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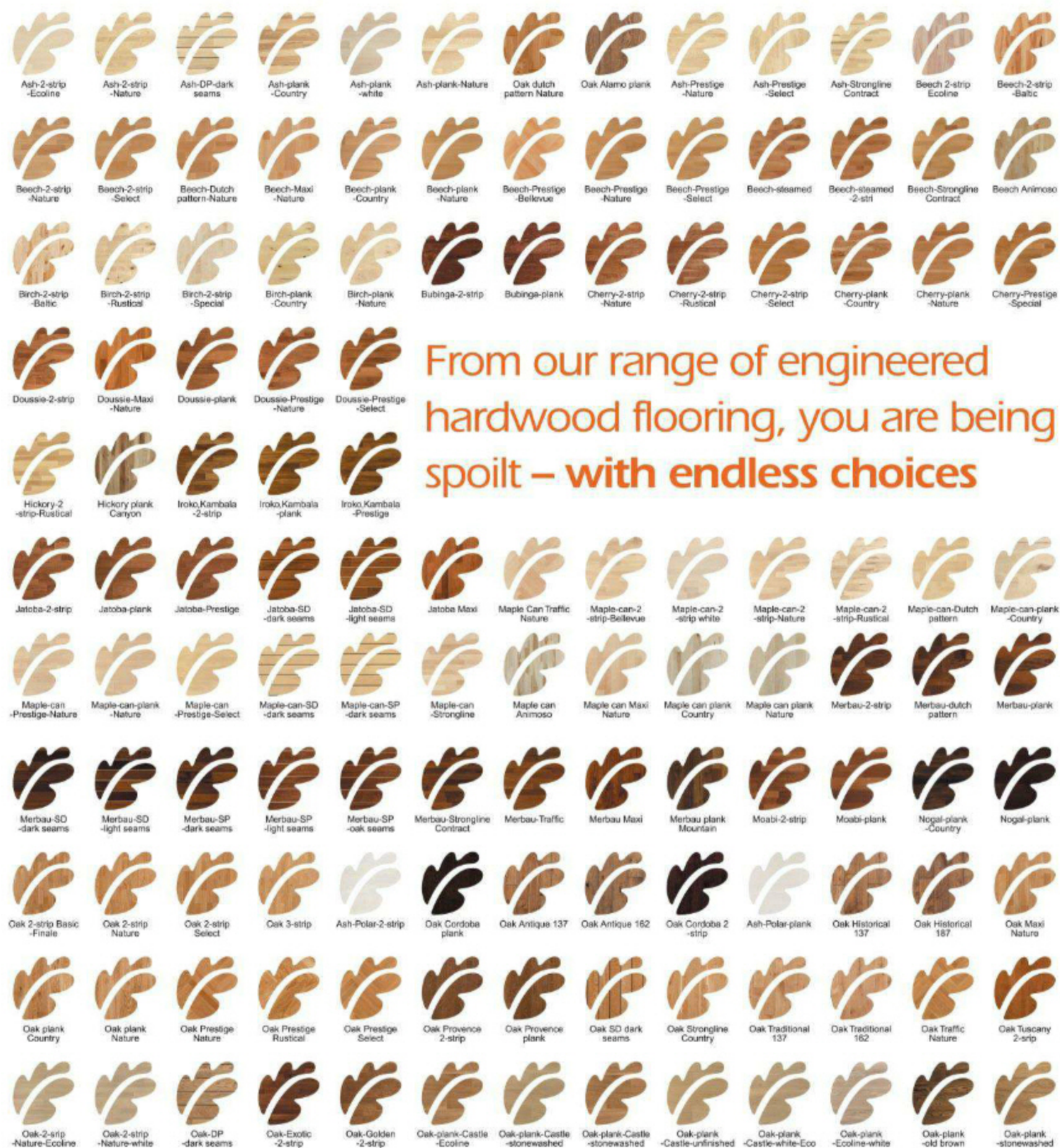
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22nd APIDA AWARDS PRESENTATION CUM GALA DINNER CELEBRATION OF DESIGN EXCELLENCE AND PROFESSIONALISM

Hong Kong Interior Design Association ("HKIDA") organized the 22nd APIDA Awards Presentation cum Gala Dinner on 24th November 2014 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, presented the awards of 10 categories and the new "Best 10 Award" (the 6th - 10th place) under the witnesses of 400 guests.

Another breakthrough this year, the APIDA received over 600 submissions from the Asia Pacific regions including those from the Mainland, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand and Korea. Over the past 21 years, APIDA had witnessed the evolution of the design evolvement in the Asia Pacific Region. Entries from various different countries demonstrate significant and encouraging improvement in the quality of interior design throughout the region.



All the honorary guests, including Mr. Eric Fok, Vice President of Fok Ying Tung Group, HKIDA 2014 Executive committees, HKIDA Fellow Members, APIDA 2014 International and Local Judges toasting to celebrate the 22nd anniversary of APIDA and to the success of HKIDA.



Mr. Wesley Liu, Chairman of APIDA 2014 presented souvenir to the international and local judges. (L to R: Dr. Vaughan Dai Rees, Prof. Keat Ong, Dr. Patrick Leung, Mr. Wesley Liu, Ms. Sarah Khoo, Mr. Ziggy Koo, Mr. Christian Low, Mr. Mark Lui)

Supported by local and international interior design masters as judges, with vigorous screening and intensive adjudication, APIDA is now a benchmark of achievement to many young interior designers, and is widely celebrated by top interior design brands. The gala dinner brings interior design professionals together in a celebration of the creative spirit of interior design, and serves to propel the industry forward.

For details of award list and the dinner photo gallery, please visit www.apida.hk

NEW BOOK RELEASE

HKIDA MEMBER DIRECTORY 2015

The HKIDA Members Directory 2015 "Interiors + Hong Kong Interior Design Association 2015" is launched.

The directory is an all-inclusive guide in presenting the best from the Hong Kong Interior Design Association. It enhances networking, strengthens business connections and keeps you in the know on all the happenings in and around HKIDA. This year's edition of the Members Directory is produced in the format of a hardcover design book with over 400 pages, and in addition to showcasing company portfolios and works, there will be a special section of Residential and Commercial projects, which is a selective showcase of 56 interiors completed by HKIDA members.



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cover

Hub Creativ, by TETRARC

Identity

8Xjet - Tommy Yeung, Tynnon Chow and Brian Ma

search

12The latest from Ron Arad, Patricia Urquiola and many other designer delights

promotion

18An integrated switching and distribution solution for Tricor Services

exploration

20Hong Kong is Land by MAP Office

frame

22Microwave Festival: *Living Architecture*

folio

24Ho Lee Fook by Douglas Young

26Hotel Clover The Arts by Teo Kok Hwee and Singapore's budding artists

28Ghost Gallery by Band Elliott

30Flex by RedGoodss

32The Envoy by Artichaut

report

34Suzy Annetta establishes Design Anthology

36Business of Design Week 2014

40American Institute of Architects International Region Awards 2014

42Asia Pacific Interior Design Awards 2014

project news

46A sneak peek at the CAD files from architects around the globe

focus

52Architecture: Redline by Pietri Architectes

56Interior: Cubix by Spaces Architects

project file

60Dilli Haat by Archohm

62Hub Creativ by TETRARC

64Chinagrowth by Jason Caroline Design

68Daycare Nursery and Collective Housing by Margot-Duclot Architectes Associes

70Long brick house by Foldes Architects

72Manchester School of Art by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios

74Tencent by M Moser Associates

76Bindella by Pistou Kadem Architects and Baranowitz-Amit Design Studio

78Kinoya by Jean de Lessard

80Aspen Art Museum by Shigeru Ban

82100 PP by Ministry of Design

84Nike by OpenUU

86Mrs. Pound by NC Design & Architecture

88Bushman by Stickman Tribe

fulcrum

90House of Music by Coop Himmelb(l)au

global perspective

92Deve Design Build

out there

96Garden paths, Technogyms and awards from the silly season

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hinge focuses on architecture and design. The magazine is distributed to industry professionals, academics and VIPs, and eagerly snapped up by the public every month from leading bookshops.

We take a dynamic and innovative approach to the disciplines of architecture and design, juxtaposing bold graphics and striking visuals with lively and informative editorial. *hinge* brings you the design world – the global picture, in full technicolour features.

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Words From the Editor

We end the year on a big note, a double issue with January that ought to carry you into 2015 in decent style, upbeat about the prospects for architecture and design in Asia and elsewhere. This issue is packed full with buildings and spaces from near and far, from the large to the minute, and in every colour and style. Deliberately eclectic, one might say, not unlike current practice. It's always a bit of a scramble in Hong Kong, to end the design year. There are parties, launches, BODW, and deadlines before the holidays. People are leaving, people are arriving, school's breaking... it hardly ever seems the time to sit down and ponder the complexities and beauty of rooms and buildings. But amid all the activity – or perhaps once the festivities have concluded – we think you might need a few pretty pictures to take the mind off things. Herewith, and Happy Holidays.

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HINGE SAT DOWN TO TALK TO TOMMY YEUNG,
TYNNON CHOW AND BRIAN MA, THE THREE PRINCIPALS
OF HONG KONG DESIGN FIRM XJET, ABOUT HOW THEY
CAME TOGETHER, WHAT THEY PLAN TO ACCOMPLISH,
AND THE FUTURE OF OLD HONG KONG.

XJET

James Saywell: Please tell us what each of you were doing before XJET, and then how you got this idea to work together and start something new.

Tommy Yeung: I grew up here and then studied in the US. After finishing my undergraduate studies at the University of Houston, I stayed in Texas for four years, then went to Columbia for my graduate studies where I met Tynnon and also Brian.

That was the place that you crossed paths?

TY: Yes. In 2000, jobs were hard to find, so I moved back to Texas. I stayed there another four years and worked for a couple of firms. RTKL was one. I did a lot of retail malls in South America and the Middle East. We started doing some retail malls in Asia, so I slowly got the idea of moving back to Hong Kong. Then I met my wife in San Francisco. That's the major trigger point, as she's from Hong Kong. Finally I decided to move back here, in 2006. I've worked for different companies here. In 2009, I joined CL3, and worked under William Lim on the China Resource interior renovation, the retrofit for the China Resource building and several other residential jobs. From there, I built up a network and started to do my own little interior design-build kind of thing. Then we three sort of met again and started to talk about creating a multidisciplinary office with our different experiences.

Tynnon Chow: I grew up in Toronto, did my undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto and then met these guys at Columbia. I worked for a while in New York and then came and worked a little bit in Hong Kong. Then I was at CUHK for five years, in their Architectural Project Unit, which conducts research by actually doing real campus-planning projects. I then taught for two or three years there. After CUHK, I spent about three years with Gehry Technologies where I did two projects, one in Beijing, the other, Zaha's project in Seoul. They were very different. The first was a more conventional

China project – very fast, so we had to keep up with it. The DDP was slower, but technically, the BIM helped a lot. It was a good experience. I was becoming more independent at that time. With two old classmates from Canada I did a few projects there, and a few competitions.

Which year did you move back to Hong Kong?

TC: Roughly 2001. Last year, I was also in Beijing working with a firm called Turenscape. It was a collaboration with them. They're a very big landscape and planning office and we were trying to set up an architecture team there, so we did a few projects in Beijing with them.

Brian Ma: I grew up in Hong Kong. My family emigrated to Canada, so I did my high school in Vancouver. I went to Rhode Island School of Design for my undergraduate in architecture. Before that, I had two ideas of what my career path should be: either fashion design or architecture. My parents and grandparents are all in the garment business...

So you made the wrong choice!

BM: I made the wrong choice (laughs). They actually gave me some advice: for fashion designers, if you have that much creativity, you don't need to go to school for it.

You know, some people say that about architecture, too...

BM: Yes, that's actually the same lesson I got in Milan visiting Alessi. Philippe Starck creates a concept and Alessi figures out how to make it. To the world, it's actually better that way; don't cross the line. Technical engineering of the piece by Alessi and design of the piece by the studio. I picked architecture.

Breaking from your family...

BM: Breaking from my family. I wouldn't say it's a traditional family, but architecture by Chinese tradition is a professional degree similar to doctors, lawyers and what not.

Is it, really? Well, it certainly takes as many years to study...

TY: It takes as many years, but we have less zeros in our bank account.

BM: Anyway, after my fifth year at RISD, there were problems financially, so I decided to go for graduate school. I thought it was a good exit strategy! I visited Columbia and asked the dean to give me three reasons why I should come to this school, and he said 'Big Apple, Big Apple, Big Apple'. That kind of convinced me. So I joined Columbia and studied architecture and urban design. Which was good, because I met these guys.

I took a slightly different route after graduating from Columbia. I find a lot of things off-scale – a little too big, and I was interested in how things really get built, so I went to work for a boutique firm called Lalire March Architects. They had me lead a new account for Estee Lauder, so next thing I know I'm doing MAC Cosmetic stores. The client would give us a sketch on a napkin. We worked with the general contractors, so it was from concept design all the way to qualifying contractors to punch list.

This is from New York?

BM: Yes, I spent three years at that firm. It was a whole cycle of how things get from sketch to store, a good journey. At that time I was planning to move back to Hong Kong, but some friends at a party told me there was this great company that would fly you in their private jet for interviews, so next thing I knew, I was working with LBrands in Columbus, Ohio. I was working between New York City and Columbus, Ohio,

for three years and worked on Victoria's Secret. My role was Specialty Store Designer, how to enhance customer experience, how to engage females as well as men to buy more lingerie.

They hired me to do Pink, an extension of Victoria's Secret, which caters to younger girls. I visited some of their stores and found that there were many different generations of stores that co-exist in the States; if a store didn't reach 12% sales growth on an annual basis, it would not earn a new design. There are about 1,000 stores in the States for Victoria's Secret and there are about four generations of design. So I talked to the construction director, looked at the numbers and came up with a refresh strategy to go in and retrofit the store. By changing some architecture details, the feature wall, the lighting, the flooring, the store layout – the refresh strategy has turned out to be very successful, increasing sales by double digits on average and bringing in an estimated cost savings of US\$31 to US\$40 million annually.

I also led one more initiative: 'Forum Shops', Victoria's Secret then newest store design type which drove more than 23% sales compared with previously, and then I resigned and moved back to Hong Kong. I worked for Dairy Farm, and then I jumped to Procter & Gamble, helping to create a design function specialising in retail, in-store brand equity, 'go-to-market' strategic framework and white space markets expansion. I spent about five years at P&G in Guangzhou, commuting – weekdays in Guangzhou and weekends in Hong Kong. I left the company and did an Executive MBA at Ivey School of Business in Hong Kong, part-time. I hadn't done architecture in a while, but joined Woods Bagot for a year. Then I bumped into these guys at a RISD's alumni event.

When?

TY: Almost three years ago. We never had the idea of forming

a partnership together. It was like 'what are you doing, and how's life?' We'd talk to each other quite often.

The three of you have quite different experiences...

TY: Yes. That's the interesting idea that we started to think about, that we all have our own expertise. I'm probably more the hands-on, getting my hands dirty. Tynnon is more research, concept, design, and Brian is more marketing, strategy, brand experience kind of thing.

So, how did it become official?

TY: I think Brian had a potential client who had some retail mall or re-brand in China, looking for help.

BM: A lot of Chinese developers build before they think. They build to the maximum plot ratio, and they build very fast and just hire a commercial team to call up all the brands you usually see. But when the brands don't come, they realise that something's not working. First they approach the architects and say that it must be the building that doesn't look pretty enough. When we engage them, we learn it's because there's no strategy in place; they don't know who their customers are, who they're targeting. That's the first layer, and then the programmes and then the brands which support the programmes. And then the layout, the whole experience, the entire mall setup. But they're like 'just make my building look pretty'. It's interesting to see tier-two, -three, or -four cities in China, all of them are like that. They build first, they crash the wall, and then they look for help. And instead of calling a retail specialist, they call the architects. To them, the outer shell is more important than what's inside.

TY: The other reason is they always try to find a quick fix. They think cosmetic improvements might be less costly than getting a deep-down solution.

In the West they call it 'putting lipstick on a pig'.

TY: Yes, to just fix it up instead of turning the whole thing upside down, gutting everything and starting over.

So that was the first way you three started working together...

TY: After we piled up our portfolio, the three of us ended up having a pretty extensive reference list and we complemented each other and represented different sectors and in that way we started talking about forming a partnership – which became XJET.

BM: We were invited to pitch for a project in China and at first we were scrambling things together and at one point we thought we needed to take this a little more seriously – like we should put a company together, a logo, business cards when we pitched rather than just three guys. So we put together everything we needed in a marketing plan and that's how the journey started.

What about the name?

TC: I was working on some Canadian projects, and at that time the company was JET. Now, the Canadian projects are done and I'm in Hong Kong, we're working together, so XJET is almost like a new company, but we do have a lot of JET project references. Somehow, we wanted to keep JET.

TY: In Chinese, the term means 'two wings'. It also means 'threesome', 'foursome'. Or you do it three times. It's got a pun to it. So a lot of times people make jokes like 'two isn't enough, you need three'. But they also tell us that it's a very good name. They won't forget it.

So XJET is born and what comes next? Are there multi streams to this? Because the China retail work

is very different from theoretical projects, or doing competitions or architecture.

TC: I think as an office, we need to sustain, so we need to do real projects. But I think 'X' represents something more experimental, theoretical, so we do competitions and West Kowloon was one of the outcomes. The other partner for that project, VPang, is also a friend from Columbia. XJET tries to collaborate with a lot of different people. And of course, parallel to that, we are doing some small local projects like residences on the Peak.

BM: A lot of investors have a hard time imagining things. Many developers were upgrading new houses on the Peak to attract Chinese investors, because if you sell them a piece of land, they don't know what to do with it. So we helped one client envision what the investor can do, creating the concept inside and then the brochure guide, and that was quite interesting to work on. We saw how a concept itself could attract an investor and it also helped us to market ourselves as an architectural firm.

Do you see these energies put into re-branding and imaging as a path to build buildings, or as a fundamental interest that XJET has, because it's actually interesting on its own?

TC: We try to be as proactive as we can, by looking into the potential of the project. We kind of envision ourselves rather than waiting for a client to come in and say 'we want you to do this'.

BM: I think it's a mix of both.

TY: To look at it from a bigger picture – definitely we want to get something built. But in the meantime, we want to create some interesting projects to push the normal perceptions of what a typical building is going to look like, and to challenge ourselves. And we can use that as a vehicle to transfer, or translate our concept for future clients.

TC: If you look at the real estate market in Hong Kong over the past 20 years, residential buildings have become more luxurious, more elaborate. So to a certain extent, this project and the West Kowloon project want to reverse that a little bit. And instead of giving you more stuff, we are keeping things basic. And then the second thing is, we like the idea of being interdisciplinary. We like to borrow fabrication techniques from different industries. So we like to mix different things together.

How do you work together in a practical sense? Is there a lot of discussion? Is it 'divide and conquer'? Do you play to your specialties, or is it everyone around the table, making a stew?

TY: I think we just chip in. Everyone puts in their two cents.

BM: We get into a room, we fight it out! See who still stands (laughs). What's interesting is that the three of us met at Columbia fifteen years ago, so it's not like we'd hate each other or walk out of the room. There's a trust, and that's what brought us together. We would have a very open conversation as to what each of our views are and how that would add value to the project. Especially when we have to pitch projects, we would look at what our competitors would do and what kind of difference we would bring. We competed with 30 firms for a project in China. To differentiate us, we didn't just do the architecture work, but we did the whole marketing campaign behind it, like what the customer experience would be like with smart phones around, how the CRM engagement would lead to people spending more time in the mall, the family interaction, the connected retail, so it's not just the architecture itself, but it's how the complete in-and-out of the mall experience comes together. And I think that's the fun thing that comes out of our studio.

Your firm is top-heavy in that it has three principals. At some point, three cooks in a kitchen becomes difficult. What is the strategy for when you get too busy to work together on every project in the office? Or do you figure

it's early and you'll solve it when you have the problem?

TC: I think we have the basic trust and respect that can avoid a lot of major arguments. Of course, there will be conflicts, but to avoid something fundamental...

TY: But we always respect each person's expertise, let's say branding and retail experience for Brian, or some construction, project-related questions, then I'd be more capable of solving it. When it comes to technological and conceptual issues, then we just go to different partners. So in that way it's sort of like a natural sharing, and we try to make good use of each other's experience.

In setting the direction of the firm, is it okay to do absolutely any kind of project?

TC: I don't think there are bad projects, but there are definitely bad clients. You need to work with them, but you are almost doing something that you don't believe in. We have met some of those.

Tell me briefly how the West Kowloon competition win happened and where it is at right now.

TC: It was an open competition that was held last year. We got awarded early this year. In terms of time, we're looking at completion by the end of next year. Construction will start early next year.

Were you surprised when you won?

TC: We had some confidence.

BM: We've done some competitions and we've always come second or third, so we really didn't want to be the second runner-up again! It was like if we don't win this, we're not doing another competition again! (laughs)

The old saying is that it's better to win second prize, because it gives you a little money in the bank, but no headaches! Do you see this as a breakthrough project for the company?

TC: I think it takes more than just one project. It's not a breakthrough, but it's about having a vague idea of what we all want and going for it, and seeing once in a while if this is still what we want.

TY: It might be a step to slowly building up the company...

It sounds like you're not trying to focus on cultural, public projects, institutions per se. You are just as excited about doing something like this or fixing a big mall in China because, for you, it's as interesting. Is that accurate?

TC: Yes, and there are three of us and we have different ideas about what is interesting and it's not fair to say that we won't do this. It's actually more interesting to find something in common that synthesises into hopefully one strong approach.

TY: As each project comes in, we look at it from a different angle, not just like one singular language or one singular design tendency would dominate a project.

BM: I think that each project comes out when there's a need or a problem. So for me it's interesting looking at how we add value or how we think differently to make the impossible possible. You asked how we split up our work; we actually do it quite smoothly. At the pre-planning stage, everything the client did not ask us to do comes from me. And then the things that are on the brief, goes to the two design architects. By default, the added-value part is mine. It's like a symphony and you have different instruments, then somehow the three of us become one, which makes it sound good.

To switch gears a bit, how do you feel about the context generally in Hong Kong right now for architectural potential? Do you feel it's a struggle to get your toe in

and start a little firm in Hong Kong? And is China still the giant dinner table, where we all feed from, or is that changing?

TY: I think that the context has become more complicated. Before, we might have the local market, several major developers and once in a while a small-scale project that you might have a chance to get selected for. Now you have, say, a new Chinese investor or China company having a major fund come to Hong Kong and do a hotel or office block or even a larger-scale project. There's an opportunity for us to say that we are a new company and that we'd give you a one-stop shop etc, but in the meantime you have to adapt to new models, doing a little bit of calculations, a little bit of retail branding and also a bit of narrative about what this project is going to be, or what this investment will turn into. I think they're more interested in us giving them a vision about the particular opportunity. I could say in a way we just need to be more proactive and more all-rounded.

TC: The question is about how we feel about China. Firstly, it's very different from Hong Kong. Maybe I don't know enough about Hong Kong, but it's about big developers and mega-sized projects, so it's difficult for small companies. We do a lot of interior projects.

There are the giant projects which are hard to break into but then there's the opposite. There's the tiny part that keeps a lot of designers alive.

TC: China still has small projects and you get to try different things. So in terms of scale, Hong Kong doesn't have a lot of big-scale things. In terms of design freedom, China has a little bit more allowance to do more.

BM: A lot of things are happening. Many of China's LDIs (local design institutes) are looking to go out of China, opening up offices in Hong Kong, or potentially buying architectural firms outside China. The LDIs all have over 300 registered architects minimum and they do humongous projects, even though the fees are lower. They would charge RMB 40 per square metre, but it's okay because the project is one square kilometre of housing, so another architecture firm would charge ten times the price, but the scale of the project is different.

Ten years ago, China was in need of education, it was like a sponge, learning from the outside world, and at the same time a lot of expats would go there and educate them. Now it's in flux, where they are learning how to innovate with what they have learnt. But by opening offices in Hong Kong, they could find international architects and set up a sub-office in Hong Kong for concept work. This combination, I think, is one of our biggest competitors because when we pitch for projects in China they have to do reference checks. They have different gradings and look at how many architects we have in our firm, so those firms that have the LDI plus a Hong Kong studio will actually have an edge. We don't have that infrastructure to compete with – so that's one of the hurdles.

Another side we're looking at is how design and innovation is missing in Hong Kong. I think the West Kowloon competition and PMQ are the best things Hong Kong has done in I don't know how long. But you look at the commercial side of it. PMQ, the first two floors, it's great – they've brought in emerging designers to open stores at lower rent, but you have Tom Dixon on the fifth floor! Yes, it helps the designers mingle with the international world, but we know that they are paying the full rents upstairs, right? I thought the government wanted to enable design and art for the people in Hong Kong, but they are not going all the way. I understand that there's a commercial value behind it but I think they're not handling very well the system of how you actually innovate on this concept. So I think there is still a hesitation as to how the government supports design as a whole. It's an interesting time and it's always on my mind: how innovation drives commercial value. That thinking is happening in companies in Korea, in the States, but in Asia I think a lot of developers come from the manufacturing business, so they are more focused on the tangible asset that adds commercial value.

TC: Innovation is what designers want, but sometimes developers or people who sell stuff are afraid of innovation because not everyone accepts it, and they don't want to be the first one to try out this approach.

PMQ is a good example, because it's something quite fresh for Hong Kong. Time will tell if it really succeeds on its own, but it's a serious attempt to do something a bit out of the ordinary for the city.

TY: I think there have been several of these conversions over the years, but PMQ is one of the conversions that has a better chance and also with the capacity and the retail-related aspect...

But there is an aspect to places like Hong Kong and Singapore where it's top-down as opposed to natural or indigenous. In most places, creativity happens organically; artists finding cheap rent somewhere so that's where they paint, or a small cultural mass is reached in a neighbourhood. It's not a government or mayor saying, 'We are going to have an arts scene right here.' I don't know whether it's possible in Hong Kong. The rents are so high, for one thing.

TY: I think it's Asian mentality. First of all, it's the ownership of the land. You don't have small parts of land owned by individuals in the middle of the city. Not like Tokyo, Korea or even in China. The ownership of the land can be quite scattered. In that way you have the opportunity for individuals to actually make something happen. Like a bottom-up theory, where one thing happens, then you start to migrate to a bigger colony. Here, everything is either controlled by the government or controlled by the landlord. Shanghai or Beijing have run-down warehouses turned into artists' villages and after that they turn into hip places, and become somewhat commercial, but not 100% commercial. But here, because of the rents and the people who are investing are always looking for the quickest way to get their money back, that's hard.

As much as you can tell, do you think West Kowloon will still be a positive cultural precinct for this city, or do you fear it will become just another excuse to sell expensive apartments on its edge? Are you sceptical or optimistic?

TC: I'd say we're still optimistic. For me, West Kowloon is a bit like TST East 30 years ago.

BM: I have a different view. If you look at the whole West Kowloon development, it is huge-scale projects and you're left with this one corridor for the arts and culture scene. At the end of the day, the government, who lends money to the West Kowloon committee, still has to be profitable.

I have two questions for that. Firstly, does it really need to be economically viable? Can't a city as rich as Hong Kong afford loss leaders, especially with cultural projects – museums, theatres and so on – projects that don't make a profit? And secondly, that chaos you described: great cities are often great precisely because of that chaos; when it's not all masterplanned to the nth degree. It seems so typically Hong Kong to say that a whole precinct will be given to two or three giant developers who will solve all the problems ahead of time. Maybe some chaos is an inherent necessity for great cities.

BM: Yes, agreed, when you have an evolution of chaos.

TC: But I think West Kowloon might be the catalyst that will affect the outside of that area. Because the outside, Tai Kok Tsui, Mongkok, are old neighbourhoods that have good potential to be more design- and culture-oriented. So I think if West Kowloon is successful, that will be the beginning.

I hope you're right. Are these culture palaces really going to work, or are they simply going to be giant showpieces? Do the people want them? Will the people of Hong Kong really take to it, and say 'I want to get

there and see what's going on'?

TC: The influence of West Kowloon is already happening. If you look at all the major malls and all the smaller, local malls they all start to have art galleries and art events, because the issue is on the table.

Let's go back to the other half of my question – why does it have to make money?

BM: Because you have to pay rent.

But why? For West Kowloon the landlord is the government.

TC: Because the government is responsible to the people, and ultimately a lot of Hong Kong people think 'Why are we spending with our taxpayers' money?' And nowadays, Hong Kong people ask a lot of these kind of questions. They really try to challenge the government.

If breaking-even financially is the prime metric of success, then we're in big trouble as a city.

TC: The thing is: Hong Kong people, when they do business or development, they look for quantifiable benefits. This is the normal way to run business and Hong Kong is a business city.

BM: Hong Kong's a very tough place, because of the mentality of people. That's why my parents put me in college in the States. Because in Hong Kong, everything you ask your kids to do, they'd say 'no'.

What appeals to people who come to Hong Kong as tourists or move here as expats, is precisely the old chaos, the Mongkoks, the TSTs as they used to be, Causeway Bay as it used to be. It may not appeal to you because you're from here, but culturally, to a foreigner, that's what excites. They don't care about the fancy skyscrapers – those are everywhere. They don't care how organised Swire is in Taikoo; they love the night markets and the mess. Can we keep any of that?

BM: When I watched Transformers, there were a lot of scenes of places that I had honestly never been to, and they're quite interesting places. When they got to the Kowloon side and all those scenes, that's what Hong Kong is about.

But will we have any of that in ten years?

TC: I think the Kowloon Walled City was super cool. I've never been there, I've only looked at pictures. The roof and Kai Tak. Yes, we romanticise things like that.

It's a tough one, because people actually living in those messy places that the tourists love will tell us 'I'd rather live in a nice, new apartment, thank you very much.'

TC: So I think we have to be very clear about what we like about it and what are the mistakes. Then just maybe clean up the mistakes and keep the roof, keep the cool part of it. If you apply it to the whole city, it's not that tricky. Keep some of the valuable bits, the nicer parts.

But how to actually stop development? Because of the value, even small developers will fight over these plots. How do you keep it? It's hard to stop the ocean of money.

TC: All in all, the Urban Renewal Authority is very strong. They have power.

TY: There are cities like Singapore, which has a half-government, half-private entity that deals with urban renewal projects. And it's also very powerful. They can keep the old Chinatown as it is but inject new business into it by having a small boutique hotel come in. Even though the building's

outlook is the same you have a boutique hotel inside. And that's sort of like another way of keeping the balance.

It's a bit late here, but absolutely, the Singapore model is similar in its structure but different in its attitude.

TY: Like maybe within the old city quarters there's like 5% or 10% of the land that can be built up into a new building to compensate the operation costs for the old city quarters.

Yet there's also a counter-argument which says that keeping old charming neighbourhoods is the old colonial attitude. Perhaps it is nostalgic to glamourise mess and night markets.

TC: You start to see a little of the ageing process in Mei Foo, which was one of the first and now has a little of the old city texture to it. Maybe that can happen.

BM: I don't know if we need to move more backwards or more forwards. In a way, when I see the red, blue and white plastic bag, that's Hong Kong. And these things are fading away, and that's kind of sad.

TC: But the best thing is when they mix together. I remember when the airport moved [from Kai Tak], the height restriction was removed also, but then the ownership of the land was so fragmented that there could not be only big projects, so it started to develop into a very interesting landscape of new and old buildings.

That's fantastic and there are still a few spots of that on Hong Kong island. Can you freeze somehow at the middle point or in 20 years will it all just be the towers? How does the government carefully say 'let's wait till the mix is really cool and then somehow freeze it or at least keep it.' I think a four-storey walk-up beside a tower is fantastic. That's really Hong Kong, but how do we protect that? Because I'm seeing places like Wan Chai where there's no more four-storeys. Only 40 stories and that's the pity.

TC: What about the market? Can the market find its equilibrium?

TY: The market is money... That's very optimistic.

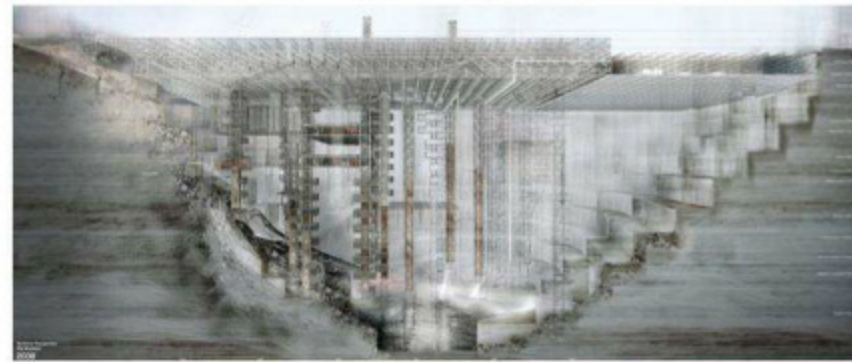
BM: Yah... we need more transformation initiatives like Xintiandi in Shanghai, Taikoo Li in Chengdu and 1881 Heritage here in Hong Kong.

But what would be their motivation? If the citizens cared enough to say 'Sheung Wan must be protected as low-rise!' that would be extremely powerful. But it would just be a bunch of us architects out there, right? Really, the 'citizens' probably think that this is great, let's finally clean up that messy Wan Chai, make nice clean buildings!

