

Clare Lubine's Traditional Building

Merritt, International Interior Solutions Firm, Acquires Renowned Agrell Architectural Carving

Acquisition showcases Merritt's continued company expansion and commitment to excellence.



The wood carving process.

[Merritt](#), an Ohio-based international interior solutions firm, has acquired [Agrell Architectural Carving](#), one of the world's preeminent ornamental woodcarving companies. Agrell, with offices in the U.K. and U.S., provides exquisite, classical hand-carved ornamentation for architecture, luxury interiors and furniture around the globe. Merritt's acquisition of Agrell furthers the company's mission to be a complete interiors solution with all traditionally outsourced crafts under one roof. Independently, Agrell and Merritt have earned reputations for precision and innovation that have resulted in close collaborations with many of the world's most renowned architects and interior designers.

Together, their highly regarded approaches ensure seamless execution, delivered on time and on budget.

Agrell, led by Ian Agrell and his daughter Kate Agrell, along with director Adam Thorpe, designs and hand-carves the finest-quality moldings, corbels, capitals, decorative panels, doors, fire surrounds, and furniture in all period styles. They employ traditional hand-carving techniques for private residences, religious structures, and public buildings. In addition, they produce cast ornamentation in bronze and other materials. Their work includes such high-profile commissions as a throne for Saint John Paul II, the award-winning Fulham Palace in London, the Cathedral of St. Paul in Minnesota and dozens of luxurious private residences. Both Agrell and Thorpe are members of the prestigious Master Carvers Association, an organization dedicated to exceptional wood- and stone-carvers with the highest quality work. They are two of fewer than 30 English masters alive today and possess encyclopedic knowledge of carving technique and history. Bringing the ancient skill of hand carving into the modern age of design and architecture has been a lifelong passion for both. Merritt's already talented team of 15 carvers is pleased to have Agrell's expertise and industry leadership on board to further refine this critical part of the Merritt interiors process.

A History of Collaboration

Merritt and Agrell's first collaboration was in 1999 and since that time they have executed 300,000 hours of carving together. When clients request period correct designs, they have the rare ability to deliver rooms in full alignment with the history, executed as it was in the 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, literally recreating Versailles.

"True English master carving is an art, a craft and a religion and because of the painstaking process and vast amount of knowledge required, it is very costly," says CEO Michael Merritt. "Folding this talented group into ours only makes good sense – it allows for cost saving and total control over the finished product. We have long been proud of our affiliation with Agrell and are now very pleased to call them part of the Merritt family."

"We have collaborated with Merritt many times over the years," said Agrell. "Our integration into the company has been a welcomed and seamless transition that allows us to be even more effective in our endeavor to increase awareness of the beauty and value of traditional hand carving."

As a \$50 million interiors firm, Merritt boasts a half century of history as an ultra-high-end woodworking company. While the core of the company remains with unsurpassed architectural woodwork and joinery, Merritt's current boundary-breaking operational capacity now allows it to take responsibility for bringing to completion the entire interior architecture of an estate or superyacht. With an unparalleled collection of capabilities under its umbrella, Merritt now manages the entire process from design concept to project delivery, ensuring an exacting and uncompromised finished product delivered anywhere in the world.

Merritt is a family-owned and managed company. Started by George A. Merritt in 1967, the company has grown with Merritt's sons Michael and Keith currently at the helm to employ more than 300 people in five U.S. offices, in addition to the U.K. office and project management and engineering office in Germany. Merritt maintains a team of highly skilled and passionate architects, engineers, 3D modelers, project managers, cabinetmakers, finishers, machinists and carpenters. Computer-assisted design and management, climate-controlled shops and vehicles, the most advanced equipment and judicious use of automation ensure faultless accuracy and timeliness, while minimizing waste. Paneling, marquetry and veneering are crafted in-house on some of the largest-scale equipment in the industry by artisans who have perfected extraordinarily painstaking hand procedures to achieve fits and finishes that mechanization cannot possibly duplicate. The result is perfectly exemplified by the art of hand carving, where detail and quality are unmatched by any machine carving process.

Merritt's work is found in exclusive enclaves, such as Greenwich, The Hamptons, Palm Beach, Aspen, Bel Air, Lake Tahoe and Malibu, as well as in penthouses in Manhattan, Miami, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco.