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May 2013

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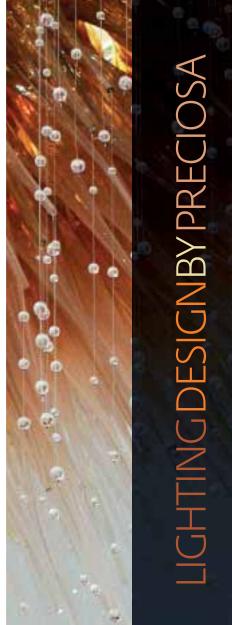








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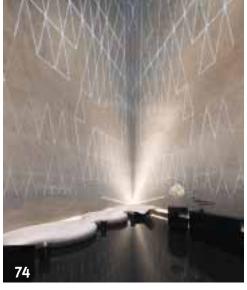
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Interior design

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Gearing up



ast month was a lively one for me, as I began my role as editor of Commercial Interior Design and was welcomed by the magazine's hospitable team. It's been a pleasant start and getting familiar with the community here has been an enjoyable experience. Having been thrown into the middle of it all, it's been a short but sweet journey so far, and I'm excited to see

where we'll go from here. Whether we're exploring exhibitions, meeting top designers, or witnessing the creation of memorable works of art, I look forward to the many opportunities the immediate future seems to be promising.

Here at CID, we've been gearing up for a month of activity ahead of us. May's schedule packs a list of events that the CID team has been long preparing for, including the release of the third edition of coffee table book Objects of Desire, a monolith publication that rounds up the latest interior design products that have recently hit the market. With the book's launch party set for 15 May 2013, we sincerely look forward to having a wonderful time getting to know the region's suppliers and designers.

Along with warmer weather, May is also bringing us Dubai's international design exhibition, INDEX where designers from around the world gather together to network, explore new collections, listen to speakers, and eye-up the region's latest design updates.

And while there's a lot going on outside of Commercial Interior Design, the issue itself is also something to celebrate, as it's one of our biggest to date. With the added page numbers, we've gone ahead and taken advantage of the extra space, filling the issue with exciting new stories concerning such events and projects as Milan's Salone Internazionale del Mobile, the new Baku Hotel, and an examination of the latest contemporary trends to hit office design.

And don't forget to check out our preview and guide to INDEX, where we've provided you with some necessary information concerning what to expect and which suppliers you should know.

So there you have it, the pages ahead of you are waiting to be flipped through and we hope you're as excited as we are to share the knowledge.

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"City Within" installation from Bloomingdale's





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Touch of grey

PALLAVI DEAN PARADES HER ELEGANT BUSINESS SUITE FOR INTERCONTINENTAL IN DUBAI

UAE: The InterContinental Hotel Dubai Festival City is celebrating the completion of its elegantly renovated business and events facilities, which were finished in late January 2013.

Designed by Pallavi Dean in coordination with Colin Beaton of Limelight Creative Services, the project converted an awkwardly shaped 500m² space into five event spaces, inclusive of ballrooms, meeting rooms, a business centre and an ample reception area.

Dean revealed that Dubai's striking skyline and marina were a source of inspiration for the project. Although the interiors couldn't compete with the view, Dean said

they could "most certainly supplement this backdrop."

The renovation focused on maximising flexibility, both in terms of the colour palette and physical space. Whereas neutrals don't usually represent notions of the sea, Dean shied away from the stereotypical use of blues and greens for the project. She explained: "The colour palette is intentionally kept monochromatic to give the client maximum flexibility ... The grey backdrop works well with any colour scheme.

"Working with different hues of grey, depth is introduced through texture, layering of materials and play of light." Dean further recognised a neutral scheme is advantageous for weddings and business meetings where clients wish to accentuate their respective colour schemes. The effect of the neutral palette is refined and emotionally soothing.

Using the view to the marina as a starting point, Dean divulged the interior concept and space planning was based on the sinuous lines and forms found in aquatic forms. Referencing the curved edge of the hotel's exterior, the oval-shaped reception and break-out space fans out in array to access the events facilities. Guests enter the space through a corridor where full-height staggered white panel-

ling in contrasting finishes of high gloss and matte is interspersed with concealed light fittings.

The reception's light fixture, designed by Dean, features acrylic rods suspended at varying heights to mimic waves. A reflective rolled aluminium backing adds visual height and volume to the ceiling. Dean admitted the low ceiling height in this area was the biggest challenge in the project. Half of the space had a low 2.8m ceiling height while the area closest to the view offered a 5.5m height. "Fitting in services while not compromising the height required huge coordination between myself, the contractor and MEP guys," Dean disclosed.



Patterned carpets that are hand-tufted New Zealand wool created by Dean further the marine theme. An abstraction of palm trees reflected on water was the stimulus for the reception carpet while curved lines in varying widths

of five shades of grey hint at ocean waves in the two ballrooms. A small scaled grey textured vinylbacked Muraspec wall covering of a seaweed pattern applied to the large surface of the meeting room walls adds an important tactile

component to the space.

While the neutral palette offered flexibility to the project, so did the adaptable design. Folding doors between two meeting rooms and the ballrooms create multifunctional spaces. "This allows the client

to incorporate larger numbers for functions or lease rooms separately if required," Dean said.

For added visual appeal and to contrast architectural curves, Dean incorporated a brick pattern in three values of grey Armourcoat applied on 18mm plywood-backed panels on the side ballroom walls. Panels of vertically striped plywood-backed wall covering highlight the meeting room walls. A shadow gap between each panel adds a 3D component.

"The vertical lines draw your eyes upwards and make the 2.4mhigh meeting rooms seem higher and also serve as a feature element in the space," she explained.

Pallavi Dean's clean design expertly weaves layers of texture and pattern, and employs a sophisticated palette that wonderfully harmonises with Dubai's unforgettable horizon.



Best of bread

PAPPAROTI EXPERIENCES A CONTEMPORARY AND WELCOMING REDESIGN

UAE: Honouring the popular Malaysian snack, the design of the PappaRoti restaurant chain provides a stylish setting that highlights its culinary draw: the PappaRoti coffee bun. Since opening in Malaysia in 2003, the chain has experienced tremendous growth, with more than 100 outlets now reaching across the Middle East and Europe. The franchise owes its fresh redesign to Vincenzo Visciglia and his Abu Dhabi-based firm Power Design. Starting in 2011, Visciglia and his team worked closely with PappaRoti owner Rasha Al Dhanhani in both the company's rebranding and design concept.

Visciglia commented: "As a client, Rasha was very clear about wanting a rich, modern and warm atmosphere." While most other franchises in shopping centres are

purposefully designed to move people in and out quickly in order to maximise table turnover, PappaRoti took a different approach. Unlike bright primary colours and distracting high-gloss finishes, PappaRoti has the air of a contemporary home. "The atmosphere is designed for the customer to come in, hang out with friends and family and to not want to leave ... We have areas for meetings and gatherings with Wifi and TV," Visciglia added.

Supporting the welcoming environment is the driving inspiration behind Visciglia's choice of materials, finishes and palette. Olive green wall paint, sepia and black graphics, dark Thai teak wood cladding, and leather seating in hues of caramel and chocolate create a welcoming ambiance.

Visciglio disclosed he wanted to have the warm feeling of a wood floor but for durability and hygienic purposes, settled on ceramic tile with a wood finish.

The teak wall cladding's geometric patterning hints at its Asian roots without being overly literal, displaying a contemporary fusion of Middle Eastern mashrabiya and Asian wood panelling. White signage with sepia-toned imagery adds a sophisticated complement to the space.

Aside from the clean design and easy-going atmosphere, Visciglia encountered a host of challenges with the project. "The MEP part is always the most difficult, adjusting all the electrical loads of the PappaRoti equipment to the existing loads of the premises," he cited. In addition, he added that finding

carpenters with high-end quality work was difficult.

When asked what aspect of the endeavour he was most pleased with, the designer explained the reward of delivering a project close to what he and the client originally envisioned and seeing the end result. "Having the client realise and take note of the richness in every detail is great," Visciglia added.

Brazilian-born Visciglia was trained in both interior design and architecture in Miami, Florida. He also has a store in Miami, V-Square Home & Design Showroom, which offers pieces both designed and manufactured by Visciglia himself. Pleased to have made the jump from Miami to Abu Dhabi, the PappRoti chain will surely continue to flourish with Visciglia's added vision and talent.











Pieces of the puzzle

ZAHA HADID ARCHITECTS COMPLETES "ARTIFICIAL LANDSCAPE" CONCEPT FOR NEIL BARRETT'S 'SHOP IN SHOP' STORES

SOUTH KOREA: Zaha Hadid Architects has completed five Shop in Shop boutiques for Milan-based fashion designer Neil Barrett. Together, the boutiques were designed as a singular unified project, but were then divided into 16 pieces and installed across each of the stores.

These 16 pieces are used as a modular display system across the four stores in Seoul, South Korea as well as one in Hong Kong, China, spreading the original free-flowing shape throughout the different venues. Each separate element acts as a piece in a puzzle of the original ensemble, ensuring that the pieces maintain a relationship between each Shop in Shop.

