



Designing for TV

INTERN GETS BUSY ON THE SET OF THE STEVE HARVEY SHOW

By Veronica Sanders, Student ASID

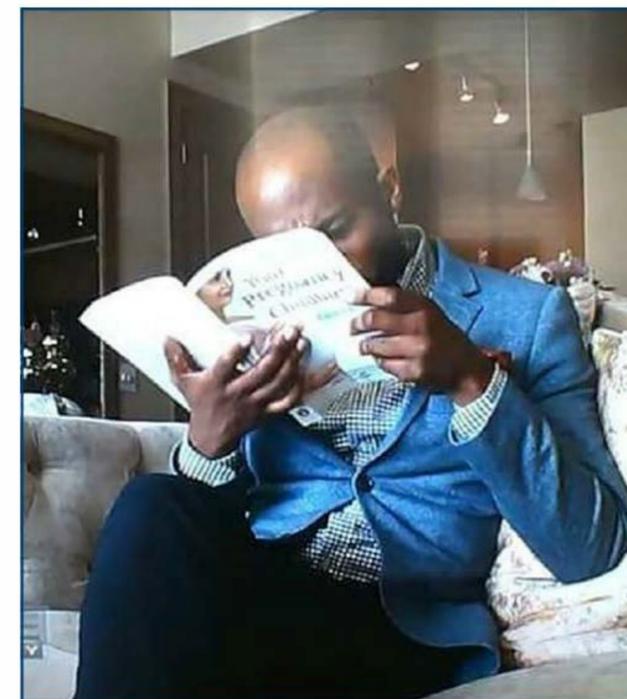
MY EXPERIENCE WITH THE STEVE HARVEY SHOW has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I am grateful for the chance to be an intern and the opportunities given to me by Mikel Welch who is a top four finalist of season seven of HGTV Design Star. Welch now serves as the personal designer for Steve Harvey and is the on-screen set designer for the Steve Harvey Show, as well as founder of Mikel Welch Designs.

Connecting with Welch via social media over a year ago and becoming his intern in January has been a whirlwind and the opportunity to see snippets of my hard work come to fruition and aired on television has been so rewarding. The hustle and bustle during the taping of the show and participating behind-the-scenes has given me a new-found respect for set designers and television designers.

As students, we don't realize how much goes into the field of design until we take courses and gain real-world experience. Mixing the profession of film with design is even more of a life lesson since Welch not only had to manage his design team, but he also had to manage the design project as well as taping for the show. I discovered that Welch is definitely a pro and handles his many responsibilities well. I served as Welch's intern, design assistant, PR assistant and project manager and was able to gain experience in taking a design concept from start to finish and learn the ropes of designing for television. In fulfilling my roles I was given a number of tasks.

A month prior to installation, Welch and I collaborated on the design concept. My jobs were to plan a furniture layout, take measurements of the space, match fabric to paint colors, and meet vendors. He also sought my assistance on furnishings, wall coverings, and accessories, as well as putting together a digital presentation. Of course, most of the finished product was Welch's professional design, but it was so valuable for me to see what the entire process from start to finish.

I had to search for, choose and purchase window treatment accessories, nursery furniture, lighting fixtures, upholstery locations, as well as pull together trusted design volunteers that knew how to keep a secret. When you're designing for television, you have to keep vital information under wraps until the show airs, and even then, you still have to be selective about the information you share. Signing the waiver documents was a huge reality check.



A week before the install, Welch and I went to upholstery shops to see the finished product of the custom upholstered daybed. I assisted in choosing the fabric and custom window treatments. A few days before the install, one of Welch's other interns and I went shopping. I didn't realize how much of a hassle it can be to trade, return, and replace items you chose for a design. It seems that no project ever runs completely smoothly. We hung the curtains, constructed the crib. I inserted the custom artwork and managed the placement of the picture frames, as well as managed the temporary interns I had recruited, and I personally wrote the blessing tree cards for the family and Steve Harvey.

Between the lunch breaks, conversations with Ben and Karli Harvey and the production team, we still had to work on organizing and decorating the space. There were so many odds and ends to this project. delivery issues for the crib—the most important furniture piece—getting trade outs, and other things in-between, but the end result was beautiful!

The opportunity to meet Mikel Welch in person and work on this project has been a thrilling experience. It has been a once in a lifetime opportunity for me to get to know the production crew, the moving company, painting company, and even Karli and Ben Harvey. They are such a genuine and sweet couple and it was a pleasure to connect with them. Congrats to them on their new baby boy. I have gained many valuable contacts that I will treasure throughout my career as a designer. Some of the photos from my experience during this project are just a small token of how fun and exciting this has been. The moral of this story is never be afraid to step out of your comfort zone, because the result may be an experience you'll treasure forever.

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