



# Maya Romanoff

THE INNOVATIVE SPIRIT IMPACTING THE WORLD OF DESIGN

your  
postage

Mr. Maya Romanoff  
Maya Romanoff Corporation  
1730 W. Greenleaf  
Chicago, IL 60626

When Maya Romanoff lived the ultimate student experience at the University of California in Berkeley in the sixties, he probably never imagined that his studies in anthropology, archeology and art would lead him to where he is today: artist, inventor, and director of the Maya Romanoff Corporation; the leading manufacturer of innovative wall covering and surfacing materials impacting the world of design.

Maya's journey began with post-university travels to such exotic places as North Africa, where he observed art as part and parcel of everyday life in the guise of usable, wearable art such as textiles. From that primal beauty he moved to the glamour of Paris' couture houses, garnering practical business skills while appeasing his growing interest in textiles and functional art.

It was during Woodstock that Maya discovered the intriguing technique of tie-dye, and the spirit of innovation that continues to live in his work. His fascination with making things, using common materials to create uncommon art, and creating art through a hands-on experience was born.

"It all clicked," explains Romanoff, "I was struck by the ingenuity of the tie-dye designs that I saw. At that moment, I had found my life's work."

Romanoff's artistic epiphany led to intense experimentation with the technique, delivering gorgeous fabrics that swept earthy tie-dye into the realm of haute couture. Further work with resist-dye techniques led to a collection of beautifully designed clothing, aptly named Wearable Art, that sold in top retail establishments across the country, including Henri Bendel, Ultimo and I.Magnin. Romanoff's reputation grew and soon he was besieged by requests for custom pieces, including a fantastic leather vest for rock idol Roger Daltry of The Who.

Romanoff's attraction to textiles and unconventional materials as his medium of choice expanded and evolved. "Once I started working with fabrics and dyes, I knew what I wanted to do the rest of my life. I had painted and drawn, but I always saw myself in my work. I couldn't stand it," says Romanoff. "When I started working with natural dyes and materials I saw myself taken out of the work – it was liberating!"

In 1969 he established the Maya Romanoff Corporation to bring his artistic creations to profitable fruition. The Chicago-based corporation has remained true to Maya's founding vision: to transform modern design by combining ancient artistic techniques with the latest production technology, all with a keen regard for nature and environmental concerns.

As the company grew, Romanoff's main focus became the development of unique production techniques, and the year 1976 marked Romanoff's introduction of the first widely available handcrafted, resistant-dyed fabric and floor covering to the industry. Throughout the seventies Romanoff wore two hats, splitting his focus between business and art. As the art world became enamored with resist-dye techniques and textiles Romanoff received international acclaim and was repeatedly called upon to create exhibitions and environments that showcased fabrics as fluid works of art. Among his many outstanding exhibitions was New York's Museum of Contemporary Arts' 1972 *Fabric Vibrations*, the first to address this emerging contemporary American art form, before becoming an international exhibition.

As the corporation surged forward in the eighties, Romanoff continued to explore fabric as an expression of unbridled art, and continued to earn accolades for his efforts. "Anywhere a piece of fabric can go – whether or not it has ever been there before – is where I put my textiles," states

Romanoff. Indoor or outdoor, draping buildings' facades or flowing internally, Romanoff's art on a massive, moving scale created a stir. The Chicago Sun-Times building got a shot of adrenaline when Romanoff suspended 28 brightly colored ribbons from the seventh floor terrace down to the Chicago River, festooning the industrial structure in warm, vibrant colors. Two of his many other noteworthy outdoor projects included *Sleeves of Spring*, his 1980 exhibit that involved draping Belvedere Castle in New York's Central Park and 1982's *God's Eye*, which similarly swathed the entire facade of the Chicago Cultural Center.

Never content to stick with the status quo, Romanoff sought inspiration and education from other countries and cultures. A trip to Japan uncovered an ancient method of paper-making that could be re-worked and translated into a modern process that could make more of his more avant-garde wall covering concepts marketable. Fortunately, Romanoff states, "I never cared how difficult things were to make," as it took over a year and a half, and countless revisions, to perfect the production process.

