

Masterfully Built

DUCE APPLIES THE MASTER BUILDER CONCEPT TO ITS WORK IN NEW YORK CITY. BY CHRIS PETERSEN

NY/NJ Focus | DUCE CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION

Duce Construction Corp. founder and President Rory McCreesh understands the value of the little things more than most builders. After emigrating from his native Ireland to New York City in 1985, he began his career in construction as a carpenter, where he saw first-hand the hard work that goes into every construction project. After rapidly moving up through the ranks, McCreesh went into business for himself in 1989, founding Duce Construction Corp.

Since then, the company has built numerous high-end luxury homes and estates throughout the New York metropolitan area and beyond, but McCreesh has never lost sight of the attention to detail that distinguishes a master builder from the rest of the pack. It is that adherence to the values of the master builder and old-fashioned craftsmanship that has allowed Duce to stand head and shoulders above its competitors even in one of the most fiercely contested construction marketplaces in the world.

Originally focused on renovating high-end homes in and around New York City, Duce today concentrates on building luxury private homes for clients in Manhattan as well as Westchester County, N.Y.; Connecticut; and New Jersey. The company's work has been featured numerous times in such prominent publications as *The New York Times*, *Architectural Digest*, *Metropolitan Home* and *House & Garden*, and in 2005 Duce Construction Corp. was included in *This Old House Magazine's* "Best Building Pros in America" feature. McCreesh personally has been honored numerous times by the construction industry as well as the Irish-American community in New York for his professional and charitable accomplishments.

McCreesh says the success of Duce is rooted in the trust of the master builder vision, a concept that has been at the core of many of the world's greatest architectural achievements. By applying the knowledge

» Duce Construction Corp. brings the sensibility of the master builder tradition to the modern New York City market.



Duce Construction Corporation

www.ducecc.com

www.ducepmm.com

• *Headquarters: New York City*
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- Roy McCreesh, founder and president



of a master builder and the model that comes with it, Duce is able to avoid many of the difficulties that arise during a high-end homebuilding project. It also brings with it an attention to detail not found among many of its competitors. With a strong core of values and tried-and-true processes at its disposal, Duce stands poised to continue carrying the standard for the master builder into the future.

All in One

The construction industry changes almost week-to-week, especially in a fast-paced market like New York City. If there isn't a new technology being introduced into the industry, there's a new process sweeping the industry or a new market that is starting to heat up. The master builder model, however, is one that has created architectural wonders from the Parthenon to Brunelleschi's Dome at Florence Cathedral.

As McCreesh explains, the concept of the master builder is one in which a single individual or group has complete control over a construction project from beginning to end, starting with conceiving the vision and design and following all the way through the construction process. In this process, there is no distinction among architects, engineers and builders as is often the case in the modern construction world.

As McCreesh puts it, separating the responsibilities among architects, engineers and builders creates too many opportunities for trouble because there is too much disconnect between the various parties involved. "Too often, renovation and construction projects get out of hand – and off-schedule – due to redesign, budgetary constraints or misunderstandings," he says. "When the visionaries i.e. the architect and or designer, have free rein to design what they want without input from others, it's not uncommon to find the client can't afford what's been designed for them. So, the architect and designers have to go back to the drawing board to come up with ways to lower costs and redesign to make it more appealing to the client. To make matters worse, sometimes the homeowner falls in love with the initial design only to be told that they can't have it due to costs and time restraints."

What Duce offers clients is a more streamlined process where its status as a master builder ensures that every aspect of the construction process is in harmony. "A master builder acts as a facilitator for the entire project from the beginning, recommending and bringing together consultants, designers, contractors and other important tradespeople to the mix," McCreesh says. "The entire project will now



CREDIT: Joshua McHugh

'A master builder acts as a facilitator for the entire project from the beginning.'

be designed and built with the input and coordination of the master builder, putting his years of experience and skillsets into the project. They will advise each vendor and subcontractor on what types of products to use and recommend the course of action to ensure the best outcome for the client, ultimately saving everyone's time and reducing risk."

