprises in 1989 from Milliken & Co., one of the largest privately held textile manufacturers in the world. Although he was a top salesman at Milliken, Hill was looking for something more.

"I love design - everything about it, from the raw materials to the finished product," said Hill. "My job at CMI lets me do it all. I go out and find exciting new products and help our customers design interiors that make them more successful and profitable. From a designer's point of view, it's

really the best of all possible worlds."

And, just as Hill loves working with CMI's customers, they love Hill.

"Michael Hill has never met a stranger," said CMI President Jorge Canamero. "Whether it's the hotel bellman, a clerk in a store or the CEO of a company, by the time Michael leaves a place, everyone knows him and he knows everyone by their first name. It is a gift I truly admire and covet. He is a consummate sales professional."

Since Hill came on board, CMI has become recognized as a top supplier of soft-trim textiles to the recreational vehicle and marine industries.

But as fascinating as Hill's career might seem, his personal life is perhaps even more intriguing. Hill, 45, lives in a star-studded neighborhood in Palm Springs, Calif., in the former estate of Academy Award-winning composer and singer Johnny Mercer. His next-door neighbors on either side are actress and friend Suzanne Somers and pop singer Barry Manilow.

A native of South Carolina, Hill moved to California after college.

"Being a smalltown Southern boy, I just fell in love with the whole Hollywood glitz and glamour thing,"

said Hill. "I just love movies and the entertainment industry, so I really found my niche out here."

Although Hill spends a lot of time on the road for CMI, he still lists travel near the top of his many passions. In addition to every state, Hill has been to Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

An eccentric and often outspoken character, Hill is an avid collector of art who owns about 150 paintings. He also collects wines and Santos, religious statuary from Russia.

A former Student Body president in college and member of Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities, Hill stays active in Democratic politics and lists former President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Clinton among the public figures he greatly admires.

For all his self-indulgent pastimes, however, Hill talks most passionately about helping other people. He is involved in a number of Hollywood charities, including the Dream Foundation, which grants wishes to terminally ill adults.

"We had a guy whose dying wish was to come to Palm Springs, see some movie stars, eat at a fine restaurant and stay at a five-star hotel," said Hill. "It's amazing. The things we take for granted out here were the things this guy had dreamt about his whole life. I was so happy to be part of making his dreams come true."

"CMI has been working very hard to bring a unique, competitive and affordable new look to the RV industry," said Hill. "With the introduction of these new fabric lines, I believe we have finally achieved that goal."

For Michael Hill, whether it's designing an RV interior or granting a dying man's wish, it's all about one thing: love.

New RV lines making debut at Showtime

CMI Enterprises introduced two new exciting product lines for Recreational Vehicle manufacturers during the Showtime show July 12-15 in High Point, N.C.

"These lines unite affordable pricing and uncompromising design to bring our customers the utmost in value," said Michael Hill, Executive Vice President and Director of Design.

The new products include a wonderful novelty line by Walfab, which has been providing unique and innovative novelty looks for the home furnishing industry for many years. CMI is pleased to be introducing the Walfab family of products to RV and marine manufacturers.

The next exciting new line comes from Doral Fabrics, which provides about 20 books of luxurious silks in both patterns and plains.

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Weaving a new web

CMI Internet site gets state-of-the-art facelift

CMI Enterprises has launched a new state-of-the-art web site, www.cmi-enterprises.com, which enables customers to browse all of CMI's product lines and services online.

"The new site gives CMI a visually pleasing, easy-to-navigate web presence that will allow customers to see the full range of products and services we offer," said CMI President Jorge Canamero. "This is yet another way we're fulfilling our mission to provide service and value to our customers."

Customers can cross-navigate the site either by market or product type, depending on their needs. For instance, a bus manufacturer can go directly to the bus and truck section to see what vinyls are available for seating, while a customer wanting to buy a single roll of vinyl can simply browse the vinyl area.

The site's home page features a cutting-edge Flash presentation that shows applications of CMI's soft-trim products in the markets it serves. Each of the market pages are color-coded to correspond to a color square within CMI's new logo, providing a site-wide consistency in design. Each product page features a color-coded key, indicating which markets are served by each product line. The Services page provides a detailed description of CMI's many value-added services.

In addition to products and services, www.cmi-enterprises.com features an in-depth history of CMI from its inception in 1968. The News section features the latest company news, upcoming events and an online copy of the most recent edition of "The Insider" newsletter. A contact form allows customers to submit questions or request product samples.

The redesign was handled by Roar! Communications, which also produces "The Insider."