And let's face it, we all enjoy these low taxes because the revenue base of Hong Kong is from land. So there's a tension. And with the costs of housing going ever higher people aren't going to go out to protect low-rise, low-density, they want the opposite - cheaper houses and more of them. Without tax raises. So it's a contradiction already, and great old architecture is going to lose, because it's the weakest.

BM: Yes... when we find ways to commercialise design and enable us to drive disruptive innovations.

We'll see. Interesting discussion, guys. Thank you very much.



Young and Restless

Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC) recently announced the 18 winners of the Hong Kong Young Design Talent Award (HKYDTA) 2014. Six of them received a sponsorship prize of HK\$500,000 each, in the form of the CreateSmart Young Design Talent Award; seven received the CreateSmart Young Design Talent Special Award; one received HK\$250,000 via the PolyU School of Design Young Design Talent Award and another also HK\$250,000, via the HKDI Young Design Talent Award. Additionally, three talents received a citation in the form of the Young Design Talent Special Mention Award. Organised annually by the HKDC, the HKYDTA aims to support local up-and-coming design practitioners and design school graduates. The financial aspect of the reward allows winners to experience work attachment in a renowned overseas design company, or to pursue further studies in design, also overseas, for 6 to 12 months. www.ydta.hk



Fab Fabrics

Fashion house Paul & Joe has partnered with textiles company Madura to create a new line of linens and home accessories with two distinct themes. The Quintessentially British range is inspired by hunting and sports scenes. For the Midnight Garden series, Sophie Mechaly of Paul & Joe merged traditional and modern details, resulting in natural-hued cushions and home accessories with textured animal prints. The debut collection, which consists of cushions, drapery, quilts and bedding, is available at Madura's Hong Kong Maison in Central and Madura's Boutique Showroom in Sheung Wan. www.paulandjoe.com www.madura.fr



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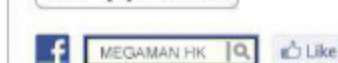
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Mish Mash Mesh

Patricia Urquiola has used metal mesh to create a new collection of outdoor furniture for Spanish brand Kettal. Named after its distinctive material, the range comprises a sofa, table and chair that also integrate other industrial and natural materials. According to a statement from Kettal, Mesh "recalls architectural facades, which filter the surrounding environment without stopping the light and air flow". The sofa in particular comes with an aluminium mesh back and arms, which bend outward slightly to create angled rests for the side cushions. Three planes of solid wood create the base, supporting two large upholstered seat cushions. www.kettal.com



The Art Man Cometh

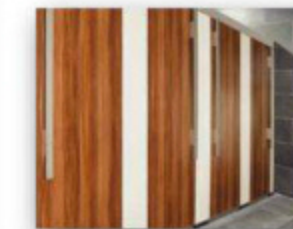
White Cube gallery in Hong Kong's Central district is hosting an exhibition by Los Angeles-based artist Friedrich Kunath. Kunath's work, which covers a range of media including drawing, painting, sculpture, installation and photography, presents an "altered reality". For his latest exhibition, Kunath has created a series of new landscapes combining an eclectic range of characters, both animal and human, and set against what he calls "highly romantic backdrops". The artist employs various painting styles, sometimes detailed and proficient in the manner of classical oil paintings, at other times illustrative and cartoon-like, using pencil outline. Notes White Cube gallerist Honey Luard, "Kunath's work is enjoyably comedic: displaying a hopeful and resilient side to human nature that is allusive and free of irony. He has explained that he always tries to 'paint the inside of things... my own private and distorted equilibrium... a place where agitation and consolation materialises and recreates itself into a meta landscape'." The exhibition runs until January 17. www.whitecube.com/hongkong

Dress Circle

Portugal-based Wewood has developed a new chair inspired by the costume worn by women in what is probably Spain's most famous indigenous dance form. Designed by Maria Bruno Neo, Flamenco is a three-legged stool that combines innovative design with traditional techniques of joinery. The chair features a spinning seat crafted from solid oak, with a signature detail that recalls the ruffles of a flamenco skirt, transforming the stool into a functional yet fun object that can be used in the kitchen, dining room, or simply as an occasional seating solution. www.wwood.eu



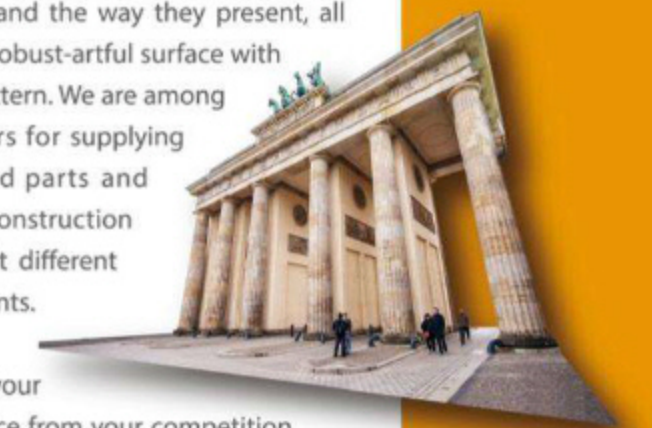
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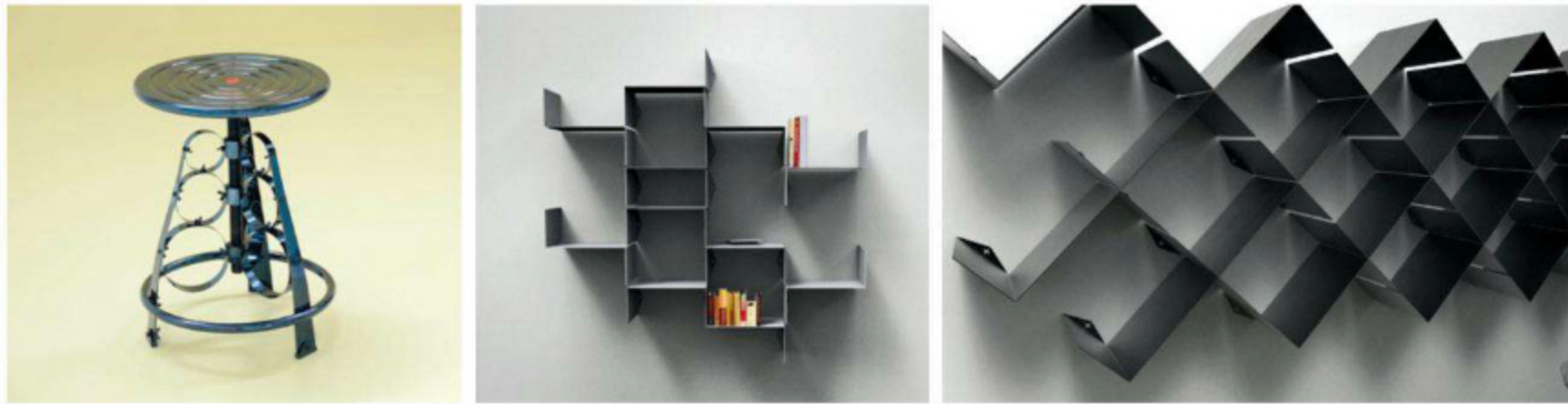
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Steely Confidence

Two new pieces by Ron Arad for Italian furniture specialist Moroso take inspiration from industrial design. The 3 Nuns stool is constructed from strips of tempered steel connected using simply butterfly nuts. The strips make the stool resilient and flexible, "gradually discharging tension" while also "becoming both the structure and the identifying feature of the object". Z-Shelf is a modular bookshelf system made from bent metal sheet. Its units can be assembled in virtually any form to hold and display items such as books and bric-a-brac. The modules come in sets of four, with a protective clear lacquer finish on matte black steel. According to Moroso, the shelf is "a snapshot of abandoned industry... an incomplete grille, broken up by cuts which lighten the perception". www.moroso.it



Style Guru

The Madison Group recently unveiled a groundbreaking retail experience in Hong Kong's Wanchai neighbourhood. Spanning three storeys, the House of Madison is a 12,000sq ft multi-use retail and event space. Products from the group's high-end furniture and lifestyle brands, including Subzero, Wolf and Rimadesio, are often used during culinary workshops and private parties, and for art installations. Inside, the space features a series of dining and entertaining areas, including a wine tasting room and a balcony lounge, designed in wood, tactile stone and sleek aluminium. House of Madison is ideal for both public and private events. www.madison-asia.com



Ander-cadabra

Anderssen & Voll has created a bar stool for Italian brand Magis that reinterprets a design that first appeared in sci-fi films and television shows. The Norwegian studio put its own spin on the 2002 Bombo stool by Stefano Giovannoni, which incorporated a gas-lift system to move the seat up and down. The new Tibu bar stool features two discs forming the base and seat, connected by a perpendicular pole. A small section branches off to create a footrest, made from the same tubular steel. The stool comes in two standard heights and eight different colours. www.magisdesign.com



Fowl Language

German design studio KaschKasch has used the shape of a cartoon character as the basis for a lamp for Danish brand Normann Copenhagen. Cap is a desk lamp with a large semi-circular lampshade. It is made from steel lacquered in a matte finish. The idea for the shape came from a cartoon character called Calimero – a little chicken with an eggshell on its head. "The shade can be rotated, making it possible to direct the light. It can function as a reading lamp or be used to create mood lighting," says Normann Copenhagen CEO and co-founder Paul Madsen. Cap comes in light blue, pink, white and deep blue options. www.normann-copenhagen.com



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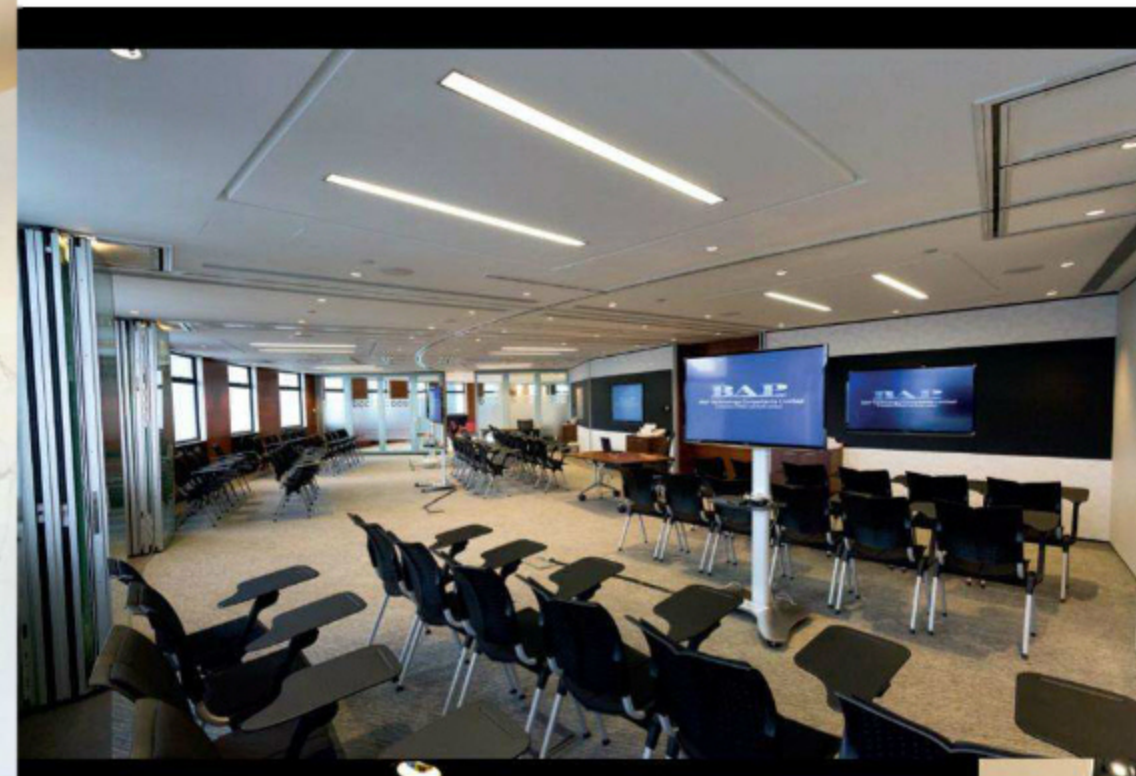
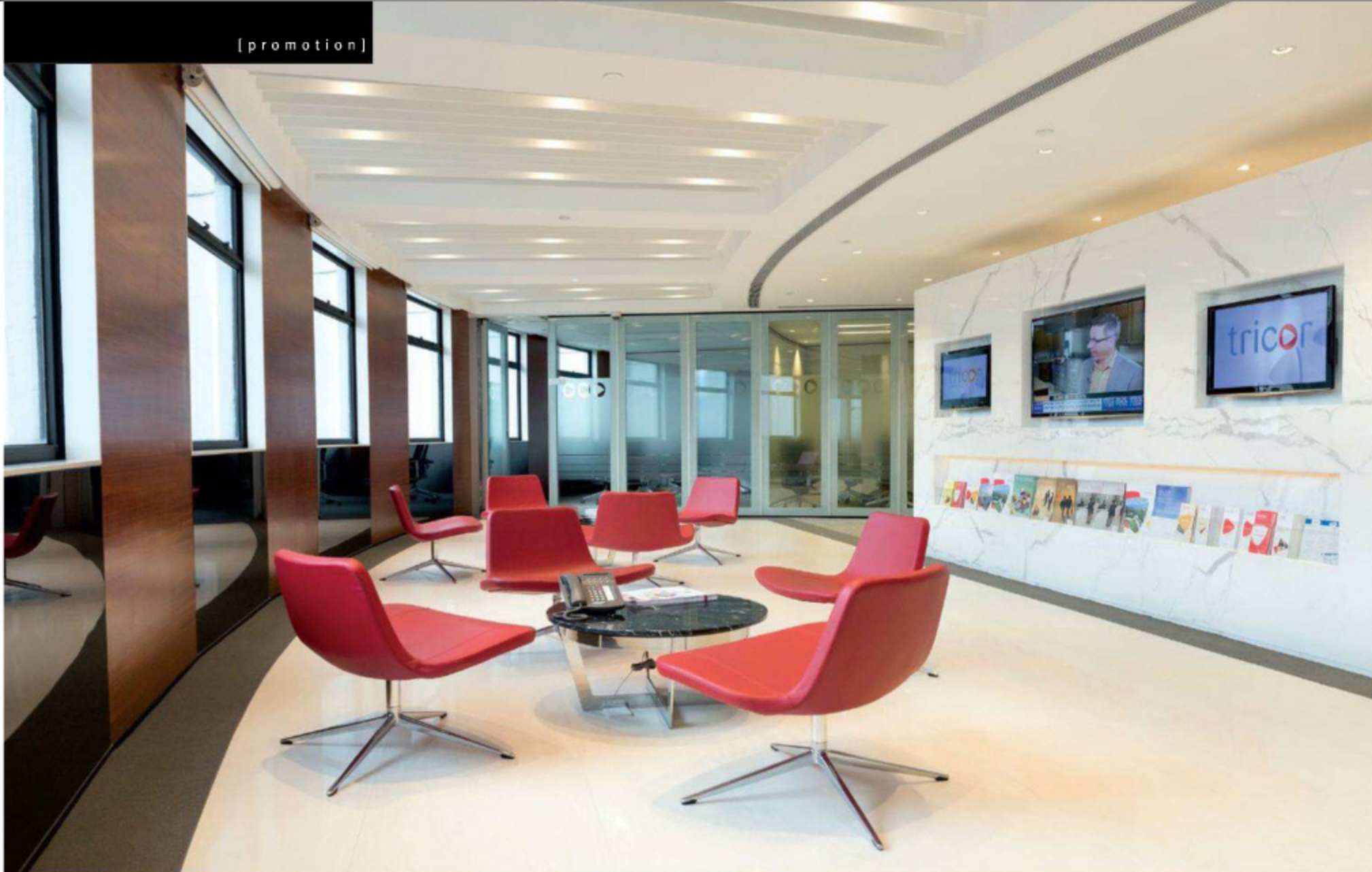
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Modern workplaces with a strong culture now provide advanced tools, systems and resources that enable staff to get their jobs done wherever and whenever they choose. Full-service solutions provider, BAP Technology Consultants Limited, offers audiovisual and light dimming technology to empower organisations so that team members can work effectively. For Tricor, a global provider of integrated business, corporate and investor services, BAP installed several new systems across their Hong Kong HQ at Hopewell Centre in Wanchai.

BAP adopted the latest XTP Systems® by Extron to fulfill Tricor's request for a hybrid transmission system, a system that is compatible with analog signals, such as VGA, while being able to catch HDMI or DVI signals from new devices like Apple TV, tablets and the latest notebooks. This presents numerous opportunities for all staff to get more great work done. XTP Systems delivers extremely high switching and transmission performance to support a wide range of video formats, including the highest resolution HDMI and DVI signals. It is also designed for optimum performance and 24/7 reliability, therefore modular components are hot-swappable so that the processor can be serviced or reconfigured without powering down the entire unit.

A major challenge was the installation of lighting and audiovisual devices in Tricor's boardroom and training rooms, so that they could be controlled individually and in specific combined modes. To this end, a matrix system was built and programmed by an experienced AV specialist. However, the matrix of signaling was the most complex part of this project. BAP had to make sure the cable conduits, wiring, and lighting circuits could accommodate the matrix design. Their professional AV designers built a user-friendly control that could be managed with ease.

Additionally, the new system is operable via iPad, providing users mobility, flexibility and strengthening operation support. BAP's design allows a single iPad to control each venue remotely, and its interface is made to look just like the touch panel control, making it user-friendly.

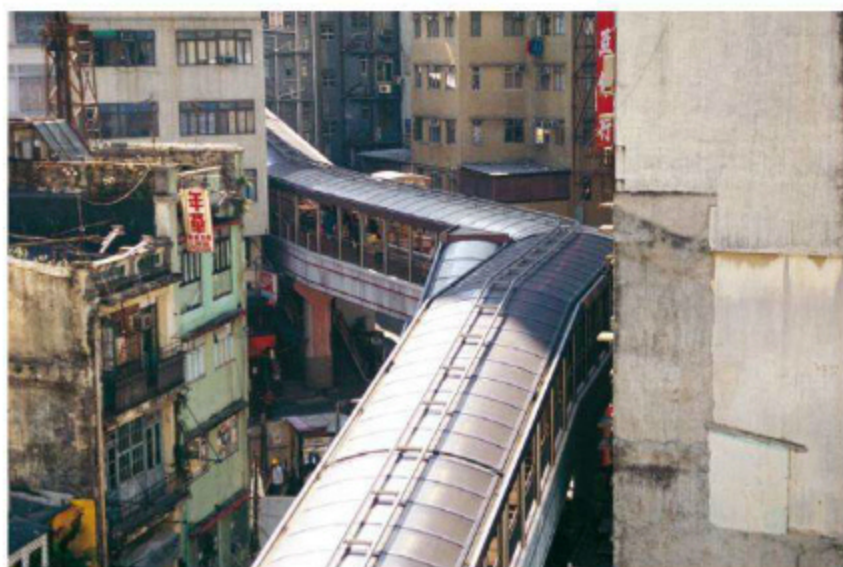
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Hong Kong is Land

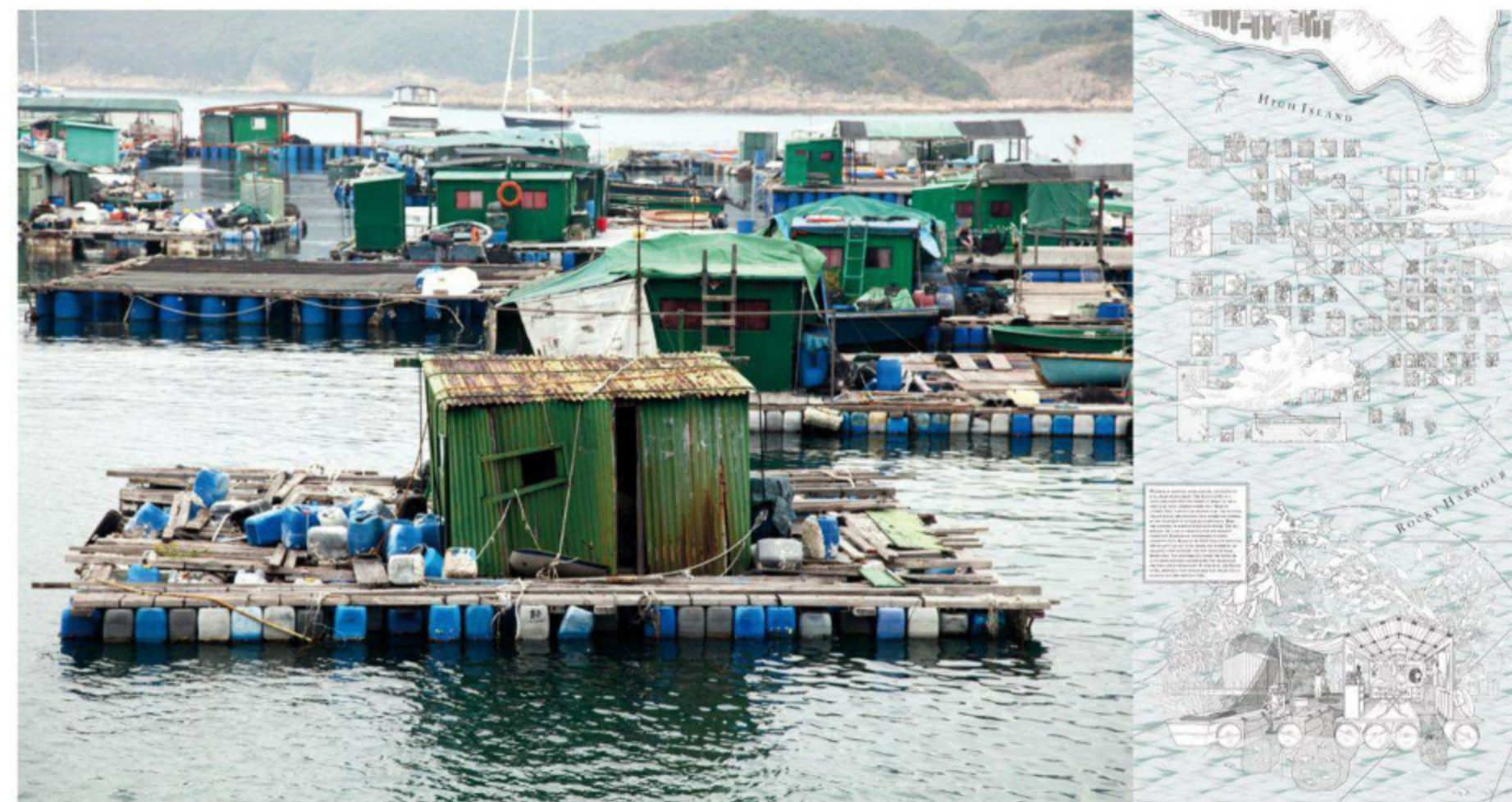
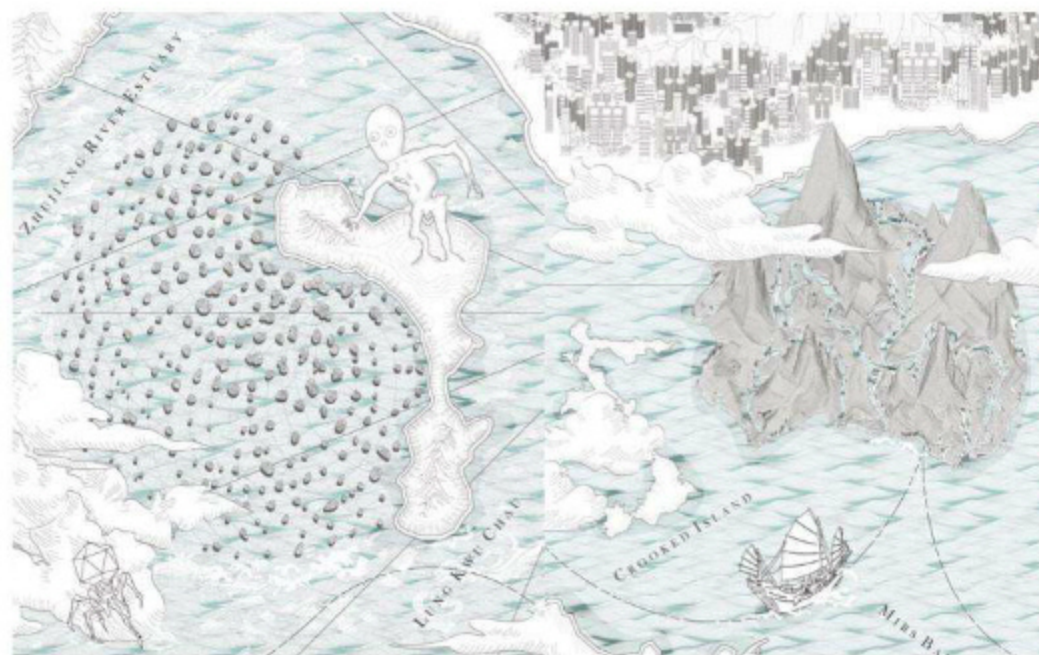
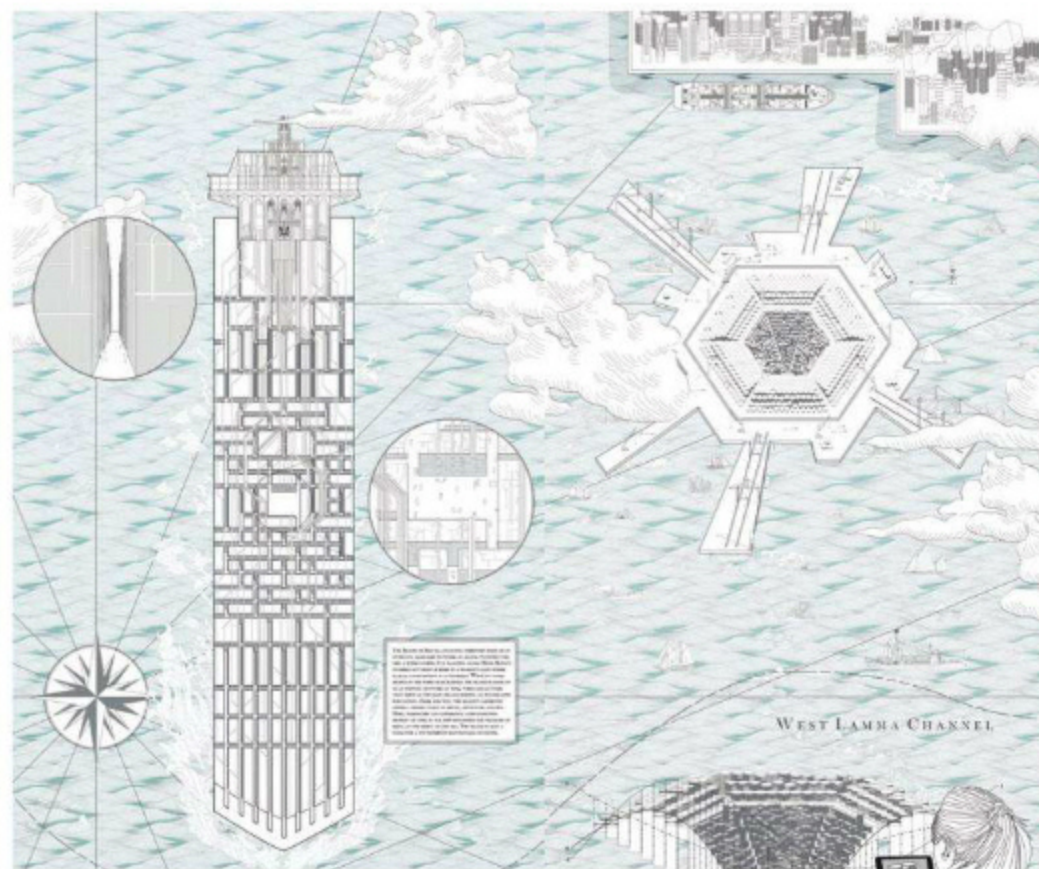
MAP Office



The bitter pill that city slickers swallow every day is common enough around the globe: lack of space. As they dream of vast forests and expansive meadows, their reality is often a cubicle by day and a shoebox by night (with a crowded subway ride between). Nowhere is the urban squeeze more apparent than in Hong Kong, a city with the most expensive real estate per square foot on the planet. For Hong Kong-based French architects Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix, the duo behind MAP Office, this issue has provided plenty of fodder for their artistic endeavours. The latest, supported in part by a HK\$150,000 Design Trust Cultural Project Grant and by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, is a scroll depicting eight imaginary islands that seek to address the city's land shortage crisis. It is part of an exhibition titled *Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities*, curated by Pedro Gadanho and currently on show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

"We see three ways to address the need for land in Hong Kong," says Portefaix. "Reclamation – which no one wants. Appropriating our country parks – again, not an option. The third is to build new islands that are self-sustainable... Built islands do not add to or take away from the city. China has created some 200 new islands near Dalian, which have become self-sufficient in terms of energy and food. Our *Hong Kong is Land* project examines the scenario from a fictional, artistic approach. We wanted to define what was essentially Hong Kong: its network of landscapes, its back alleys, its rooftops, its waste. And each of the [imagined] islands provides a distinctive hub for tourism."

With assistance from Hong Kong Polytechnic University students Jenny Choi Hoi Ki, Xavier Chow Wai Yin, Hugo Huang Jiawu, Venus Lung Yin Fei, Winson Man

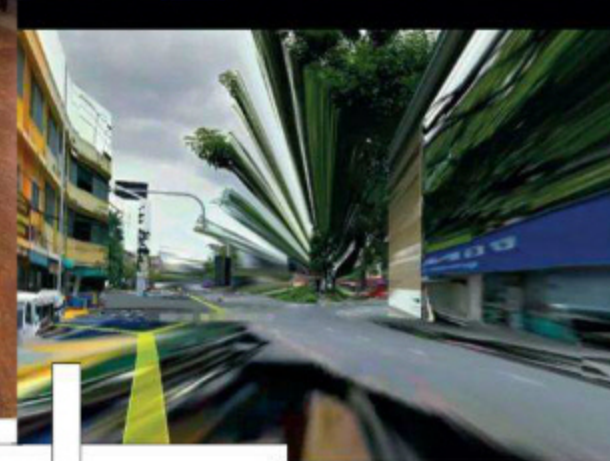
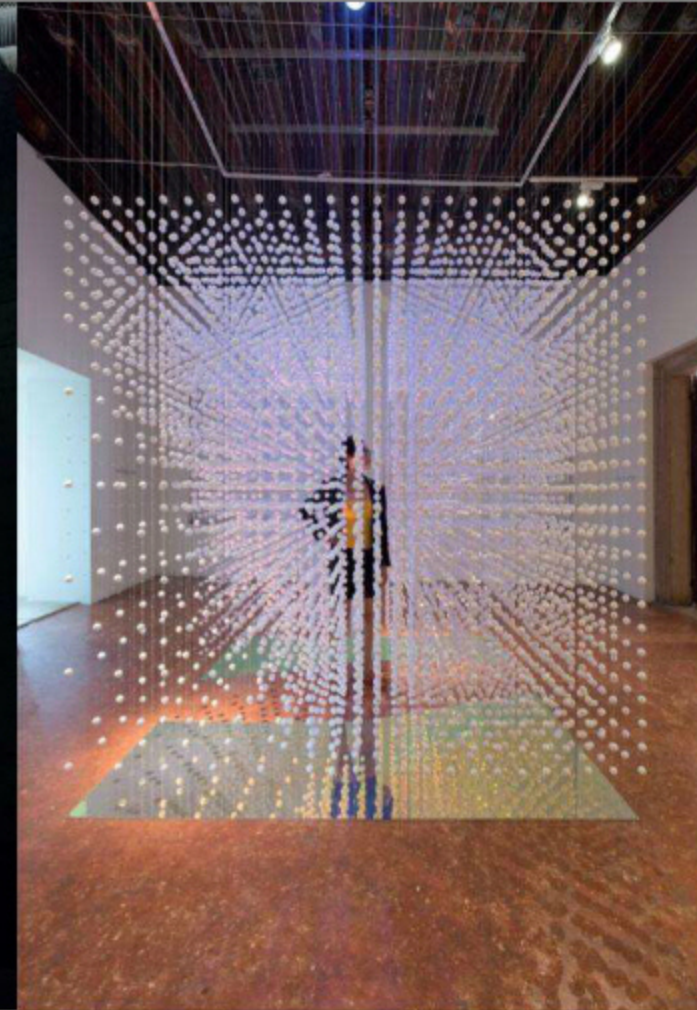


Ting Fung, Tammy Tang Chi Ching and Vivienne Yang Jiawei, MAP Office, together with project supervisor and PolyU School of Design professor Gilles Vanderstocken, oversaw the creation of eight hand-drawn tablets that form the basis of the presentation scroll. "This project changed a lot as it evolved," Portefaix admits. "We originally envisioned a film with actors. That eventually became drawings, which then became eight short films. We already had interest from MoMA, but no funding. We knew Jehan Chu, one of Design Trust's board members, from when we were awarded the Sovereign Asian Art Prize in 2013. He mentioned that there was a new organisation and that we should talk to Alan Lo (chairman of Hong Kong Ambassadors of Design, the parent organisation of Design Trust)."

