



Hello dear readers,

Sometimes, the best things happen through serendipity. Consider, for example, how the talented Mike Holmes came to the attention of Canadians and became—pardon the pun—a household name.

Mike Holmes, who has made a career of righting the wrongs of bad contractors on a succession of television shows that he's hosted, had no plans to become a TV star. Brought up by his dad to do renovation work with the motto “build from the outside in,” he founded his own contracting firm in 1982 at the age of 19.

Serendipity arrived in 2001, when he was working as a stagehand, building sets for the HGTV program *Just Ask Jon Eakes*. Mike, an outspoken critic of incompetent and dishonest contractors, complained to a studio programming executive that he was tired of seeing homeowners being exploited by bad and duplicitous builders. His righteous indignation, which would become his signature style, gave the network executive an idea: to create a program that would profile Mike righting renovation mistakes.

Thus, in 2003, *Holmes on Homes* was launched. Within three seasons, the show was so popular that Mike was receiving hundreds of emails every week from homeowners who were desperate for his help. He was shining a moral spotlight on the dark side of the renovation industry in Canada. Soon, he was able to help his philanthropic causes around the world, change outdated building codes, and create awareness about important safety issues such as radon gas.

It was not only an honour to talk with someone whose morals and work ethic I admire and whose background seems similar to my own, but who was a downright pleasure to be with. With Mike Holmes, what you see is what you get. He tackles everyday issues with gusto, one at a time, with honesty and genuine concern, knowing that in this way, he will save the world. He is a real Canadian hero.

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