Described by Zaha Hadid Architects as an "artificial landscape," the curving shapes feature a variety of twists, folds and rotations that reference the geometries adopted for the Neil Barrett Flagship Store in Tokyo, developing a dialogue between the Cartesian language of the existing envelope walls and the sculptural, smooth finish of each and every piece.

The pieces have been carved and moulded from the original solid as pairs that define one another, unfolding multiple layers for display.

Being a flexible modular system, the pieces allow for multiple arrangements and adaptations according to different locations and conditions, developing an original space at every location.

They can be used either individually or in conjunction with others from the collection to suit the different scales and spaces of the various stores. They're also enabled to display shoes, bags and inspiring accessories.

"Our concept echoes the brand's minimalism and use of fixed points, folds, pleats and cut outs. Space in the store is defined not in terms of rooms but as a passage through which customers circulate. Furniture, sculpture, textures and colours on both store floors explore the interplay between male and female," said the architecture firm.

In terms of the colour scheme

itself, the stark white of the objects contrasts with the polished black flooring underneath. Continuing the monochromatic scheme in each of the five stores, the walls have been painted in alternating shades of black and white.

The practice is currently working with designer Neil Barrett to create more Shop in Shop stores to be located in Beijing, Shanghai and in other places in Seoul.

In addition to Barrett's successful collaboration with Hadid's firm, the British designer has also worked with Italian studio AquiliAlberg, who designed the interesting angular scenography that accompanied Barrett's chic 2010 Autumn/Winter Collection.











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In the mix

HONG KONG'S ARTIFY GALLERY EXEMPLIFIES THE NOTION OF FLEXIBILITY

HONG KONG: Designed by Nicholas Ho Architecture & Design, the Artify Gallery in Hong Kong celebrated its opening in December 2012 and offers a 140m² space which is completely adjustable.

The space can be adapted to fulfil a series of different programmes, ranging from exhibition, performance, lecture to workshop and banquet venues.

"The space was designed with one core identity – to be universally flexible," stated Hong Kong-based Ho. The space can be easily divided into as many as nine spaces or opened to reveal a singular expansive area.

True artistry resides not only in the gallery's artwork, but also in Ho's innovative design of the mobile plaster walls and versatile ceiling. The two components work in tandem to achieve staggering levels of flexibility.

At roughly 550mm wide, the gallery's custom-built walls are comprised of an extensive stainless steel framework and eight industrial-grade wheels with hydraulic brakes to allow for infinite wall configurations. Ho explained that the breaks serve to both stabilise the walls, but also to balance adjacent wall alignment.

Releasing the breaks enable the walls to be freely moved by an individual. Because many galleries tend to confine its artists, Ho explained he felt challenged to utilise the space to its fullest potential, to maximize freedom and minimise artists' constraints.

The gallery's open grid ceiling provides electrical provisions at any location as well as diffused and track lighting throughout, which is incorporated into a custom I-beam framework for support.

Ho continued by explaining: "In order to enable this maximum potential of spatial layouts, all technical provisions are concealed and located in the ceiling, thus reducing any conventional planning constraints."

The structural ceiling grid also has a heavy load hanging capacity, which Ho assured "can suspend anything from a bench to a small car," enabling the gallery and artists to showcase hanging pieces, in addition to more traditional wall-hung exhibitions. Also integrated are six speaker zones with independent controls, LED projectors, and a sound-absorbing sponge material on the underside of the ceiling slab to minimize echo and sound reverberation.

Despite its comprehensive logistic and technical offerings, Artify Gallery's appearance is uncomplicated. Its sleek aesthetic capitalises on the gallery's impressive view. Occupying a corner on the tenth floor, it grants a 270-degree view of the harbour and Hong Kong's eastern Kowloon district beyond it.

Complementing the urban patina of the gallery's industrial Chai Wan neighbourhood, the self-levelled concrete screed floor, a deep black ceiling, and white walls create an elegant, yet subdued backdrop to showcase fine art.

Ho eloquently stated: "A successful gallery design is one that appears effortless, and yet poses minimal constraints. The space is to complement the exhibition, to enhance its effect, and not to compete technically and spatially. If form follows function, then for a flexible space, the form should be everchanging—formless."









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Breaking the ice

"SNOW WALL" FEATURE OFFERS A REFRESHING SETTING AT CAFE ASPEN BY KEMPINSKI AT THE KEMPINSKI HOTEL MALL OF THE EMIRATES

UAE: Carrying on with the snow theme from adjacent Ski Dubai, the Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates is celebrating a cool new sculptural "snow wall" in its refurbished cafe, Aspen by Kempinski. Re-opened late November last year, the cafe's dramatic 103m2 wall was created by London-based Solomon&Wu.

Masters in architectural mouldings, Solomon&Wu collaborates with architects and interior designers to realise their visions. For this project they were commissioned by Wimberly Interiors to sculpt the wall, inspired by arctic snow drifts and rock formations. "Solomon&Wu's innovative designs caught our attention and we knew by collaborating with them that we would be able to produce a beautiful, dramatic installation to suit the space," said Margaret McMahon, vice president and managing director of Wimberly Interiors.

Manufactured from glass-reinforced plastic, the astonishingly 5.5m high snow wall holds a 30cm deep relief and also has a Class A1 EU fire rating.

To create the wall, Solomon&Wu had to devise a way to make the stratifications over a large surface area. First designed in AutoCAD for overall consistency, they moulded a staggering four kilometres of polystyrene in their London workshop to create 40 separate panels. Each piece was numbered and catalogued to ensure it corresponded correctly to the adjacent panels as well as those above and

The panels were designed to hang in 10 sections between the cafe's existing columns, with a shadow gap at the side edges. Once installed, individual panels were painted in plaster and sanded to produce a smooth finish.

Although fun in spirit, the project wasn't devoid of complications. Once the 40 panels were packed into 14 bulky crates, Solomon&Wu divulged that freight companies were not interested in transporting it. From the UK, they were forced to hire half a cargo plane and devise their own logistics to deliver the crates to the airport and jobsite. Upon arrival, the unfortunate discovery that the delivery door wasn't large enough required them to insert a large hole in the wall of the hotel.

Furthermore, once the wall was installed, the architect wasn't pleased with the shadow gaps. Jake Solomon, the founder and managing director, recalled spending the next three weeks creating filler pieces that measure at 1cm wide x 5.5m high to insert into the recesses.

In hindsight, Solomon explained that if he were to do the project over again, he would opt to make the panels out of high density foam instead of polystyrene, which requires less finishing. Moving forward, they have also adjusted their sampling process in order to manage client expectations on large-scale, complex projects.

"It's been an exceptionally challenging task but we're delighted with the result. Our snow wall perfectly showcases the breadth of our capabilities for the commercial interior market," Solomon boldly concluded.



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Devoted modernists

KNOLL CELEBRATES 75 YEARS OF DESIGN WITH NEW LAUNCHES AND PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST







UAE: With 75 years of design history, Knoll celebrated its presence in the industry with the launch of its new communications campaign "Modern Always," which spreads across six social platforms reaching beyond the Knoll website to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube and Pinterest.

Alan Howard, senior vice president at Knoll, stated that although the firm is celebrating its past, its greatest interest is the future.

"Our communications campaign is trying to appeal to a younger audience, to the new and the future," Howard said. The campaign allows multiple means of engagement that will include 75 Modern Always moments from Knoll's history.

Beginning in 1938, Knoll had left its mark in modern design history, with over 40 products having permanent placement in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, with designs from leading modernists architects such as Mies van der Rohe and Fero Saarinen.

"Knoll has always been associated with the iconic designers of the twentieth century," explained Howard. "Florence Knoll, one of the co-founders, is actually considered [to be] the founder of interior design. If you go on the Encyclopaedia Britannica and look up "interior design," you will see that the description of it references Florence Knoll. So there is this real connection between Knoll and design," he continued.

OMA's Rem Koolhaas has been the most recent contributor to Knoll's list of modernist masters with the introduction of the new Tools for Life collection.

"We have been anxious to create that association for a number of years," Howard stated.

The firm has also introduced its ReGeneration chair in the Middle East through its distributor Al Reyami Group. The chair is the newest member of the Generation by Knoll family making its debut in Dubai on April 3rd.

The ReGeneration chair allows one to "sit how you want" with the Flex Back Net model giving the experience of being cradled. It is also almost half the weight of a regular office chair.

Hafez Abdul-Hafez, sales director at Knoll Middle East added: "The intention after we launched the Generation chair was to create a similar chair from the same family but one that is more affordable to the public."

Sustainability is another feature of the ReGeneration chair using renewable materials derived from

corn by-products in the Flex Back Net and biobased upholstery foam.

Al-Hafez also revealed that the Middle East is progressively adapting the European and American styled office furniture and seating within its working environment with new projects being commissioned in the region, the ReGeneration chair being one of them.

Howard enthusiastically explained: "There seems to be a strong interest in iconic American design, so there is a natural synergy for us [and] we're excited about that."