Although MAP Office already had the project well under way, it used the grant money to hire professionals and finalise the film's details – the exhibition at MoMA was thus a more polished product, owing to Design Trust's support. Portefaix acknowledges it is somewhat of a catch-22 situation for talented artists who wish to reach a wider audience but require extra finance. "In Hong Kong, there is a lack of space for showcasing this type of project, which means that we had to show abroad. Yet there is very little local funding support for an exhibition that takes place abroad. I think that artists who are interested in applying for a Design Trust Cultural Project Grant should present not necessarily an [outstanding or innovative] project, but one where there is already interest by an internationally recognised venue. It gives the project a certain aura if it is slated to be exhibited at MoMA or Victoria & Albert Museum. The board members can then prove to their sponsors that their funds have been invested wisely."

Hong Kong is Land, part of *Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities*, will remain on display at MoMA until 10 May 2015.

[frame]



Living Architecture

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7 November to 7 December 2014

Architects often have a love-hate relationship with technology. On the one hand, it helps them accomplish more and to spread the good news about their work faster, to more people, all the way to those in remote corners of the globe that were previously isolated. On the other hand, it puts added pressure on them to be always better than their last project, because the world is watching.

For its 18th annual festival, Microwave explores the relationship that people have with their city and technology. The word 'architecture' is employed in the broadest sense possible: it includes a 10-part collection by internationally renowned artists and architects that explore new architectural shells. "Human beings plus architecture makes up a city," says Joel Kwong, director with Microwave and curator of the month-long festival. "For *Living Architecture*, we wanted to examine the human body and technology as the materials that make up a different type of architecture."

The Microwave Festival began in 1996 as a video art showcase celebrating local talent, and was originally affiliated with local video art institution Videotage. As technology became more and more accessible, the event evolved to encompass other media. Today, Microwave Festival is an annual month-long cultural calendar highlight that brings cutting-edge artists to Hong Kong, provoking further discussions about the pros and cons of technology – as well as wonderment at what it can accomplish. The festival's main attraction is always the installation mounted in the low block at City Hall, while satellite events such as workshops, seminars, forums and film screenings are held across town.

Living Architecture was a lively show that included a screening of Ila Beka and Louise Lemoine's 1998 film *Koolhaas HouseLife* at the Hong Kong Space Museum. "It's about the architecture of Rem Koolhaas, but from the perspective of his housekeeper,"

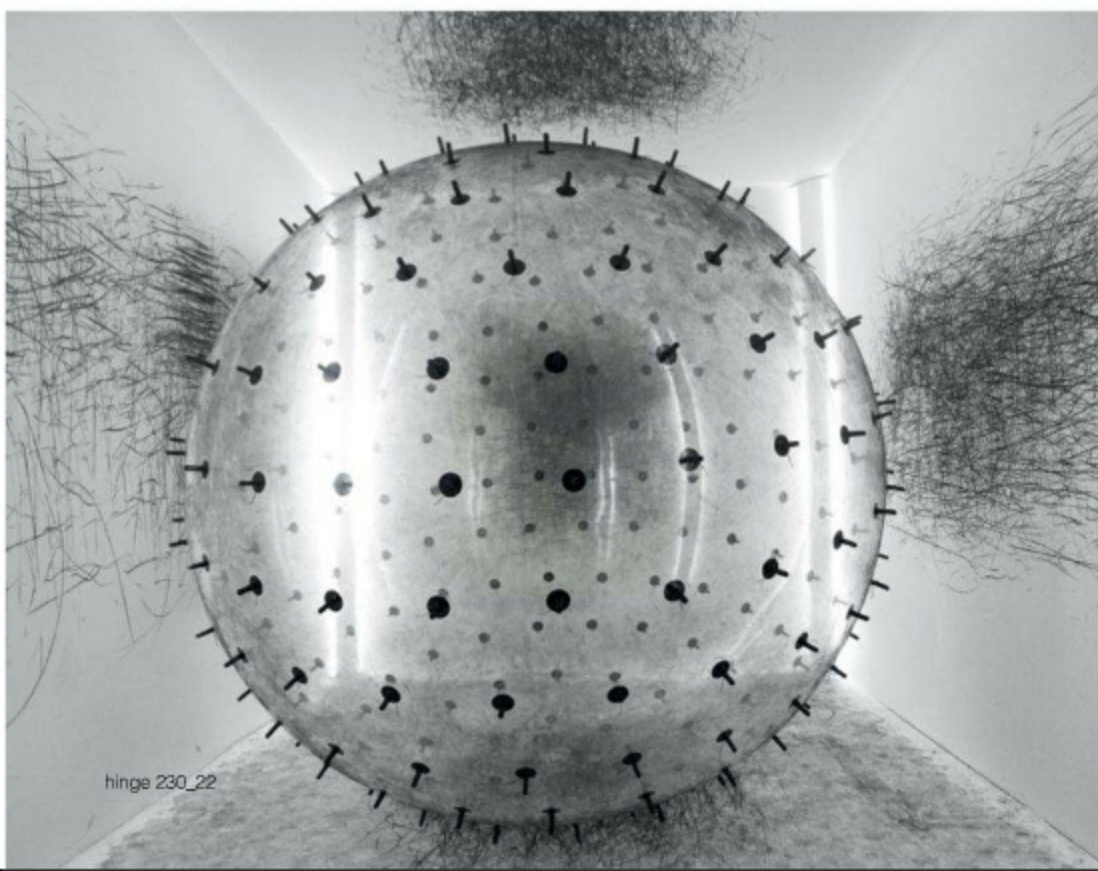
says Kwong with a wry smile. "The film asks how practical his work is." Other screenings included *DTMOV 2013* and selected animations from *Future Film Day in Daiwan*, both in the Clockenflap film tent at West Kowloon Cultural District.

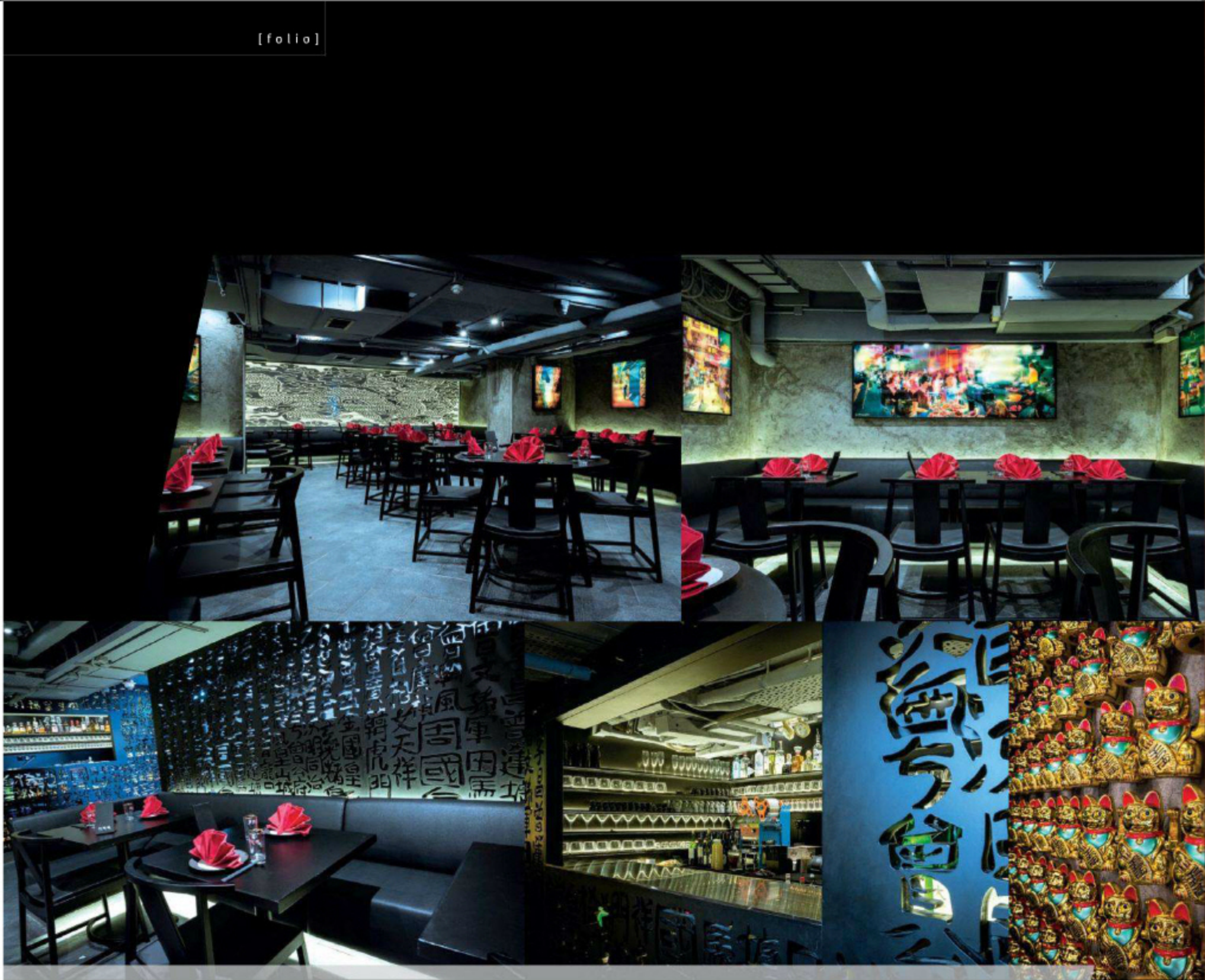
The festival's keynote conference was an international affair with speakers from Serbia, Germany, the US and the UK talking about their interpretations of space. For people who wanted to get their hands dirty, public workshops held at City Hall included Australian Lukasz Karluk's take on *Creating Sound Sculptures with OpenFrameworks* and Americans Huy Bui and Carlos Gomez de Llerena's *Plant-in Hong Kong*, a 'gardening' experience that turned out to be quite popular.

Without doubt, the highlight of the festival consisted in the 10 installations themselves. The creepy floating 'molecular' creature ADA, by German/Polish Karina Smigla-Bobinski, kept marking the room and its inhabitants with charcoal streaks, thus allowing every visitor to have a hand in creating the eventual outcome of the installation. Englishman Charlie Behrens' *Algorithmic Architecture*

was a film comprising Google Earth's 3D street scenes from the perspective of a car travelling along a road in Hong Kong. Bui and Gomez de Llerena's *Plant-in City* featured a self-sustaining stack of terrariums made from cedar and copper piping. Karluk's *HoloDecks* 'mapped' music as landscapes through 3D printing. Bekkering Adams Architects from The Netherlands presented *Fundamentals: Form-ContraForm* – a room filled with suspended balls that appears to expand once the viewer is inside. "It alludes to the fact that our resources are finite," says Kwong. "But we don't see that, being in our world where everything seems expansive." Hong Kong's Mathias Woo showed his *A Very Good City*, a series of iconic, captioned images that together depicted the city as poetry in motion.

If architecture could be given such wide latitude with such compelling results using technology, imagine what buildings could be created if all architects made it their friend instead of foe.





WHAT

Ho Lee Fook [Cantonese for 'good fortune for your mouth'] is a stylish, new Chinese restaurant inspired by old-school Hong Kong cha chaan tengs.

WHERE

On Elgin Street in Hong Kong's Soho district.

WHO

Douglas Young of notorious lifestyle brand G.O.D and Hong Kong-based Black Sheep Restaurants group.

HOW

Upon entering, guests are led down a flight of stairs into the main dining area with dark tones and dim lighting. The space is imbued with a funky ambience and is full of playful details. For example, the myriad of golden lucky cats that flank the staircase, or the walls lined with mahjong tiles outside the open kitchen. Additionally, bright backlit artwork by local artist Johnathan Jay Lee depict scenes from Gauge Street market, while the back wall is dominated by a giant, 3D dragon mural.

WHY

"We wanted to create a space that our local friends would be proud to hang out in," says Black Sheep Restaurants co-founder Christopher Mark. "Ho Lee Fook not only offers a fantastic menu, but a cool setting to kick back and relax." From branded chopsticks to a rock and roll playlist, every detail at the restaurant has been designed with customer experience in mind. The result is an eclectic space that draws a hip crowd.



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WHAT

Hotel Clover The Arts, an art themed 44-room boutique hotel with basic facilities enhanced by one of a kind wall paintings and graffiti by local talent.

WHERE

A colonial shophouse in the centre of Singapore's Chinatown.

WHO

CEO Teo Kok Hwee with art by the likes of students from Raffles Design Institute, Temasek Polytechnic and Singapore Polytechnic, as well as local artists Ceno2 and from Life Art Society.

HOW

By capitalising on the shophouse's architectural features for distinctive room types with an extra layer of fun and colourful murals. By enlisting the assistance of budding artists, providing a platform for them to reach a wider audience while at the same time keeping things real and frills free.

WHY

Singapore's Chinatown has become a haven for boutique hotels, and Hotel Clover The Arts adds another layer to the eclectic mix. In a cookie cutter world of standard hotel parts, it is refreshing to find a hotel where the line between sleeping and waking is blurred through full height surrounds of surreal imagery. Even hallways are not overlooked, as they become gardens of earthly delights. An art gallery with a few beds is surely an immersive way to enjoy a painting.

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WHAT
Ghost Gallery, a renegade gallery space.

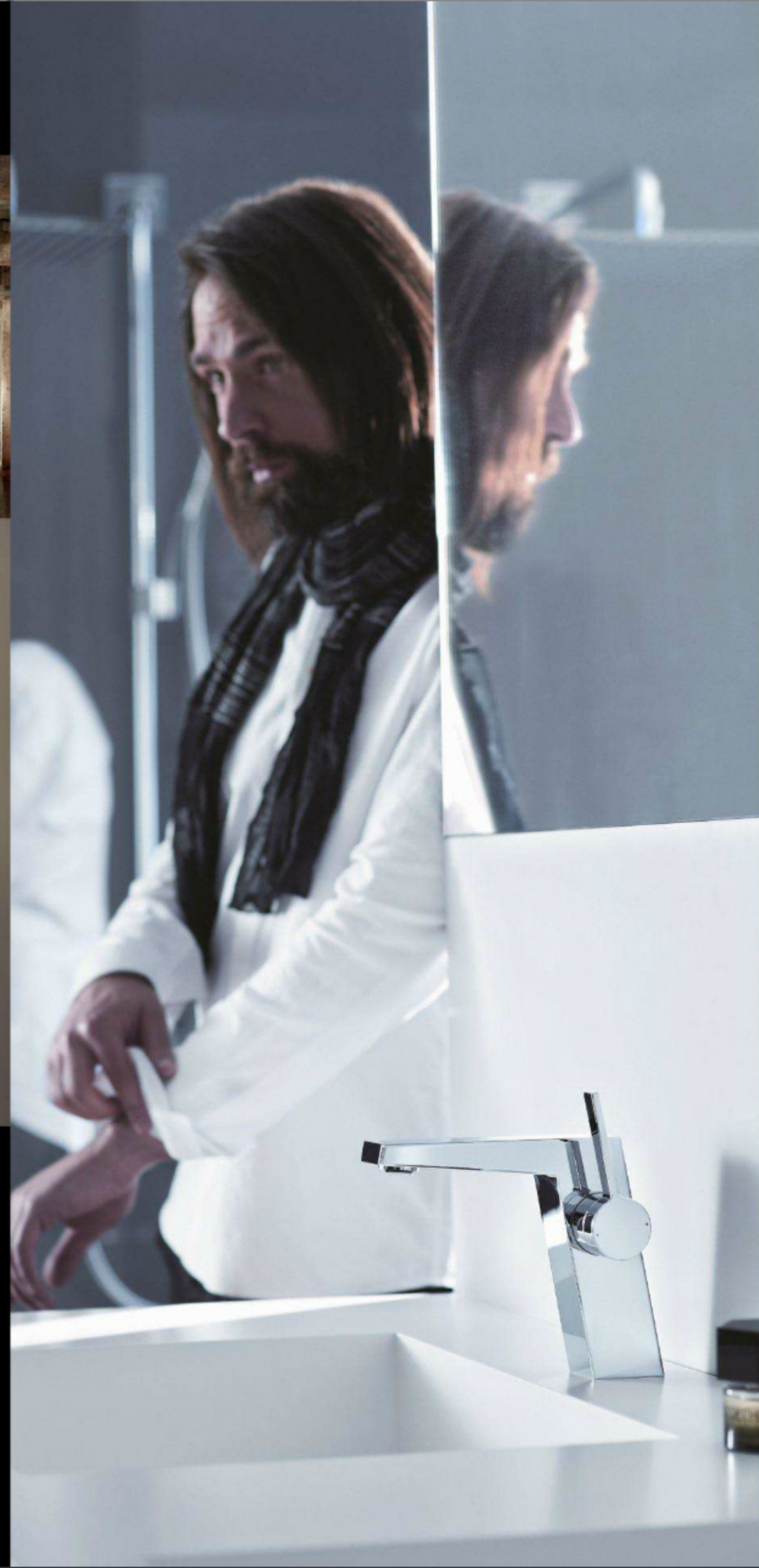
WHERE
Oklahoma City, USA.

WHO
Elliott + Associates Architects.

HOW
Utilising the basement level of an historic, former Buick car dealership set along 'automobile alley', in downtown Oklahoma City, this space combines exposed concrete and masonry structural elements of the existing building, with subtle newer (and smoother) surfaces, lighting and furniture appropriate for displaying art and

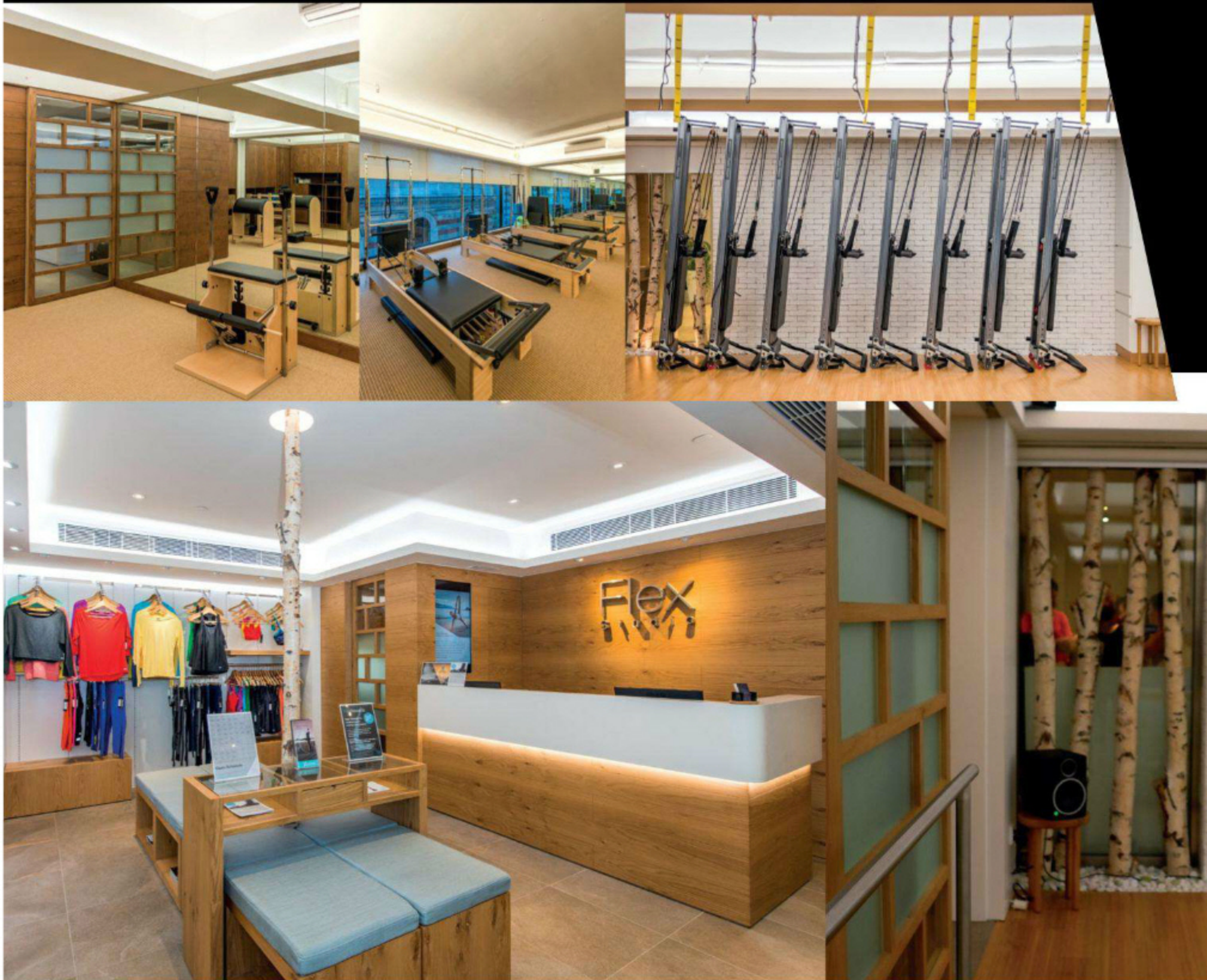
hosting discreet private dinner gatherings devoted to specific topics of discussion. The furniture is bespoke plywood, a delightful juxtaposition of high-end detailing and low-end generic material.

WHY
Because since Buick decamped, this basement served no purpose as lofty as art and thought. Because there's a steak restaurant upstairs, so the kitchen facilities were tempting. Because the idea of art – and desirable minds to ponder it – 'sneaking' together, then disappearing again afterward, like ghosts, was irresistible. Because Rand Elliott could make the inside of a trash dumpster look great.



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WHAT

Flex, the second installment of an upscale Pilates studio with an emphasis on holistic well being.

WHERE

The heart of Central in Hong Kong – perfect for office workers trying to squeeze in an hour of gentle exercise as they squeeze into their Lululemon tops.

WHO

Hong Kong retail designer RedGoodss.

HOW

Through use of natural materials such as white pebbles, timber, sisal and slate. Through insertions of calming elements such as tree branches in the reception/ retail area and the multi-purpose studio. Through specification of Pilates equipment with timber shells, for a seamless look throughout the space. Through details such as shoji-inspired timber screens instead of swing doors to reduce noise for latecomers as they sneak into a class.

WHY

Hong Kong people's stressed out lifestyles mean that Pilates, with its emphasis on core strength, is becoming many people's choice for looking good and feeling great. Flex founders Anna Luk and Heather Thomas Shalabi both practise what they preach: U.K. native Luk is a former ballet dancer while Shalabi, originally from the U.S., is a life long fitness fan. Shalabi worked closely with RedGoodss' Calvin Tam to instill a quasi-Japanese aesthetics for a tranquil, community-oriented environment that seems worlds away from the bustle of Wyndham Street.

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**WHAT**

The Envoy, an old school watering hole with one of the prettiest terraces in the city, where guests can indulge in obscure spirits and cocktails concocted by star mixologists Antonio Lai and Amanda Wan.

WHERE

Boutique hotel The Pottinger facing (where else?) the weathered stone steps of Pottinger in Hong Kong's Central district

WHO

Eva Leung from Hong Kong-based Artichaut

HOW

By tying in the concept of an envoy – Sir Henry Pottinger's original posting to Hong Kong before he became its first governor – and all things English and eccentric. Tall tales of Grand Tour travels run rampant throughout the design concept, executed through herringbone timber flooring typically found on sailing ships or in country estates a la *Downton Abbey*, tromp l'oeil Chinoiserie wallpaper with matching upholstery, and art featuring exotic creatures such as a hippopotamus.

WHY

Because everyone needs a place where they know your name, and The Envoy's various nooks and crannies offer a safe haven with plenty of style. Because leafy terraces in Central are treasures to be savoured with a shot of Monkey 47 straight from the Black Forest. And because The Envoy raises the bar with such understated diplomacy that it warrants repeat visits.

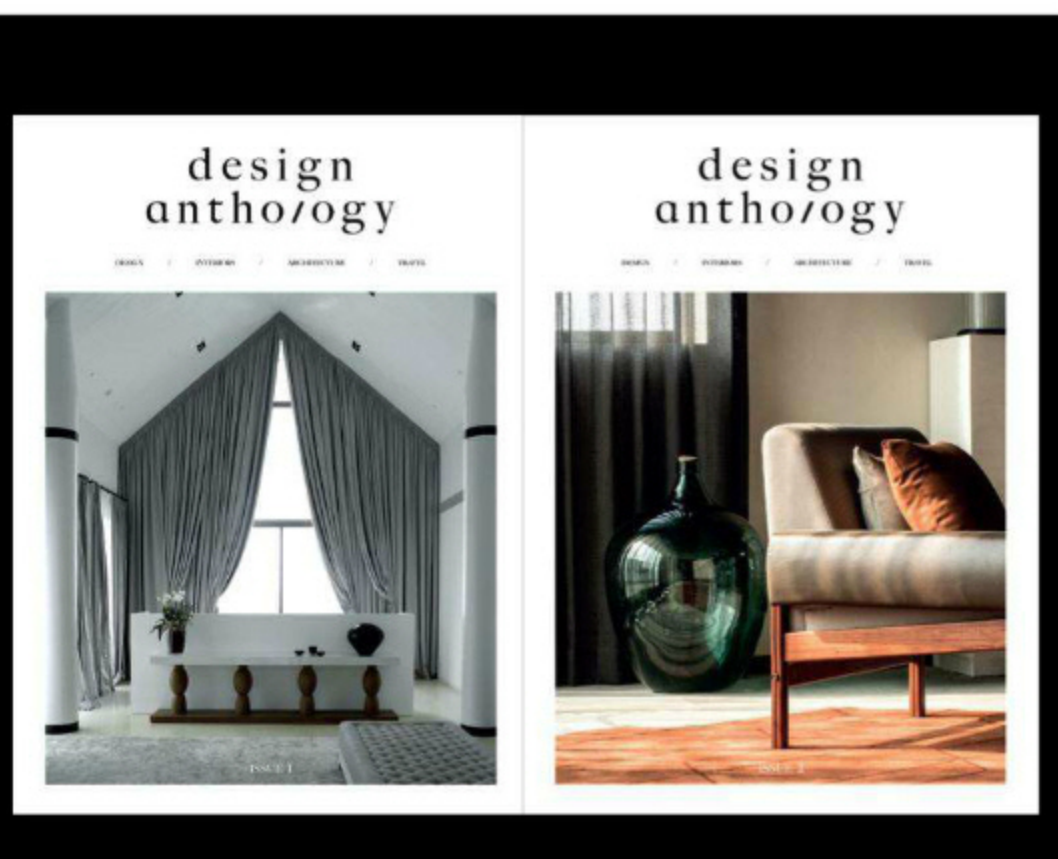
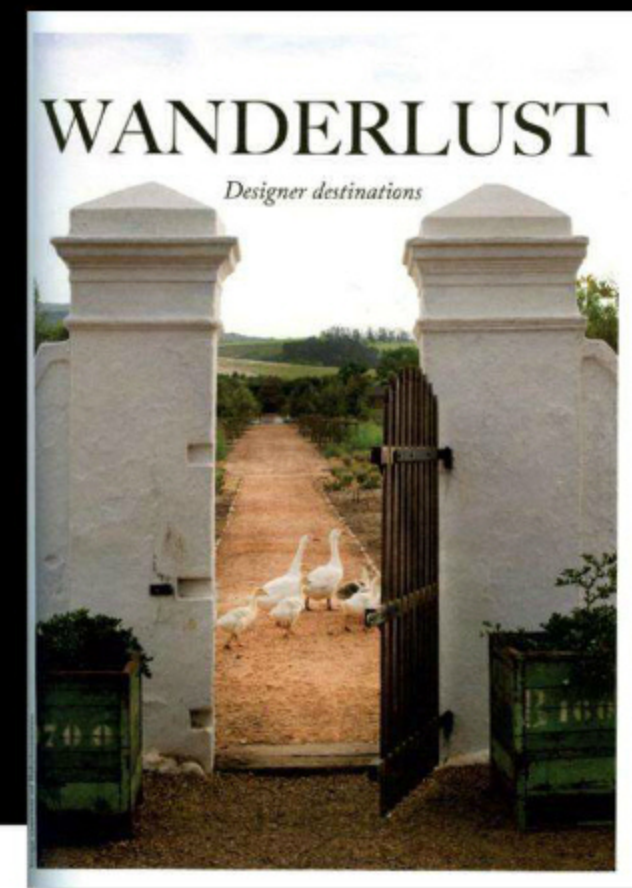


BLOG TO BOOKAZINE

About a decade ago, Australian interior designer Suzy Annetta began blogging about the pretty things that caught her trained eye; last year, she transformed her musings into the quarterly publication *Design Anthology*.

"For me, the perfect weekend is spent with a cup of tea and a stack of magazines," states Annetta, whose love for the glossies began in her early teenage years. "After a while, I began to question why design magazines weren't more beautiful... I am inspired by the timelessness of books, and wanted to create something that would still be relevant over time. After all, so much information is free online."

When Annetta relocated to Hong Kong, she found a job putting together textile collections. "I was feeling underchallenged and I stumbled across blogs – back then, no one in Asia was blogging. I started doing it purely for myself; it was like keeping an online diary. Although my husband is from the publishing world, I am the first to admit that I'm not a writer. But I liked compiling images for my blog and it grew organically. The design blog community is very small and I eventually had 13,000 unique readers per month. My blog's readership wasn't that far off from design magazines' readership. Friends dared me to start a magazine. I already had a target audience. And I felt that there was a niche: a publication that promoted tasteful Asian design; that would inspire other Asian designers and students."



As in every great city topography and history have dealt Hong Kong, a unique urban place we have areas of the highest density in the world, while at the same time an exceptional proportion — more than 40 per cent — of our land consists of protected areas.

With 280 islands, 800 kilometres of coastline, white sand beaches and only 24 per cent of our mountainous landscape developed, Hong Kong resembles Hawaii. But once you enter Kowloon and Hong Kong Island, the compression of communications, transactions and traffic turns red hot.

To cope with the flows, pedestrian networks overlap at grade, below ground and at elevated levels. Where others have ring roads, we have mountains. Where others have a historic centre, we have a harbour. Our major traffic arteries run through the core urban areas stretching around the 73-kilometre waterfront.

Opposing critical trends shaped the city after the Second World War. Massive reforestation programmes, the designation of country parks, the impenetrable Frontier Closed Area along the boundary with mainland China — which has drawn animal and plant life — and the recognition of Deep Bay as a Ramsar site boosted Hong Kong's biodiversity. On the other hand, unprecedented public housing programmes, new town developments and reclamations to cope with the influx of residents and growing economy created tall urban centres on small footprints. Between these two, rudimentary and purposeful village developments, container yards and open storage have spread out over former paddy fields and fish ponds.

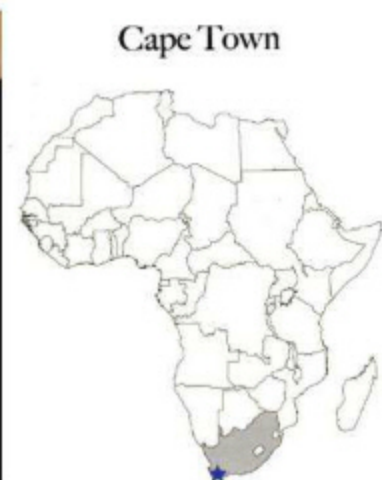
This dialectic translates into the lifestyle of Hong Kong's residents: the absolute majority live a short walk away from mass transit, shopping and schools. Few own private cars. And except for the ultra-rich, people share living quarters well below the average floor area in neighbouring Shenzhen or our ultimate competitors Singapore and Shanghai.

Until 1997, people cared about earning enough to get away from the Mainland. Soon after, Chinese from around the world came to Hong Kong to partake in the development of China. Prior to the outbreak of SARS no one cared much about hygiene, but after October 2003 no one dared to spit in the street. Only in 2006 did the government abolish work on Saturdays, with much of the private sector following suit. People suddenly had an extra day of leisure and their demands on the city changed. With one in eight people over 65 today to become one in four in 2030, demands on the city continue to change at a time when integration with the Mainland manifests itself in increasing cross-boundary visitation.

The challenge now is how to create room for improving quality of living and economic development; how to redefine livable density and how to safeguard the biodiversity with which Hong Kong is endowed. How this will play out will depend on the quality of the discourse among the community, professionals and academics. To those in Hong Kong, I hope you will partake.

Paul Zimmerman is CEO of Designing Hong Kong and a District Councillor.

Text / Paul Zimmerman Illustration / Satoshi Hoshikawa



Annetta began working seriously on *Design Anthology* in late 2013 and spent six months preparing the inaugural issue, which hit newsstands in April 2014. Her first three months on the project were devoted to research, sourcing writers and a graphic designer; the rest of the time was spent on details such as editing features, selecting a high-quality paper and determining how the front cover would look. "I wanted something that had a tactile quality and could entice with a bit of mystery; it's like a cross between a magazine and a book... a 'bookazine'." Both the first and second issues each ended up being just shy of 200 pages – something that surprised Annetta. "I thought it would be a challenge to find content to fill pages. I soon discovered that there was plenty of great content. The challenge

then became what went in and what got left out. We use a lot of full-page or double-page spreads for a single photo. It isn't text-heavy; I don't want it to become a trade magazine."

