



Floor of the Year (Master Division)

WATERFRONT JEWEL

BIRGER JUELL LTD.

Chicago, Ill.

The word “retirement” doesn’t seem to be a part of Birger Juell’s vocabulary. Although the 84-year-old is well past the age where most people say goodbye to the working world, Juell’s passion for growing his business is ever increasing. He’s looking to move his operations to a larger location (“I’m trying to rent or buy some new space,”

he says)—and ceaselessly works to increase his company’s profile (“Have you seen my new ad in Architectural Digest? I got 20 calls in four days.”).

It came as no surprise when the industry legend walked away from the Palm Springs Convention with one of the most prestigious awards—Floor of the Year in the Master

Division, reserved for those who have won an award before. Juell is thrilled with the award, and even moreso with the fact that the winning floor represents the epitome of his work—clean, good design.

“That is basically what I do,” Juell says. “I don’t do all this laser cutting and crazy things like that. I do ‘simple classic’—that’s what I call it. It’s just a way of making the whole room come together. You don’t want to see just wood floors. If your floor sticks out, it’s not a good job,” he explains.

Juell’s success in achieving that principle is what has earned him notoriety in high-end design circles, and it’s what keeps designers coming to him for jobs such as this one in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The designer, Sam Rosenberg, had worked with Juell on a job in the same area and sought out Juell for this one, as well.

For many contractors, it’s a job they could only dream about. For Juell, it’s a typical project. The waterfront home is approximately 22,000 square feet, most of which features wood flooring. The price tag for the wood floors came in at just under a half million dollars.

The portion of the job that won the award is a foyer measuring 800 square feet. Herringbone sections are individually framed between the foyer columns. Walnut, maple and mahogany were hand-scraped, hand-beveled, oiled and waxed in signature Juell style. All of the flooring was manufactured by Juell. The entire job, which features different custom patterns throughout the home, took about nine months to complete.

In large part, Juell credits his employees for his continued success. “I have good people, and that’s what it takes,” he says. That’s true, but the driving passion behind the company undoubtedly remains Juell himself. —*K.M.W.*



Designers: Sam Rosenberg, Birger Juell ♦ *Flooring:* Birger Juell Ltd. ♦ *Finish:* Dura Seal ♦ *Nailers:* Stanley-Bostitch, **Pownail Co.**
♦ *Adhesive:* Franklin International ♦ *Buffer:* **Clarke (Alto)** ♦ *Saws:* Makita ♦ *Handscrapers:* Red Devil

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