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# FOR DESIGNER MARA SILBER, HOME IS WHERE THE STORY IS

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Five years before opening her own firm in 2015, **Mara Silber** worked as a senior designer at AD100 company *Mark Cunningham* (<http://markcunninghaminc.com/>), and her designs were featured in *Architectural Digest*, *Elle Decor*, *Interior Design* and more. Today, New York City-based *Mara Silber Studio* (<http://www.marasilber.com/>) services both residential and hospitality projects across the globe. Get better acquainted with this talented designer as she answers our 19 *Rapid-Fire* (<http://godesigngo.com/category/series/rapid-fire/>) questions...

**What is your chief characteristic?** Resourcefulness

**Your favorite design motto?** Less is more.

**What makes a house a home?** Anything with a story. I love when something as simple as a ceramic bowl becomes a conversation piece. Maybe it was found on a street corner, or maybe someone interesting made it—with a story, a piece can take on a whole different meaning.

**What is your most treasured possession?** This is so cliché, but my wedding ring. It belonged to my great-grandmother, and then it was passed to my great-aunt, then my grandmother, and finally my mom. There's a steady undercurrent of anxiety running through me at all times now that it's in my possession. I have nightmares about losing it.

**If you hadn't gone into interior design, what would you be doing?** I think I'd be a graphic designer. I love technology. My friends call me the geek squad.



**Who is your design hero?** Either Jacques Grange, Joseph Dirand or Jacques Adnet

**Your favorite author?** Ronald Balson, author of *Once We Were Brothers*, *Saving Sophie* and *Karolina's Twins*

**What is your favorite season?** Summer. I love the beach and hate the hassle of a winter coat.

**Your favorite food and drink?** Buffalo wings and pizza. Basically, I'm a frat boy. My favorite drink is called Ranch Water, which is tequila with lime juice and sparkling water.

**What is on your nightstand right now?** My Kindle, a picture from my wedding, Labello chapstick, a Sonneman reading light, a small framed print by Alain Biltreyst, and an Astier de Villatte candle

**What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?** Public speaking. My husband is so incredibly articulate and captivating when he speaks—he lights up a room—and I constantly struggle to verbalize my thought process. I just get so nervous! I'm much better on email—does that make me the ultimate millennial?

**What is your present design state of mind?** I think my present—and permanent—design state of mind consists of neutrals on neutrals. Whether it's gray, beige or taupe—to me, neutrals are totally timeless.



**Your idea of happiness?** Beach and family

**When are you most content?** I love weekend mornings when I hit the gym early and can look ahead to a day of being productive (or justify being completely lazy).



**What was your favorite journey?** I love visiting places that are authentic. To me, Africa and Marfa, Texas, top my list. I know—these are completely opposite trips, but the authenticity of both places is what I love about them. In Botswana, for example, it's such a beautiful thing to watch wildlife in their natural habitat. In Marfa, you have a small town that has evolved into an art mecca, but is still holding on to its roots and out of reach from big chains and corporations.

**What historical design period would you most like to visit?** Art Deco! It feels so glamorous and sophisticated.

**If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?** I often get so wrapped up in a project that I tend to ignore the business elements, but the reality is that running your own firm requires a mix of being an artist and an entrepreneur.

**One goal you hope to accomplish over the next year?** I'm hoping to plan a trip to Sweden next year.

**In your opinion, how is design evolving?** Instagram and Pinterest! I'm finding that my clients are more and more open to pursuing out-of-the-box ideas because I'm able to find relevant inspiration images to convey the vision. In addition, I can learn about a client's taste just by visiting their social media page. At the same time, these platforms give me a constant stream of visuals to find inspiration.





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