Though Annetta admits it has been a learning curve birthing her softcover baby, she has no regrets. Now with her third issue coming out, she hopes to continue growing distribution and plans to introduce a bilingual or simplified Chinese version of *Design Anthology*. "I'm creating a magazine that I want to read."



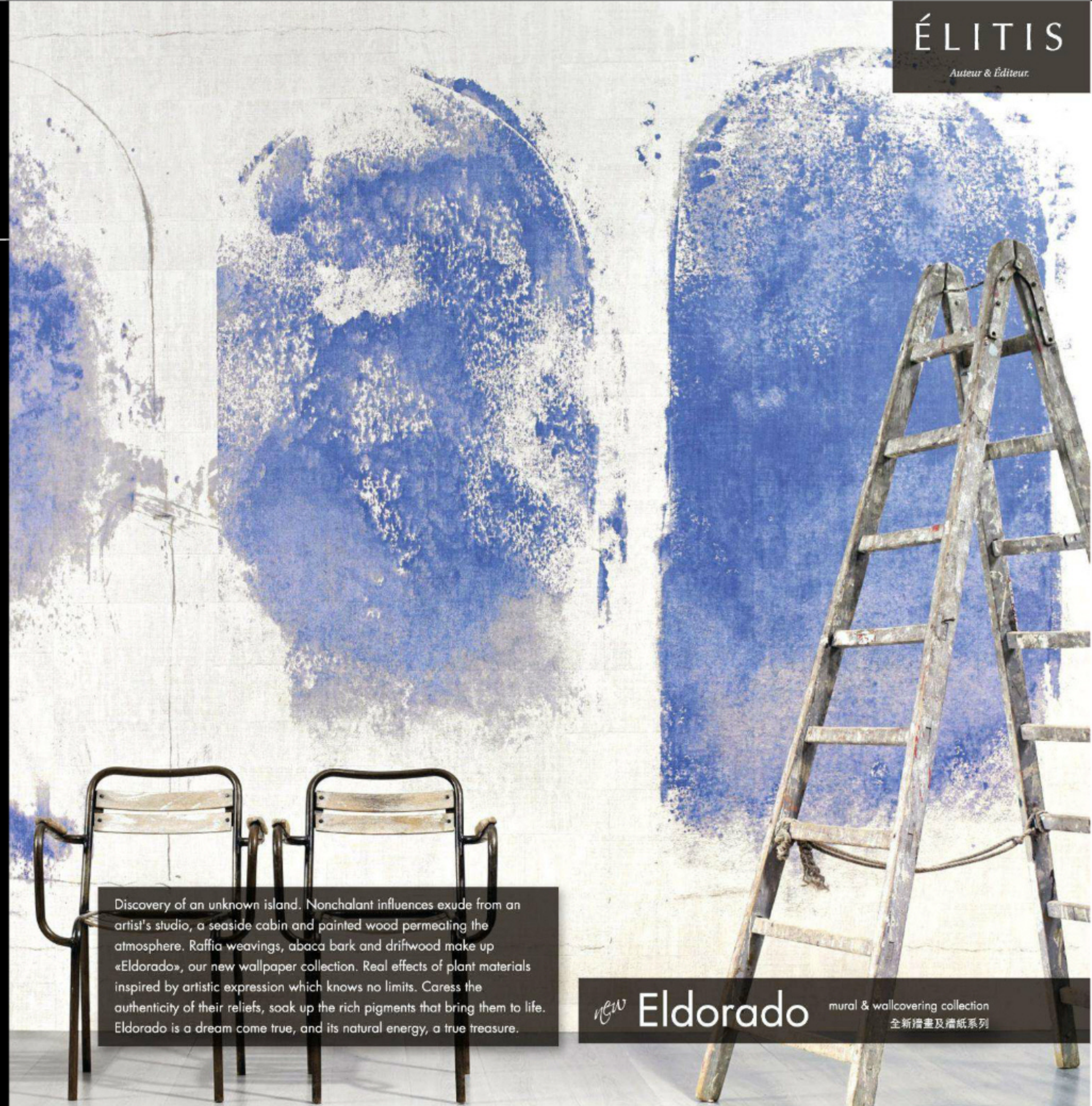
Stockholm's Karolinska University Hospital, a 10-year plus project slated for completion in 2017; the 320,000sq m facility was developed with patient dignity and infection-safe design in mind. PMQ's creative and programme director William To gave audiences an overview of how Hong Kong's latest creative hub is faring, while Rem Koolhaas examined different working styles and how they are reflected in today's building in his presentation that included projects such as CCTV in Beijing, an office for German media near the Berlin wall and a theatre in Taipei.

After West Kowloon Cultural District Authority's CEO Michael Lynch began the afternoon's roster under the banner of Culture & the City on 4 Dec, Dutch landscape architect Adriaan Geuze from West 8 discussed his firm's recent projects in San Francisco and Madrid, and how they give back the city to its residents by burying highways and creating parks for a variety of activities. Victoria and Albert Museum's director Martin Roth flew in to discuss the V&A's expansion plans, which include a design gallery in Shekou. Dutch architect Koen Olthuis of Waterstudio talked about floating structures as a way to use dwindling land supply more efficiently, albeit his presentation had a sci fi alternate reality element to it. Wrapping up the day was the back to earth musings of 2014 Pritzker Prize winner Shigeru Ban on building with paper and their suitability for temporary or disaster relief structures.

Among the few high points this year was a presentation on 5 Dec by Erik Nissen Johansen, a Norwegian who has spent over a decade designing hotels and F&B outlets across Europe. His enthusiasm for the process of design through storytelling, and his ability to derive great pleasure from the small details, was nothing short of inspiring. Before Johansen, we heard from James Law, a Hong Kong-based 'cybertect' who works within the realm of futuristic design. As his presentation clearly demonstrated, he is consumed with architecture, infrastructure and city planning, and their relationship with emergent technologies and artificial intelligence. His desire for construction that parallels a virtual world could very well be the zeitgeist of the architectural revolution in the 21st century. His proposals include a doughnut-shaped convention centre in Mumbai, an apartment complex in Dubai inspired by the iPod and a pavilion in Chengdu that resembles a flying saucer.

On 6 Dec, S.K. Lam, Ola Melin and Francine Houben took to the stage during the Culture and City session. Lam presented a selection of artworks that his creative studio, AllRightsReserved, helped curate; they included the hugely popular Doraemon exhibit at Harbour City last year and the flash mob of pandas, which toured Hong Kong in June. Ola Melin and Francine Houben delivered precise presentations of their work that echoed their respective design approaches and principles.

On the opposite side of Hall 3G was Inno Design Tech Expo, the annual exhibition of design bits and bobs. Here, plenty of students and visitors wandered among the various booths featuring cool new designs and technologies, as well as innovations by countries including China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland. Inventions ranged from small gadgets such as the FoFo Cup to a high-tech solar powered motorcycle. It also housed forums and workshops by representatives from Swedish brands and enterprises including IKEA, Scania and Electrolux, among others; they spoke of the seamless integration between design and our daily lives under the theme of 'Living Design'.



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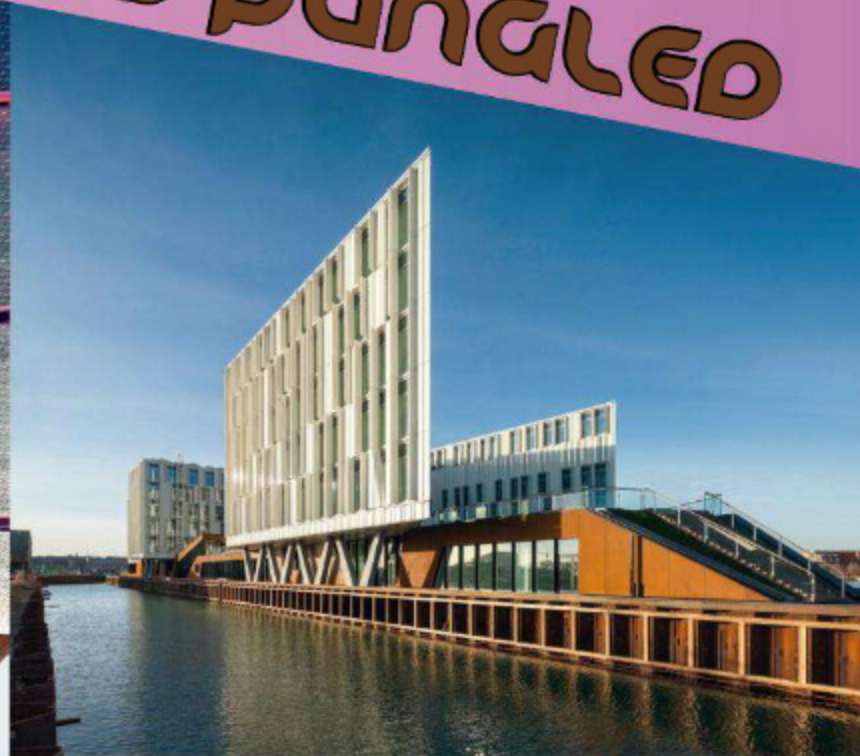
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As work opportunities become increasingly global, American architects have set up chapters of their professional association in far-flung corners of the world. Last November, the newly established American Institute of Architects, International Region (AIA IR), decided it would honour the best and brightest projects produced by its members living and working abroad. For its inaugural awards gala, the AIA IR Design Awards 2014, held at the American Club in Hong Kong, the SAR's Secretary for Development Paul Chan was the keynote speaker.

"This is the first time we have staged such an event," said Dr Christine Bruckner, AIA IR president 2014-15. "We hope to pass the torch onto the next chapter who will take up the task of organising future AIA IR awards, while at the same time sharing our combined strengths and knowledge." She hopes that as news of the AIA IR spreads, more American architects working abroad would be encouraged to submit their work for increasingly diverse and international representation.

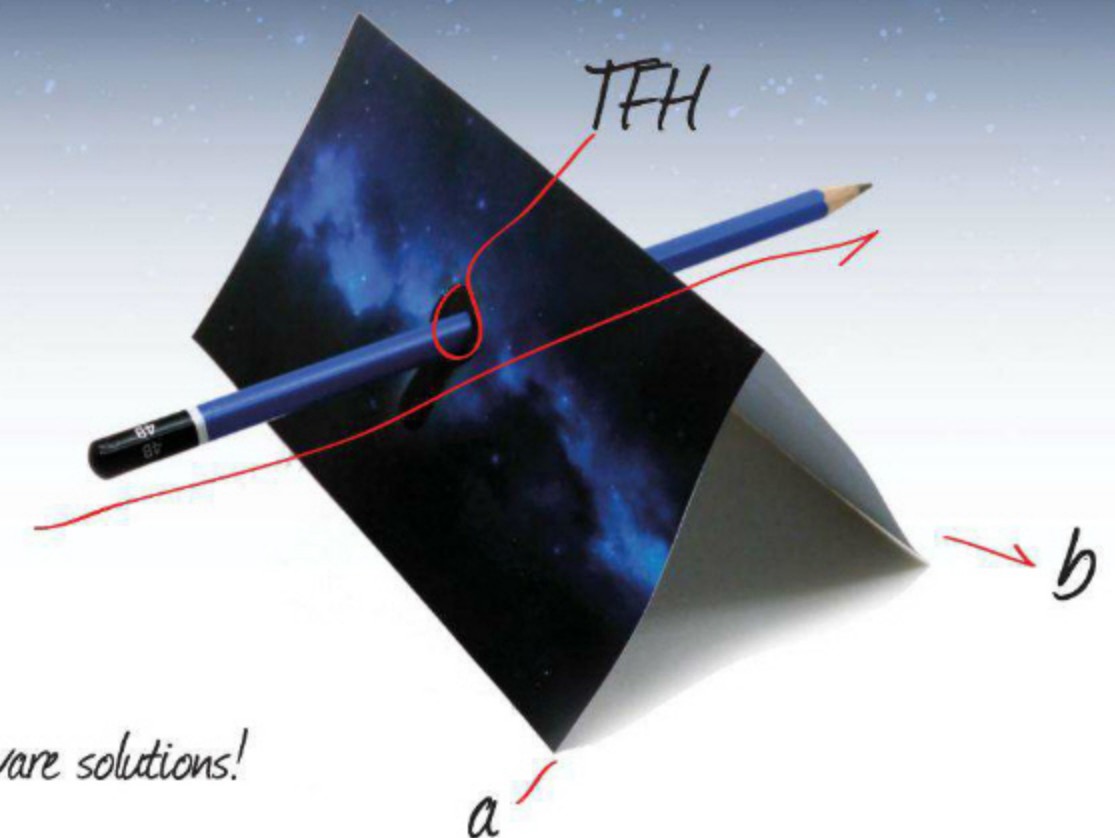
The inaugural awards covered the categories of architecture, interior architecture, urban design and open international; deserving entries were recognised with honours, merits and special commendations. The jury reviewing design submissions included Sudhir Jambhekar of FXFOWLE Architects, George Kunihiro from Kokushikan University and Chris Wilkinson of WilkinsonEyre Architects. Licensed architects in AIA chapters outside the US, namely, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Japan, Middle East, Continental Europe and the United Kingdom, were invited to submit their works for consideration. The winning entries will be showcased in a special exhibition at Grassroots, AIA Headquarters in Washington DC, in March 2015.

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CELEBRATION TIME

For interior designers, recognition by one's peers is confirmation of a job well done. The hard work and dedication of talented individuals doesn't always get noticed precisely because it's often feast or famine – when there's a lot of work available, designers don't have time to bask in accolades, and when there aren't enough jobs, designers are too worried about their next contract to reflect on prior projects. This is one of the main reasons the Asia Pacific Interior Design Awards (APIDA), now in its 22nd edition, remains the Hong Kong Interior Design Association's (HKIDA) headlining annual event.

APIDA has come a long way; its scope and reach in 2014 resulted in more than 600 entries across 10 categories, coming in from greater China, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan and Korea. Winners were awarded Gold, Silver, Bronze, Excellence or Top 10 honours, with a maximum of 10 projects acknowledged in each category. The panel of 12 judges included a design editor from Australia, established professional interior designers based in Hong Kong and abroad, association presidents from Korea and Japan, and even an architect or two. Along with its *Professional Guideline for the Interior Design Industry in Hong Kong – Education & Practice*, launched last summer, the HKIDA has a lot to be proud of. APIDA is now widely perceived as a prestigious regional award competition that showcases the most dynamic interior projects in Asia.

At the awards gala with entertainment provided by Cuban percussionist David Chala, HKIDA chairman Antony Chan underscored that the association's initiatives are starting to bear fruit. Cross-border exchanges are key to getting designers out and about, not only to share within their own communities but also to learn from other cultures. That cultural sensitivity is mirrored in the works being honoured: many are place- and site-sensitive, incorporating vernacular elements seamlessly into contemporary – even cutting-edge – interiors to reflect how we live, work and play today. The tension created by inserting a workspace into a mid-century warehouse, or outdoor elements such as a reflecting pool in a luxury residential living room, is what makes the Gold recipients' work interesting, relevant and inspirational.

Congratulations to all these winners.

GOLD AWARDS

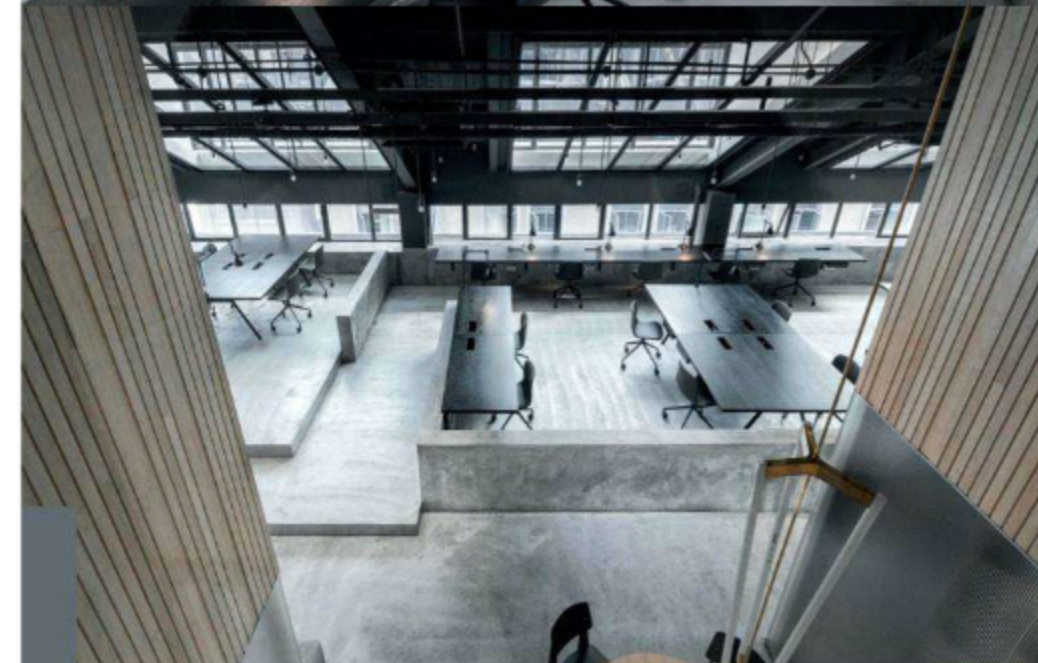
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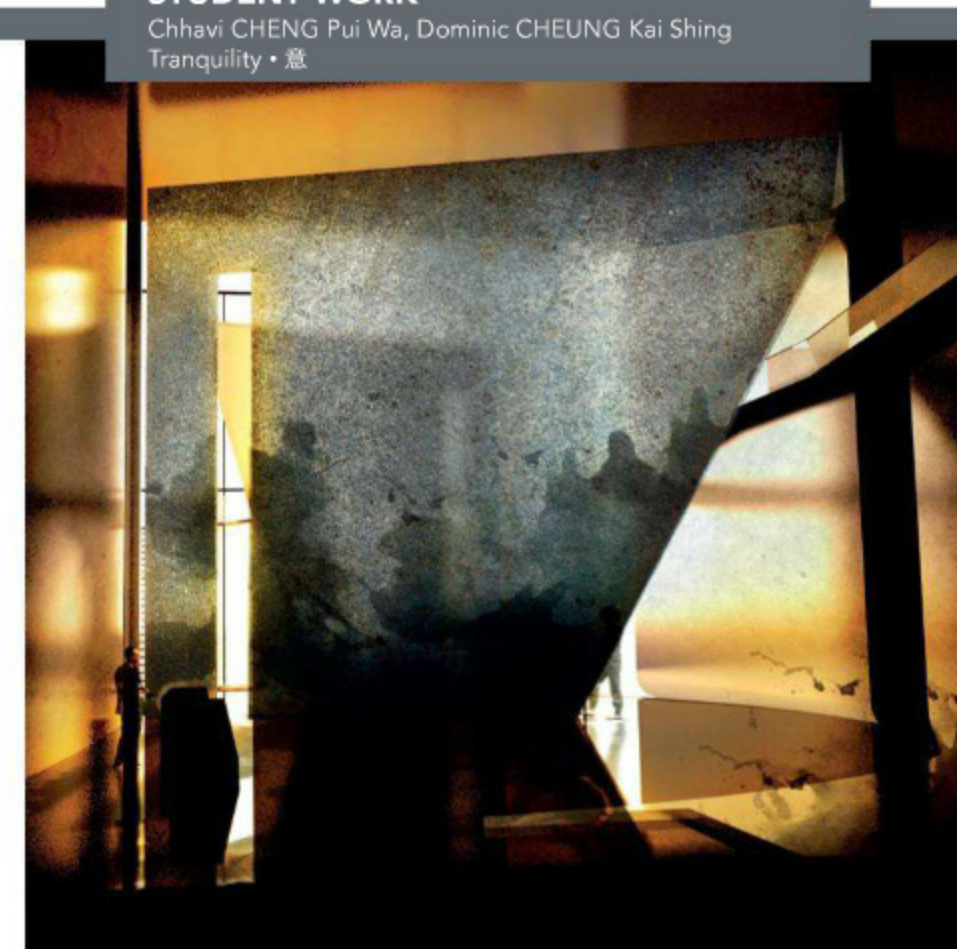
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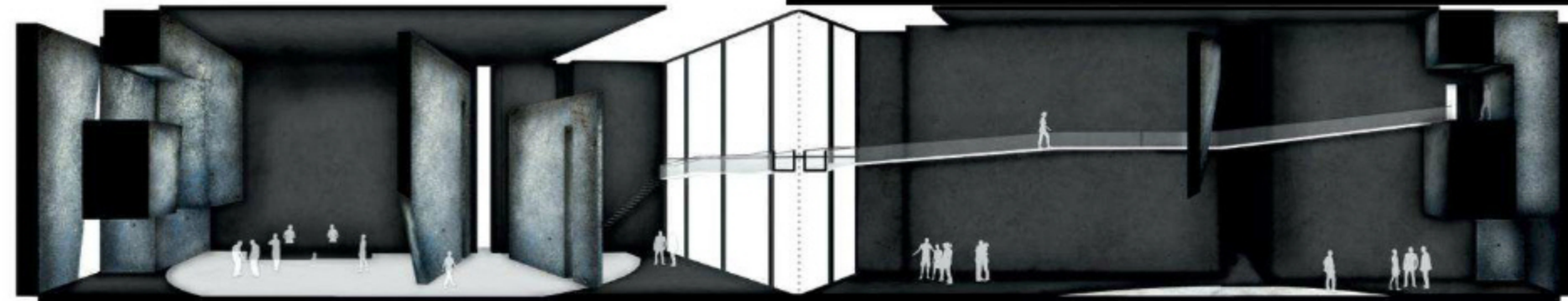
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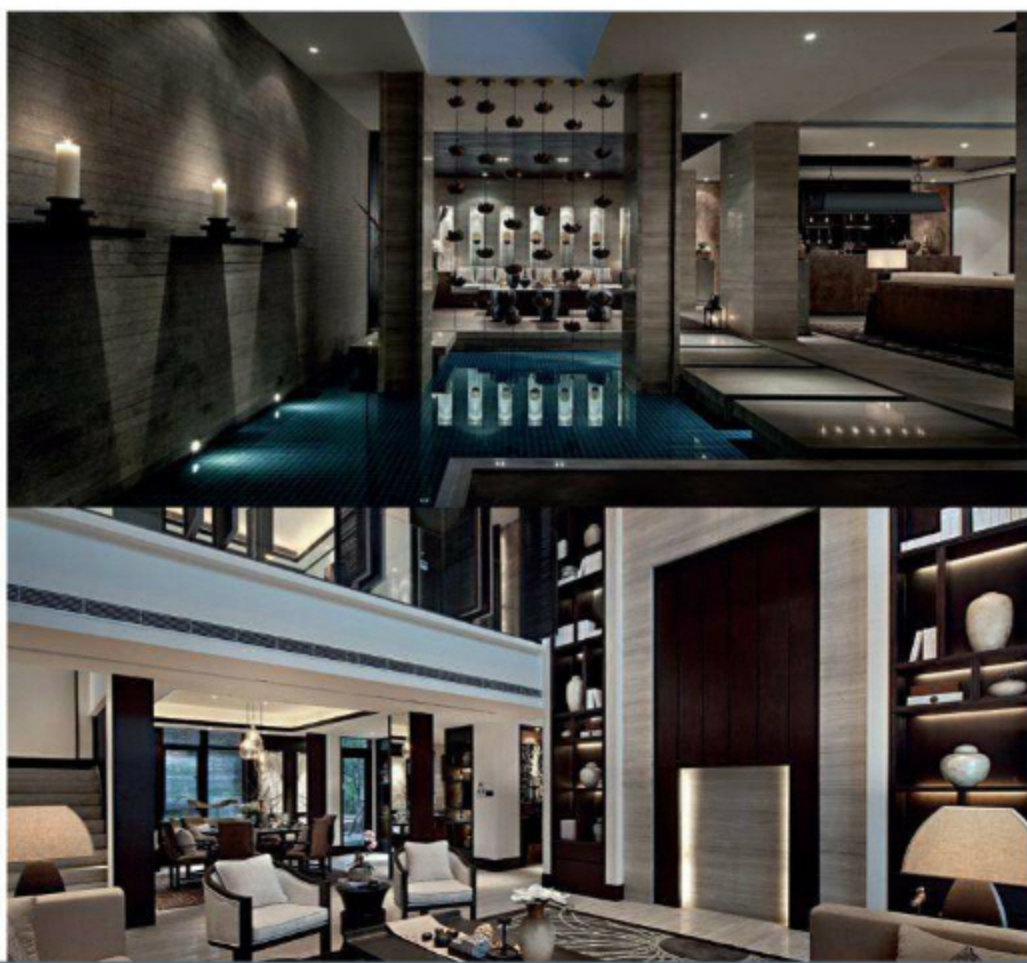
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THE LEGO HOUSE – BILLUND, DENMARK



One would like to imagine that Lego was the childhood toy of choice for many an architect. Whether or not a young Bjarke Ingels first experimented with form using the Danish manufacturer's colourful building blocks is not known. The Dane is, though, designing a visitors' centre for his compatriot toymaker. The LEGO House, conceived as a "creative learning experience centre", will be situated at the brand's headquarters in Billund, and will house displays and installations aimed at inspiring children as well as engaging adults. Naturally, the project will reference the brand's famous commodity, with block-shaped volumes that interlock and overlap. "The LEGO House will be both expressive and rational," says a statement from Ingels' architectural practice BIG. "Innovative and systematic – like a Guggenheim of white cubes, combining the functionality of the modular space with the iconic character of a sculptural building." Ground has been broken.

MATHEMATICS GALLERY – LONDON, UK



Before moving to England to study at the Architectural Association School of Architecture, Zaha Hadid completed a degree in mathematics at the American University of Beirut. So, perhaps the Baghdad-born architect feels a particular affinity to her firm's recent commission: to design a Mathematics Gallery at London's Science Museum. "The design explores the many influences of mathematics in our everyday lives, transforming seemingly abstract mathematical concepts into an exciting interactive experience for visitors of all ages," says Hadid. The gallery, which will be permanent, will show visitors how maths has shaped our world over the last four hundred years. "With this gallery we want to evoke the kind of excitement around mathematics as our Collider exhibition has done around particle physics, and with Zaha Hadid's extraordinary designs this project is off to the best start imaginable," says the museum's director Ian Blatchford. The project has been funded by a private donation to the tune of £5 million. The new gallery will open in 2016.

ASHJAR – DUBAI, UAE



Ashjar means 'trees' in Arabic. It is also the name given to a new high-end residential development coming up in Al Barari, Dubai. A cluster of 21 low-rise volumes will house a total of 300 one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. There will be two building typologies: extrovert and introvert. Units of the former type will be more open-plan, with large protruding balconies; the latter will feature moveable screens that can shield both external terrace space and internal living quarters from prying eyes. Lush landscaped areas will surround the residences, creating a forest-like environment on the 100,000sq m site. Recreational amenities will include footpaths, outdoor seating, swimming pools, and play areas for children. Leading the project is architectural practice 10 Design. "The idea of 'tree living' has given us the inspiration to envisage apartments with three different characteristics: 'on the forest floor', 'within the tree canopy', and 'above the forest canopy'," says founder Gordon Affleck. "With over 80% of the site dedicated to landscape, these apartments will merge seamlessly into their surroundings from day one." Completion is scheduled for 2017.



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THREE CULTURAL CENTRES & ONE BOOK MALL – SHENZHEN, CHINA



Images by Christopher Malheiros Architectural Visualization

Dutch architectural practice Mecanoo has designed a cultural complex for the Pearl River Delta megacity. The 95,000sq m project will house a public art museum, a science museum, a youth centre, a five-level bookshop, and underground parking. The four volumes will be wider at their upper levels than at grade, creating a series of de facto arches that, in turn, create sheltered outdoor plazas between the buildings for public event use. The external skins of the top-heavy edifices will be reflective, with a red tint. The new cultural hub will become one of the main recreational attractions of Shenzhen's Longgang district, and, it is hoped, will revitalise the Longcheng Park neighbourhood. Construction has begun; completion is expected sometime in 2017.

TARIFF STREET – MANCHESTER, ENGLAND



A residential project in the north of England has received planning permission. Designed by local practice Ian Simpson Architects, the 11-storey building will contain 91 one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments, which will look out onto one of Manchester's famous waterways, the Rochdale Canal. The volume will be composed of three distinctive layers: the main section, starting at grade, will be finished with redbrick – a reference to traditional canal-side architecture; the next section above will be clad in aluminium, to dovetail with mill buildings located nearby; and atop will be a cantilevered glass section boasting the best views of all. The project was designed in consultation with English Heritage, so that the finished volume would fit in nicely with its surroundings. Work on the development, which is part of the wider Piccadilly Basin regeneration scheme, will begin in 2015.

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SYDNEY BY CROWN - SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



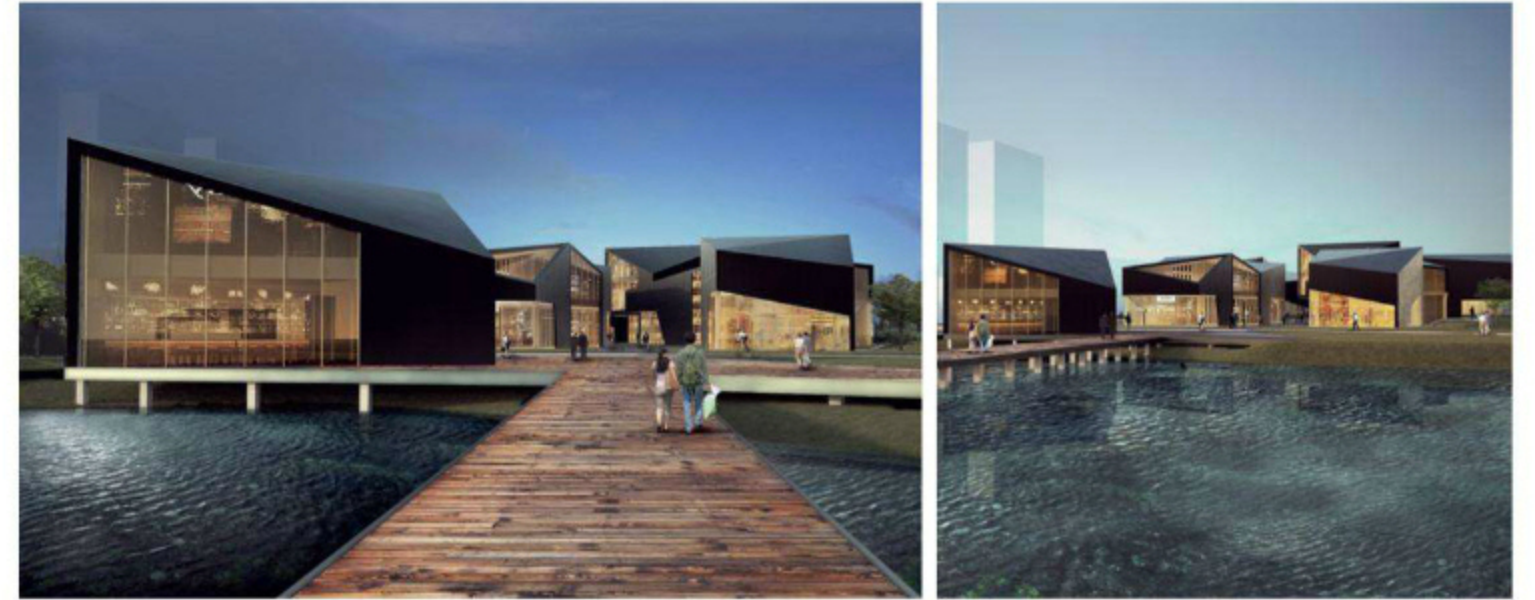
Sydney-based developer Crown Group has enlisted Koichi Takada Architects to design a 25-storey, 220-unit residential development in the heart of the city's CBD. The result of an international design competition win, the tower will also contain boutique serviced apartments. It will reference heritage buildings on its lower levels, and rise up to incorporate a glass-and-steel volume with a rooftop bar and garden enclosed by a series of rhythmic arches. At the base of the building will be a 20m-high atrium straddling a new public laneway between Kent and Clarence Streets, including the historic Skittle Lane. Sydney by Crown is slated for completion by 2017.

UNIVERSITY OF PEMBANGUNAN JAYA - SOUTH TANGERANG, INDONESIA



The new campus intended for 10,000 students at the University of Pembangunan Jaya will be green on many levels. The competition-winning scheme by Hong Kong-based DLN's director Alexander Lush contains features that reduce lifecycle energy consumption while increasing users' contact with nature - specifically the surrounding paddy fields intended to be retained on and around the campus. "We have sought to minimise reliance on engineered systems," says Lush. "The orientation, disposition, layout and detail design of the buildings are all calculated to exploit the potential for natural shading and ventilation. Grade-level areas beneath the buildings will create outdoor seating space and accommodate gardens for shade-loving vegetation. This approach ensures that the interstitial garden areas of the campus are able to tolerate the periodic acute flooding that occurs in the region, without disruption of core campus activities, as well as reducing the costs of deploying expensive civil engineering works." The multiphase project is slated for completion by 2025.