HD Expo marks contract 'coming out'

CMI Enterprises has officially introduced itself to the hospitality and contract furniture markets, unveiling its new corporate identity, new product lines and advertising campaign at the Hospitality Design Expo April 29-May 1 in Las Vegas.

"The HD Expo was really the coming-out party for our entry into the contract market," said CMI Enterprises CEO Michael Novick.

"With our new branding and product lines geared to the needs of contract furniture manufacturers, CMI has entered the field as a serious player."

Continuing its drive to become a major supplier to the hospitality and contract markets, CMI will be showing at the Hospitality Design Boutique Oct. 6-8 in South Beach, Fla.



CMI draped its products at the recent HD Expo to intrigue prospective customers. The chair at center was supplied by Bernhardt Furniture and is upholstered in CMI's OptimaLeather.

At the Las Vegas show, CMI tantalized contract manufacturers by hanging drapery-like its marquis faux leather, faux suede and vinyl lines - Optima-

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NEW PRODUCT:
Miracle Headliner

Recreational vehicle manufacturers can now get vinyl headliner from CMI Enterprises to match its highly successful OptimaLeather and matching "O" Vinyl product lines.

The new line, Miracle Headliner, is a foam-backed vinyl headliner with a special embossing that brings yet another decorative dimension to RV interiors. It is now available in four neutral colors designed to coordinate with CMI's OptimaLeather and "O" Vinyl lines.

With Miracle Headliner and the rest of CMI's product lines, RV manufacturers can now create stunning, color-coordinated interiors floor to ceiling. In addition to its unique look and feel, Miracle Headliner also hides smudges and imperfections, and is more durable and cleanable than acrylic and nylon headliners, which is important above RV kitchen areas. "Miracle Headliner provides aesthetic qualities and per-

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CMI Solutions provides OEM one-stop shop

When a customer wanted headliner with peel-and-stick adhesive on the back, Jorge Giraldo nearly burned his house down trying to figure out how to do it.

But Giraldo, Vice President of Operations at CMI Enterprises' Elkhart, Ind., plant, was undaunted. A few months and a lot of experimenting later, Giraldo had come up with a process.

"After about 150 yards, we got it to work," said Giraldo. "Now we do a million and a half yards a year."

Since those early days, CMI Solutions, the value-added services division of CMI Enterprises, has helped numerous customers save time and money by devising OEM fabrication solutions, including door inserts for a number of General Motors vehicles.

By providing ready-to-use parts for transportation interiors and contract furniture, CMI Solutions enables manufacturers to eliminate labor, material and shipping costs. Instead of going to one vendor for the materials, another for adhesive application and another for laminating and cutting, manufacturers can simply go to CMI.

In addition to applying adhesives to vinyls, headliner and other materials, CMI can laminate plywoods, plastics and other substrates, then die-cut the pieces to customer specifications.

"We have the ability to save customers at least two steps and, in the process, save them a lot of money on labor, materials and freight," said Giraldo. "CMI really is a one-stop shop."



Sandra Schrock, Director of Sales for CMI's Bus and Truck Division, chats with racing legend Richard Petty recently at the United Motor Coach Association show in Atlanta. Daimler Chrysler built a custom passenger coach, right, for Petty that features seating fabrics supplied by CMI, above left.

Outfitted for a legend

Seasoned pro hired for truck segments

CMI Enterprises has lured away a veteran sales pro from one of its chief competitors to bolster its business in the over-the-road and heavy truck segments.

Brad Nord, a former sales representative with Morbern of Ontario, Canada, will focus on marketing CMI's value-added services to truck manufacturers.

Actually, Nord is no stranger to CMI. He spent 14 years with the company before moving over to Morbern about five years ago. Now, he's back in the fold.

Nord said he plans to focus on CMI Solutions, the company's suite of value-added

services, including flame lamination, die cutting, Gerber cutting and other custom fabrication services.

"CMI not only supplies the materials; we can manufacture the part to customer specifications and deliver it ready for assembly," said Nord. "We're the only company I'm aware of that can do all that. We think it's a very attractive package."



Brad Nord

First half of 2004 saw big strides in branding, market expansion, new product lines

As we reach the midpoint of 2004, it's incredible to look back at all the changes that we've made this year and all that CMI has accomplished - a new logo, a fabulous new interactive web site that enables our customers to view actual product samples online, as well as a steady stream of new products that target every market that CMI serves.

In addition, CMI Solutions, our suite of value-added services, continues to expand to meet customers' needs. Our team of experts can perform cost-saving magic

when it comes to design, fabrication or manufacturing applications. CMI can laminate, perforate, cut and form our products to your custom specifications.