Romanoff's endeavors have paid off, bringing the corporation and himself clearly into focus as a prime resource for top interior designers and architects. He credits his wife Joyce with being the strong business push behind his artistic efforts. "We balance each other, we're a great team," explains Romanoff, "and that's as vital in business as it is in life." Since joining him in 1989 she has elevated the already successful business by increasing its visibility, fine-tuning product consistency and stepping up the volume of production, all while maintaining the integrity of the corporation and Maya's vision.

In this rarified atmosphere Romanoff leads, receiving countless awards over the years, including The International Furnishings and Design Association's Trailblazer Award, *Metropolitan Home's* Top 100 Designs 2004, NEOCON's Best of Show, and International Contemporary Furniture Fair's Editor's Award. Romanoff's ability to step beyond the ordinary, and his affinity for organic beauty has led to the creation of delightful and unexpected surface coverings for walls and floors.

"To work with Maya Romanoff is a privilege," said Albert Hadley, of Parish-Hadley Inc., arbiter of design excellence in interior design.

*"Anywhere a piece of fabric can go – whether or not it has ever been there before – is where I put my textiles."*

While fabrics, vinyl and wood have been used extensively in prior collections, lately Romanoff has given free reign to his love of natural, genuine materials. Gold leaf, mica, grass and bamboo are part of the mix, but perhaps the most captivating introduction of late has been *Beadazzled*, a collection of wall coverings amazingly made from tiny glass beads. The collection has not only taken the interior furnishings world by storm, but has earned a prestigious, permanent place in the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum.

What's next in line for this Renaissance man and his successful company? The challenge of consistently coming up with new ideas and maintaining the integrity of existing products is what drives him on. "Making one beautiful thing is easy – making something beautiful over and over again is what's difficult. But that's what I thrive on," notes Romanoff. ●

Share your thoughts with Maya

## Stacy M. Schield – Maya Romanoff Scholarship Recipient



*Words seem inadequate to describe my feelings of joy, gratitude and pride to accept the Icons of Industry Scholarship award. The NEWH has an outstanding reputation for educating and mentoring designers as well as partnering with groups such as UNICEF to help those in need. I congratulate you for investing your talents in developing future designers as well as providing a place for current designers to advance.*

*And now for my confession - Interior Design was not my first career. I studied opera for 6 years and believed that one day I would be a professional vocalist, even though I loved performing I always left the stage wanting more from the experience. When I decided to change careers I took some time to explore my hobbies and found my desire for design work.*

*I wanted to go back to school for Interior Design and knew it would be a challenge since I didn't even know how to set up a drafting board much less use one. I'd like everyone to know that after four years I have not only figured out the drafting board, but I also learned that the art of design is more than what I had thought it would be. I have loved every minute of the challenges that my schooling presents and know that I have found what I am passionate about.*

*Luckily, the University of Cincinnati has combined the degree program with internship opportunities. By the time I graduate, I will have worked a year and a half in three different offices and the experiences will be invaluable. Not only have I been able to put into practice the theory of my classes but also see the fields that surround interior design.*

*It is on my internships and during school that I found myself exposed to the work of Mr. Maya Romanoff. In fact, I remember the day I learned who Maya Romanoff was. My second year at school we had our first materials class. It was very broad and our teacher would have local reps come in and talk about their products. The Donghia rep came to our class with bags for each student. She handed them out and in mine I had these pieces. Although the flexible glass is beautiful I spent the rest of the class staring at the mother of pearl, inlaid shell. It seemed alive and I couldn't stop turning it in the light to see the different ways the luminous tiles reflected.*

*Now, being a student on a Wi-Fi campus, the first thing I did was to go to the Maya Romanoff website to see what else he had designed. From weathered walls to precious metals, the collections blew away what I had thought of wall coverings. Other reps had shown our class wall coverings that looked lifeless and stiff, while Maya Romanoff's seemed to be alive and, instead of imitating, embraced the materials.*