TENTH CHINA INTERNATIONAL GARDEN EXPO - WUHAN, CHINA



Santiago Parramon, RTA-Office and OMA are designing the site and buildings for next year's Garden Expo. A 21,377ha plot will contain an exhibition garden, a five-star hotel, an international-arts-and-garden-centre designed by OMA, and a service centre for the exhibition by RTA-Office. The volumes will be angular and fashioned to allow plenty of light into interior areas. Once the exhibition is over, the garden will become a residential area, the international-arts-and-garden-centre will be converted into the Wuhan Wedding Culture Centre, and the service centre will become a commercial property; the hotel will remain unchanged. Some 12 million visitors are expected to visit the central Chinese city over the course of the expo. Construction is underway.

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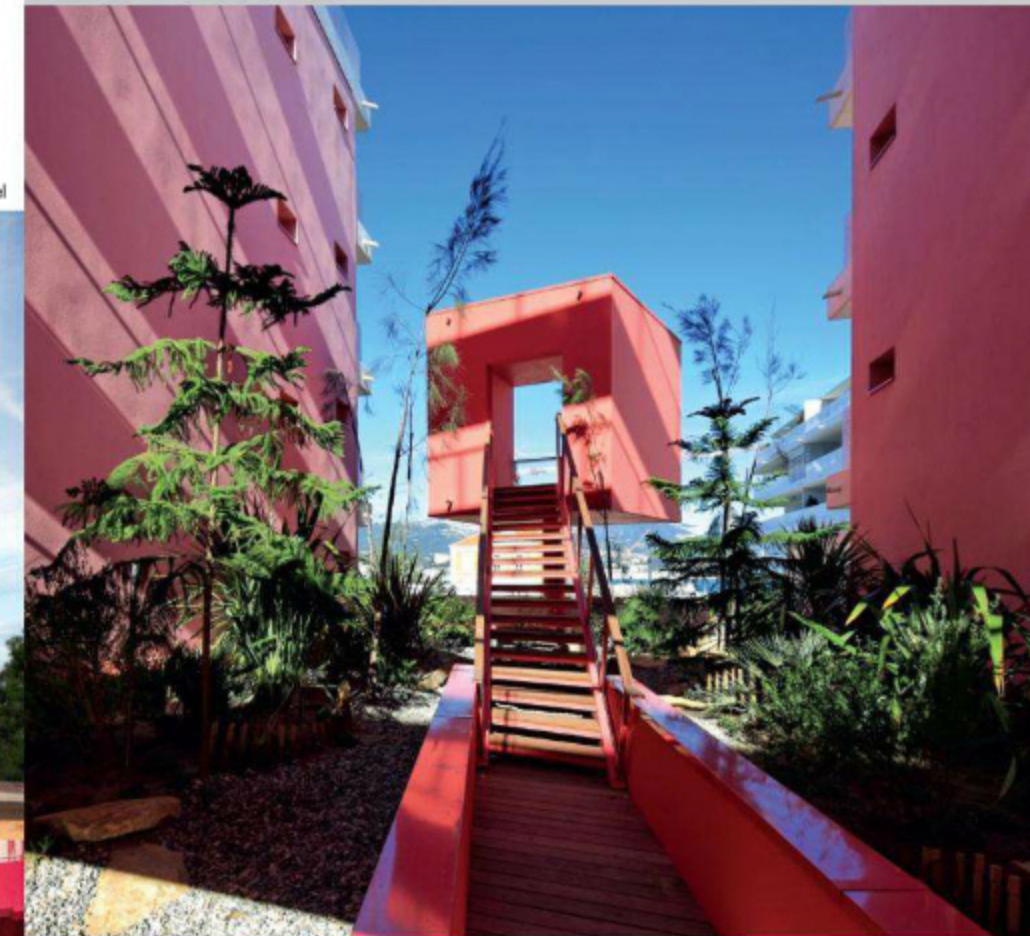
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REDLINE

La Seyne-sur-Mer, France

Pietri Architectes

Photography by Serge Demailly and Christian Michel



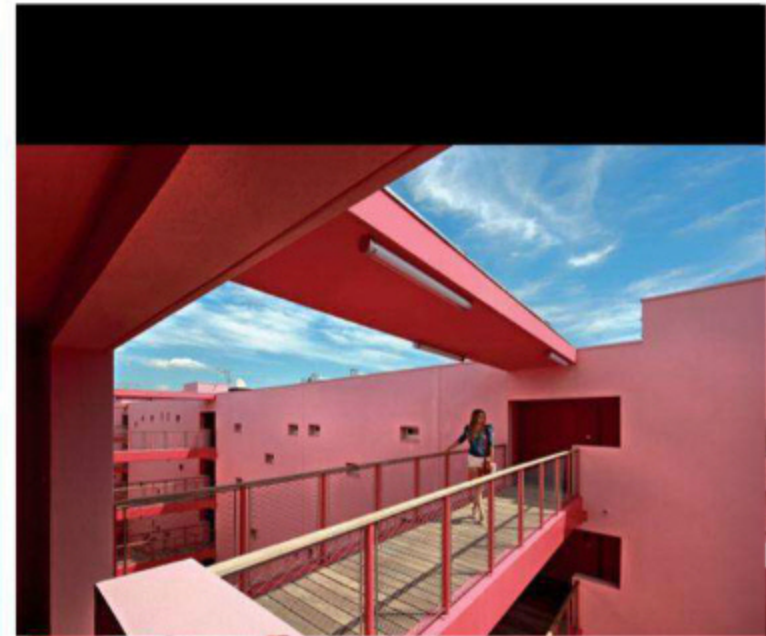
This housing complex for 59 units is organised around a site-driven directive: preserve sea views for as many of the residents as possible. This moved the architects to split the site plan down the middle, creating a pair of blocks hovering over a patio that runs east-west down its midsection. Fringe benefits of the approach included double views and cross-ventilation in most units, as well as improved movement of natural air coming in off the ocean. To cap the composition and underscore the buildings' relationship to their context, a playful 'belvedere' was added, to frame views and serve as a lookout point. It might as well be a symbol for the place.

The Redline feeds off recent efforts to revitalise and transform La Seyne-sur-Mer into a new community focussed on beach tourism rather than its former lifeblood, shipping. But Pietri Architectes obviously kept one eye on the remnant shipyards in terms of inspiration, as the new structures hint, ever so quietly, of semi-industrial masses prevalent in (and suggestive of) former seaside architecture. The flats themselves range in size from studio to five-room, which will encourage a lively mix of tenants, from singles to families.

The massing sets the two long blocks upon a common concrete base at grade. Open corridors give access to the flats and outward-oriented terraces are marked with storage cupboards that separate units and provide a partial screen from the street. The shared landscaped patio in the centre of it all sits upon the parking garage. Commercial spaces are incorporated at street level.



While privacy and individual space is respected here, there is also the implied encouragement of social interaction and shared identity within the complex. The architects' decision to enliven the exteriors with colour is part of this effort. Whereas the outward elevations are kept mostly to pale cream tones – albeit with the pink-striped storage boxes on the terraces – the patio slicing down the inside of the site plan is doused in deep pink, as if the building had been dissected alive and we were being shown its innards. The effect is strong and could easily go too far (particularly if you don't love pink), yet somehow it works because it goes too far, and literally bathes the entire inner realm of the building. Rather than seeming like extraneous dressing-up or like an attempt at decoration on a budget, this pink zone feels uplifting and nearly celebratory. The fact that it changes tonally through the day, as the sun moves around, helps further. It may not be everyone's cup of rose tea, but with very simple means (and, yes,



little money), the architects have added another dimension to the experience of the building, one that gains from contrasting so dramatically with its own opposite. Since the units also face inward, one can imagine residents taking occasional peeks into the candy-coloured courtyard to take their minds momentarily off the dreariness of daily life.

The little cubic belvedere, which is supported on a central column and is also all in pink, is a folly that children and oldsters will equally enjoy. Again, it didn't cost much extra, but delivers instant personality to the large ensemble, and reminds everyone that architecture can have wit. Besides, it's a nice homage to those little beachside pedestals that lifeguards often inhabit. One might have placed the superintendent in this one, smiling behind a little pink desk.



CUBIX OFFICE



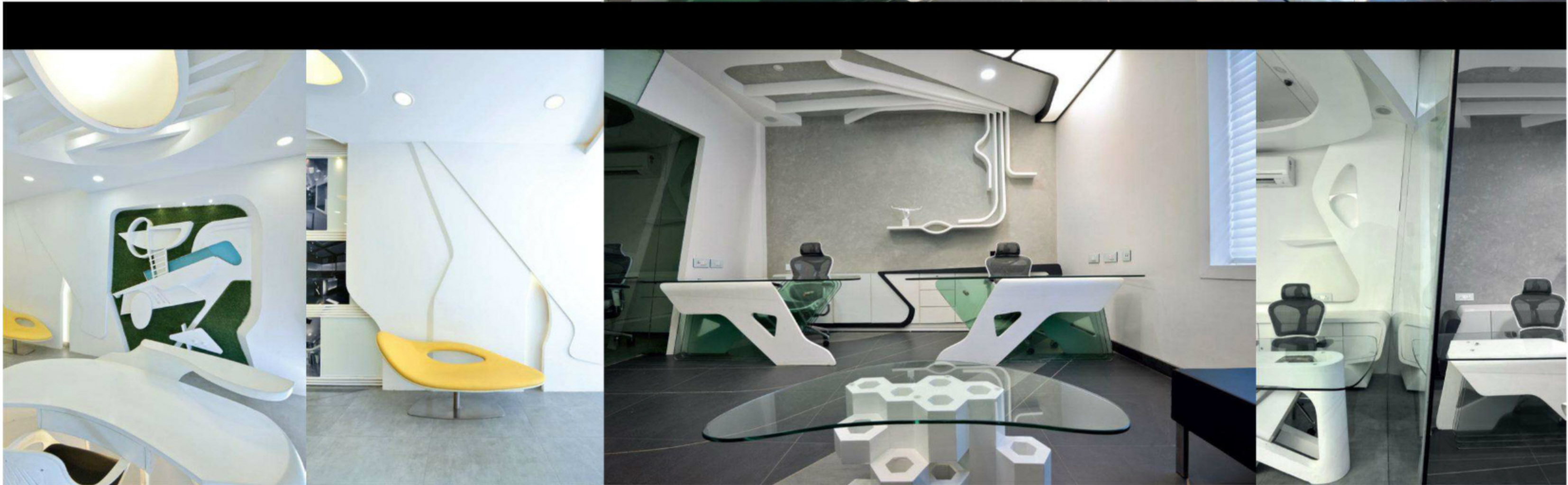
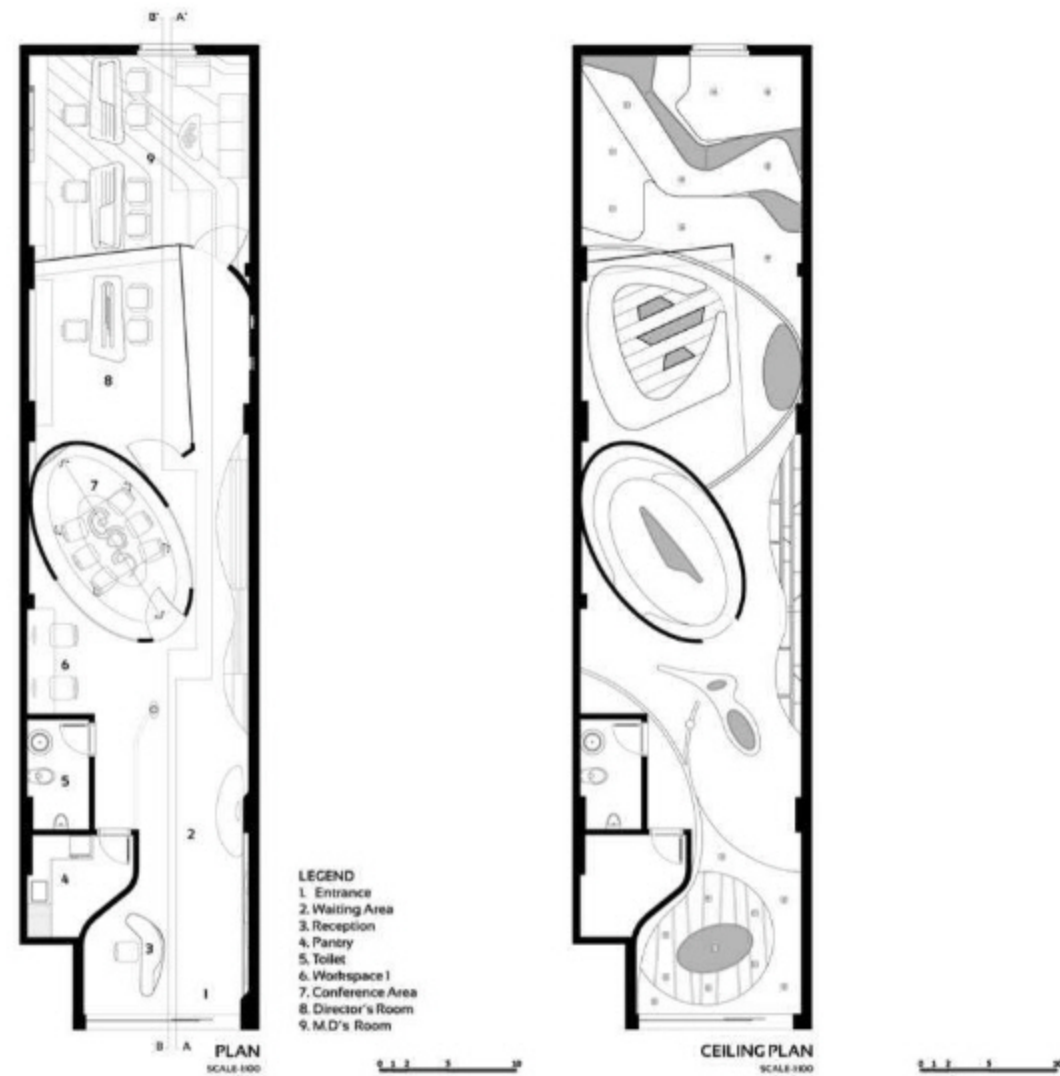
New Delhi, India Spaces Architects

Hong Kong interior designers are well acquainted with compact office fitouts (indeed, many of them work in such spaces). One of the default approaches is to remove visual obstacles and 'minimise' obstructions to the eye or body to perceptually enlarge the limited space, making it seem bigger than it is. This new office interior in New Delhi took a different route. It effectively goes 'busy' to remove the evidence of the outer spatial envelope, so that you don't really understand the actual outer limits of the space. Instead the eye is distracted by a series of elements, surfaces and details that cohere to make up a micro-environment. It might seem a risky method to choose, because if it didn't work – if it all didn't fit together

tightly – it would seem like mere chaos. Crowding a lot of ‘design’ into a narrow, 14 by 80ft envelope, Spaces Architects has put all its eggs into one design basket.

That basket happens to be a very specific aesthetic language of ultra-modern – some would say, ‘spacecraft’ – forms and lines. Bathed virtually consistently in white, the running, swooping, curving lines, facets and ribs that describe the space – and devolve into the furniture and cabinetry as well – collect into a unified image that, presumably, also reflects the ethos of the company that occupies it, a real estate consultancy. The designers use the term “fluid” in describing their work here, and one can see what they were thinking. The idea to continue lines and surfaces up, down and around the space suggests that even if humans don’t quite move around like water, their eyes might. The extent of attention to detail – necessary, once this strategy was adopted, to pull it off – is impressive. Even if the entirety risks feeling a tad like a film set; one expects to see the staff attired in neoprene one-piece suits and short leather boots. Possibly there is a subtext to do with encouraging Delhi property investors out of the city’s impressive architectural past?

In any case, what is perhaps most interesting about Cubix is the overlap of architectural elements, furniture, accessories and artwork. It is often difficult to discern any lines or points of distinction between these conventional categories of office ‘stuff’, particularly on the perimeter surfaces of the space. Walls become artworks become ceilings become light sources. Where the occasional element proved beyond Spaces’ abilities of transformation or integration, such as an air conditioning unit or existing square window, it jumps out all the more starkly for it. There is certainly a lot going on here, and as certainly, not to everyone’s palate. But Spaces Architects definitely deserves recognition for taking an idea and running with it... and seeing where that ends up. Design should always be clear about what it is, about what it wants to be. Cubix leaves no room for doubt. Beam us up, Scotty...

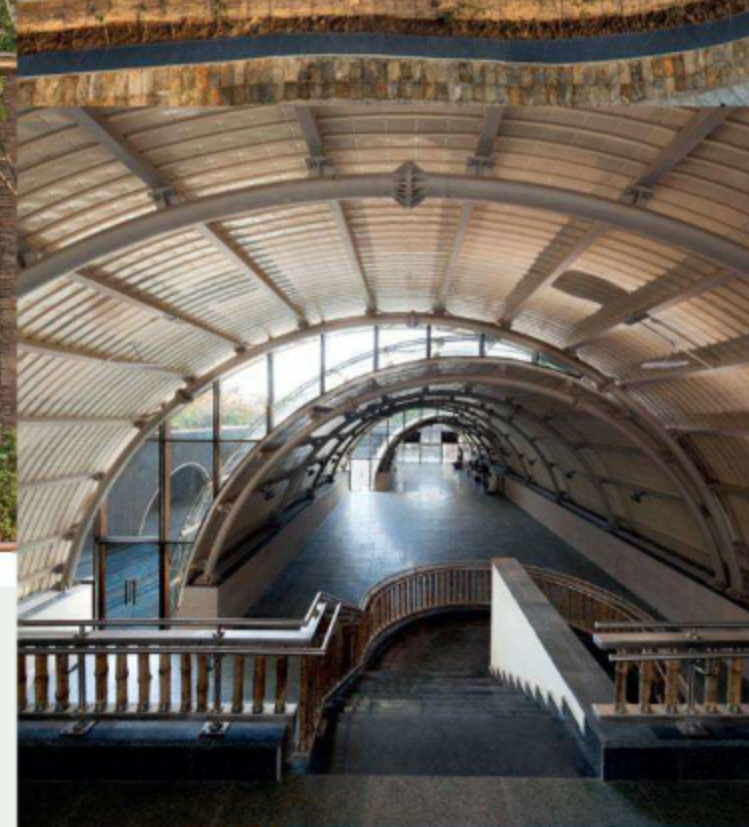
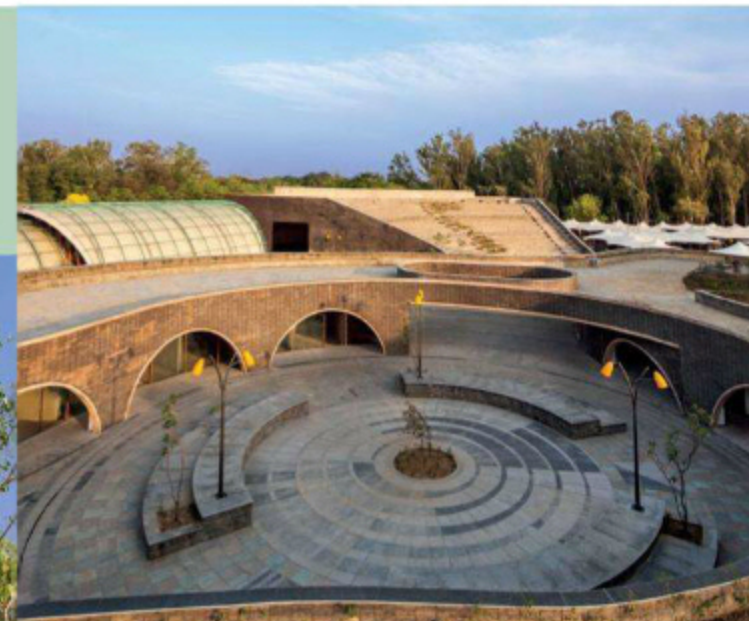


ANTHEM

Dilli Haat (Janakpuri Branch)

New Delhi, India
Archohm

Photography by Andre J. Fanthome



Delhi's versions of the Indian *haat* – or traditional weekly open-air village market – are teeming, colourful and necessary components of urban life in the subcontinent. Their combination of permanent thatched-roof cottages, semi-permanent open-air food kiosks and temporary vendors plying handicrafts give the two established Dilli Haats a convivial village ambience. For the third Dilli Haat, situated in the predominantly residential area of Janakpuri where there is very little in the way of nightlife, the Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation invited entries for an architectural competition held in 2005. The latest *haat* was to be more than just another outdoor market – it was also to be a home for musicians both high- and low-brow, allowing them to interface with varied audiences easily and seamlessly.

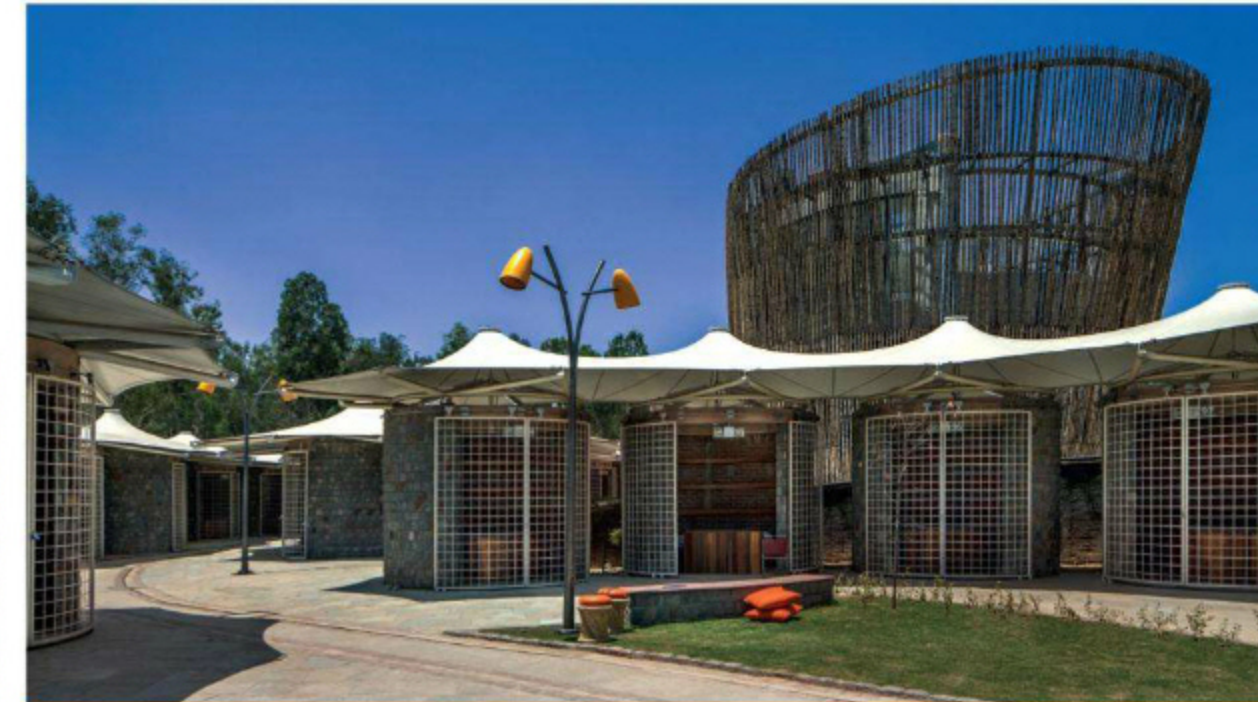
Delhi architect Sourabh Gupta of Archohm won the commission and completed the 12,950sq m project on the six-acre site with a team that included Aarti Kulkarni, Sadhvi Astin, Suboor Ahmad and DD Sharma. The northwest-oriented plot of land is bound by a bus terminus on one side and a national prison's grounds on the other, with a busy road in front. Gupta gave the complex two entries: a main one for vehicular and pedestrian access from the main road, and a secondary one strictly for pedestrians to enter the crafts zone.

The programme consists of an indoor auditorium to seat 800 for formal concerts and an open-air amphitheatre for informal events, with the latter's alternating ribbons of green grass and paved seating lightening the heavy

massing of the former. In addition, a hall for exhibitions or seminars, a music museum, a music store, music workshop spaces, a food court, cafes, a fine-dining restaurant, shop spaces (formal, informal and open) and a number of offices make for a buzzing neighbourhood *haat* vibe.

"Like a well-crafted movie, the strength of this project is that the plot is strong and the basic idea is immersed well in every aspect extensively," explains Gupta. "The site plan is knitted together efficiently. Free-flowing open spaces bind various activities on two levels. Four 8m-high towers are interspersed along the site; designed to look like huge bamboo baskets, they are two-storeyed buildings with a rooftop canopy designed for outdoor activities. Closer to the entry, one basket houses the information centre, while the other forms a cafe. Wander [further] into the interior of the site and the baskets house a music centre and a museum."

Dilli Haat is perhaps most successful in its finishing, which features a refreshing blend of old- and new-world materials. Gupta combined red Agra stone, kota stone, slate and local Delhi quartz stone masonry on the facades. Bamboo was also used extensively: in shading structures, basket screens and furniture-like street sculpture – besides quietly growing as breezy boundary demarcations. The overall effect is a rich series of buildings with a contemporary yet sensitive vernacular nestled in a green landscape. Dilli Haat feels as if it was inevitable – which is the hallmark of all good architecture.



BEEHIVE

Hub Creativ

La Chantrerie, Nantes, France
TETRARC



Creative hubs dedicated to attracting innovative young firms and studios involved in new ventures and technologies, the outfits often including startup companies, have sprung up the world over. The idea is sound: in gathering under one roof a small collection of bright, energetic, youthful minds, an entrepreneurial momentum is gained, and healthy interchange of ideas fostered. The common denominator is usually pretty straightforward, encompassing affordable rent, humble yet flexible spatial envelopes, transportation access, and a ready source of caffeine.

This version in Nantes, France, by TETRARC, starts off on a 'colourful' footing, with a bright yellow facade formed of numerous protruding metal frames that surround each window. The building is four storeys high, and the base level is articulated in vertical wood siding. Inside, the basic spatial layout is organised around an oblong atrium at the building's centre, which is emphasised with vertical latticework and serves as a central 'piazza' where people and ideas bump into each other.

Nantes is something of a startup centre already, apparently, with some 700 companies, many dealing in information, new media and communication tech, occupying real estate. An area named La Chantrerie serves as a campus for both private and public higher education, and this new building slips into the neighbourhood as a willing partner. Hub Creativ will hold about 400 users in 70 companies and organisations, which will make it a lively place in which to work and think.

The distinctive facade is undoubtedly the centre's calling card, and won't be easily forgotten, or hard to find. The metal window frames, which seem to tilt, jog and jolt out of alignment, produce an intentionally lively forward plane, one that looks quite different depending on viewing angle. As well, the shadows created by the deep frames add a singular interest to the elevations, so that approaching from a distance one initially isn't sure if these are shutters, moveable components, or leftover scaffoldings. The choice of the deep bumblebee-yellow wasn't accidental, of course; the



beehive is the obvious metaphor for industrious worker bees intent on remaking the modern world (digital or real). Yet one can't help being curious what the effect might have been in bright white, or perhaps the opposite... something dark and brooding. The yellow is pleasing and uplifting, to be sure, but there's already a lot going on with those frames; perhaps colour was redundant. Then again, probably not... this yellow hive is supposed to pulse with energy, both architectural and human. And so it does.

PLAYPEN

Chinagrowth Hong Kong SAR, China Jason Caroline Design

In recent years, Hong Kong's decommissioned industrial buildings have become magnets for creative types. Previously, Chinagrowth conducted business out of two trucks, which provided its staff plenty of, uhm, 'street life and colour'. But the predominantly fresh grads tended to disappear for three-hour lunches (surprise surprise!); a few never made it back to work (wonder why). So, in a bid to get some real work done and to provide staff with a more structured, if conventional, work environment, Chinagrowth looked to Jason Caroline Design, who delivered its 770sq m new premises in a Chai Wan industrial building in June 2014.

Chinagrowth is a creative enterprise with four branches engaged in culture and media; HKBC, Evergreen Solar, Salmongate and Ixelera together offer a platform that aims to be an influential voice for the next generation of global Chinese citizens. Although the four arms work independently, they share some common areas that are best addressed with overlapping zones in an open environment. For Chinagrowth's programme, Jason Caroline Design examined the premises of YouTube, Google and Adidas as examples of creative workspaces. "We decided that the brainstorm area needed to be away from the staff's desks," recalls Jason Yung. "This way, management can immediately assess individual personalities – and who is proving himself valuable to the company."

The floorplate was divided into four zones dubbed 'creative', 'recreation', 'production' and 'management'. Shared spaces for all staff to use freely include a library, entertainment area, laboratory, meeting rooms, studios and non-dedicated work spaces, with the last subdivided into private and common. The library forms the heart of the office: it contains a long bench that has multiple functions for the different branches of Chinagrowth.

"As soon as the lift doors open, you see the central library space," notes Yung. "It's like a hip bookshop. It is flexible enough to allow

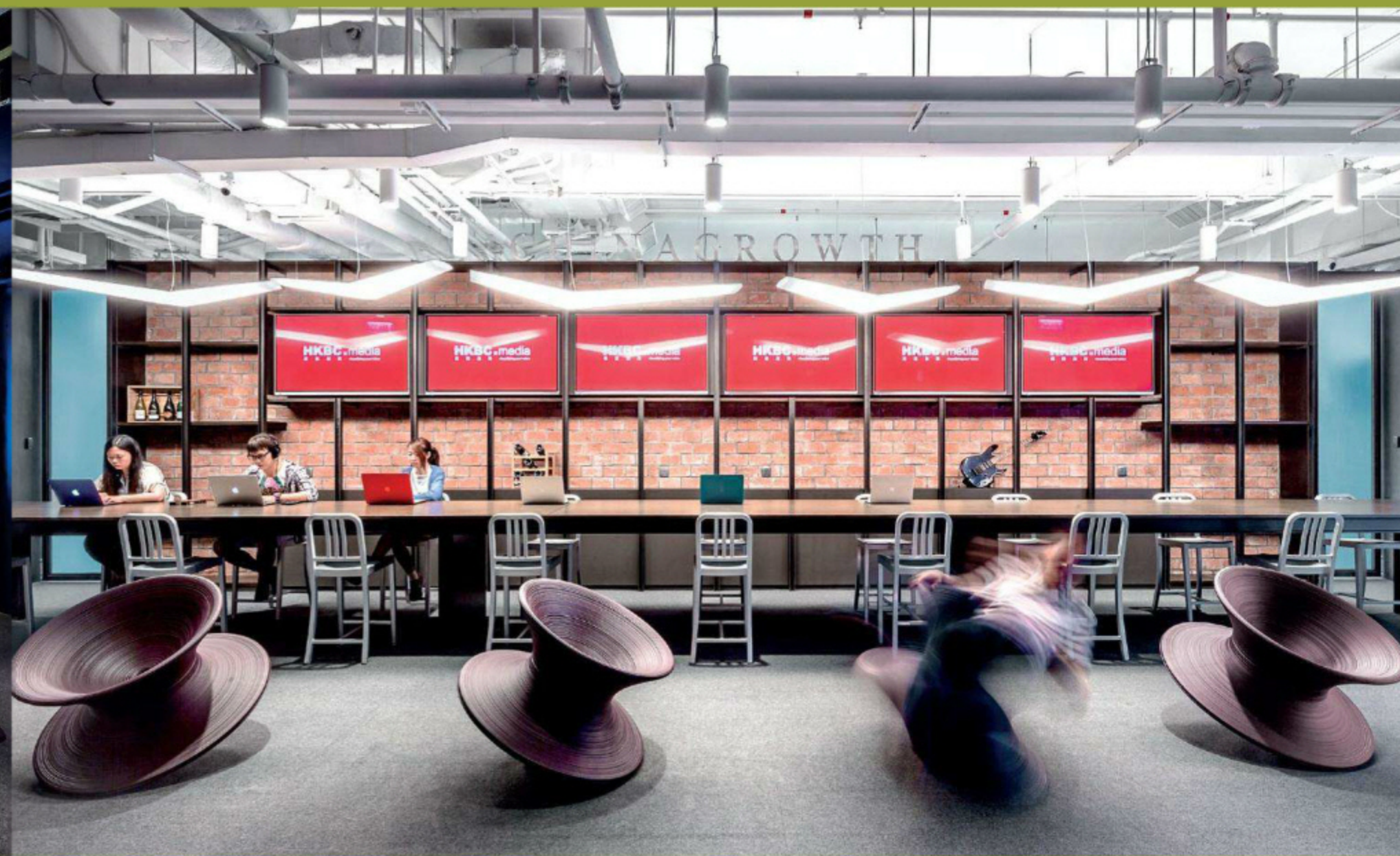
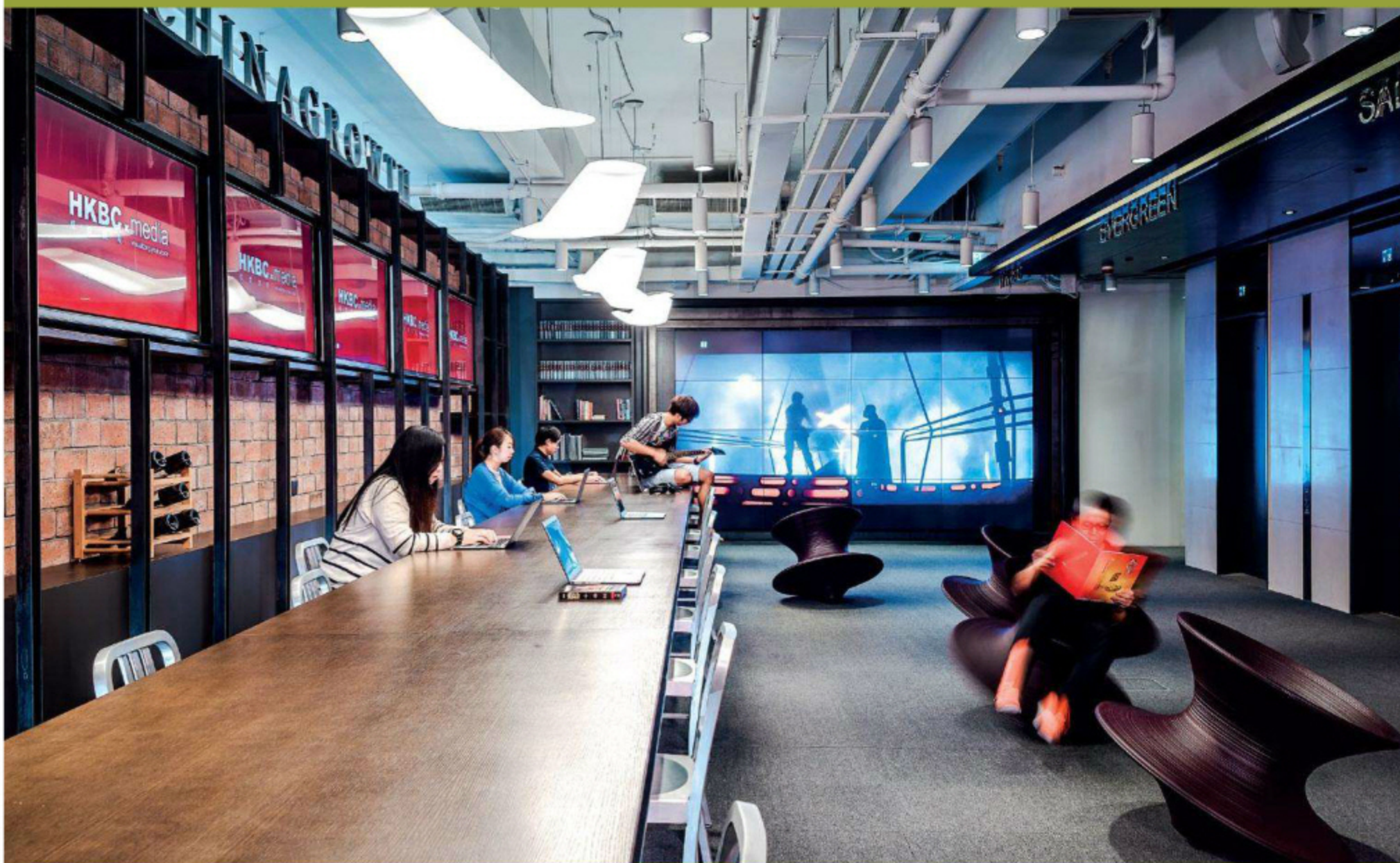
Photography by John Butlin



for performances, events and mini concerts. The bench acts as a work area, meeting table, catwalk for fashion shows or surface for private kitchen dinners. The pantry can transform into a proper kitchen for catering. The news and media arm is a 24/7 space with staff working around the clock; near it, we included a shower, gym and ping pong table in the recreation area. For management, the director's office contains a cigar bar and wine cellar; for entertaining clients in privacy."