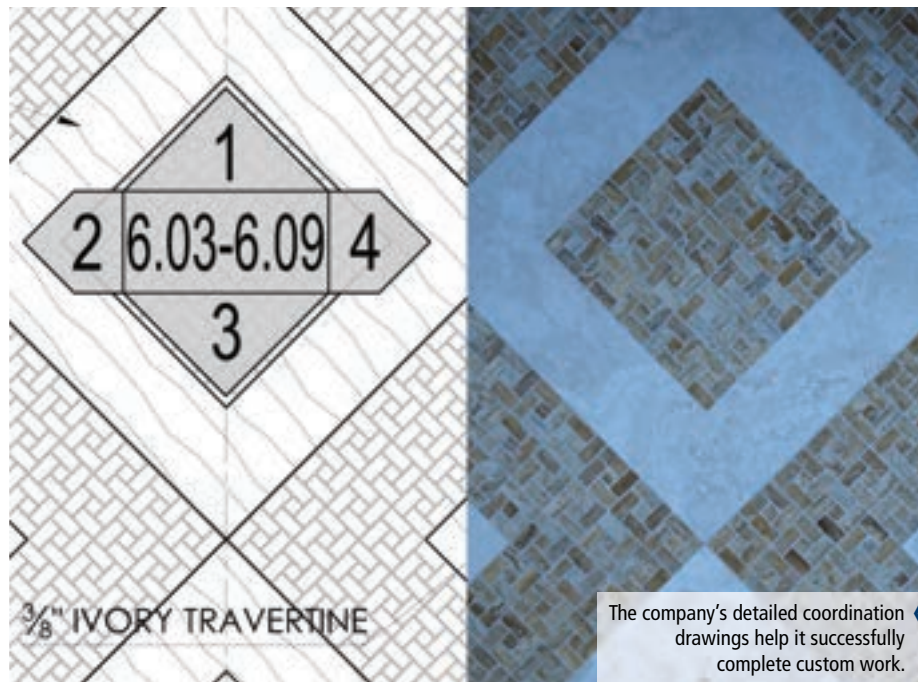
As a proven construction management firm and a general contractor, Duce has the capabilities to function as the master builder for its clients, and McCreesh says this is one of the company's most significant advantages over other contractors. "When we provide construction management services, we have the opportunity to flex our muscles as a master builder and really put our skills and experience on display," he says. "The biggest advantage for a homeowner utilizing Duce as their construction manager, is the establishment of a global schedule for the entire project, inclusive of a cost-control estimate (CCE) for the entire project, this is based on a client budget and a thorough review of their wants and

needs, before any design or drawings or have been conceived."

Detail-Oriented

Duce Construction Corp.'s ability to serve as

a master builder on any project is a major advantage for the company, but McCreesh says this is not the only way in which the company distinguishes itself as a leader in the marketplace. The company's attention



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The company's detailed coordination drawings help it successfully complete custom work. <<



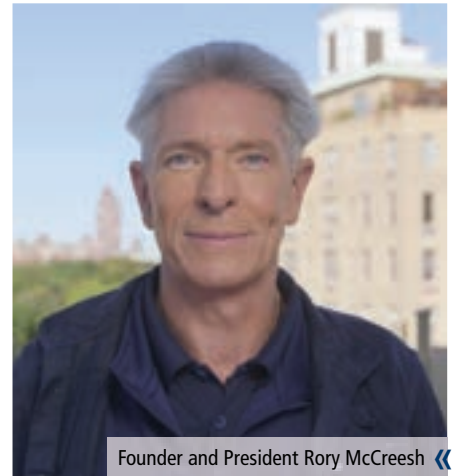
CREDIT: Joshua McHugh

The company says its approach reduces mistakes and costly delays on construction projects. <<



CREDIT: Joshua McHugh

» Duce Construction Corp.'s approach allows it to guide the project from beginning to end.



Founder and President Rory McCreesh

“We must gather all of our knowledge and expertise to build a perfect prototype. We do not have the luxury of trial and error, which most likely will cause job delays, cost overruns, stress and aggravation to everyone involved with the project, most importantly the homeowner.”

Dream Come True

Duce continues to redefine quality in the New York market based on the time-tested concept of the master builder – i.e. taking ownership of the build. McCreesh says he continues to look for new ways to improve the industry and construction methods, including his recent patenting of a new type of multipurpose hand tool for contractors and DIY.

Although the act of construction becomes more and more complicated every day, McCreesh says that complexity only makes the presence and experience of a master builder more important. “The number of parts and pieces that must come together perfectly to give a homeowner the home of their dreams is incredibly meticulous to manage and facilitate,” he says. “The builder needs to be experienced, meticulous and organized to give the homeowner a beautiful home, built to the highest standards.”

“We are able to construct quality construction, that is built to stand the test of time,” McCreesh continues. A home built of superb construction, a well-managed project and a project that is delivered on time and on budget is truly a dream come true that any homeowner will appreciate.” ♦

to detail makes it one of the most conscientious and meticulous builders in the New York market, and it is one of the main reasons Duce Construction Corp. excels at custom work.

“In high-end luxury renovation and custom building, the designs and specifications call for custom details that simply do not follow standard construction guidelines,” McCreesh says. “Over the years, many of our coordination drawings have become standard ‘Duce Details’ that accommodate an architect or designer’s signature design elements. Our Duce Details and coordination drawings bridge the gaps between the trades and vendors. Duce facilitates the means and methods for all trades and vendors, working on- and off-site.”

McCreesh stresses the importance of having the details and means and methods

worked out on paper before construction begins, this avoids problems and delays. To ensure this, at the onset of each project, Duce reviews all architectural plans to identify areas where coordination details are needed.

“We create the coordination drawings, these become the means and methods of construction for all trades and vendors. This allows for the successful install of their materials adjacent to other materials installed by others, ensuring the design intent,” he says. “Examples of this are stone, metal and glass work installed adjacent to a recessed medicine cabinet or rough framing dimensions required for a flush pocket door installation.”

“On each project we come across design details that require something different to execute perfectly,” McCreesh continues.