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Taking back the city

DESIGNER ANTONIO PIO SARACINO EXPOSES THE CITY THROUGH HIS INSTALLATION AT BLOOMINGDALE'S HOME DUBAI

UAE: Italian designer and architect Antonio Pio Saracino showcased an exclusive installation called "City Within" at Bloomingdale's Home in Dubai, which went on till April 16th as part of Design Days Dubai's off-site events.

The abstract installation is composed of multiple hanging light-weight translucent polycarbonate sheets that create a box-like shape. Through a tangible space, it conveys the idea of an ephemeral city as opposed to a physical one, and stands as a metaphor of a contemporary digital city that isn't yet created.

"It creates a shape of a complex volume," said Saracino. "Each panel has the shape of a city landscape with different building forms. The many surfaces composing the installation display images of my design work, from chairs to architecture."

Commenting on the idea of a metaphoric cityscape, Saracino said: "The idea to work in Dubai, a city of the third millennium, made me think of a work that could analyse the idea of a contemporary city and the metaphor that it represents."

The empty space inside the installation originated from carving out the shape of a dimensional city landscape and a visual experience for visitors who pass by or those who wish to engage with the work by sitting on cubes placed inside the installation.

"Although this is my first time in Dubai, it is definitely not the first time I dreamt of coming here for a project. Architects from all over the world have contributed to making Dubai a city of the third millennium and it has been an exciting project," Saracino revealed.

Matteo Magnanini, head of creative services, Al Tayer Group remarked: "In bringing Design Days Dubai into a retail environment, we saw an amazing opportunity to work with one of the world's most innovative architects and designers and the relationship with Saracino had been organic from the start. His ability to engage his audience and stimulate social dialogue through his work is fascinating.

"With a lifestyle store like Bloomingdale's Home Dubai, it is not just about the design but also about functionality and connection and Saracino's work tangibly reflects that philosophy."

In addition to the installation,
Saracino exhibited a hand-picked
selection of seven pieces from his
Star collection at Bloomingdale's
Home. As his first commercial
collection, Star is an exploration
of the star morphology applied to
a chair and a coffee table.

The points of the star extend from a core and become the legs, seat, back and arms of the chair. The thin aluminum sheet is bent to strengthen the star section and is hand-welded and polished. The futuristic chairs are available in a handful of different colours and come with an optional leather cushion. It is built with eight rays that create a dimensional star holding a glass tabletop.















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Natural mystic

A SEMINAR BY WOODEN FLOORING MANUFACTURER TIMBERWISE OFFERS ALTERNATIVES TO ADHESIVE-BASED PRODUCTS

UAE: Timberwise, the Finnish manufacturer of wooden flooring, held a seminar at the Pavilion Downtown Dubai, offering its alternative solutions for ordinary wooden flooring containing hazardous adhesives.

Formaldehyde, a chemical commonly used in building materials and household products, plays a regular role in the production process of both natural and engineered wooden flooring. These adhesives are known to release hazardous vapours and fumes into the air as glues and lacquers continue to dry even after installation.

Producing full plank flooring, Timberwise was the first manufacturer in the world to fully switch to formaldehyde-free products, reducing risks of allergies and irritation. "I would say that the formaldehyde issue is one of the biggest in flooring, so working towards emission free products is very important," said Laura Lankinen, marketing manager at Timberwise.

She continued: "We respect nature and appreciate the advanced Finnish expertise in wood processing. The floor is one of the largest surfaces in a living space. This is why we ensure that Timberwise plank parquets are safe, beautiful and durable."

The wood used by Timberwise comes from certified forests where the number of planted trees exceeds the number that are harvested. The firm now holds a PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) certificate.

"We have also stopped using

exotic woods which is when we started specialising in colour because we wanted to offer our customers a variety, such as darker woods like Merbau, but didn't want to actually use the material itself," Lankinen explained.

The species that Timberwise uses for its full plank flooring products include oak from Central Europe, ash and larch from Austria, and pine from Finland.

Certification is another major initiative for Timberwise, holding the best building material classes for emissions and adhesive joints including both the JAS F**** and JAS 2 certifications.

"We are not the cheapest material in the market as we are concerned about delivering the highest quality wood from sustainable forests. Our lacquers and wax oils are always natural without any added formaldehyde and the glue we use is naturally more expensive," explained Lankinen.

To prove the durability of the glue and lacquer used, Lankinen showed that even after hours of being in boiling water, Timberwise products remained completely intact. Simultaneously, a pot nearby contained wood that used formaldehyde in its production; the wood grew disfigured and half of the lacquer had shredded apart.

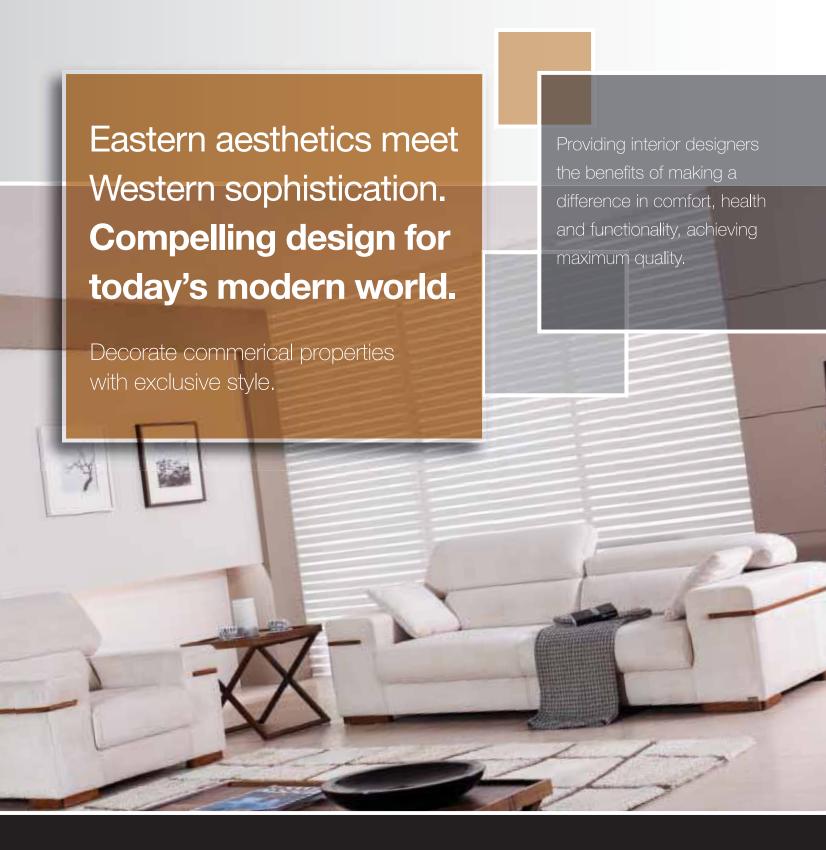
Timberwise's cross-glued threelayer structure parquet has passed the industry's most demanding glue joint tests, Lankinen stated. "Even boiling water will not break the structure of our product," Lankinen concluded.











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A brighter future

MUSSAWIR ART GALLERY LAUNCHES ART CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR INTERIOR DESIGNERS IN DUBAI

UAE: Mussawir Art Gallery in Al Quoz will be launching art consultancy services for interior designers, architects and artists in Dubai who are looking to enhance their spaces with lively artworks.

The art consultancy is set to launch on 1 May 2013, working for both commercial interiors as well as private residential projects.

Having opened its doors to the city in December 2012, the owners of Mussawir, who together have over 20 years of industry experience, also hold galleries in Lahore and Karachi, Pakistan.

"We already know that demand for ... our upcoming artists and established master artists are high ... in Dubai, so this was a logical next step," said Natasha Jochman, gallery manager, about the initiative for creating the art consultancy. She added: "Pakistani art in particular is under-represented in Dubai and as a majority of our artists are from Pakistan, this is a great platform to promote our talented artists in the UAE and Middle East."

The service itself will create a collaborative relationship with the client by helping to attain a bespoke art environment with realistic budgets.

"At Mussawir Gallery, we are passionate about putting beautiful artwork into beautiful interiors. Whether it's a residential or commercial space, our service can assist clients with appropriate and bespoke art solutions," the gallery manager commented.

Already in possession of over 400 impressive, original art pieces at the gallery itself, Mussawir's team is now extending its services to include prints and art commissions as well.

"Artwork plays such an important role in the overall impact of a space," Jochman said. "We have a great range of paintings and prints to suite every interior and budget: calligraphy, landscape, abstract, figurative and sculpture. Even if we don't have the right artwork, we can go as far as commissioning our artists to create the perfect piece."

Concerning the level of the gallery's involvement in the projects, the team is adamant about accommodating client needs and approaches. Jochman explained that it's up to the client in terms of overseeing the process from the initial consultation to framing and final installation.

While discussing the level and

variety of creativity employed for the design of interior spaces in Dubai, Jochman went on to say: "We love how all creative spaces are developing in Dubai, especially in Al Quoz, with all its galleries. But for us, it's not just about creative spaces; we want artwork to be accessible to the public and believe our artwork can have a positive effect on many different types of public spaces, from hospitals to hotels- you name it."

Mussawir Gallery is also planning to keep the consultancy
Dubai-based for the time being;
however, Jochman revealed that
the team is always open to working on projects that are located
throughout the Middle East.