Chinagrowth's floorplan is something of a doughnut: the core with its vertical linkages is in the middle of the rectangle, with the shared area opening up from the lifts' doors. The production area takes up the bulk of the plan, as it includes a meeting room to seat ten, a lab to accommodate eight, workspaces for six dedicated staff and a large multimedia studio with cockpit.

The recreation area includes a green wall featuring local fauna on the clerestory level installed on the opposite side of the library's sandblasted brick wall, giving people on coffee breaks some



much-needed extra oxygen. A punching bag and two treadmills make up the balance of the R&R elements, while off to one side are contemporary 'phone booths' where staff can make private calls or work undisturbed. "We used a mix of furniture including Emeco barstools and Coca Cola chairs," says Yung. Kept light and flexible, most of the seating is in aluminium, as commonly found in loft spaces. The exception is a quartet of giant wooden tops that double as rotating, pivoting lounge chairs for staff to freewheel playfully while reading or chilling out. "Chinagrowth previously found it difficult retaining staff," notes Yung. "Now, with its new premises, it can pick and choose the talent that it wants to hire." If only the rest of us could be so lucky...



EXUBERANT

Daycare Nursery and Collective Housing

Quai de la Charente, Paris, France

Margot-Duclot Architectes Associes (MDaa)

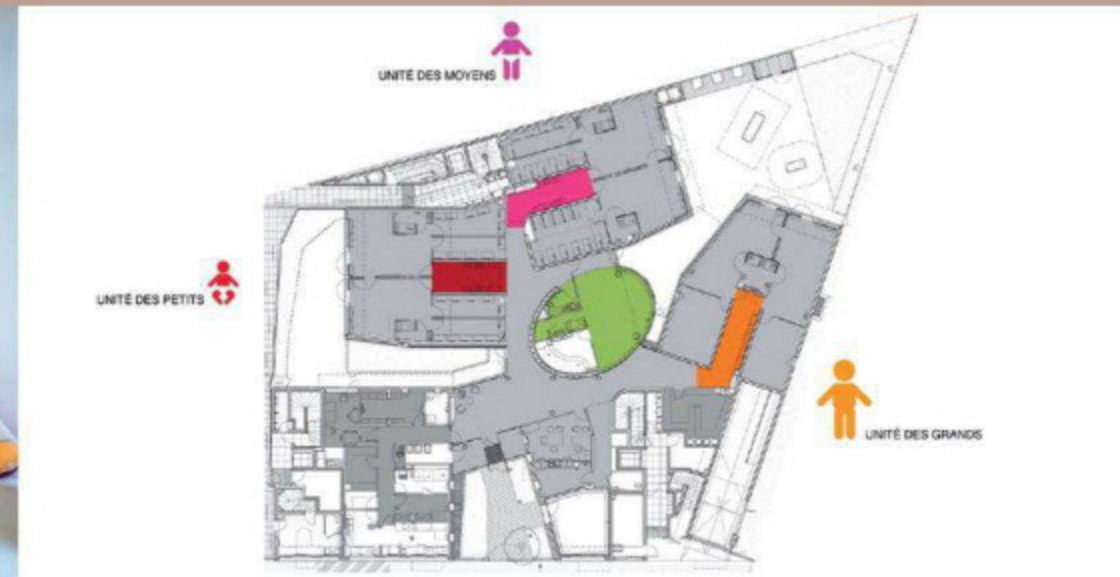
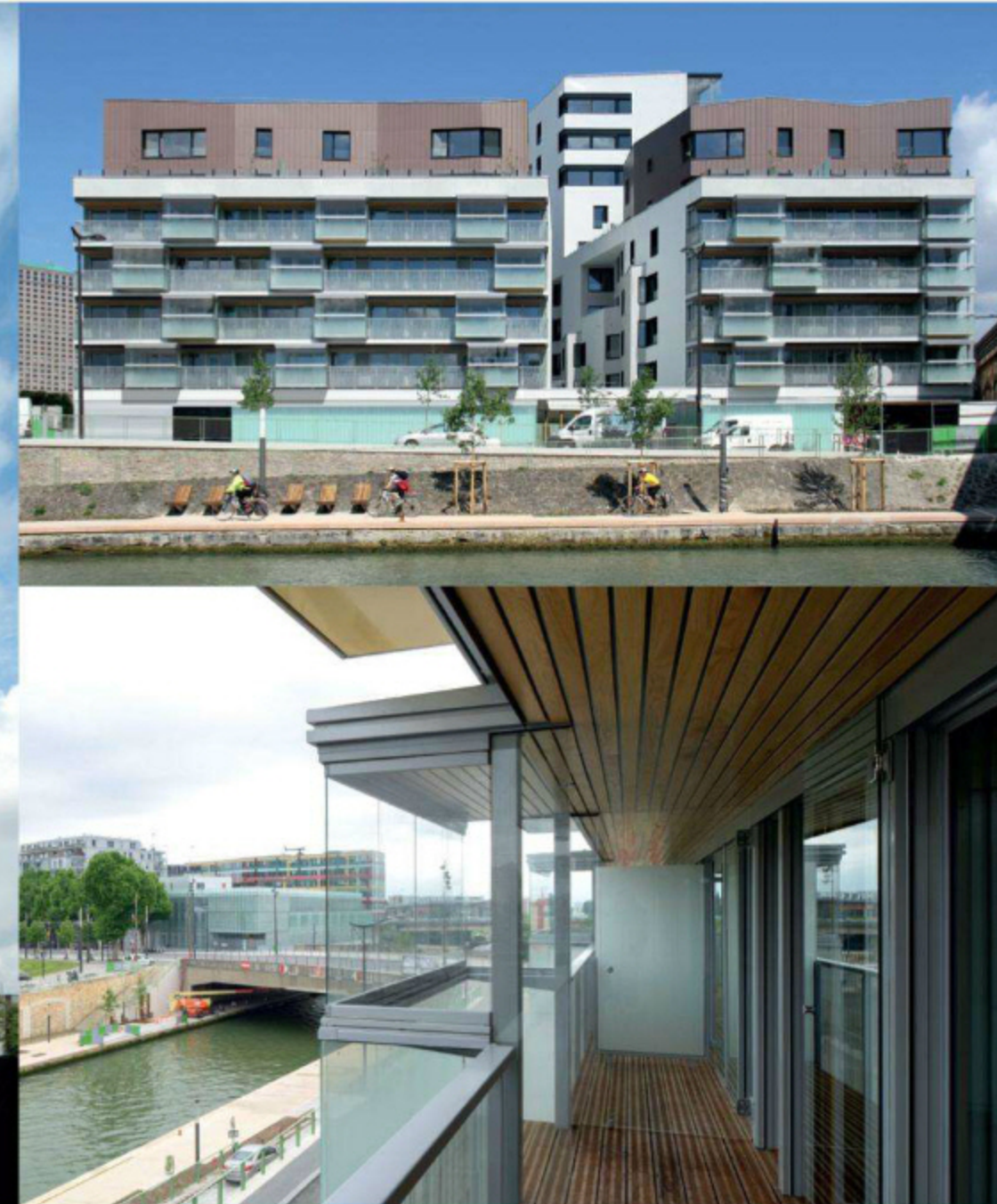


Joining a quite rich tradition of modestly innovative publicly subsidised housing in Paris, this new block enjoyed a specific site advantage, namely, views of the adjacent canal and the distant city centre. That, and the chance and wish to devote space to a micro landscape for the building, led the design direction, at least at the large scale. The many opportunities to exploit recesses and voids, and to make something positive out of them, were important. In part, they reveal and connect the central space, but possibly more vitally, they enliven domestic experience as well as the facades. There is design energy pulsing through the building, which seems to change as it turns, or breaks, or rises, as if it were excited to be doing what it's doing, and where.

The project was the winner of a limited competition in 2009. The flats, many with double exposures for cross ventilation, and the lucky ones with canal frontage, are pleasantly doused with natural light and the ample, simple glazed openings to take full advantage of it. Some units feature small enclosed loggias or porches that can act as thermal buffers – solariums in winter – but also add verve to the patterns of the elevations. Another piece of the ensemble, a building inserted into a site gap on Macdonald Boulevard, sports a facade composed of randomly chequered panels of lacquered aluminium in different hues, presenting an abstract art-like plane to the public realm. In the context of numerous visually loud statement-buildings in our times, this one is hardly aggressive, but it does stand out from its neighbours, without being brash or overly self-congratulatory, partly thanks to its subtle polychromy.

On grade is the day nursery, which anchors the building programmatically. It is a facility designed to help integrate special-needs children into a 'normal' urban curriculum, and experiments with absenting many of the usual paraphernalia associated with disability design. It is a rather lively, optimistic place, clearly devoted to children of all types and situations.

The complex is hardly the first French proposal in public housing that brings aesthetic energy and open-mindedness to what are essentially limited-budget constructions. The country is really good at pushing design to the forefront in the public realm, and at all budgets and scales. It holds lessons aplenty for many parts of Asia.



PAGE TURNER

Long Brick House

Big-Proud Peak, Pilisborosjeno, Hungary
Foldes Architects

Photography by Levente Sirokai



Designed for an intellectual couple with the directive to house their collection of books, which stretched to 100 metres in length, this simple, long house – in brick – hugs the side of naturally beautiful Big-Proud Peak, in the Pilis hillside some 15km from North Buda. Retaining most of the existing greenery onsite yielded a highly private approach, concealing the house itself from the arrival point. The plan, a single-storey stretched out longwise on the narrow site, was partly a nod to the clients' retirement age, partly a response to the sun path and to views. A corridor organises internal space, culminating in the public rooms facing the valley in full panoramic mode, encapsulated by a generous covered loggia space. The long hallway transformed naturally into a 17m library; in one sense it is the antithesis of the outward-oriented loggia. Because the building follows the linear site in being oriented longwise toward the best view, the master suite is pulled to the rear of the plan. Under this area is a small basement with sauna, workroom and storage space.

The centre of the main level offers a guest room, bathroom, storage and a kitchen that opens onto the dining and living space. The ceiling height grows as one progresses toward the building's prow because the floor steps down in two places, following the books. This gives the house a pleasing sectional interest, and introduces variety in height where it is lacking in plan. The library wall incorporates specifically placed window openings, and then, in the living area, a fireplace.

The masonry house sports 50cm-thick walls, good for insulation, a cavity roof for the same reason, and the loggia, which provides a shade layer to the living space in summer months, but can become a sun-porch in winter. The building is 140sq m in total, and cost 115,000 euros to construct, revealing its economy.

The building revels in its own unpretentiousness, and celebrates the beauty of modest materials and straightforward planning; there are no tricks or feasts to impress with, so it has to get by merely on well-proportioned spaces doused in sunlight and light tones. The living space in particular, feeding into the loggia outside, is a minor triumph... the kind of place its two owners will while away their days in, with long views of nature, and short views of literature.

ARTFUL

Manchester School of Art

Manchester, UK

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios



This major addition to and renovation of the Manchester School of Art at the Manchester Metropolitan University provides a boost to raw space as well as a healthy reorganisation of the entire facility. Says senior partner Keith Bradley of Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, "The building is about facilitating the arts by choreographing spaces that enable a culture of creative interaction between disciplines, around dedicated and shared studio spaces. It also acts as a showcase and gallery for the arts... Physically the art school is an interpretation of the arts and crafts traditions of the material and making upon which the school was founded in the 19th century."

The brief from the client included the mandate to create a "21st-century school... that would challenge convention and create a place that would encourage cross-disciplinary working, team projects and a more open and social approach to learning". The present solution, the winner of a by-invitation-only competition held in 2009, focuses directly on that 'social' aspect of the task,

with a generous public lobby space that rises up several floors in height, producing visual drama and an instant cohesion among the inevitably varied goings-on of an art school. Perhaps the deepest challenge involved not the new bits, but the old, including recladding of the original 1960s tower block, which resulted in horizontal bands of glazing alternated with black anodised aluminium screens (effective for concealing air vents). The job reduced the total area of external glazing by 40%, yielding an improved environmental performance, even while enhancing panoramas through better proportions of the windows.

An exposed concrete frame, decorated explicitly at certain places with a pattern derived from wallpaper of a century ago by school tutor Lewis Day, rules the roost. Steel and wood also play their parts, summing up a combination of materials that is rarely unattractive: cool plus warm, smooth plus textured. The spaces carry on a definite academic tradition, not least because of the concrete, but also knowingly accept the liveliness of a busy educational facility. The building sort of sets up the



spatial canvas, and then gets out of the way. The main atrium space, with its theatrical but handsome spanning bridges and timber stairway, is easily understood as the beating heart of the whole place, and is doubtless filled with constant social life and objects of attention; it is the kind of space academies everywhere ought to have – welcoming, exciting, pleasing. And nowhere does the Manchester School of Art feel like a forced retrofit or 'salvage' job. It is, rather, a very new place altogether.

SOCIAL NETWORK

Tencent

Guangzhou, China
M. Moser Associates

Shenzhen-headquartered media giant Tencent is the fifth largest Internet company in the world, with a market value exceeding US\$150 billion. For its new Guangzhou campus, completed in October last year, the company had selected a cluster of mid-20th-century industrial buildings sitting in the shadow of Canton Tower, which for a brief period earlier this decade enjoyed a reputation as the world's tallest freestanding structure (it is currently the world's fifth tallest). The six dilapidated buildings, formerly textile factories, were scattered among a rambling series of then-red-brick-clad, pitched-roof structures, which have since been redeveloped to constitute what is now known as Guangzhou Creative Park. Tencent's share of the lot comprises a total floor area of 9,914sq m, albeit spread somewhat haphazardly. M. Moser Associates was entrusted with the task of repurposing those spaces to suit Tencent's needs while also linking the buildings.

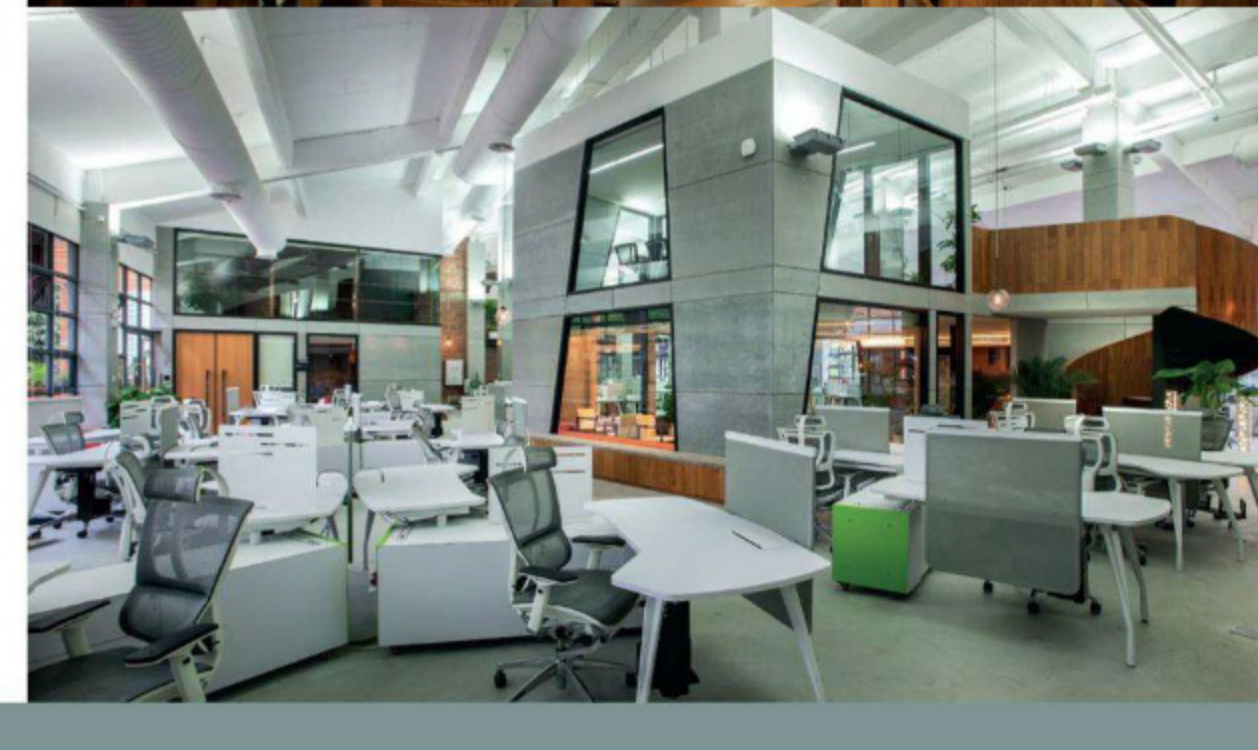
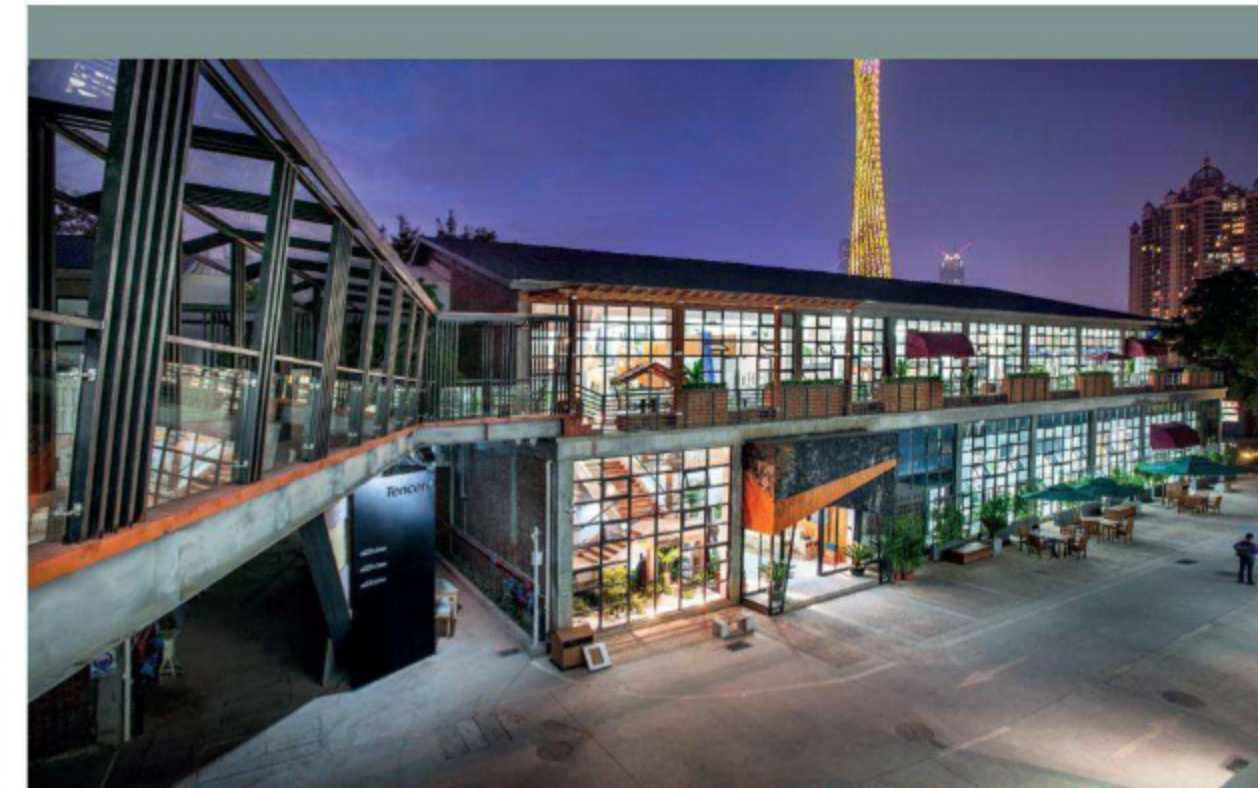
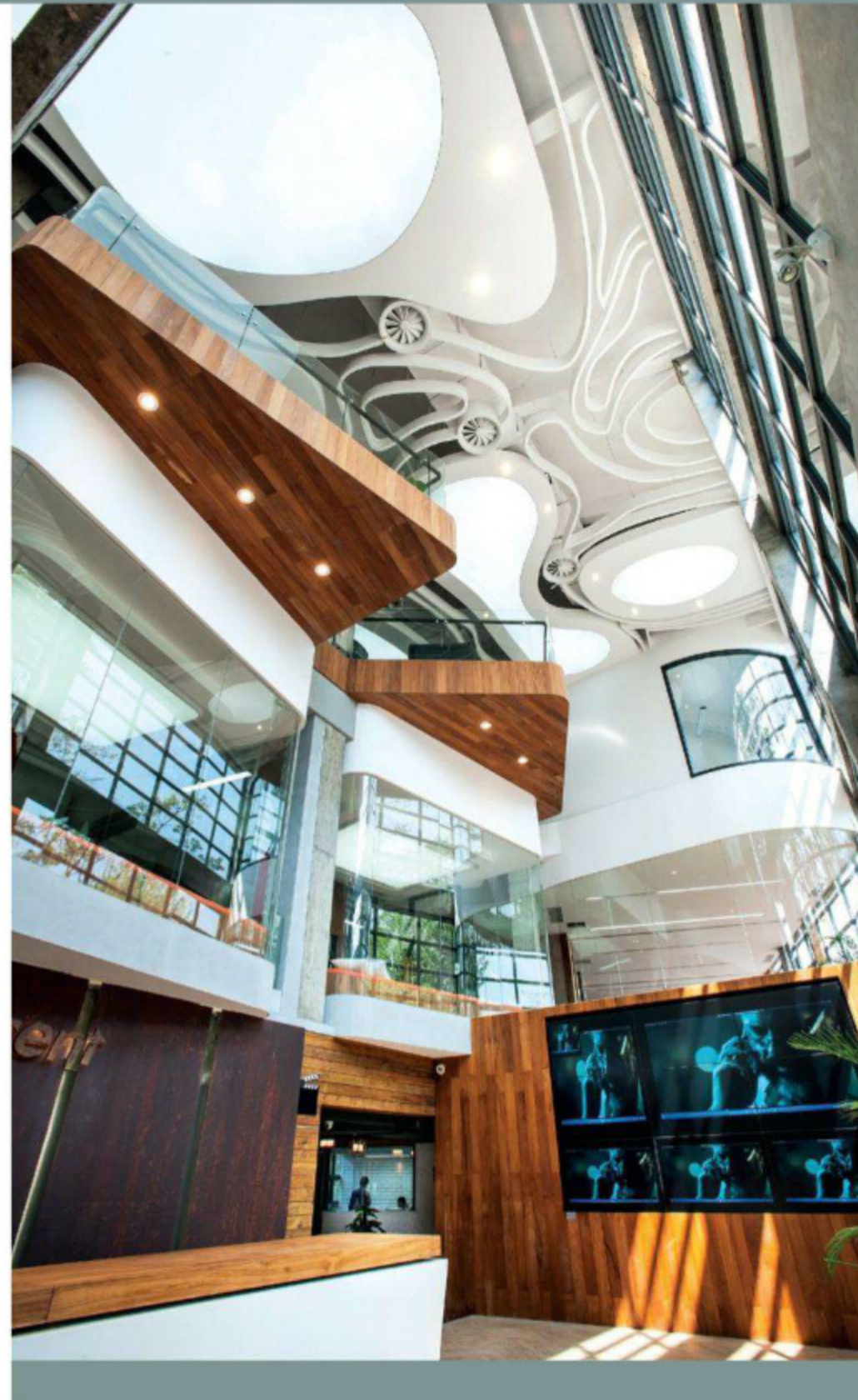
"Somehow, all the buildings had to be connected together and have a distinct, coherent identity," says Ramesh Subramaniam of M. Moser's Kuala Lumpur office and the project's concept designer. "There was also a need for very clear wayfinding through the campus, because there are quite a lot of other buildings there which don't belong to Tencent." Bridges supported by exposed steel beams became the way to go, and these join four of the six buildings, which house workspaces for the company, while the other two buildings contain the staff canteen, meeting rooms, lounges and reception area. "The bridges not only connect the buildings physically and turn four workspaces into one, but also link them together conceptually. They create a distinct campus within a campus for Tencent, without altering the buildings' existing historical features and characteristics."

M. Moser's project directors Wendy Leung and Joe Ho, along with project leader Grace Hu and her team, referenced the old factories' characteristics throughout their design solution. Red wooden decks allude to the site's existing architectural elements, while colours inside the offices are kept simple, muted and earthy, with green walls acting as lively textural counterpoints. Materials are predominantly natural, locally sourced and renewable or recycled, in keeping with the industrial vibe while at the same time being low-maintenance and highly sustainable. The main building features an entrance lobby with a full-height glazed atrium capped by a series of abstracted white fins that evoke clouds floating above staff and visitors. Meanwhile, a stacked series of meeting rooms and workspaces inserted as mezzanine floors within the large volume resembles a jagged cliff finished with greenery and timber panels.

"When you're in the atrium, you feel like you're still outside looking at a natural feature," Subramaniam says. "The cliff face also exposes the functions inside the buildings: what's in front of you are all the spaces you're about to enter and use. You get an instant understanding of where everything is." Hu chimes in: "The mezzanine levels were added so we could fully exploit the floor-to-ceiling height of the buildings. It was one of the most successful but also difficult parts of the project, because we needed to blend new engineering into old architecture."

Naturally, social interaction and serendipitous gatherings are the hallmarks of Tencent's business, encouraged by greenery and aisles – instead of solid walls – that indicate different functional areas. Breakout areas are planned near workstations, while writeable boards and washable walls throughout

Photography by Peter Marino



the workspaces support creativity. Indeed, the only enclosed area is the meeting suite of rooms, although these, too, include moveable glass walls, for the spaces to be as flexible as possible. All the rooms can thus become one large, open space, ideal for the company's regular 'town hall' meetings. "The aim was to create an interesting and comfortable environment that would encourage spontaneity," explains Hu. "It makes collaboration a natural and instinctive act, rather than a matter of scheduling a meeting."

There's no denying Tencent's Guangzhou office is a vivid expression of the company's DNA, and suitably represents a network for creative interaction. For M. Moser's efforts, the project was recognised with an Honour Award for Interior Architecture by the American Institute of Architects Hong Kong Chapter.

TEL AVIV TUSCAN

Bindella Osteria & Bar

Tel Aviv, Israel

Pistou Kedem Architects and Baranowitz-Amit Design Studio

Photography by Amit Geron



Their passion for wine and Italian cooking began over a century ago in Switzerland. Today the Bindellas own a farm outside of Montepulciano, Tuscany, that is divided into 100 acres of vineyards, 32 acres of olive groves, 75 acres of varied crops and 50 acres of oak forests. They produce nine different kinds of wine as well as extra virgin olive oil; more recently, they have started producing their own wheat for their 33 Italian restaurants across Switzerland.

Tel Aviv's newly opened Bindella Osteria & Bar is the first Bindella restaurant located outside Switzerland. The space, designed by Pistou Kedem Architects and Baranowitz-Amit Design Studio, is as sophisticated as the Italian dishes served here. Kedem decided to adopt a more contemporary approach that takes into account the family's traditional values, while maintaining a "young, urbane and sophisticated dialogue" with its patrons at its new home along the Israeli city's popular Montefiore Street. "The Bindellas' love for Tel Aviv inspired them to bring the best of Italy to the city," notes Kedem. "They asked that the restaurant speak two 'languages' – one that applies to contemporary cuisine, available throughout the day, and another that speaks the language of a late-night experience."

In organising the 310sq m space, the design team set up three different seating plans in between columns, to emphasise the restaurant's length. The interiors reference the family vineyard, with a grape motif featured on the metal screens and continuing across the feature front door. A "library of drinks" [made

from Dafni woodwork] climbs up unevenly toward the ceiling, just like grape vines, transforming into long beams that float above the diners, and changing height as they spread throughout the space. The underside of these beams is painted different shades of green – an architectural homage to the vines' foliage. Additionally, Marset's terracotta Pleat Box pendants illuminate the spaces between the beams, simulating the sun's rays as they break through the 'branches'.

On the other side of the room is a patio with outdoor seating, which adds to the informal atmosphere. The restaurant interior is furnished in warm tones of brown with the combination of concrete, wood and steel. The concrete floor has been polished so that its aggregate is visible, resembling a classic Italian terrazzo floor. The tables are made from blackened natural oak and the long, communal bar from iron and basalt. Hee Welling's About a Chair armchairs line the windows, while Ethnicraft's N4 teak high chairs at the bar add to the relaxed, modern Mediterranean atmosphere.

