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Jason Lane, Barbara Rourke and John St. John

"The comic relief ... the whip cracker ... the drama queen." — John St. John

Want all the bells and whistles with that next renovation project? John St. John, Jason Lane and Barbara Rourke are ready to help, but don't expect any Ikea-esque construction. As owners, designers and craftsmen for bells&whistles, a design/build studio, these three channeled a sophisticatedly hip vibe as they put the final touches on the posh, asymmetrical alligator bar chairs for Aubergine. Then they switched gears and went for an "urban cool" design for the new STARTLITE lounge in Mission Hills, rocking out to the Kings of

Leon as they sat among piles of sawdust working during its construction.

The partners are very selective about their clientele. "You have to work very closely, and it can be very stressful, so you have to have a good connection," Rourke says. For each project, St. John usually draws sketches of the items he envisions for the space, then Lane manipulates each piece sketched into something that can be functionally created, and Rourke and Lane oversee project management, ensuring each piece works within the project as a whole. The trio

claim teamwork and hard work comprise the backbone of their firm's success.

Current and upcoming projects for bells&whistles include the residential renovation of a 1962 Richard Wheeler home and a social performance lounge for the University of California, San Diego.

And what is the group's favorite project? Lane says with a laugh, "The next one."

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