"We really want to inspire architects and interior designers in the city," insisted Jochman.









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A creative twist

ART GALLERY SAATCHI AND DANISH FIRM FRITZ HANSEN COLLABORATE ON A CONTEMPORARY SUITE FOR THE HYATT REGENCY LONDON — THE CHURCHILL HOTEL

UK: Hyatt Regency London — The Churchill Hotel offers guests a novel way to experience contemporary art, with a new suite that's a far cry from the white washed walls of gallery spaces.

Saatchi Gallery's recent collaboration with Danish furniture firm Fritz Hansen boasts modernity from its art to furnishings.

With the gallery hosting its exhibition at the hotel itself, guests can now choose to stay in the art suite boasting an array of contemporary designs.

Fritz Hansen has supplied all the furniture for the suite, complementing the style of the artwork. Sales and brand cocoordinator of Fritz Hansen, Martha McNaughton said: "We were approached by the Hyatt Regency—The Churchill Hotel as they were looking for a high-end furniture brand to furnish one of its suites, [which] was going to be adorned by artwork from Saatchi Gallery as part of a new project that they were due to launch."

McNaughton added: "With the calibre of brands on board, it was hard to say no." She explained that the Saatchi Suite is very much targeting art and design aficionados globally. An opportunity is created to try-before-you-buy for those interested in recreating high-end and contemporary design in their own chosen spaces.

Along with all the contemporary art and furniture, an installation has been commissioned to artist Celine Fitoussi to cover the entire bathroom of the suite with soap.

There will also be a wall-based installation entitled "Effects of the Earth's Motions" by Chantal Powell, who had previously exhibited at the Venice Biennale.

Rebecca Wilson, director of Saatchi Gallery, added: "The suite offers a very exciting opportunity to provide a 'total' art experience for guests in a very intimate way."

She continued: "It is not every day that hotel guests are able to sleep in a room surrounded by art made by some of the most exciting emerging artists in the UK. This experience makes contemporary art more accessible and begins to break down barriers."

She explained that the motive was to find works that fitted with the Scandinavian furniture for the sophisticated yet warm aesthetic of the suite.

McNaughton revealed that the natural choice was a selection of products by Danish designer Poul Kjaerholm, whose pieces are exhibited at the Modern Museum of Art in New York, and "whose minimalist designs would enhance the boutique, contemporary space we were trying to create."

Wilson commented that the chosen products by Fritz Hansen, along with the fresh colour tones of the interior of the suite and vibrantly elegant art works, fit fantastically well together.

McNaughton added: "There was a conscious effort to make the Saatchi Suite as minimalist and as light and airy as possible so that the artwork and the furniture would really stand out."





Changing the face of Dubai

CAPAROL PAINTS OFFERS A FRESH ALTERNATIVE FOR EXTERIOR AESTHETICS

UAE: From a factory less than onethird the size of its current new 20,000m² facility, Caparol Paints is setting the stage for things to come. With plans to increase output by 40% in the next three to five years, Caparol's new factory in Dubai Industrial City produces paint to change the face of buildings around us.

Caparol Paints may have made a late entry into the Middle East only setting up base here in 1998, long after competitors like Jotun and Berger established their presence. But despite that, Caparol has its game plan set to revolutionalise the paint industry throughout the Middle East.

Less than a year ago, the company moved from a small factory site in Al Quoz to a massive 20,000m² facility in Dubai Industrial City, where it manufactures close to 30,000 tonnes of paint annually.

Architectural paints comprise more than 70% of Caparol's revenue in the Middle East, with the remaining 30% distributed among flooring services and thermal insulation systems.

But Gary Seabrook, general manager of Caparol Paints in the Middle East, expects these numbers to grow even more as the Germanbased family-owned paint brand gains greater recognition here.

"Architectural coatings have strong growth potential in the GCC region, and are estimated to be worth Dh2.5bn per annum. Our new facility will ensure that we can meet this increased demand," explained Seabrook.

"Clients tend to prefer shiny and metallic colours a lot more in this part of the world," he continued. "They also tend to opt for wall textures that have clean smoother surfaces since it prevents dust ac-







cumulation, so we cater our products accordingly for the region."

In addition, the laboratory develops paint technology to incorporate new international trends in raw materials, and designs new textures, colours and finishes as demanded by local consumers and international architectural designs.

Caparol recently became a mem-

ber of the Emirates Green Building Council, which is working towards making the UAE a global leader in reducing the ecological footprint of the built environment by 2015. Seabrook hopes that this initiative will pave the way for better regulations and in turn boost demand for Caparol's products.

"Being environmentally friendly

is at the core of all our practices. We are the market leader in Germany because our high standards for quality are recognised and valued by the authorities and consumers. As consumer perceptions and regulatory standards begin to change, I am confident that we can achieve such results here too," said Seabrook.



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Under one roof

WOULD DUBAI BE BETTER OFF WITH A DESIGN CENTRE?

esign centres are powerhouses of commerce. A building with commercial space solely devoted to the various facets of interior design trade, design centres are one-stop destinations. Centres typically include showrooms that exhibit furniture, fabric, lighting, wall covering, flooring, sanitary ware, antiques and accessories in one space.

Most large cities have design centres: New York's D&D Building, Chicago's Merchandise Mart and London's Chelsea Harbour represent just a few. Commercial Interior Design magazine asked local interior designers whether a design centre in Dubai would be advantageous to the regional interior design industry and they answered with a resounding "yes"!

In comparison to other cities, the Emirates can be challenging to navigate, as locations are not identified by numbered street addresses. Such a system can make supplier showrooms difficult to discover and locate. While electronic navigation systems help, they're not always reliable. Ellen Edwards, VP-interior design at RSP said about finding showrooms: "I have lived here for quite some time now and became accustomed to the 'landmark' references provided with location maps. In the beginning, it was difficult to find my way around."

Adding to that, American
University of Sharjah interior
design professor Robert Reid said:
"Designers who have lived here
for some time figure out how to
get around and find the limited

variety of showrooms we have in the area, but a lack of a dominant showroom district and the Dubai traffic make the effort painful at best." Moreover, Reid finds the resources limited in Dubai compared to other international locations.

Not only are the suppliers difficult to find, their locations are spread throughout Dubai. Edwards recalled: "I try to club trips to certain areas in the city together, but if I have to visit several showrooms all over town, it becomes a real pain due to time constraints. I do not have time to go around visiting different showrooms all week long." Agata Kurzela, senior architect and interior designer at AK Design agreed: "The inefficiency of the 'drive around FF&E' cannot be justified from neither the efficiency nor from the budgetary, with an exception of high-end private commissions."

Even upon locating showrooms, designers cite that finding parking adds another layer of frustration when visiting suppliers. "Lack of parking provision in the area can be a strong enough deterrent to avoid a visit," recalled Kurzela.

While a dedicated design building or district would reduce travel time by condensing multiple suppliers in one location, it would also present new opportunities to both the designer and the vendor. Close proximity of showrooms would expose designers to new products merely by walking through the building. Designers could also investigate new suppliers in the centre, whereas the current situation would require

a separate excursion - one that would likely never happen.

"I can imagine going to a design centre for a casual browse to get an idea about the current industry trends. There might be an added benefit of being able to take clients along to the centre," Kurzela pointed out.

Likewise, interior designer Ellen Bishop of Bishop Design Associates explains that designers don't often have time to visit all of the fares and exhibitions around the world. She described: "I believe we would benefit greatly from being able to find it all under one roof. Also, it is sometimes difficult for us to get enthused within the four walls of our office, so if there was a place for us to go for inspiration, that would be amazing." Clearly, product exposure in one location would dually increase creativity for designers and sales for vendors.

Reid interestingly pointed out that the lack of a design district encourages design complacency. It discourages travel by designers to independent showrooms, he said, which in turn leads to "repetitive solutions by designers." Reid explained it is less stressful to go with what one already knows instead of wasting time driving back-and-forth across the city trying to find new options. "This lack of a design centre ... leads to lost opportunities for designers, suppliers and ultimately the client," he added.

However, Bishop also cautioned that if a design centre in Dubai were to come to fruition, it would have to be sizable and offer a substantial range of products to prevent designers from selecting the same products and design solutions as a consequence of variety shortage.

A centralised design centre would give the designers the crucial opportunity to try out actual samples rather than rely on on-line imagery and catalogues.

Kurzela noted that most of AK Design's product information reaches them in a purely visual form, either via internet or supplier presentations. Regarding this method, she noted: "There is a significant loss of information that happens in the process. Good design goes beyond mere image manipulation; awareness of scale, tactile qualities, subtlety of detailing and in [the] case of furniture, comfort level should be taken into account during the design process."

Additionally, a design centre would prove to be an educational hub for students, from being a pivotal source of samples for school projects, to nurturing a new generation of interior designers. Reid explains: "Many vendors and suppliers take a very short-sighted approach and refuse to assist students with samples, not recognising that these students are the future of our industry." He also noted that an aggregation of showrooms consisting of knowledgeable staff will allow students to develop self-confidence in dealing with suppliers and vendors.