We can help provide in-house or multiple-supplier solutions, as well as solve logistical issues that are costing you time and money. As the owners of CMI, it is our commitment to continually be on the lookout, not only for new and unique fabrics and materials, but also cutting-edge processes and value-added services.

Two other exciting developments were

CMI's "coming out party" at HD Expo for the contract industry, and the welcome our products have received in the Marine OEM marketplace. Both markets are enthusiastically embracing CMI's offerings.

As we continue to expand, it becomes clear that what CMI does best is offer new and unique ways of solving both design and manufacturing issues. Enabling customers to eliminate several steps by delivering pre-cut and laminated ceiling panels directly to the production line is just one example.

The ability to provide foam-backed leather, either in full hides or cut to customer specifications, together with matching vinyl, is another.

Providing ideas and solutions, and responding to our customers' needs, continue to be CMI's forte.

We will continue to search out areas where CMI can provide new and unique products and solutions. Let us know how we can help you, and please continue to tell us how we can do a better job serving you, our customer.

Two years after maiden voyage, Synergy program sailing along

Nearly two years after it began, CMI's partnership with Syntec Industries to market products to the marine industry is sailing along. "The relationship is working great," said Cindy Steele, head of Syntec's Design Team. "The first year was a lot of learning but this year, we picked up a lot of business."

The joint venture, dubbed "Synergy," couples CMI's expertise in leathers, vinyls, fabrics and laminated trim products with Syntec's lines of marine

carpeting.

Synergy customers now include Regal Marine of Orlando, Fla.; Fineline of Merced, Calif.; Skeeter of Kilgore, Texas; Four Winns of Cadillac, Mich.; Larson Boats of Little Falls, Minn.; Bentley Pontoons of Columbia, S.C., and some other smaller manufacturers.

"We're very pleased with how it's turning out," said Steele. "It's really starting to kick in, and we're not done for the



year yet. We've still got some other irons in the fire."

In other Marine Division news, CMI and Syntec are setting up a joint marketing venture with furniture maker Flexsteel to promote each others' product lines to the marine industry.

While Flexsteel has traditionally focused on home furniture, it has branched into the recreational vehicle industry and is now making significant headway into the marine market with its innovative furniture designs.

New Illusion colors geared to imports

CMI had added nine new colors to its marquis Illusion line of faux leathers to meet a growing demand in the late-model import segment of the automotive aftermarket industry.

CMI recently added the neutrals, grays and tans to match the interiors of Hondas, Acuras, Lexuses, Toyotas and other late-model import cars.

"At CMI, we are constantly looking to fill needs in various market segments," said Frank Valdes, manager of CMI's Automotive Aftermarket Division. "With the unprecedented popularity of import sedans in recent years, we saw a big need for aftermarket materials that would match the original color schemes of those vehicles."

Valdes said the new colors of Illusion also will be sold into the other markets CMI serves - recreational vehicle, bus and truck, contract, marine and van conversion. All but one of the new Illusion patterns feature a G grain. The other pattern, Goldstone, features a haircell grain.



Dynamic meets durability

CMI Enterprises recently launched a new print advertising campaign, left, aimed at marketing its OptimaLeather, Illusion, Reflections and Dinamica Suede lines to the contract furniture industry. The campaign, which began in April, is aimed at raising CMI's brand awareness in the hospitality and contract furniture markets. The ads will run in Hospitality Design magazine, the top publication for the contract industry; Fabrics & Furnishings magazine; and U.S. Industry Today through the end of the year.

HD EXPO

Leather, Reflections, Dinamica and Illusion. At first, show-goers assumed they were leathers but were pleasantly surprised to learn otherwise. "People would stop by the booth,

see our materials hanging there and say something like, 'Well, I'm really not looking for leather,'" Novick said. "They became very intrigued when I replied, 'Actually, it's not.'"

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 12-15 - Showtime High Point, N.C.

Oct. 6-8 - Hospitality Design Boutique South Beach, Fla.

Oct. 27-29 - IFAI Exposition Pittsburgh, Pa.

Nov. 30-Dec. 2 - RVIA Louisville, Ky.

MIRACLE

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formance characteristics that manufacturers typically wouldn't get with acrylic and nylon headliners," said Jeff Post, CMI's Director of Marketing. "It has a fine texture, a soft touch and moiré-type look without being too busy or distracting. Plus, it's durable and washable with most household cleaning products."

Apart from aesthetic and performance considerations, Miracle Headliner further cements CMI's position in the industry as a single-source soft-trim and textile supplier for RV manufacturers.

"With our ever-expanding line of products, CMI is hoping to provide one-stop shopping for RV manufacturers looking to put together elegant and functional interiors," said Post.

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