*I was excited to see that Maya Romanoff had been awarded the Icons of Industry Award last month which makes this scholarship award more personal to me. His creativity and love for his work is evident in the surface coverings he produces. This weekend attending the IHMRS show, talking with people from all parts of the hospitality industry and especially getting the chance to meet you, Mr. Romanoff, has been the experience of a lifetime.*

*So, for all whose lives you have touched and will continue to influence, I thank you on their behalf.*

*And personally, today, I offer my thanks to the Icons of Industry Scholarship committee and Mr. Maya Romanoff for this award for which I am sincerely grateful! ●*

# NEWH INITIATIVES



NEWH, Inc., the Hospitality Industry Network, has established an international award to honor icons of our industry. In addition to the award, the honoree will have a scholarship presented in their name. The initial scholarship of \$5,000 will be presented by NEWH, Inc., thereafter the honoree, their company or family may endow the scholarship.

The Icons of Industry Scholarship is an international award open to exemplary students who have completed at least half of their program working toward a degree that will lead to a career in the Hospitality Industry. It will require that the student have a minimum 3.0 GPA and have participated in an industry internship. Applicants are also required to provide a minimum of three industry references. The winning applicant will exemplify the highest standards of professionalism and scholarship.

The \$5000 grant will be given at the IH/M&RS Gold Key Award Breakfast. The breakfast event is sponsored by George Little Management, Interior Design magazine and HOTELS magazine.

*Leading the hospitality industry in promoting education, inter-cooperation, and endorsed policies for environmentally responsible practices, construction methods, materials and environments.*

When interest, passion and commitment are the underpinnings of a committee, it is amazing how fast plans come together! The NEWH Green Committee's first agenda item was to craft a Vision Statement to reflect the mission that they were eager to launch. The statement, as reflected above, will enable a clear direction and purpose for committee programs.

The committee currently has a professional composite of design, architecture, purchasing, manufacturing, hotel asset management and an environmentalist. The combined perspective of this important diversity of disciplines, along with a mutually recognized need for corporate community responsibility in the promotion of sustainable practices within the hospitality industry, allows for a very focused committee.

Two initiatives have been initially identified in support of the Vision Statement and are currently being studied and structured. One will provide a resource directory for our members and the other will launch a high-level, effective dialogue and forum for exploring and implementing sustainable initiatives. We look forward to announcing further details very soon.



NEWH, Inc. is pleased to join UNICEF in a joint venture to launch a pilot campaign called School from the Heart. NEWH, Inc. pledged to raise USD \$50,000 over a one-year period to fund UNICEF's School-in-a-Box educational program.

NEWH, Inc. will produce imaginative fundraising concerts at hospitality tradeshow and venues in collaboration with all NEWH chapters in the US, UK and Canada. (See School-in-a-Box on display in NEWH, Inc. Booths at major hospitality venues.)

Individual contributions can be made directly to NEWH, Inc. for School from the Heart for any amount although you can fund an entire School-in-a-Box by contributing USD \$400, CAD \$500 or GBP£250.

Be a Funds-Matching Sponsor to, not only support School-in-a-Box, but also show your own organization OR an NEWH chapter that you care about their efforts to support School from the Heart.

How can you do this?

Spread the word about this important and life enriching effort with your company or organization. Select an NEWH chapter (or two or more) and watch their fundraising efforts take off. Be prepared to MATCH FUNDS that they raise. Pledge any amount of money or make it a simple dollar-for-dollar match.

YOU can make a difference! Start today and show your support. Show that you support the hospitality industry, your clients, friends and most of all, education. When you give, you give from the heart. Please give to School from the Heart.

Have you ever seen someone's eyes light up...when they have a good idea.... are in the process of discovery... has suddenly realized a dream... or is very grateful for an opportunity? They have Bright Eyes!

The NEWH Bright Eyes Program was designed to enable manufacturers to participate in the development of good ideas, discoveries, opportunities and dreams. This program is based on a Percentage of Sales or Royalty for goods and/or services related to the sale of their products within the Hospitality Industry. Such support provides critical financial backing for new program development and expanded scholarship initiatives, enabling NEWH to further its activities as a responsible and effective international organization.

We encourage you to participate in the program...