A localised design centre would also provide a resource for furthering social growth within the interior design industry. Kurzela explained: "It would be great to have some networking areas along with a dedicated design library. A space for training courses would be highly desirable. I would love to see a workshop geared up to [assist] designers with prototyping and exploration of new technologies." Likewise, Bishop noted that it would enable suppliers and designers to connect and meet more frequently.

A clear win-win situation, a centre devoted to increasing efficiency and sales, while fostering greater connectivity within Dubai's interior design industry would create more time for what designers do best: design. 💷



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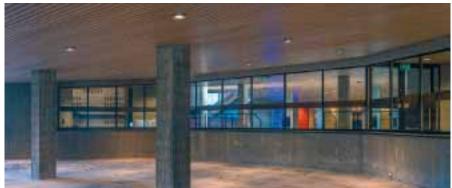
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Renovation of Monument Woudestein at Erasmus University Rotterdam

rasmus University Rotterdam is a research university that's internationally recognised for its high quality teaching. In 2007, the university launched a master plan to modernise and increase the capacity of the Woudestein campus. The plan essentially called to re-organise the layout of the university and for a separation between the school's built up zone and a greener area with open spaces for students to enjoy.

Located at the heart of the university campus, Monument Woudestein is a cluster of buildings representative of stark concrete brutalist architecture reflective of the 60's and 70's. As

part of the master plan, a renovation programme of these historic buildings of Monument Woudestein was commissioned to Gerard Frishert in 2004. Erasmus University had expressed its wish to improve the buildings without compromising their original character. As a result, Frishert's restoration maintains the original simple design, making use of the large windows that allow natural daylight to sweep through the building, brightening up the stylish interior, which now features sophisticated red oak ceilings.

When Monument Woudestein was originally built, the ceilings and walls were a combination of grey concrete

and dark wood strips, which created a gloomy and uninspiring atmosphere. The re-fit of the ceilings was therefore a key objective of the renovation. Working closely with Derako ceiling suppliers for guidance, Frishert chose to replace the old ceilings with the warm tones of American red oak.

The first of the buildings to be renovated was Building A in 2009. The building comprises all the offices for the university professors and dons the main university auditorium (Aula maxima) as well. Some 3,500m² of red oak ceilings were installed, including exterior ceilings under the main covered passage ways. The 15mm x 70mm

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solid red oak slats are clipped onto a metal carrier system, which can be easily dismantled to access technical

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Renovation Architect: Gerard Frishert BNA/BNSP

Client: Erasmus University Main Contractor: Breijer BV

Wooden ceiling supplier: Derako

International NV

Glasswork: GBB

Final completion date:September

Construction period:2008-2012 Gross floor area:18,000m2

Final budget: EUR 40 million

Photography: John Lewis Marshall

installations underneath. The ends of the slats are connected to one another by pre-tooled tongue and groove connections. The grooves on the back of the slats have fixing pins. This method of connection guarantees a durable and clean butt joint.

In September 2012, the Erasmus University re-opened the renovated C building, which includes two auditoriums: the larger auditorium seats 450 students and the smaller 350 seats. The C building can host up to 2,300 students attending different lectures or seminars. Over 3,000m2 of American red oak solid wood ceilings were installed both indoors in the main hallway of the building and outside under the overhangs of the main buildings and the auditoriums. The entrance to Monument Woudestein is hugely enhanced by attractive red oak strips

that follow the different sloped angles of the overhangs under the auditoriums, creating intricate patterns. Inside, numerous study corners have been built in the main hallway with bespoke benches where students can work in between lectures. The warm tones of the red oak ceilings contrast beautifully with the muted grey tones of the concrete sections. The area is brightened even more by two striking glass artworks designed by Gerard Frishert to enhance the original architecture.

After this extensive renovation programme, the C building on Campus Woudestein looks as crisp and modern as it did in 1970. A new student pavilion is currently being built which will act as a focal point in the middle of the campus. The entire renovation and new build master plan is scheduled to be completed by 2016. @D



Keeping you on your toes

CID GETS THE CHANCE TO UNCOVER THE QUIRKY INNER WORKINGS OF RENOWNED INTERIOR DESIGNER MATTEO BIANCHI'S HEADSPACE

of figuring out what we want to do when we grow up is a gradual process that includes hard work, plenty of trial and error, and sometimes pure luck. Pointing your finger at a timeline and establishing exact dates isn't exactly the easiest thing to do. For Matteo Bianchi, becoming a reputable interior designer was a matter of confident, unexpected decisionmaking and the courage to never look back, a combination that set the concep-

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tual foundation of the designer's future company and work ethic.

Born in Venice, the advertiser-turned-designer relocated to London nearly 10 years ago, as London was Europe's capital for advertising. Bianchi explains: "When I landed here I sort of felt at home and I really liked the professionalism. London gives you a lot of opportunity for different courses and one of them was interior design. That's when I realised that's what I want to do and it was very liberating.

"It was a pretty clear moment. It was in 2006, and I was in London doing something different, and I decided to take a 10 lesson course in interior design on a Saturday morning. [During] the first lesson I realised it was going to be my career. So I changed my career completely and I went to study at Chelsea College of Art and Design."

Upon completing his studies and driven by his new found passion, Bianchi opened up his studio in 2006, and has since built an impressive portfolio that includes projects located around the world including: the UK, Italy, the Middle East and Nigeria.

From residential to commercial projects, the Bianchi Studio's design team masters the act of balancing different local tastes with classic sophistication. On their approach to design, Bianchi explains: "First of all, we don't have a house style, which is a conscious decision because we like to listen to the brief and to the client. Having said that, we always try to throw something unexpected and elegant right from the

starting point. When we're approached, it's very important to understand the local culture so you can deliver according to the local taste."

Having a natural knack for pairing high-end material with polished finishings to create stylish, yet refined interiors, one wonders how Bianchi meets clients with more flamboyant tastes at middle ground. The designer, though, is confident that local tastes, like those in such regions where there's a preference for ostentatious design, are adopting more minimal elements.





"On a general level, local taste is growing up," Bianchi explains. "In Saudi, the taste is quite rich but there's a move to make things more minimal ... And there's always room to show how minimalism can be elegant and sophisticated.

"If you have a local person who understands [the] rules and regulations of design, you can deliver a project that the client wasn't expecting but is very excited about," claims the designer very enthusiastically.

And that's what it mostly comes down

Merchandise display

Bathroom detail from Knightsbridge residence









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to for the Italian designer - providing unexpected results that incorporate the client's wishes, yet yield a sort of "Bianchi" charm.

The designer explains how there's always room for surprise and individuality, even in historical cities where the skyline, and spirit, has been long established. Citing the Boutique Hotel in Venice as an example, Bianchi notes: "I think that was a true expression of what we like and how we can push the boundaries. That project was really challenging because it's in a historical city and the brief wanted industrial baroque. So we wanted to make something very masculine like polished resin, upholstered seats and red velvet. The bathrooms are very cosy while also being industrial with hard surfaces."

Matteo Bianchi has a sharp vision that confidently wavers between commercial and residential projects. It's a matter of being flexible, he explains, something all designers should be. "We like to do residential projects because it's quite creative and there's a lot of interaction with the clients. At the same time there's a lot of drama and a lot of emotions. So we don't only do residential because it would drive us insane. Commercial is very professional and you've got the quick timing and the brief. But if you only stick with commercial you become a bit stagnate. It becomes a bit of copy and paste, so we do both and we like to do both. In my opinion, interior designers should be flexible enough to do both."

From bold and bright refurbishments in Chelsea that highlight an eclectic source of inspirations, to creative and feminine corners of London's shopping Mecca, Harrods, to an edgier and magnetic restaurant and bar lounge in Lagos, the designer is determined to always experiment with his limits, never repeating himself while always leaving his artistic touch.

Scheduled to speak at Dubai's INDEX

International Design Exhibition 2013, Bianchi has a few topics up his sleeve at which he was happy to give us a peek. Having recently been at Milan's Salone Internazionale del Mobile, the designer is looking to give some insight into upcoming trends.

"I was [at Salone] sort of zipping through and I realised there are some very real trends coming out for next season in terms of colours and features. Think lots of blues ... If you think of a peacock, that's what you're going to have - lots of deep blues, reds, yellows and greens.

"Also, wardrobes are changing.
Rather than keeping it nice and tidy,
you're wardrobe is open and enjoyed as
it should be - very scattered, very messy
and very real. 10 years ago you had
big sliding doors, those are gone now,"
Bianchi points out.

