

& MORE



Meeting of the Minds

*Eight top designers come together to create
the best seat in the house — the Catbird*



MILIEU-MAG.COM

& MORE



"I have longed to discover this piece. Many came close, but this tallish sofa suits many different room types and sizes. Attractive from varied angles, it boasts a practical tight back and a comfortable seat depth." — Jane Schwab

THE NELSON

Cindy Smith is a creative dreamer. But unlike many visionaries, she brings her dreams to life. Last May, while sitting with her business partner, Jane Schwab (the two own Charlotte and Birmingham-based Circa Interiors), she decided there was a great void in the home furnishings marketplace. "What was missing were pieces with more creativity in their forms, more details, something that brings rooms together to give them a spirit," she says. "You can dream all kinds of things, but dreams need to be worthwhile and attainable."

Before she could plump the cushions on her sofa, Smith had forged a consortium of eight top furniture designers — including herself, Schwab, Paul Bates, Emily Bourgeois, Jeremy Corkern, Susan Ferrier, Bobby McAlpine, and Ken Pursley. In a series of informal discussions among themselves, the designers devised a unique group of sofas and armchairs for homes. "We all vetted ourselves," says Smith. "Of course,

these are friends and colleagues of mine, but even deeper than that, I reached out to them because we're of the same tribe. We share underlying similarities. We may not have the same exact taste, but we have the same passion for and love of beauty in the home." In describing the group dynamic, Smith adds, "All of us have a quiet confidence. None of us have big egos. There was an immediate bond."

As for the name they chose, Smith explains that Catbird is a term with deep roots, referring originally, she says, to the best seat at a baseball game, at third base. "It's a term with a real tradition behind it. It's also a catchy word and an updated reference to what we are doing now."

Catbird designs debuted in Houston's Chateau Domingue March 5 — and anyone who owns one has the best seat in the house.

WRITTEN BY DAVID MASELLO

THE WHITLOW

"I affectionately call this sofa 'my nest with feathers.' A slim, tight outline filled with loose fitting, unstructured luxury — it always looks a little bit well loved and is perfectly imperfect." — Cindy Smith



& MORE



THE KATHRYN

"With the strong elegant posture of a thoroughbred, the Kathryn is free to indulge in all things feminine. She adds romance to a dining room but is equally comfortable in the kitchen to commune with family and friends." — *Emily Bourgeois*



THE GRACE

"The Grace chair was conceived to represent what its name implies, a graceful expression of seating. The elegant lines and gracious proportions allow for comfortable lounging that will blend seamlessly with the interior landscape." — *Ken Pursley*

THE REBECCA

"I designed this sofa to be a modern antique, a pared-down version of a nineteenth-century Sheraton sofa. Equally at home in a traditional or contemporary setting, the piece has classic lines but doesn't feel like your grandmother's sofa." — *Jeremy Corkern*



& MORE

"This sofa is named for my grandmother, Fannie Cornelius — a strong, silent type, so well grounded that she could dispel all manner of chaos. Like her, this sofa is the rock of any interior, beautiful and inclusive of all creatures present."

— Bobby McAlpine

THE CORNELIA



THE SULLIVAN

"Although it's a clean-lined piece, I designed this sofa to act as a bridge between modern and traditional styles through its combination of long, low lines with luxurious tufting details, bronze buttons, and silver silk velvet."

— Paul Bates

THE PIPER

"The Piper Swivel chair is named after my constant companion, a rescue dog that was waiting for me. Always intent to please, this generous chair in motion was inspired by a walk along London's Pimlico Road." — Susan Ferrier