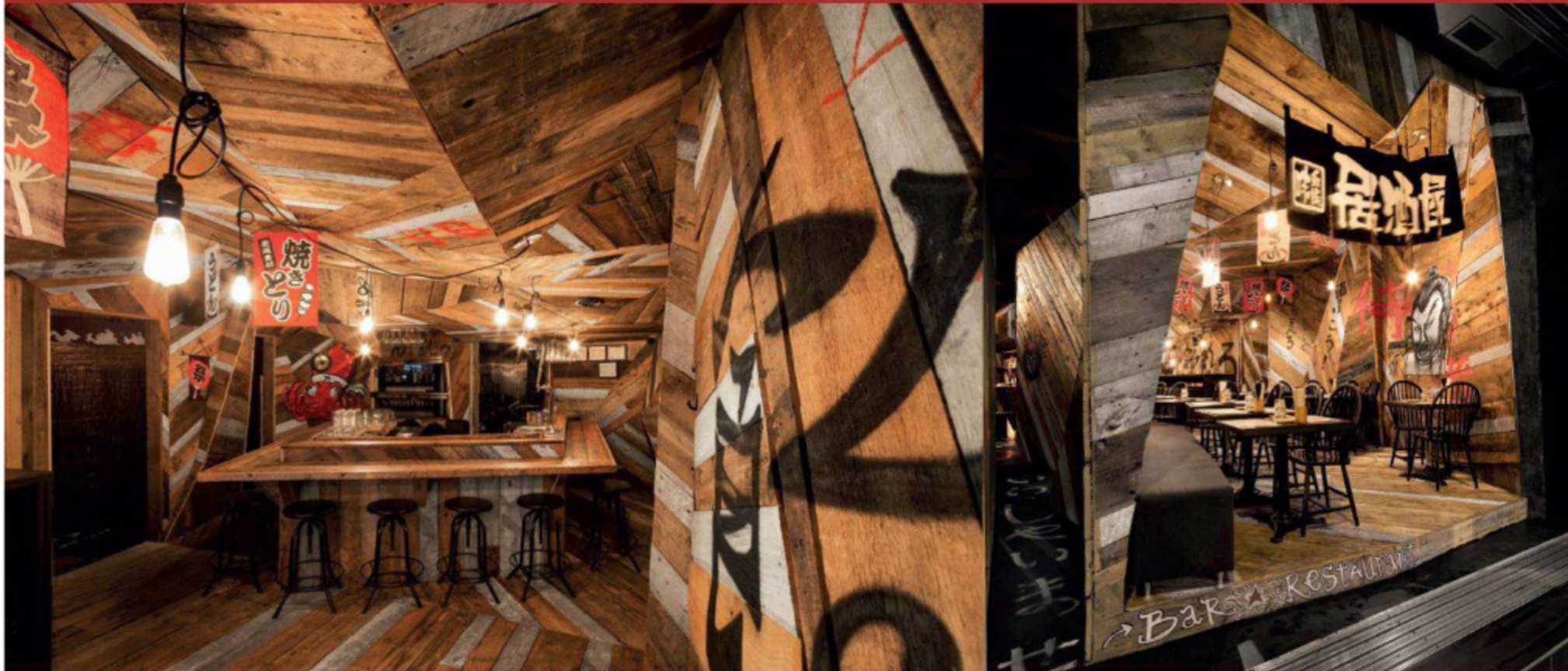
"The restaurant's facade withdraws slightly inwards, thus allowing the street to enter the restaurant in an organic fashion. The large metal door, constructed from hollow iron rings, is framed with a high iron gate, inviting guests to cross the threshold and escape the hectic city environment and enter the comforting, enveloping vineyard," says Kedem. With Bindella Osteria & Bar, Tel Aviv now has a classy new highlight that brings Italian food back to its glory days.

CONVIVIAL

Kinoya

Montreal, Canada
Jean de Lessard

Photography by Adrien Williams



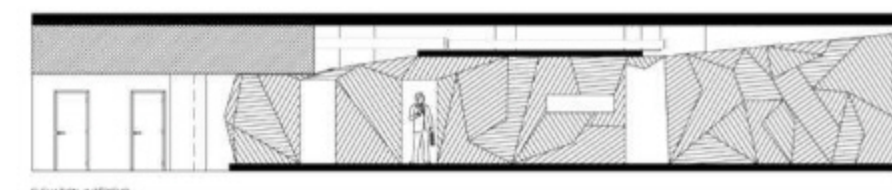
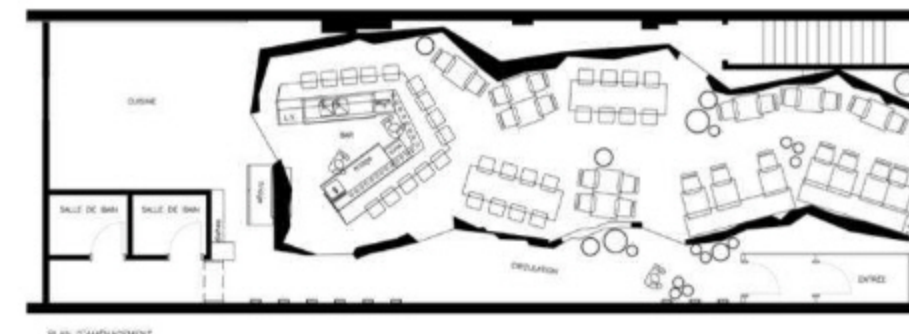
Photography by Peter Marino



Canadian designer Jean de Lessard recently renovated a 'Japanese tapas bar' in downtown Montreal. Striking interiors, characterised by geometric pieces of recycled timber and large tavern-style graffiti on the flooring, ceilings and walls, conjure a fitting environment for knocking back a coupla pints of beer or sake.

The project aims to explore the interactions that occur between diners in an enclosed, intimate environment. "It's a fantasy cave where people are in constant visual exploration mode," explains carpenter Dominic Samson, who handled Kinoya's woodworking. The restaurant is set inside a box frame to draw a well-defined boundary between the mundane surrounding streetscape and the chaotic interior that is "totally focused on the business of partying". Lessard designed a vertical drop of four to five feet between the front and rear parts of the ceiling to create a cocooning effect.

Soft, indirect lighting combines with reclaimed wood [sourced from local barns], funky graffiti and other



artwork to reinforce the "urban grittiness" of the place. Covering an area of 4,500sq ft, the space is composed of origami-inspired walls that recall an 'articulated snake'. Boards of hemlock and white spruce of different widths and thicknesses have been crookedly placed in a random fashion to strengthen the idea of chaos. The furniture and lighting were reused from the restaurant's previous design. Perpetuating Japanese cultural traditions, vibrant kakemono also hang from the ceilings. "For a space to become an 'event' or 'emotion', it must generate its own energy," notes Lessard. "The design elements are deliberately oppressive and aggressive to give it a sense of roughness and unpredictability."

Since its opening, the contemporary izakaya has been a hit on the city's food scene. The cosy seating and rough, haphazard interior lends a warm and friendly atmosphere where the scent of wood mingles with the aroma of sashimi and other Japanese dining classics.

HIGH ASPENATIONS

by Alistair Drummon

Aspen Art Museum

Aspen, Colorado, USA
Shigeru Ban Architects

Photography by Michael Moran

Aspen, a small town nestled in the Rocky Mountains, has a colourful past. It was settled in 1879 by a group of pioneering silver miners, grew quickly, and flourished until the silver market collapsed in the 1890s. Thereafter, the population declined and the next few decades were dubbed locally as “the quiet years”. But by the mid-twentieth century the town had reinvented itself as an upmarket ski resort. Aspen was back on the map, attracting the rich and famous... and the infamous. Singer John Denver moved there and wrote two songs about the place. Pistol-toting gonzo journalist Hunter S Thompson once stood, unsuccessfully, for election to the sheriff's office. In 1977, serial killer Ted Bundy escaped captivity and hid out on Aspen Mountain until his recapture. Today, Aspen is predominantly a playground for the wealthy. Many a billionaire owns a ski cabin (and by ‘cabin’ we mean ‘luxury hillside villa’) in the area. Louis Vuitton, Prada, Gucci and Fendi boutiques line the streets; fine-dining restaurants are easily found. And this year saw the opening of the new Aspen Art Museum – a publicity-attracting volume designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Shigeru Ban.

“Only in Aspen – surrounded by hills and mountains of money – would the good citizens come together to raise US\$72 million for a museum with no collection,” wrote Ray Mark Rinaldi in the *Denver Post*. And in some ways Ban, an architect best known and respected for designing disaster-relief accommodation, and an art museum privately funded by the well-heeled, part-time residents of a winter playground for America's elite, make for strange bedfellows. Certainly securing the services of a Pritzker laureate known for his humanitarian work is a coup for the museum directors, even though the building has been some years in the making, and Ban's profile wasn't what it is today when the museum commissioned him. (It was this year that



he won architecture's highest honour.) Still, Ban has always come across as a talent guided by his social conscience; and one can't help wondering how Aspen attracted Ban to the project, or why the little alpine town needs such a grand and expensive art display platform in the first place. Nevertheless, the museum – which will not have a permanent collection, focusing instead on hosting temporary exhibitions of contemporary art – opened its doors in August 2014.

The four-storey – three above ground, one below – building measures 100 by 105 by 47 feet. It has a total floor area of 33,000sq ft, of which 17,500sq ft is dedicated to exhibition space, divided into eight zones. The museum also contains a rooftop cafe and terrace, an education workshop, and a museum-store. Sitting on the corner of Spring Street and Hyman Avenue, the volume has been programmed to evoke the ski experience. As soon as visitors enter the museum, a glass lift – its ‘openness’ suggestive of a cable car – whisks them up to the rooftop deck. From there the tour begins. Visitors take in the artistic attractions as they descend the building's four levels. “I [positioned] the entrance foyer on the rooftop. It's like the experience of skiing – you go up to the top of a mountain, enjoy the view, and then slide down,” says Ban. Indeed, the rooftop terrace, boasting views that showcase the area's natural beauty, may prove a greater attraction than the art housed on the lower floors. Certainly the venue, which will be public space, seems an ideal addition to Aspen's social circuit. The building's preeminent architectural feature is its skin. Ban is known for using

cardboard tubes to create functional, temporary housing for people displaced by a disaster. And paper is a material that features here. The building has been wrapped in a kind of wicker-basket weave made of prodema, a composite of paper and resin, onto which a wood veneer has been added. The latticework facade mitigates solar heat gain, and diffuses light before it hits the museum's glazed inner skin.

Inside, the spaces are clean and minimal, creating a blank canvas for the art. Walkable glass skylights ensure that plenty of natural light enters the building during the day. Wood features – slat work on some of the ceilings, long bench seats, timber screens – visually connect the interior to the exterior. “Designing the Aspen Art Museum presented a very exciting opportunity to create harmony between architecture and Aspen's surrounding beauty while also responding to the need for dialogue between artwork, audience, and the space itself,” says Ban.

The museum was completed for US\$45 million, leaving a US\$27 million endowment to cover operational costs for some years to come. Aspen can now add a high-profile, attention-grabbing, starchitect-designed museum to its growing list of upmarket accoutrements. The town has come a long way since its founding as an outpost on the pioneer trail.

STACKED

100PP
Singapore
Ministry of Design

Photography courtesy of MOD

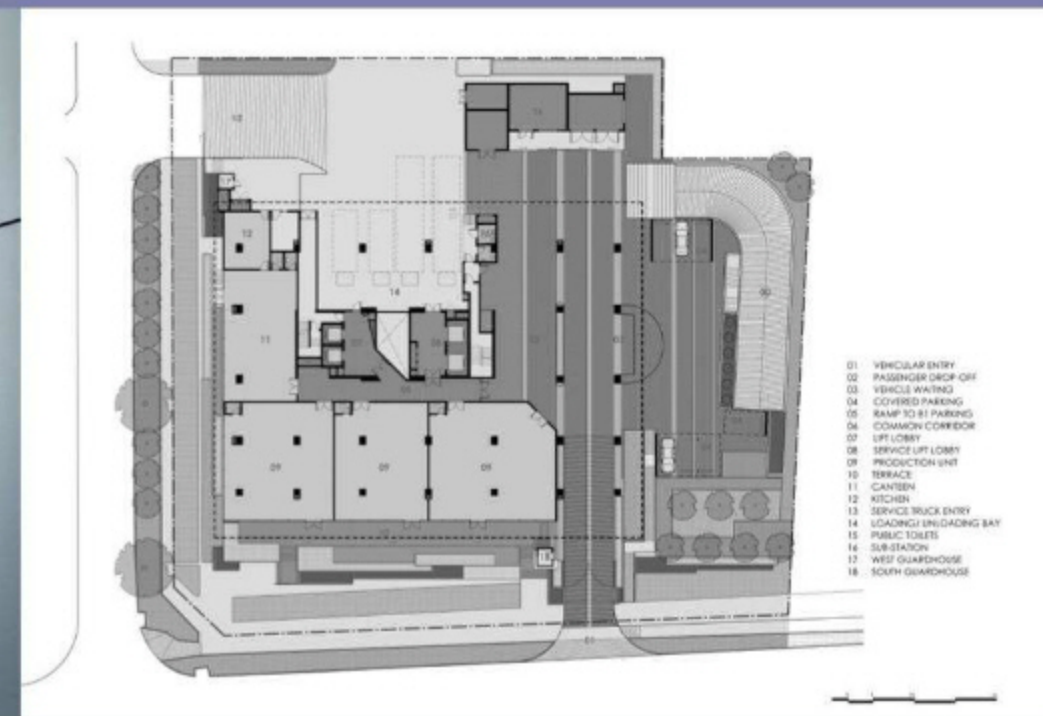


There's not that much you can do to (or for) a generic commercial office building, unless you don't treat it as generic. And if the motive for the building was to attract design and digital firms, you'd begin by looking at what they're after. Flexible space? Large floor plates? High ceilings? Access to food and strong coffee? For 100PP, a new structure near the waterfront in Singapore's grittier neighbourhood, Ministry of Design worked with what it was given to enliven the massing of the block, exploit views and natural daylight, and make the building announce what it was after.

To exploit the sea views – and, hopefully, breezes – MOD stepped the facades back to provide balconies at varied floor levels. The apparent randomness of the stepping lends the building's mass its primary characteristic, which is that it resembles a stack of giant books. Because there is a busy elevated freeway directly in front of the building, this strategy also helped to screen floors above from the noise of passing traffic. The shifted stacking has effects on the overall scale of the structure, making it seem less like a single block or cube, and more like separate, and smaller, flat plates. Within the context of surrounding blocks that are generally monotonously cubic, the result jumps out positively. But simply offsetting floor levels is hardly new, and not enough to set it apart from the crowd. It may have been the single largest gesture in formal terms, but MOD was just getting started.

To unify the facades, the architects 'wrapped' them with stripes, composed of necessary architectural elements such as windows, balconies and the ubiquitous air-conditioning ledges. The intention was to "blur" the distinction between them so that they read as collected horizontal bands. Tonal variations of grey were selected to do the job, and after dark, lighting takes up the task. The bands also accentuate the step-backs of the floor plates.

The effect is youthful and eye-catching, suggesting not so much a single commercial tenant as something like an active hub, which was the intent of the project from the outset. If the building were any more sleek or polished, it would lose the edginess that is part of its appeal and business plan; it has to answer to the kind of progressive, startup mentality of its prospective tenants. The drama of the stepped periphery works to that end, and 100PP straddles the fence between where such tenants often gravitate to – lofts in revitalised industrial warehouses – and the sort of planned, government-sponsored facilities often provided for the creative industries in Singapore. You can only plan so much for this crowd – it naturally seeks out undiscovered corners in which to be spontaneous – but in a city-state where virtually everything is planned, even randomness, 100PP stakes out a distinct position.



SWISH

Nike

Hong Kong SAR, China
OpenUU

Photography by Nirut Benjanapont

Photography by Peter Marino

For millennials, the running shoe is less about sports and more about attitude. In keeping with its reputation for being ahead of the curve, American sports apparel manufacturer Nike has been moving away from positioning their products as athletic wear. While naturally it still looks to the likes of footballers for endorsement, lately it has also been promoting itself as a lifestyle brand.

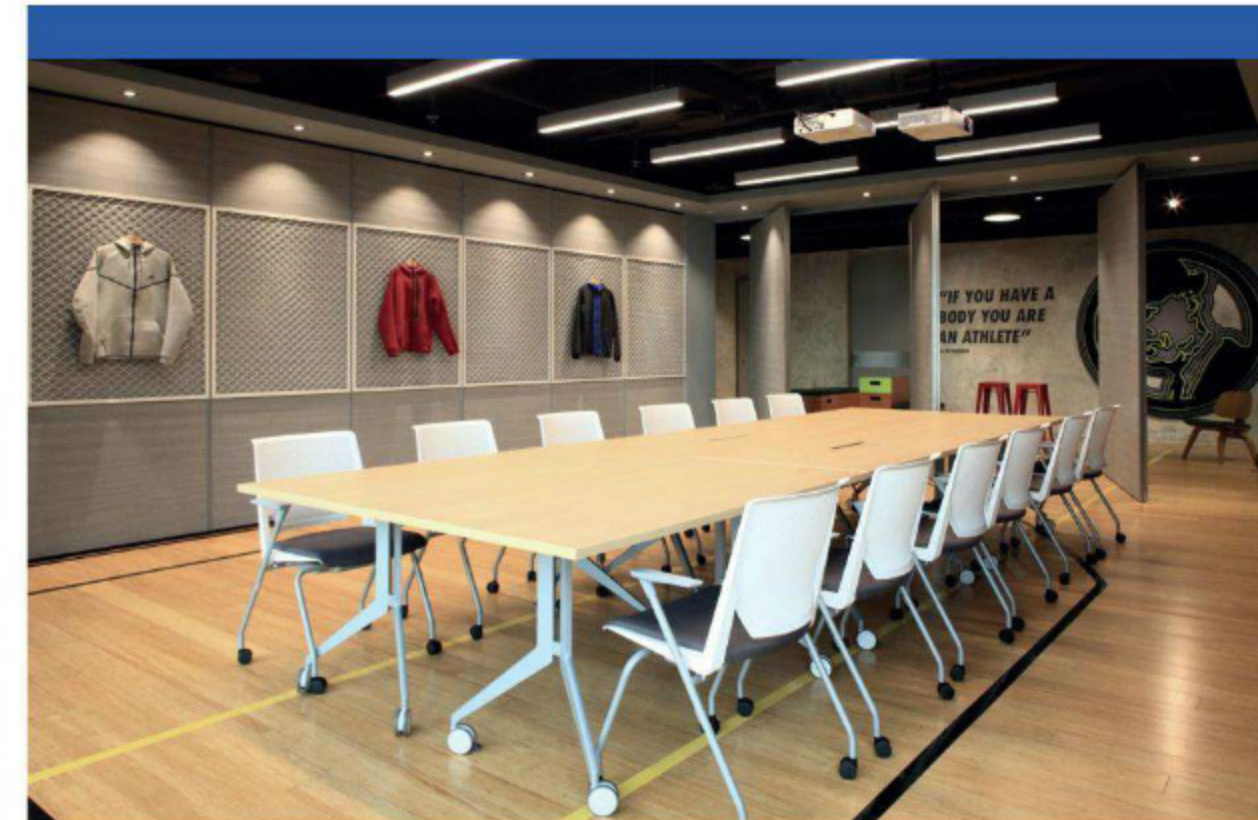
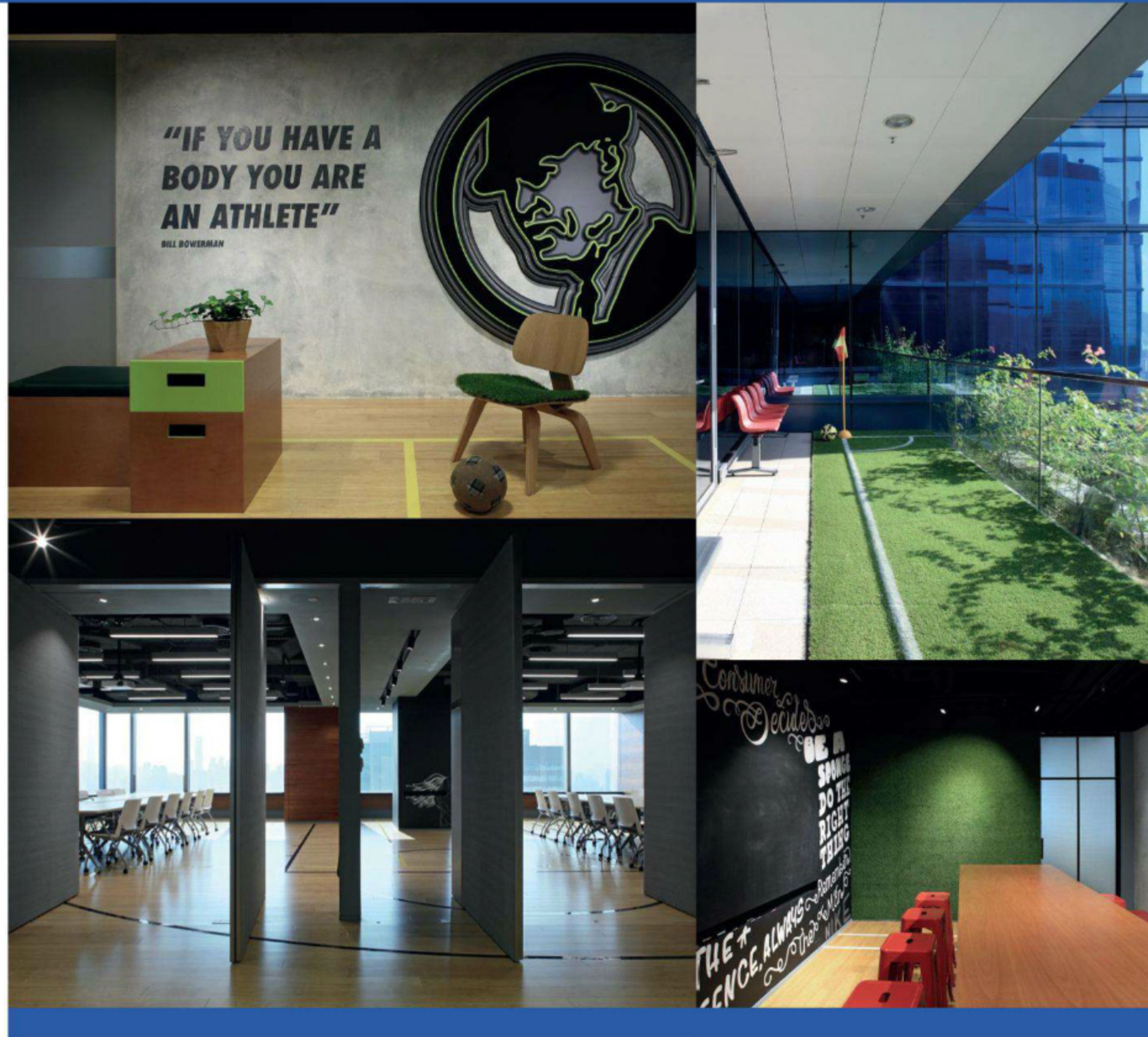
Nike's Hong Kong office has three storeys in Kowloon Bay. Early last year, the company realised it was quickly outgrowing its conference and meeting facilities, and looked to OpenUU to help transform 3,000sq ft on its 31/F – previously let out to its subsidiary, Cole Haan – into 'an inspirational place' while keeping its lower floors as-is for staff work areas. The brief was for a reception and lounge, plus one room that could facilitate video conferencing, and two smaller rooms for product demonstrations.

"Nike holds global meetings in Hong Kong where they need to accommodate up to 180 people at a time – they then break out into smaller groups," explains Kevin Lim, managing director with OpenUU. "We needed to provide seating and tables flexible enough for different activities. We understood that Nike was moving towards being more of a fashion and lifestyle brand, like streetwear, and we looked to Hurley, a skate brand, and Converse, Nike's neighbour, to inform our eventual design solution. In the end, we delivered a space that was casual rather than corporate."

The job was completed last August. OpenUU highlighted Nike's business philosophy wherever possible in the office. Movable partitions give the space flexibility and are finished in Nike fabrics and gym motifs. Sports markings on ballcourt-like timber flooring denote basketball and badminton playing-fields, while green Astroturf covers a number of furnishings and feature walls. Custom furniture includes workout plyometric boxes in bright hues; commonly used by cross trainers, these have been turned into seating options or platforms for speakers and exude a locker room vibe. Partitions with white chain link fence panelling add a streetscape feel. "We wanted to bring back Nike's DNA into its office," says Lim. "We designed the balcony [to be] like a soccer pitch with stadium seating."

Besides putting up walls featuring inspirational quotes by Nike's co-founder Bill Bowerman, OpenUU worked with Nike's graphics department and artists such as Mark Goss for the wall graphics and Vinti Andrew on a whimsical dog sculpture. "Mark did one of the elephants for a recent Swire exhibition in Hong Kong, while Vinti is a British artist who uses Nike fabrics and other donated goods to create his work," notes Lim.

By integrating Nike's branding into the office's public spaces, OpenUU has created a colourful and dynamic environment that, on all accounts, is a slam dunk.



SECRETIVE

Mrs Pound

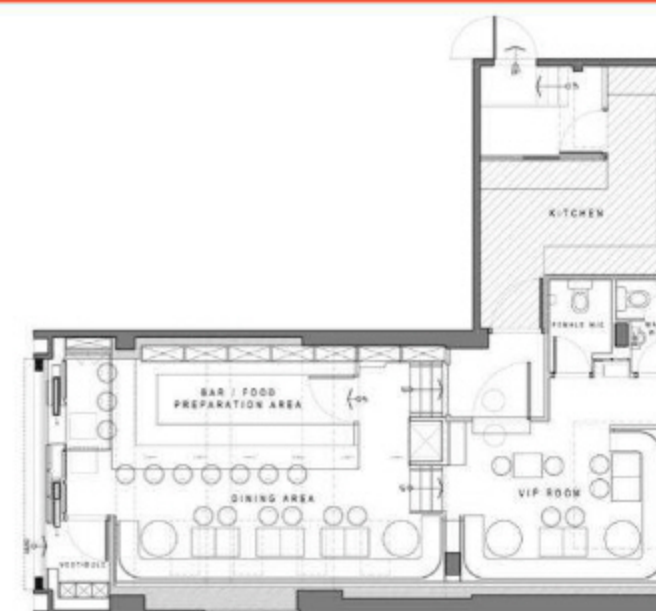
Hong Kong SAR, China
NC Design & Architecture

Photography by Dennis Lo



In Hong Kong, good things often come – of necessity – in small packages. In the city's resurgent Sheung Wan district, on the west side of the CBD, some of the oldest structures, streets and urban fabric have survived (for the moment) the seemingly unstoppable bulldozer of redevelopment, and been adopted by the young, the trendy, the foreign and the entrepreneurial, as the hippest zone around. It's all rather dicey at the large scale; as the neighbourhood gains the attention of bar-hoppers, foodies, craftsmen, artists and tiny-scale business owners, it likewise gains the attention of greedily salivating developers, seeking to quench their thirst for sites to redevelop and capitalise on 'location, location, location' status. Yet for the moment, Sheung Wan is enjoying the delightful combination of popularity plus authenticity. Perhaps fate will allow that to endure.

Among the minuscule commercial ventures in fashion, F&B, arts, crafts and so on that proliferate the area is Mrs Pound, a 'hole-in-the-wall' eatery/drinkery that plays cleverly on a classic stalwart of Hong Kong history: the stamp (or chop) shop. The 150sq m, 45-seat cubbyhole adopts a fictitious narrative about a romantic couple who reunite midlife after years apart. Namesake Mrs Pound was a former burlesque dancer from 1950s Shanghai (why not Wanchai?) who retires to Hong Kong to rendezvous with her otherwise betrothed love, Mr Ming. Together they open a stamp shop as a front to disguise their speakeasy, which is actually their secret love nest.



As 'guests' of the couple, visitors must gain access by activating the main door via a secret stamp hidden in the outside vitrine. Once customers are inside, the miniature, vibrant retro world of Mrs Pound and Mr Ming envelops in pinks and greens, nostalgic objects and lighting, vintage photographs and memorabilia. Pink rules a more feminine area, with mirrors, marquee lights, lipstick writing and Chinese tile, while the more masculine zone up a few steps tends toward green bar stools and floor tiles, as well as neon artwork and concrete panels. Gym rings appear as lights suspended over the bar, and various small features tempt the eye around the space, encouraging patrons to speculate on the private story of its owners. One expects to find Wong Kar Wai sitting in a corner, ruminating behind dark shades on his next opus.

NCDA has done a lot with a little here, and had a lot of fun with the task. As for basing it all on a fiction, why not? If interior design for a small bar and diner isn't the chance to let a story lead the way, what would be? No matter that Mrs Pound or her Mr Ming never existed; their presence is felt in every corner of this place. Lesser things have been created at greater cost. And where better to hear a tall tale, than in a pub?

OUTBACK IN THE MIDDLE

Bushman's Australian Grill & Bar

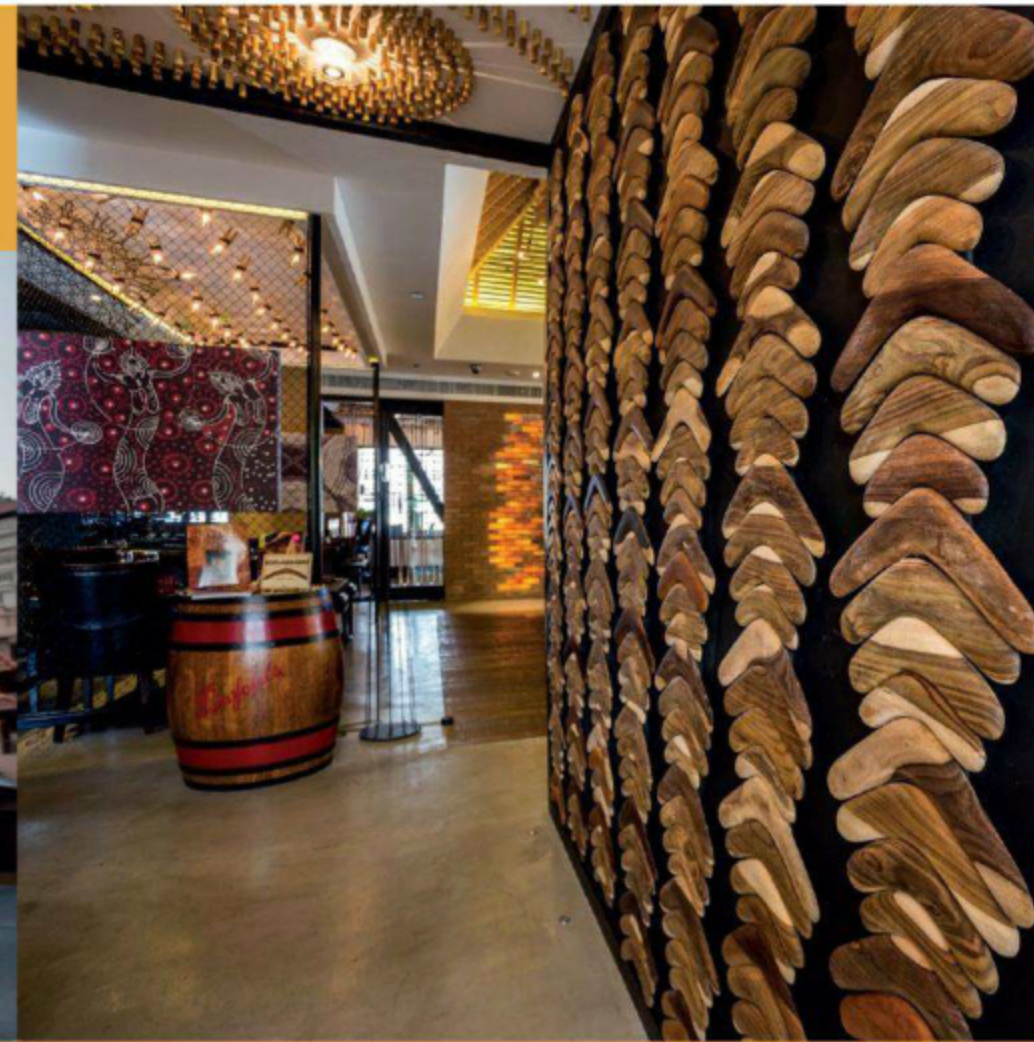
Dubai, UAE
Stickman Tribe

Bushman's Australian Grill is the latest restaurant to open in Dubai's iconic Palm Jumeirah. Situated in the five-star Anantara Hotel on the eastern crescent of the man-made archipelago, the rustic eatery is an innovative space that reflects all aspects of Australian history and culture.

The 1,617sq m restaurant, unveiled in May last year, accommodates 200 persons, with a combination of open, semi-open and private dining areas. Upon entering, diners are immediately transported Down Under by the well-thought-out Aussie-inspired decor. The Stickman team sourced materials typical of the region and incorporated these into the design. Boomerangs made of jarrah, a natural hardwood from the southwest corner of Western Australia, adorn the entrance. Another wall is lined with over 10,000 corks mimicking cave and canyon wall art. Genuine Australian-dollar coins [collectively worth A\$6,000] line the bar top.

One of the design challenges the team faced was the ceiling inspired by aboriginal art. "There are very tight and specific laws about the import of native flora and fauna from Australia. We needed to factor this into our project timeline as the aboriginal art was imperative to the design of the outlet," says lead project designer and Stickman co-founder Marcos Cain.

The terrace, according to Cain, adds even more of an Antipodean touch, with knitted fences, an open courtyard and miniature animal sculptures. The outdoor dining area, which looks like a typical Aussie backyard with an open firepit, represents a billabong – a watering hole that provides water for wild



animals like kangaroos, wombats, dingoes and snakes. In fact, images of these animals are found throughout the restaurant. The outdoor seating pods are the oversized outline of a gum nut pod, the seed of a gum tree, and the Parrilla grill is a modern take on the bushman's fire.

Offering an extensive menu of grilled specialties, Bushman marries authentic ingredients with honest design materials and a soulful atmosphere – a recipe that works every time.



NATIONAL

HOUSE OF MUSIC AALBORG, DENMARK COOP HIMMELB(L)AU

Photography by Markus Pillhofer



visible through various glazed apertures, so that students, visitors, teachers, musicians and anyone else can view what's happening inside and, presumably, be inspired by events, rehearsals, concerts or performances.