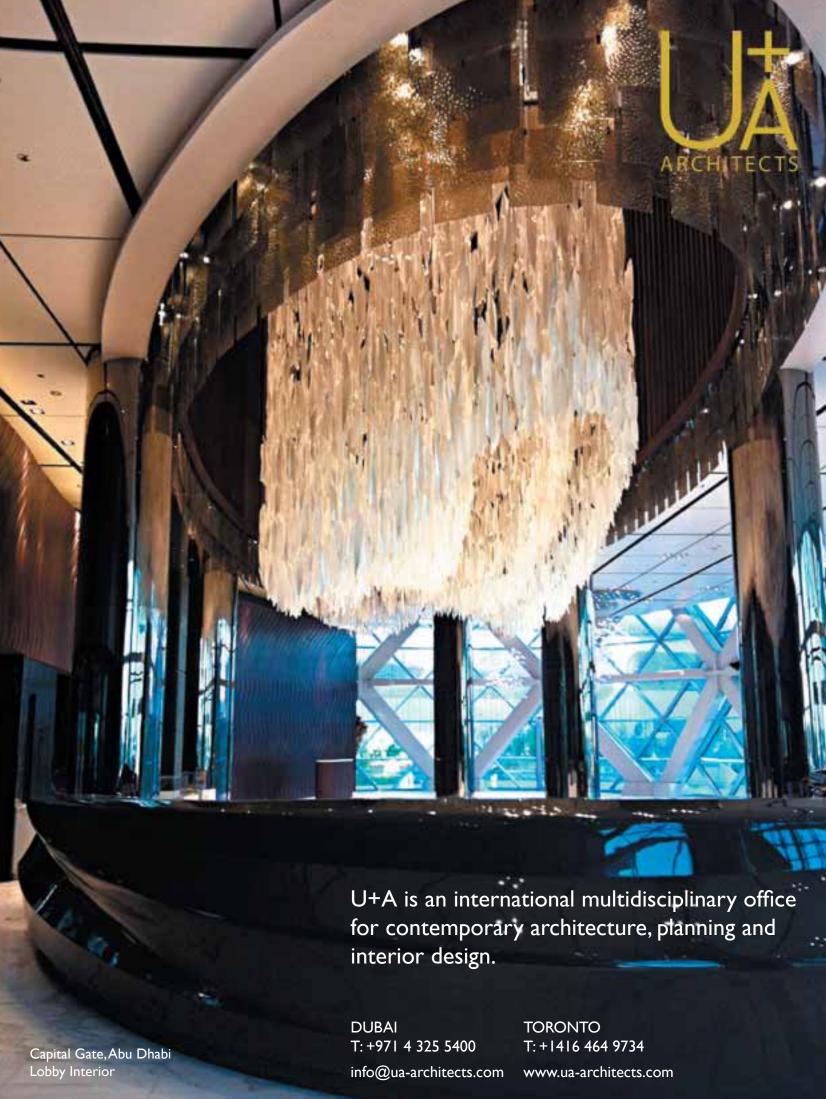
At the moment, Bianchi is flying around the globe, yet he's scheduled to visit Dubai three times this year to tutor



3



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Textures and finishings set the mood for the Chelsea residence.

Details combine for bedroom design in Venice Boutique Hotel.

From Bianchi's tutoring session, "How to decorate your villa or apartment." local design students through Chelsea School of Art and Design's Dubai program. From principles of interior design, to introductory courses on furniture, lighting, materials and decoration, the intense week-long courses are meant to help emerging designers realise their vision.

"First and foremost, I love teaching and coming over there to deliver the same courses that we have in London. So for me, it's a very inspiring place to be," the designer explains. He continues: "The students are much more enthusiastic and eager to learn and

they're really hungry to understand what happens in Europe. It's interesting to be in front of people who have lots of work and experience, but at the same time they need extended support and a new point of view. I'm always impressed by the knowledge, professionalism and enthusiasm of students in Dubai."

Aside from INDEX and the design courses, Bianchi is keeping busy with a number of projects coming up and a few relationships he's looking to build. "I'm associating myself in Jeddah and we're going to start working in that region and Dubai. We're doing a big restaurant in

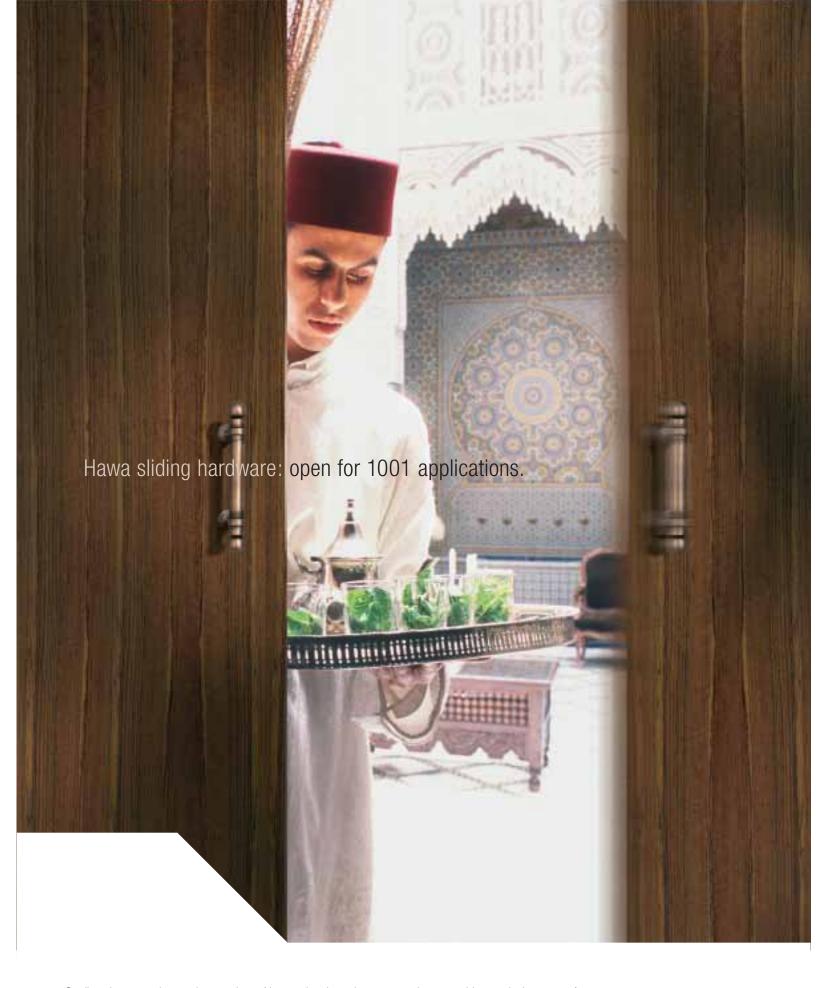
Lagos, also. We're also keeping an eye on Morocco, there's a lot going on there. We love travelling and in the studio, we're very international and we like to explore different countries," he notes.

Moreove, Matteo Bianchi Studio is unveiling the team's first product collection by the end of the year, entitled "Unexpected Elegance," which will feature a number of original decorative pieces.

"Unexpected Elegance" says it all. It signifies Bianchi's desire to pleasantly surprise, while providing timeless pieces of art that will be appreciated for years to come.

5

6



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Salone's Onoise Salone's Onois

CID MARKS UP A LIST OF FAVOURITE DESIGNERS FROM THIS YEAR'S SALONE INTERNAZIONALE DEL MOBILE

From creative lighting installations to contemporary indoor benches, there's plenty of room for unique and novel design solutions, and Milan Design Week's popular trade show Salone Internazionale del Mobile 2013 certainly didn't shy away from displaying the latest creations from the bravest and most inspired. Salone, which ran from April 9th to April 14th, is certainly an eventful week for both those involved and those admiring, so we've gone ahead and rounded up a crucial list of ten of our favourite designers.

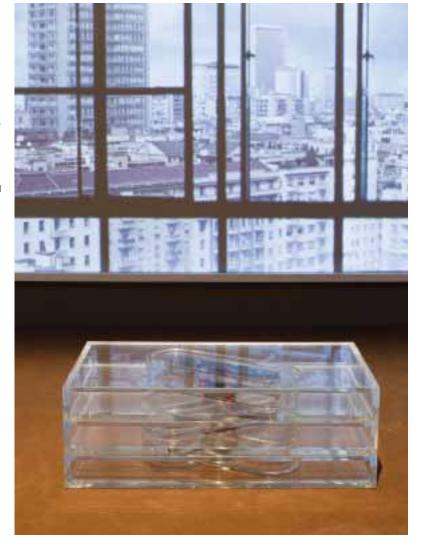
Knoll

Salone was a big event for all those involved, but it was a monumental stepping stone for Knoll, who celebrated 75 years of classic home and office design. In celebration, OMA and Edward Barber & Jay Osgerby revealed new designs and an upscale exhibition space.

Knoll's exhibition space at Salone, formed by OMA, provided Salone attendees with ideal viewpoints of Knoll's classic designs, such as OMA's Tools for Life collection and a new lounge furniture collection by Edward Barber & Jay Osgerby. OMA is the collaborative practice created by architect Rem Koolhaas. The brand's Tools for Life collection consists of 12 fresh pieces that merge the needs of modern work and social life. Each piece is made to suit twenty-first century technology and society in stylish ways. Such elements exemplify the nod to modern lifestyle, like the table pockets that help manage smart phones or mp3 players.

Edward Barber & Jay Osgerby's collection continues forward with the futuristic style, introducing a number of new pieces including: sofas, ottomans, tables and a stool.

The lounge furniture comes in a range of upholstery fabrics and leathers, while the legs are made of chrome with red or black paint finish.



