



POWER FLORISTS

Fauxmidable

IF YOU ASK Carlos Mota, a colorful approach to design is all it takes to brighten a room. As editor at large for *Elle Décor* and an interiors stylist for more than 20 years, he knows what he's talking about. "Flowers are one of the only things that you can bring into a room and make the entire space come alive," he says. "You don't need to paint the walls, you don't need to change the sofa. Just go get a whole bunch of peonies and, right away, the room is different."

It was precisely this thinking that inspired the Venezuelan-born Mota to create the Casa collection—his own line of silk flowers for the Home Shopping Network (HSN). While styling the home of HSN CEO Mindy Grossman for a spread in *O, The Oprah Magazine*, Mota suggested finding a way to collaborate.

NEW YORK FAVORITES

The People: Jaded New Yorkers—what's new in the morning is history by night.

Convenience: Waking up at 4 A.M. and being able to order anything.

Motto: Anything's possible here.

"[Mindy] said that HSN had been looking for someone to design a silk flower collection, but still hadn't found anyone they really liked," Mota recalls. "She said, 'Why don't you make some samples for me?' It was very casual, just like that."

Two months later, Mota met with Grossman and she green-lighted his designs. From there, Casa—a collection of six bright and colorful arrangements—was born, a clear reflection of the design beliefs Mota holds near and dear. "The collection was inspired by the real thing, so it's very lifelike," he says. "In my opinion you cannot live without flowers. That's why Casa is perfect—it makes it so you don't have to." Visit hsn.com or contact Carlos Mota at cmotainc@gmail.com. —RACHEL BOWIE

photographs by Sari Goodfriend

Natural Calling

TO LEWIS MILLER, flowers are an essential part of life—especially, he says, for someone living in New York. Born and raised in California farm country, he grew up with a keen appreciation of nature. At 18 he moved to Seattle, where he studied horticulture and landscape design, but it wasn't long before he decided it was time to test his expertise in New York. "There's something about bringing nature to an urban environment that I love," he says.

Once in New York, Miller collaborated with Russell Labosky (now art director of *Interview* magazine) and launched LMD Floral Events Interiors in the East Village.

"My style is modern and old-fashioned at the same time," he says. "I kept seeing so much stuff that was contrived or overmanipulated. I wanted to show that classic and traditional [floral design] doesn't have to be uptight."

Now, seven years after opening LMD, he's a go-to source for floral design—from *Vogue* photo shoots to parties (Jessica Seinfeld and Annie Leibovitz have been clients) and high-profile weddings. But regardless of occasion, he stays true to his roots and his aesthetic. "Nature is always a part of the design," he says. "That doesn't mean just flowers everywhere. It's about creating a mood. I want people to step into a party and feel like they aren't in New York anymore—that they've left the city for five hours of fun." *LMD Floral Events Interiors*, 437 East 12th Street, 212-614-2734; lmdfloral.com. —R.B.

NEW YORK FAVORITES

Museum: The Cloisters—one of the most peaceful, beautiful places in the city.

Activity: Running from the West Village across to the West Side piers and down through Battery Park City.

Stores: Tiny Manhattan hardware stores—I always find what I need. Shopping at Bergdorf Goodman the day of Pridefest. Everything is on sale and I don't have to fight the other queens.