- As a Manufacturer Promote your products within the industry with a Bright Eyes Sticker and donate a portion of the sales to NEWH Bright Eyes
- As a Designer Specify manufacturer's products that subscribe to the program
- As a Purchasing Agent Support Manufacturers and Designers who participate in the program and present it to your Owners
- As an Hotelier Ask your Designers and Purchasing Agents to look at the products available as possible resources for your property
- As an Owner Encourage your Designer, Purchasing Agent and Hotelier to use these products in your properties
- As a Result, Follow the program initiatives and watch the magic that Bright Eyes brings to our Industry.



we honor you.

artist

father

designer

husband

visionary

friend

master

role model

icon...

2006 NEWH ICON of INDUSTRY AWARD

# Maya Romanoff

CONGRATULATIONS

from your friends at

INTERIOR  
DESIGN<sup>®</sup>  
magazine

CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES  
FOR A WELL DESERVED AWARD  
YOUR BEAUTIFUL WORK IS A REFLECTION  
OF YOUR BEAUTIFUL SOUL

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John V. Basso, CPA  
Mark T. Jason, CPA  
Phillip C. Ravid, CPA

Maya, we at Ravid & Bernstein salute you as a leading designer and entrepreneur in your industry. Over the years you have demonstrated a unique ability to take what is beautiful in the world, transform it into works of art and bring it into the places we live and work. As financial advisors to you and The Maya Romanoff Corporation for many years, we have been privileged to observe your rise to prominence, and we are proud to participate in this tribute to you and your artistry. We look forward to your innovative creations for many more years to come.

Sincerely,  
Mark T. Jason

Ravid & Bernstein, LLP

230 West Monroe Street ♦ Suite 330 ♦ Chicago, IL 60606 ♦ Tel. 312/782-4710 ♦ Fax 312/782-4711

*Congratulations Maya!*

*Thank you for your vision  
and innovative spirit  
throughout the years!*



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*“It has to  
be beautiful.”*

Maya Romanoff

Thank you Maya  
for sharing your visions of artistry  
and adaptations of technology.

Your design continues to inspire and  
continually raise the bar in creativity.



*Leather...Nature's textile*

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Congratulations, Maya, on receiving the Icon of Industry Award recognizing your tremendous creativity and artistic genius. I am honored to be entrusted with helping you protect your unique designs, and look forward to many more years of our professional collaboration.

Jerry Schur  
Welsh & Katz, Ltd.

Congratulations Maya  
on your wonderful  
accomplishments and  
being the second  
NEWH Icon of Industry.

From your greatest admirers,

The members of  
NEWH, Inc. – the hospitality  
industry network



Congratulations

*Maya Romanoff*

on your

*Icon of Industry Award*



**magnificent**



**artistic**



**you're**



**astonishing**

You are magnificent, astonishing, artistic, inspiring, intelligent, innovative, witty, warm, fascinating, charming, handsome, adorable, and an icon in every manner of the word. (And you sure know how to pick a dynamo of a wife)

Much love and admiration, *Barbara Lazaroff*

Congratulations, Maya.  
Your creative genius is a gift to us all.

Your friends at PMI.

**P | M | I**

dallas • las vegas • cancun • guadalajara • delhi



A heartfelt thank you to our leader and inspiration Maya Romanoff for making us all part of the magic.

Thank you for your relentless pursuit of perfection. We are proud of what you have accomplished, and proud of what we have accomplished together!

With affection and admiration,  
Your MRC Family

Bayky Kokhlaneeo | Boy Chong | Carlos Martinez | David Berkowitz | David Schmidt | Francisco Martinez | Gaudencia Reyna  
Gina Panijan | Heng Bou | Hugo Escobar | Jessica Barrow | Jo Anne Paramo | Jocelyn Meyer | Joyce Romanoff | Juan  
Bustamante | Laura Romanoff | Leticia Reyna | Luis Fausto | Luis Landa | Margarita Martinez | Maria Ramos | Matilde Landa  
Michael Gutwaks | Monica Bauman | Nabopha Ly Om | Nadezda Micovic | Paul Schreiber | Ricardo Landa | Rosa Roman  
Santiago Landa | Santos Landa | Sarah Townsend | Saul Martinez | Sin Samnang | Sochea Lim | Sonam Dhargye | Spencer  
Bustamante | Stephanie Heppelmann | Steven Schmidt | Susie Ramos | Tammy Irvine | Tracy Sherman-Lewin