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Preciosa Lighting

The Czech lighting company, Peciosa Lighting went above and beyond this year with their interactive exhibition stand that illustrated not only their ability to attract with creative use of light, but also their ability to design futuristic creations without being cheesy.

Their newest lighting fixtures come in the form of "Living the Light," a collection of colourful and trendy fittings.

"[The] concepts [behind the] lighting fixtures from the 2013 collection were fully based on the newest technologies. As a first company worldwide, Preciosa used Printed Circuit Board to conduct electricity in lighting fixtures," explains Tana Rydlova, Marketing Manager at Preciosa Lighting. She continues: "In each of the new lighting fixtures from Living the Light collection, we are 'playing' with [light's] colour and intensity."

Inspired by the "essence of light and life," the collection Living the Light marks the company's strong inventive trait that is rarely found elsewhere.



Maarten De Ceulaer

Belgium-born designer, Maarten De Ceulaer has an interesting way of approaching product design that has not only caught our attention, but others' as well. When Milanese gallery, Nilufar caught sight of Ceulaer's "Pile of Suitcases," they confidently jumped on board and requested an entire collection be developed.

Having a "strong passion for travelling," one can easily map the source of inspiration behind the designer's playful creations: Pile of Suitcases and Chest of Suitcases. The structures, consisting of leather suitcases and briefcases aligned in unique and asymmetrical compositions, were created by Ceulaer who collaborated with leather artisan Ralph Baggaley.

When asked about the flexibility of the suitcase configuration, Ceulaer explained: "[It] can be done in hundreds of different ways, [since] they are all separate suitcases."

Ranging from dark, ominous and dramatic tones, to light and whimsical hues, the suitcase projects are memorable and thematically suggestive.



Daniel Libeskind

A spinoff product design company of Studio Daniel Libeskind, Milan-based Libeskind Design displayed a number of new collections during Salone. The designs include, but are not limited to: the Wing mirror collection, the Paragon lamp and the Idea doors.

The Polish designer has a way of maintaining his recognizable artistic touch throughout the collections. Each product radiates a certain advancement in functionality and often introduces new and original aesthetics.

The Paragon lamp is an example of Libeskind's unique way of combining functionality with forward design. The lamp, not-so-surprisingly inspired by "the shape of a skyscraper," was created for Artemide, and is the latest design in a collection of eccentric table lamps.

Consisting of four joints made from anodised aluminium hinged together with a steel base, the Paragon lamp can be fashioned to suggest a number of shapes to suit any mood.







Budri

When natural disaster strikes, it leaves little room for optimism. However, Budri, Italian marble inlay atelier, found inspiration in an earthquake that struck the brand's home town of Emilia, in northern Italy. Having reached 5.9 on the Richter scale, the earthquake left little untouched including Budri's plant, which stored the company's impressive and large array of marble and semi-precious stone slabs. The collection of material was left severely damaged.

Upon hearing of the earthquake, designer Patricia Urquiola explained to the Budri team that inspiration could be garnered from such an event, and hence the creative collaboration was formed and the collection Earthquake 5.9 was born.

Earthquake 5.9 is a series of unique furniture pieces designed by the damaged marble and stone slabs. From geometric wall shelves to colourful tables, Budri's Earthquake collection is sensitive and delicate. The collection also stirs up images of traditional Eastern cultures and art forms, such as colourful Japanese origami.



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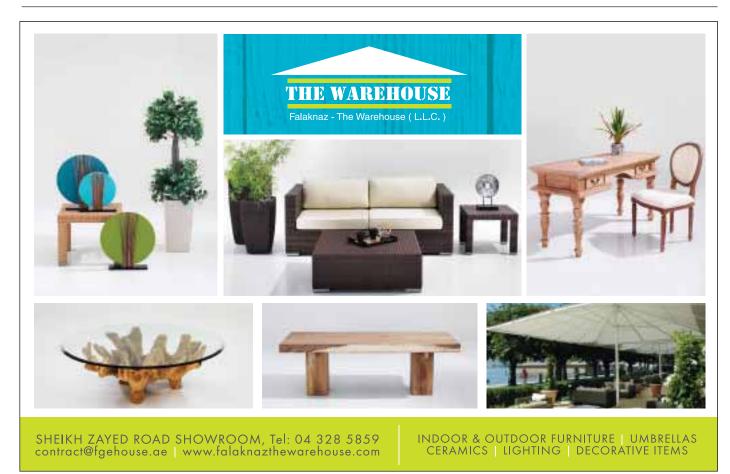
Baccarat

With contemporary and minimalist tastes directing the flow of design, it's not often you come across a company that still values the glitz and glamour of design. But Baccarat, who has stayed true to its core principles and values, revealed a collection of crystal chandeliers at Salone.

While some of the chandeliers still maintain that grand character defined by being immensely large and brightly twinkling, many chandeliers practiced severe refinement and were held against backdrops illustrating the Parisian city centre, wild creatures and slim tree trunks.









Sé

Having been priding themselves on their feminine designs and sensitivities, it was only a matter of time before Sé would pair up with a female designer and they found their lucky strike in Nika Zupanc. After announcing the company's collaboration, we were waiting to see what the products would look like.

Sé Collection III isn't ready to be fully unveiled; however, Sé co-founder Pavlo Schtakleff was happy to give Salone a slight peep by revealing the Full Moon lamp.

Inspired by the Olympics and humanity's historical passion for athletics, the lamp masteryfully combines sleek circular shapes with a touch of 50's modernism.

Available in white or black, the Full Moon lamp is minimal, sweet and a natural classic.

Mambo

This year's Salone saw an exciting array of partnerships, and Mambo's joint affiliation with Lema is no exception. Mambo Unlimited Ideas has traditionally rooted itself in Portuguese culture and heritage, using the country's history to inspire its textile approach and stylistic decisions. And with Portuguese designer Claudia Melo spearheading the artistic direction, it seems that Mambo's Ettero collection, which includes furniture and in particular lighting fixtures, such as lamps Star and Comb, are proving to Salone's international crowd just what contemporary Portuguese style looks like.

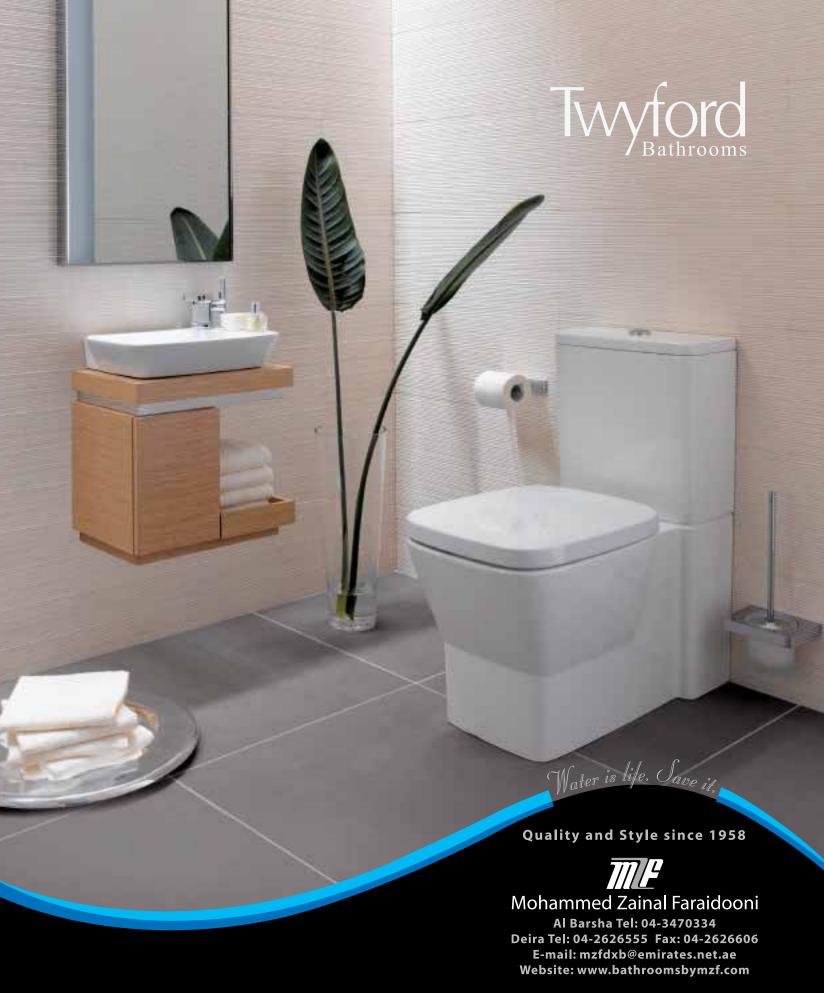
The lamps were chosen to light up Lema's space. The lighting fixtures bring together an interesting union of a soulful style and modern tastes. Melo explains: "Our inspiration came from the industrial era with a twist of the 40's, 50's and 60's. We tried to revive these periods into the modern world without taboos or judgments."