The parti is underscored by contrasting the curvaceous, flowing shape of the concert arena with cubic, boxy forms holding the other spaces. Arup helped with the complex acoustics inside the hall, leading to numerous plaster sculptures on the wall and ceiling. The foyer space is a meeting place for virtually everyone connected with the House of Music. It rises five storeys in height, and offers balconies, windows, stairs and landings that combine to enliven the space with constant activity and occupation.

Environmental innovation permeates the complex nowhere more than in the use of the cool fjord waters to temper summer heat in the building.

Conceptually, the project, which won a competition in 2003, is clear: the clustering of the secondary yet related functions around the celebrated concert hall at its core would tell in massing how the building works, and guide users to where they need to be, all the while bringing dynamism and drama to the places – and fact – of overlap. But the architects have gone to considerable lengths to complicate the diagram along the way, so that the finished building at the large and medium scales seems quite busy, and there is never the answering calm that might make the loudness exciting. It's all acid rock, little melody. One assumes, upon approaching the aesthetics with programme in mind, that some metaphor to do with musical structure or form is at work, and perhaps it is. But if so, it's of the dissonant type alone. Designing a building for and about music is dangerously potent stuff – the metaphors can hardly be kept silent – but this outing seems perplexing: is it an essay on the complexity of sound, a position statement on the inherent radicalism of music, or does it try to avoid the subject matter entirely... in which case, what on earth drove these forms and their interrelationships? Was there possibly a deliberate effort to oppose the obvious relationship of music and beauty? This is not Coop Himmelb(l)au's, or Denmark's, finest work.



This new music building combines two programmatic purposes under one roof... or, perhaps, a number of conjoined roofs. It is a school of music and a fully functioning, 1,300-seat concert hall, and the building's massing, which is initially slightly inscrutable, expresses the idea that, in the words of Wolf D. Prix, "The school embraces the concert hall."

The latter occupies the centre of the plan, and is wrapped around with rehearsal spaces and training rooms. A large foyer connects all these together, as well as opening onto a cultural space and the fjord running beside the site. Underneath the foyer, which is the paramount public space of the centre, are tucked further rooms devoted to music: the intimate hall, the rhythmic hall and the classic hall. The concert hall is

DEVE BUILD DESIGN

Established in 2005 by Feng Yu, this aggressive design-build firm, based in China's southern megalopolis, Shenzhen, is out to edit the conventional wisdom on firms doing both design and construction – which happens to be the common approach in China, at least until now. By stressing the 'design' portion of the equation, without losing the undeniable advantages of also handling construction (primarily economic and administrative), Deve is burnishing the image with results that clearly define a distinct aesthetic sensibility and direction. In this case, that means an interpretation of Chinese architectural and spatial traditions in a context of contemporary details and programmatic requirements. Without venturing into the question of whether the 'build' mandate of their business plan is actually essential to its company culture – or what, if any, effects it has on design integrity – Deve is clearly worth keeping a close eye on in future. Perhaps this bodes a new chapter in an old game.

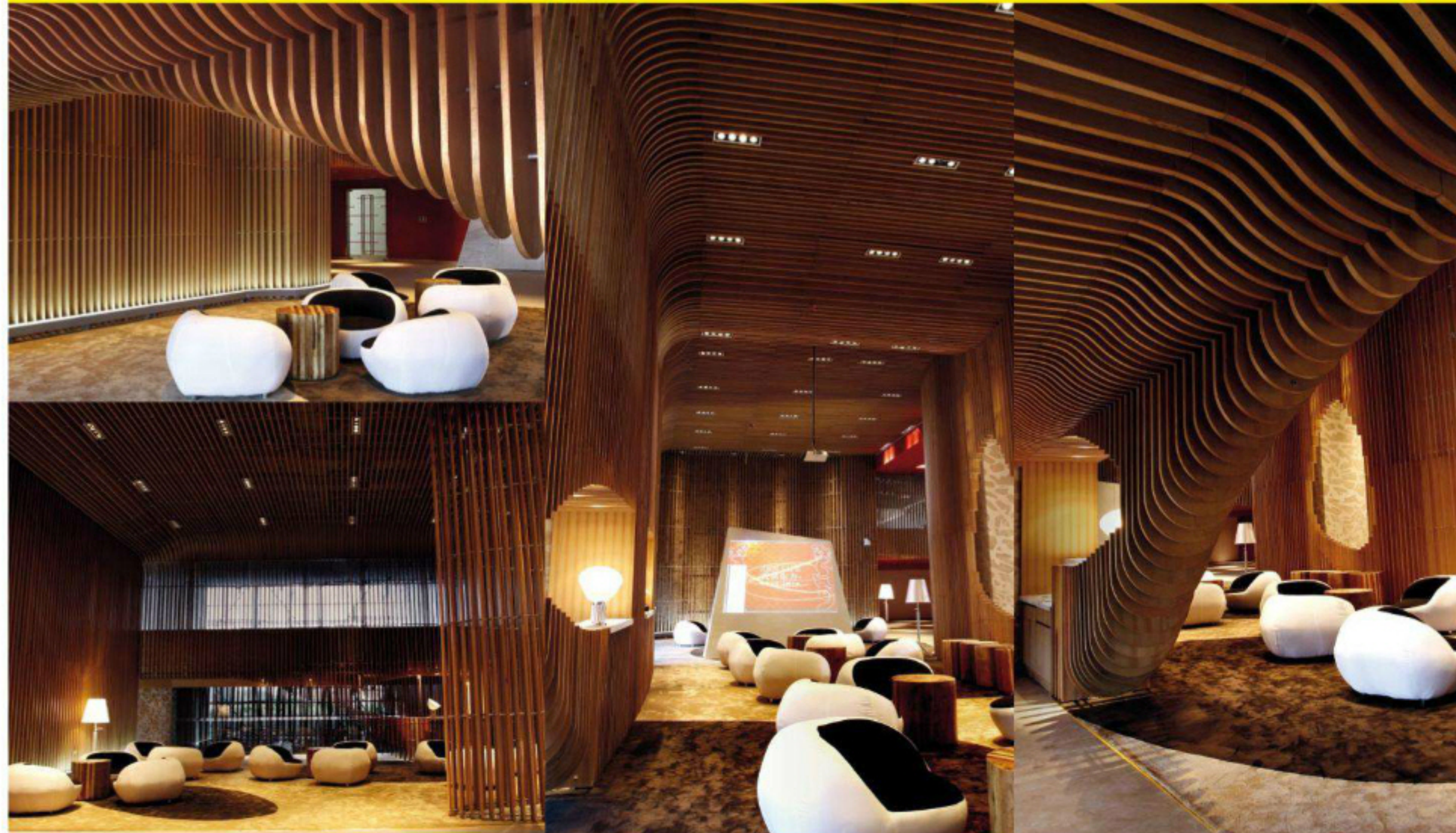
SHENZHEN, CHINA

Photography by Qi Ma



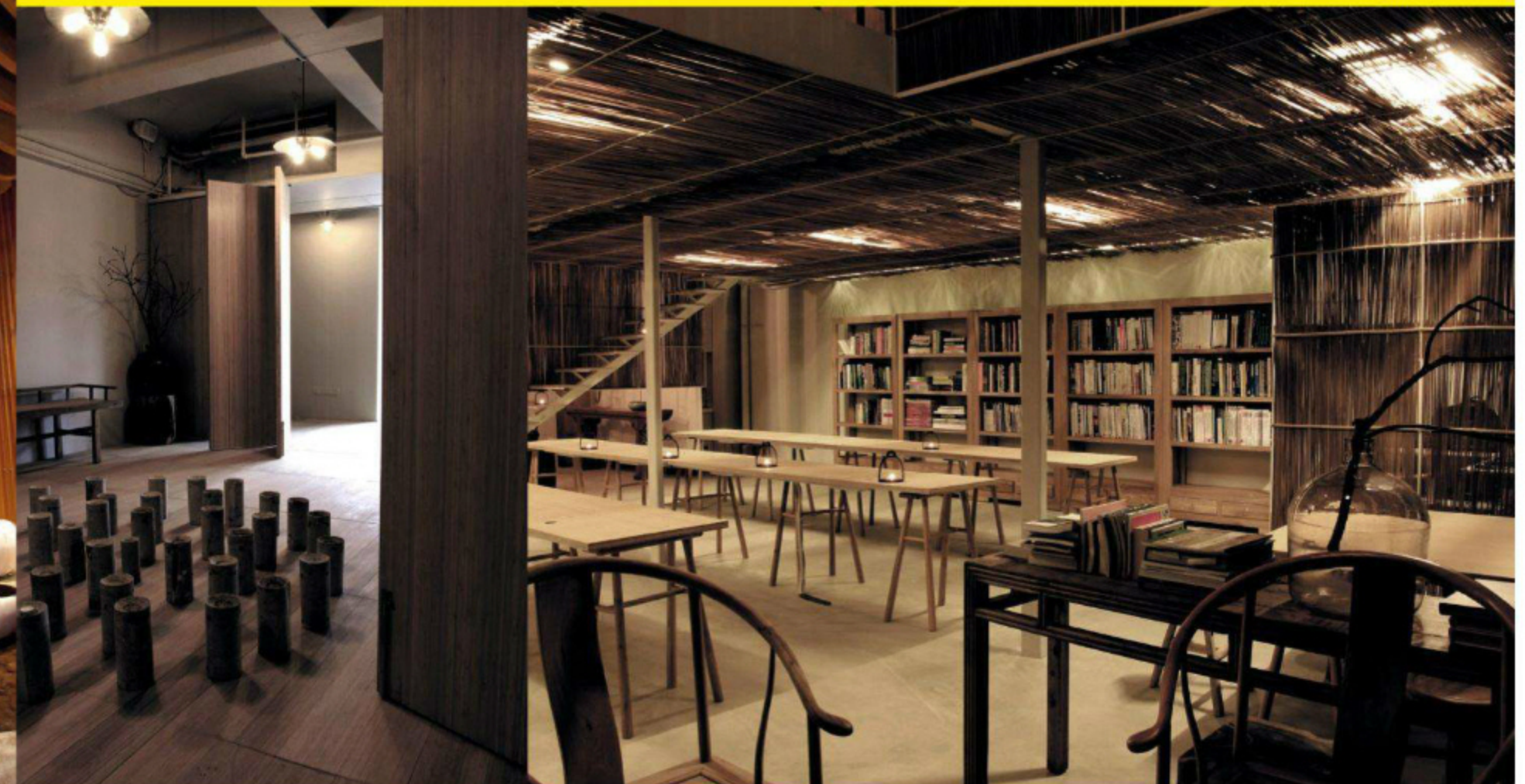
TIANXI ORIENTAL CLUB

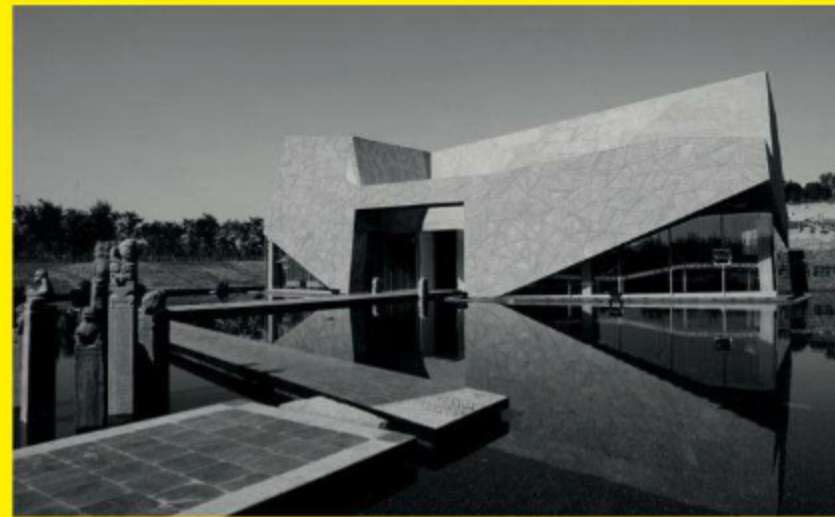
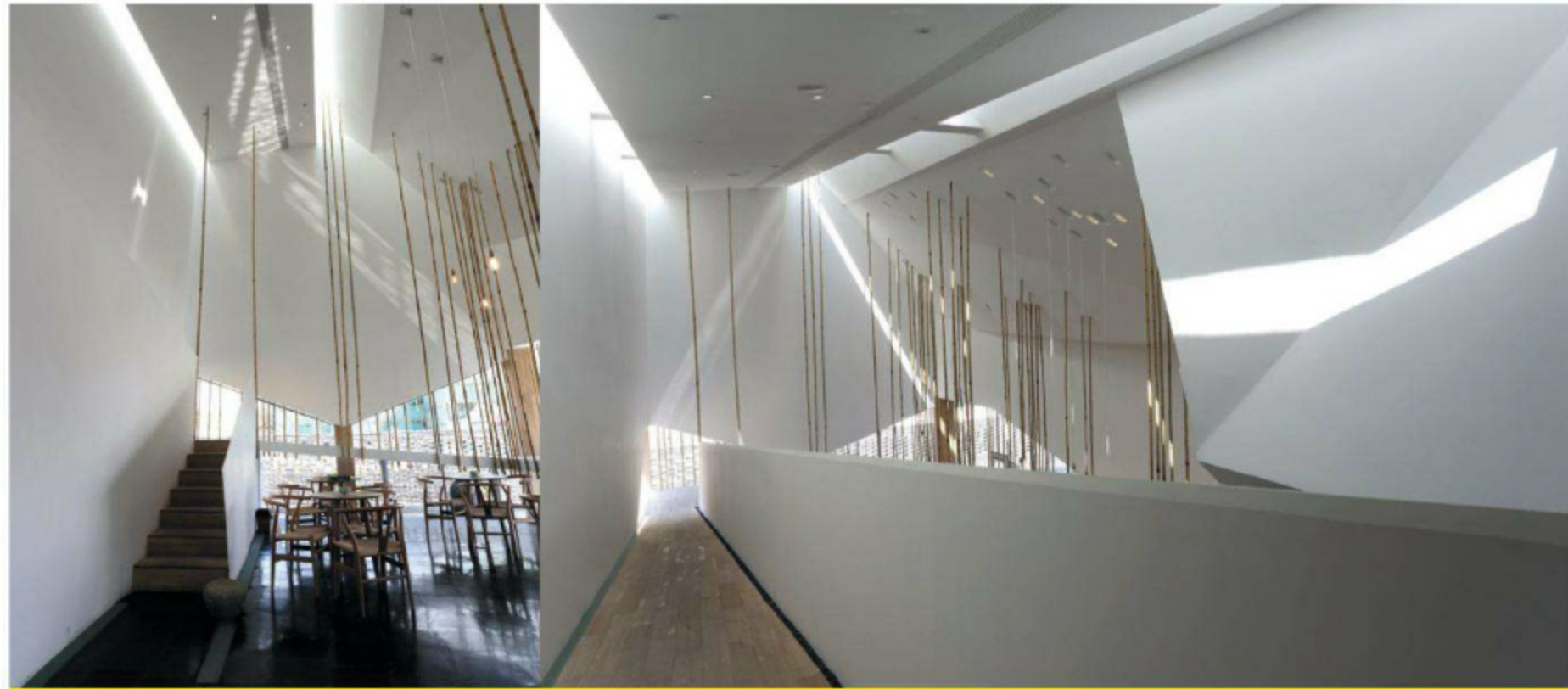
This 1,500sq m club lobby space is a cohesive expression of Deve's interpretation of Chinese precedents re-presented for the modern world. Doused in ribbed timber struts that 'wave' around the space to create an organic envelope evoking both natural topography and nautical imagery, the room is lighted to accent contemporary furniture and set in place a mood that is tranquil and intimate.



BITTER BAMBOO ROOM

This space, which serves the Deve Build Design staff as studio space, is a bamboo-clad, zen-inspired place for diverse functions, but also a Yu Feng passion project. In a kind of denial of conventional design parameters, it is an expression of the designer's wish to retrieve the simplicity of our relationship to the earth and to space. A kind of 'purity' is sought, through straightforward layout and reduced, economical materials (largely bamboo itself) as well as details and construction methods. Is the result 'designed' or the opposite? Perhaps that question was the point.

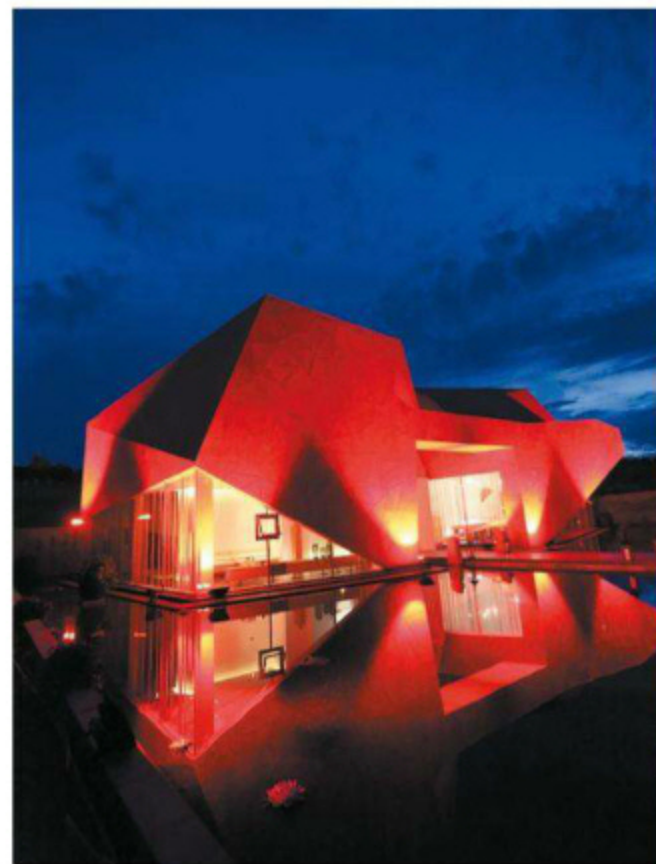




This ambitious yet ambiguous building takes Yu Feng's unorthodox approach to programme and practicality to a new level. Is the building a museum? A folly? A private retreat? A gathering place? Using the garden promenade as the generating inspiration, the designer has created a sequence of spaces and visual arrangements that absolutely entice and intrigue, with plenty of moments for pause along the journey.



GU YUAN



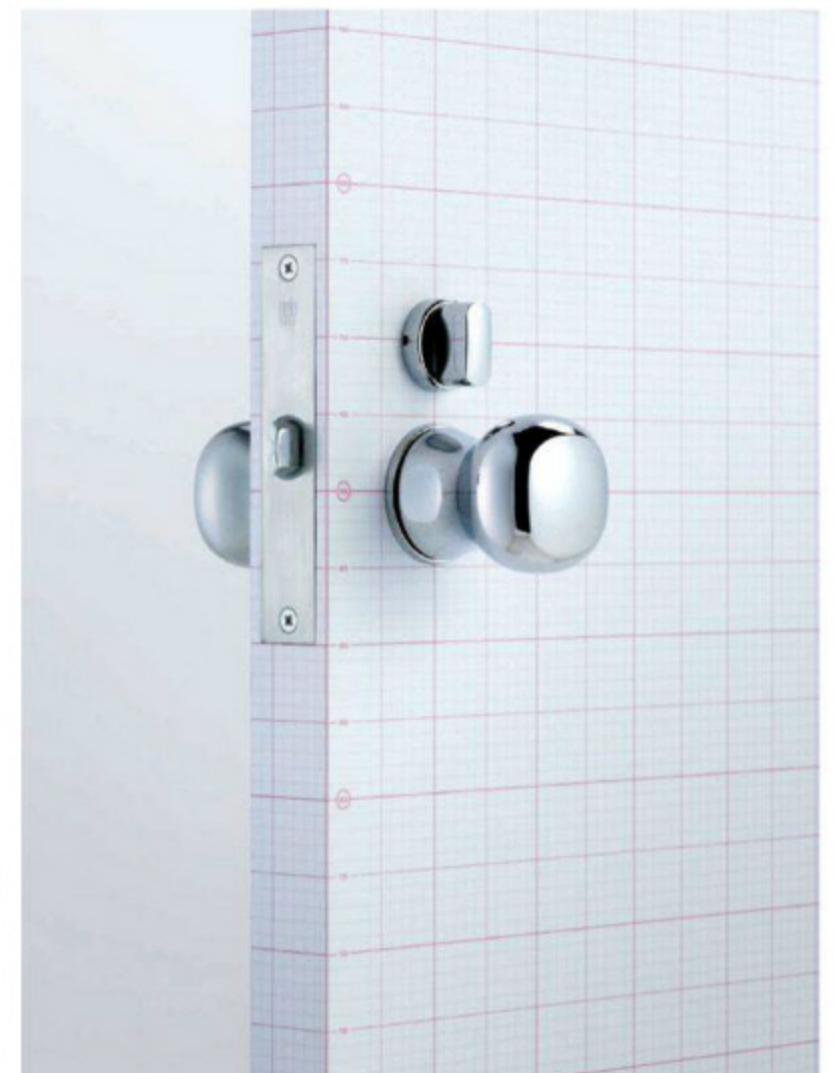
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Stars and Stripes

Members and guests were seeing red, white and blue on the evening of 14 November at the annual American Institute of Architects Hong Kong Chapter's (AIA HK) Honours & Awards 2014. The event is held at Exchange Square's Rotunda annually just before American Thanksgiving, as its members give thanks for another fruitful year at the drawing board and on construction sites. Categories this year included Honour & Merit Awards for Architecture, Merit Award for Architecture & Sustainable Design, Honour & Merit Awards for Interior Architecture, Honour & Merit Awards for Urban Design, Honour & Merit Awards for Unbuilt/Other, and AIA Scholastic Awards. Meanwhile, Community Citations and Honourary Memberships were given to individuals and organizations that made an impact in promoting architecture within the community. A big congratulation to all the winners.



Lily with Osmanthus

On the afternoon of 23 November, the Frank Gehry-designed Maggie's Cancer Caring Centre on the grounds of Tuen Mun Hospital was the venue for a talk by landscape architects Lily Jencks and Urbis managing director Alexander Duggie. London-based Jencks spoke about a topic close to her heart: the garden that surrounds Maggie's, which was inspired by her mother Margaret Keswick Jencks' book celebrating Suzhou's famous gardens. Two decades ago, cancer-stricken Keswick Jencks felt there should be another side to healing: one that allowed patients to take ownership of their illness in a nurturing environment designed by exceptional architects. Today, Maggie's Hong Kong is the first centre outside of the United Kingdom to offer this type of support. Gehry (a personal friend of Keswick Jencks), project architect Ronald Lu & Partners, Jencks and Urbis all donated their time to realise Keswick Jencks' vision. Jencks and Duggie led a talk about the design of the gardens, followed by a tour of the grounds. Duggie explained that specific plants were chosen to flower all year around for patients' contemplation and some, such as osmanthus, were chosen for their fragrance. Phaidon, publisher of *The Gardener's Garden* featuring Maggie's Hong Kong, hosted the event.



Design Education

On 1 November, SCAD held an Open Day for the city's brightest talents seeking to pursue a creative career. The event took place at the restored former North Kowloon Magistracy Building in Sham Shui Po, where students are offered an impressive range of art and design programmes. Four SCAD graduates shared their experiences on how SCAD has helped them embark on careers at some of the world's most recognised creative companies including Leo Burnett, Alchemy Asia, Disney Hong Kong and Hasbro. The institute is committed to preparing talented students for professional careers, and emphasises learning through individual attention in a positively oriented university environment.



Joint Ventures

Autodesk Asia Pte Ltd signed a Joint Marketing Agreement with Advanced Construction Information Development Limited (ACID) at its annual media luncheon at the Mira Hotel on 31 October. Under this newly formed partnership, the two companies will launch the first Building Information Modelling (BIM) Center of Excellence, an online, Autodesk technology-based platform built from the ground up for professionals in architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) industries to share design resources and raise the degree of standardisation across different companies in Hong Kong. During the luncheon, Dr Wendy Lee, general manager of Autodesk Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, outlined the company's commitment to enabling designers, engineers and artists to improve their processes and gain a competitive edge. "Autodesk is providing designers and everyone else with a wide array of market-leading technology and tools, enabling them to shape and reshape the world at their will with unprecedented abilities. These technologies, from 3D printing to BIM, are redefining the future of how things are made, and by doing so, we can create a better and more sustainable future."



Asia for All

Awards season continues in full swing with the annual Design for Asia (DFA) Awards, held on 3 November as part of Business of Design Week's roster of events and celebrations. Following a late afternoon cocktail to get people mingling, the awards presentation itself took place at Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre's theatre. Organiser Hong Kong Design Centre recognised 168 DFA winners out of more than 1,000 entries from 23 countries. In addition, the DFA Lifetime Achievement Award went to Japanese graphic design and typography maestro Kohei Sugiura, the Design Leadership Award went to Banyan Tree Holdings' executive chairman Ho Kwong Ping, and the World's Outstanding Chinese Designer went to Isometrix Lighting + Design's principal Arnold Chan.



Russian Roulette

Konstantin Bessmertny is one of Asia's most respected and prolific artists. The Russia-born, Macau-based painter was in Hong Kong's 10 Chancery Lane Gallery in late November as part of Art Gallery Week. On 26 Nov, he led an exclusive artist's talk prior to the opening of *Stir-Fry*, on from 26 Nov 2014-31 Jan 2015. And, 30 Nov proved to be a sunny Sunday afternoon for a Bessmertny-led mural drawing session on Victoria Prison's south wall. "I call my exhibition *Stir-Fry* because it is a mixture of sculpture, collage and painting," says the Vladivostok-trained artist, as he guides the audience into one of his densely layered paintings. "I use a lot of technical tricks and I like playing with misleading concepts. There are many layers for people who want to understand deeper, but they can also stop at the layer of beauty." Outspoken and direct, Bessmertny enthralled his audiences with a mastery of classical techniques. His interior landscapes references literary masterpieces and historic milestones with tongue in cheek humour masked by stylised formality and meticulous attention to detail.



Going Global

The Watermark Restaurant in Central hosted a global launch event for Battersea Power Station, a new mixed-use development in south London, on 30 October. Attendees had the opportunity to see some of the stunning designs for the landmark project, including homes which were designed by Gehry Partners and Foster + Partners. The event also showcased the current commercial leasing opportunities ahead of an exhibition at the Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong where businesses interested in the retail, F&B, hotel, office and leisure opportunities at Battersea Power Station were invited to meet with representatives to find out more. The global campaign aims to find the most exciting global brands, businesses and restaurants to bring life to the capital's largest and most central development.



Work It

Technogym and colourliving introduced Unity, a revolutionary interface available on Personal Line fitness equipment at the colourliving showroom on 27 November. Created by Technogym in collaboration with Antonio Citterio, the equipment is ideal for training in homes, hotels, offices or in wellness facilities. The interface combines a sleek design with cutting-edge technology – a winning combination for wellness products.

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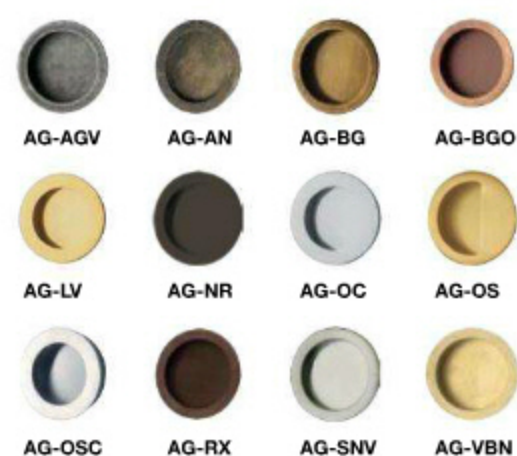
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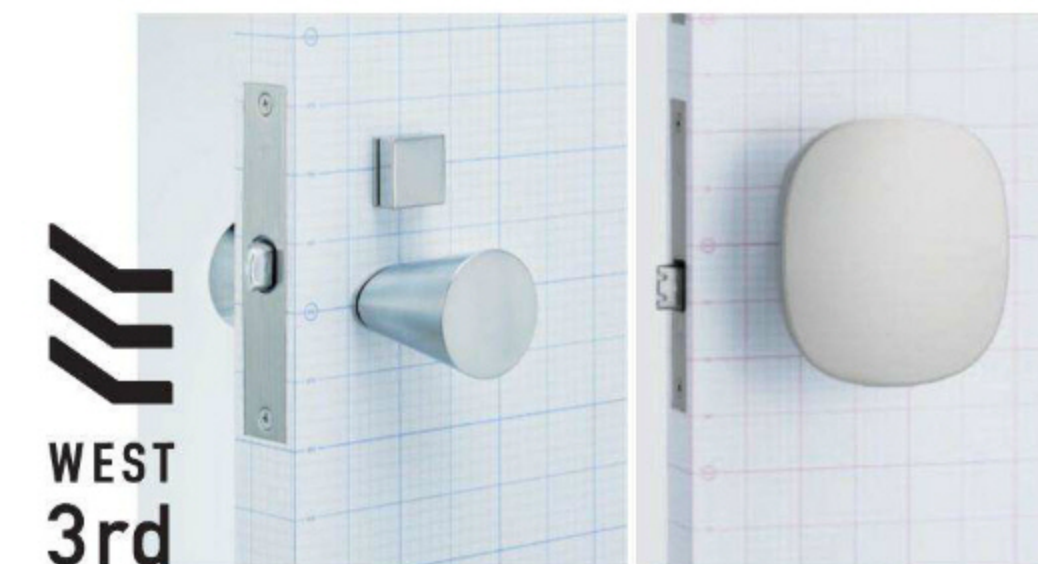


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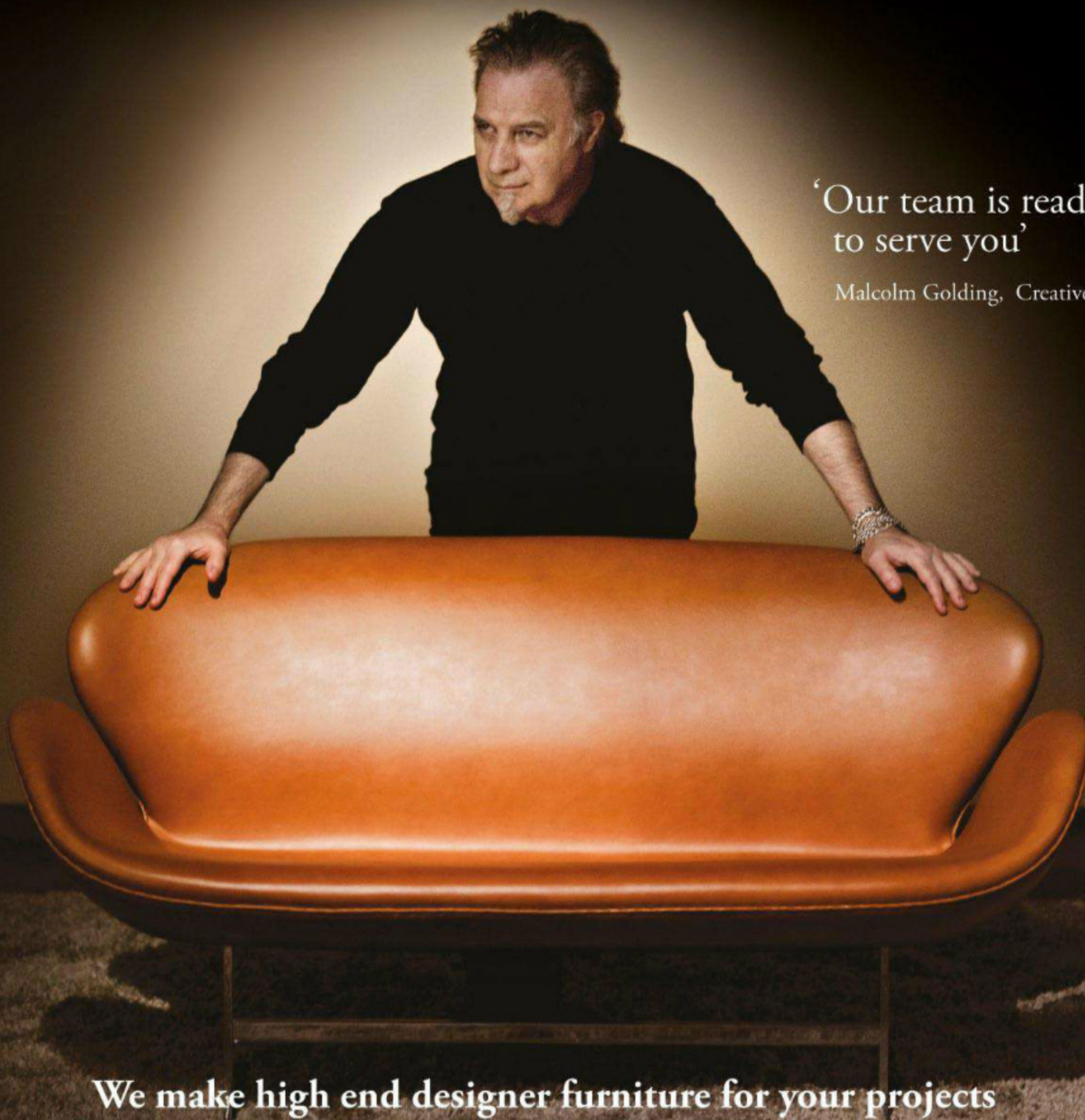
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