*Congratulations on being the honored recipient of the “Icon of Industry Award”! No one in our industry deserves it more than Maya Romanoff. Thank you for being a great inspiration, friend and business associate. We all at SK Textile wish you the best in life!*

*Your friends,  
Debra Centurion, Stanley Kassap and Company*

We Congratulate  
Maya Romanoff

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# MasudaFunai

Masuda Funai congratulates its esteem  
client Maya Romanoff  
on receiving the  
**NEWH ICON of INDUSTRY AWARD**

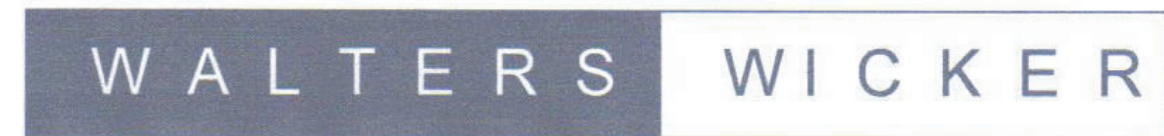
*Jerrold F. Fink*

*Senior Principal*  
*jfink@masudafunai.com*

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To our Dear and longtime friend Maya,

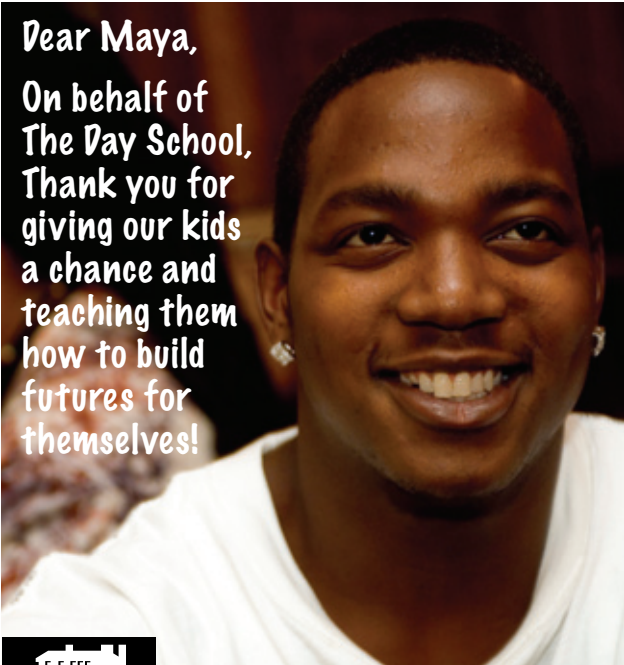
A great honor for an artistic genius,  
we are so glad that our industry is  
acknowledging what we have known  
for over 35 years!

Walter and Ken Schindler





Dear Maya,  
On behalf of  
The Day School,  
Thank you for  
giving our kids  
a chance and  
teaching them  
how to build  
futures for  
themselves!



**The Day School**

The Day School supports underprivileged children in grades K-12 who are diagnosed with severe emotional and behavioral disabilities.

800 West Buena Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60613

## Maya Romanoff:

Creativity  
Artistry  
Innovation  
Intelligence  
Humanity  
Passion

are just a few words that define the essence of Maya Romanoff, a true friend and inspiration

Eric Engstrom, FIIDA

EDG

# Congratulations Maya

Continue to dazzle us  
with your vision and style.

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PIONEER  
~  
VISIONARY  
~  
ICON

# Maya Romanoff

Congratulations  
from your friends at  
hospitalitydesign

Maya  
Romanoff

Congratulations

Wallpaper\*

*Thank you, my dear*



*For opening up a world of possibilities in art and beauty. You are my sensei, my dance partner, my poet, and my blessing. I am so grateful for the best partner in business and in life. You rock!*

*All my love all my life,*

*Your Trophy Wife*