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October 16, 2024—

Madison Company Becomes Wisconsin's First Interior Design Finalist at International Awards

Madison, WI – [The Medallion](#), a Madison-based extended stay apartment, has made history as Wisconsin's first-ever finalist for the prestigious [Dezeen Design Awards](#) in its seven-year history. Selected from over 4,000 entries worldwide, The Medallion is now one of five finalists on the global stage in the [hotel and short stays category](#). The project stands out as just one of just four finalists from the United States across all interior design categories this year.

The project, which offers 21 fully furnished one- and two-bedroom apartments for stays of 30 days or more, is a collaborative effort between Madison's [Voyageur Stays](#) and [Voyageur Design Build](#). The team worked closely with Dutch designer [Arno Hoogland](#), local master woodworkers, and Wisconsin craftsmen to create a cohesive, affordable, and innovative design.

"The Medallion is a testament to the creative energy and craftsmanship that make Madison a design hub," said Jason Ilstrup, President of [Downtown Madison Inc.](#) "It's exciting to see a local project receive international recognition, and we are immensely proud of the team behind it."

Craftsmanship Meets Innovation in Mid-Term Hospitality

In the mid-term hospitality industry, high craftsmanship is uncommon due to tight profit margins. This project sought to challenge that notion, exploring how handcrafted production could be both valued by guests and achieved affordably.

Voyageur's husband and wife team employed innovative fabrication techniques such as CNC robotics, laser cutting, plywood steamforming, and 3D printing to meet tight deadlines and budget constraints. They prioritized local artisans and sustainable materials, while their collaborations with emerging international designers allowed for fresh, inventive approaches.

They used non-traditional materials in unconventional ways—vehicle wraps, for example, were applied to cabinets for an affordable, custom design finish. They repurposed Industrial LED modules and used 3D-printed diffusers to enhance fixtures.

To further optimize efficiency and cost savings, they developed modular components for sofas, headboards, and ornamentation, streamlining production while maintaining a custom feel. Even custom light fixtures were partially pre-fabricated in collaboration with glass manufacturers and assembled on-site, balancing artistry and cost-effectiveness.

"We love pushing boundaries to create beautiful, cohesive designs that are both affordable and sustainable," said Kristopher Steege-Reimann, owner of Voyageur Design Build. "Our goal is to prove that handcrafted furniture and thoughtful design can be integrated into hospitality without breaking the budget."

Sustainability at the Core

Sustainability was a central focus of The Medallion's design approach. The team emphasized durability and repairability, sourcing sustainably harvested local wood and using high-quality Axminster wool rugs. Furniture was designed to be easily repaired, reducing the need for full replacements, while existing cabinets were refreshed rather than discarded.

"Our commitment to enduring, repairable designs is the opposite of the fast-fashion mentality that dominates today's hospitality design," added Steege-Reimann. "We believe in creating pieces that last a lifetime."

A 'Gesamtkunstwerk' Approach

Dutch designer Arno Hoogland drew inspiration from The Medallion's architectural features, particularly its signature diamond-pattern brickwork. This motif became the foundation for the visual language of the project, with nearly every piece of furniture and fixture custom-designed to harmonize with the building's exterior. Heavily influenced by the philosophy of Wisconsin's own Frank Lloyd Wright, Hoogland embraced the concept of a gesamtkunstwerk—a holistic approach where every design element works in harmony with the others.

"Working with The Medallion's existing architecture allowed us to create a truly integrated design, from the furniture to the smallest fixtures," Hoogland remarked.

About Dezeen Awards

The [Dezeen Awards](#), organized by the world's leading design website Dezeen, celebrate the best architecture and design projects globally. With low entry costs that encourage submissions from small studios, the awards focus on projects that are not only beautiful and innovative but also socially and environmentally conscious.

- [Photos of the Medallion](#)
- [Photos of the Voyageur Design Build Team](#)

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About Voyageur Stays and Voyageur Design Build

Voyageur Stays offers curated, furnished rentals for long and short stays in downtown Madison, WI. Its sister company, Voyageur Design Build, specializes in innovative, beautiful, and affordable custom designs. Learn more at voyageurstays.com and voyageurdesignbuild.com.