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## Boutique firm brightens celebrity sites to dazzling effect

By **Arielle Paul**

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**A** boutique Agoura Hills lighting firm has illuminated some of Southern California's most exclusive homes — literally.

Whether it's the exterior and interior lighting in [Kourtney Kardashian's](#) Calabasas home or a single decorative bronze light fixture for [Candy Spelling's](#) \$150-million manor, ADG Lighting holds an impressive Rolodex.

Under Gerald Olesker, the company's chief executive and principal designer, the firm completes an average of 45 projects per quarter. They include high-end homes, but also commercial sites such as the Bellagio and MGM Grand hotels in Las Vegas, restaurants and historic landmarks including the Pershing Square building in downtown Los Angeles.

Although lighting is often an overlooked element by homeowners, Olesker, who trained as an architect, sees lighting design as a "purposeful part of the architectural whole — curbside to poolside."

With a team of 18 artisanal craftsmen, his firm manufactures its designs at its factories in Chatsworth and El Monte. Olesker calls it a "gritty, raw and creative process" that he said deserves greater public awareness and appreciation.

"Without the trades, all you have is a piece of paper and a set of plans," he said.

Urgent client requests are met with expedited delivery — an aluminum-polished sculpture was once designed, fabricated and installed in a Newport Beach home in just one week. Other projects, such as that at an ever-expanding Malibu home and vineyard, mark five years with no end date in sight.

“He makes lights exciting,” said interior designer Tiffany Harris, who has collaborated with Olesker on numerous projects including installing Calder-inspired orb fixtures throughout NBA star LeBron James’ \$23-million Brentwood estate.

ADG Lighting’s prices can range from a modest \$900 for an average made-to-order lantern to \$200,000 for a single custom project. The expansive, made-to-order collection features more than 1,000 indoor and outdoor fixtures, including lanterns, sconces, chandeliers and pendants in traditional, modern and historical styles.

The firm also creates custom, non-lighting pieces, such as furniture and architectural ornamentation, including metal and iron work for fire screens and other property adornments. The company is introducing 350 new pieces soon.

“When I get stumped, Gerald is able to get out his pen and paper and create something from an artisan’s perspective as opposed to factories where there is no insight into the actual design,” Harris said.

Olesker cites his collaboration with Harris on actress Molly Sims’ widely photographed chandelier in her Pacific Palisades dining room as an example of a symbiotic creative relationship.

Instead of buying yet another Lindsey Adelman fixture priced at \$20,000 — Sims’ original plan — Harris championed a “one-of-a-kind piece of art” from a local fixture-maker for the same price.

“Tiffany presented the idea of beautifully staggered handblown glass spheres, and I fell in love instantly,” Sims said in an email. Olesker “was able to make Tiffany’s vision come to life and was hands-on throughout the entire process — even scaling a model of the fixture for me to see before it was actually made.”

At ADG’s Chatsworth factory, sliced-metal and deconstructed lights take over the various workstations, and fixtures such as gas box lights for a \$150,000 lighting project on a Hidden Hills spec await final touches.

“It’s a job that keeps us busy and is always different every day,” said Joey Gennaro, ADG’s senior industrial designer. Gennaro has worked for the company for 15 years and leads a crew of people dedicated to artisanal craftsmanship.

“There is a shortage of good craftspeople in the U.S.,” Olesker said. “Good design is going to be evocative of good product and great craftspeople working with you.”