

Former Markham resident living a 'Danger-ous' life

By BRENT LONDON
 Gary Danger, a former resident of Markham, has captured the attention of Toronto's Queen Street West artistic community with his Inclusionist mode of interior design.

Gary admits that Danger is not his true surname, but a pseudonym coined by his poet-friend Sitara.

"I have a rather careless self-destructive nature and I felt the change of name was quite fitting," he said.

On a trip to New York City in 1982 Gary met Dan Friedman, the founding father of Inclusionism. At the time Gary had only a mild interest in interior design. He was deeply involved in a moderately successful painting career.

He had also written and independently published a small volume of poetry which received rave reviews in a number of Toronto's underground publications. His book never reached the common market as it was ruled obscene.

"I was intrigued by what Dan Friedman was doing. It was so different from anything happening in Toronto."

Art Deco, Pop, Mid-Century Modern and Memphis influences came together to form the whimsical blend of the Inclusionist style.

"It's sort of a melange of everything. I often describe it as Jetsonesque Moderne with a touch of Bedrock. It's pure fun! It's a diehard conservative's nightmare."

One of Gary's clients was a Batman fanatic. Large comic strips in the Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol Pop style were painted on the walls.

The living room became the Batcave, complete with Batpoles, Batcomputer and of course, the Batphone. Fiberglass rock furniture was incorporated to create a cave-like atmosphere. Dim lighting was used to enhance the effect.

"It's my favorite," Gary says. Inclusionism is a very personal design technique. A completed project will reflect the idiosyncracies of each individual client.

"One reason I feel this is a successful mode of design is that the decor is so familiar. The client sees pieces of himself/herself within the room and feels very comfortable with that."

Gary works out of his Queen Street West flat. The majority of his clientele are members of the

Queen Street arts scene. Gary will often exchange his services for a piece of art in lieu of cash. He has also received numerous enquiries from Rosedale and Forest Hill residents.

When asked if he'd received any business from his former hometown he replied, "No, not yet. I don't think Markham is quite ready for me!"



GARY DANGER
 Inclusionist designer

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