When asked about the inspiration behind the lamps, Melo divulges: "We are all the time searching for new ideas and for new shapes for lighting, and we find [it] very difficult to see lamps like ours. They are pretty unique. The market divides in two categories: one very technical and with a very minimal design and the other very classic. I think there is a gap in between. Our lamps are just in this gap where the lamps are creative, functional but with a strong sense of taste."

Star display's Mambo's preference to fuse comfort with sophistication; it's a white lamp shade surrounded by a geometric copper design and comes in three variations. Comb is an iron pendant lamp that employs a combination of soft neutral colours layered in symmetry with each piece fiercely moulded to impress.



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SELVA

Italian furniture company, Selva has been around for quite some time, but throughout its years of creation, the company has maintained its superior craftsmanship and sophisticated creative identity.

For Salone, the company partnered with a number of designers to create chairs, drawers and tables. While the tables are admirable and expertly made, the Chair Peggy and Chest of drawers Waldorf caught our eye the most.

Chair Peggy, designed by designer Peggy Norris, brings an interesting element to Selva that is identifiably American in its bold and clean lines, and its feminine curves.

The Chest of drawers Waldorf, created by Lorenzo Bellini, was crafted from cherry wood and polished with grey and black lacquered finishes. The lines are strong and contemporary, making the chest an interesting choice that can add an intriguing element to any room.

Zaha Hadid Arhitects

Inspired by the natural formations of glaciers and the accompanying crevasses found within the ice, Zaha Hadid Architects' "Serac Bench" for Lab23 has a fluid character that is romantic and unforgettable.

Developed from resin quartz, the bench has a natural shape that seems almost infinite. Being of a solid and tough material, it's symbolic that the design team was able to shape it into a continual and curvaceous structure, reflecting the natural





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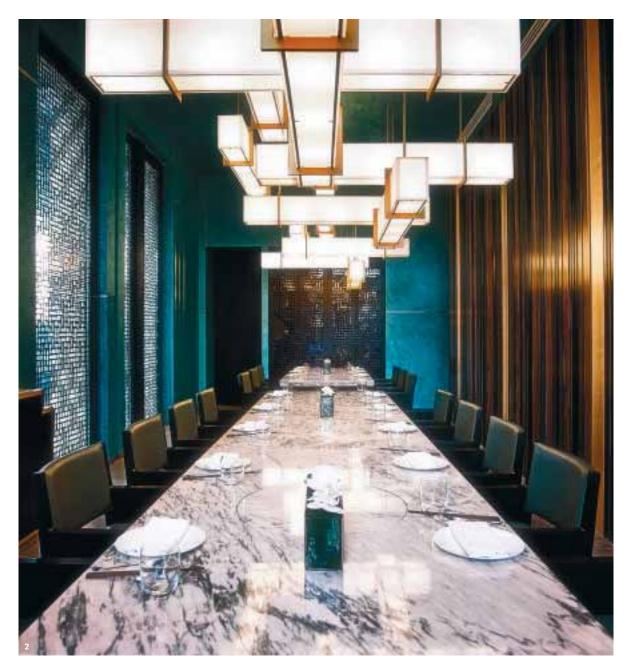


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aving opened on January 16 of this year, the Hakkasan Doha, by Woods Bagot, is set amongst the gardens of the St. Regis Doha and is the chain's third restaurant in the GCC.

As an international restaurant brand, Hakkasan provides its customers in major cities across the world with high-end, Michelin-starred Cantonese cuisine presented in contemporary and elegant surroundings. The Doha location is the restaurant's eighth Hakkasan in the world, following the branches in London, Miami, Mumbai, San Francisco,

New York, Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Acting as lead designers for Hakkasan Doha, Woods Bagot, who had completed the role of executive architects for the Dubai branch alongside Parisian firm Gilles et Boissier, worked to bring the brand's signature look to Doha's fine dining scene.

Niall Howard, CEO at Hakkasan comments: "The opening of Hakkasan Doha highlights our success in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. It was only logical to bring Hakkasan to Doha."

St. Regis Doha's general manager Tarek Derbas states that the new restaurant is bringing an experience that is "unmatched" in the Gulf city.

Since its opening in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, Hakkasan had quickly earned its title as one of the most prominent dining destinations in the region, as it has attracted the likes of international celebrities Uma Thurman, Morgan Freeman and Clive Owen.

The design of the 775m² space was led by Woods Bagot's principal Jonathan Clarke, based in the London office, with the firm commissioned to spearhead the design and execution of the project.

In regards to the concept behind

Iconic coridor in slate

Private dining area.

2

Doha's Hakkasan restaurant, Clarke says: "Our role was to bring a fresh approach to the new restaurant, while maintaining the design standards and look and feel that are common to all Hakkasan restaurants. The design takes a hand-crafted approach, with bespoke furniture and light fittings designed by Woods Bagot."

Clarke explains that as every Hakkasan restaurant aims to represent itself through its brand identity, all its restaurants worldwide are expected to evoke a similar ambiance and setting, regardless of location and region.

When surveying the restaurant's designs across the chain's many locations, it can be noted that one doesn't stray too far from another in terms of look and feel. Using New York's restaurant as an example, the design incorporates leather appointments, wooden and stone screens, and dark-oak latticing that together evoke Chinoiserie decadence. In addition, an open-plan kitchen is visible from the restaurant, which

makes any kitchen activity an integral part of the restaurant's entertaining theatre of patrons.

Slight alterations are made visible for the design of the Doha restaurant, which is more similar to its neighbour in Dubai with its impressively large 860m² landscape terrace.

Although mentioning that there are nods to the Middle East culture, Clarke explains that these touches are executed more in terms of the functionality of the restaurant rather than the actual aesthetics of its design.

Taking into consideration the pleasant winter climate of the GCC, the team created an outdoor dining terrace that offers an additional capacity of 60 seats to the overall plan.

"With outside eating a luxury in the Middle East when the weather is cool enough and the restaurant set in the beautiful grounds of The St. Regis hotel, Hakkasan was keen for us to mirror the very successful and award-winning approach taken for the outdoor dining

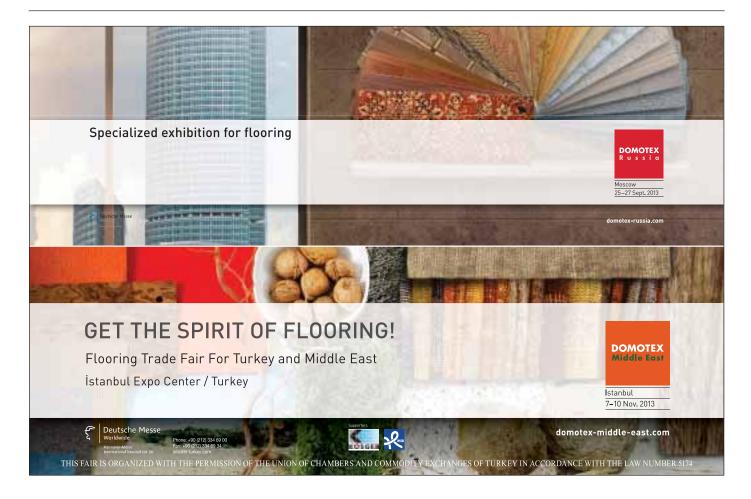
spaces in Dubai," says Clarke.

Featuring cascading wooden pavilions surrounded by greenery, the terrace creates a relaxed garden atmosphere that's perfect for private gatherings as well as large parties.

"The Doha restaurant includes a private dining terrace to complement the internal private dining rooms," Clarke continued.

Private dining is another part of the design concept that targets the Middle East culture with privacy being of greater appreciation in the region. Intricate screens that embrace the mashrabiya style are designed to set a distinction between public and private dining areas; however, the design team sculpted them in a way that avoided completely casting off the private space from the rest of the dining area.

"Hakkasan restaurants are ones where you come to see and be seen," explains Clarke, which justifies its dramatic entrance through its iconic corridor in slate stone.



Warmer colours to

reflect the region.

Traditional blue

flashing throughout

"In Doha, we decided to use backlit onyx at the arrival. The materials and colours in this restaurant are slightly fresher to establish a point of difference from other restaurants and to reflect the warm palette usually preferred in this region," says Clarke.

In terms of dining, the restaurant has two distinct dining areas: the Ling Ling, which has a sophisticated late-night lounge concept, and the Main Cage, which incorporates a more formal ambiance. The two areas can be indentified through the striking timber of the cage in the Main Cage area.

Clarke explains that the two areas are also not directly different from each other to ensure a unity between each individual space within the restaurant.

The bar presents the restaurant's signature blue glass used in all Hakkasan branches with some bold uses of abstracted Chinese motifs throughout the space.

"The Chinese motifs are not so blatantly suggested throughout the design, but are rather subtle suggestions," says Clarke, explaining how the team spent time researching Chinese design and calligraphy to use delicate forms and shapes to indicate its influence.

"The furniture and lighting are areas which are unique to individual Hakkasan restaurants. Both were bespoke designs from Woods Bagot," Clarke comments. "It is important that both these ele-

ments fit seamlessly into the overall concept of the restaurant."

From the LED matrix screen at the entrance to the ripple effect at the bar, the lighting in Hakkasan Doha certainly has the wow factor.

When asked to describe the style of the restaurant, Clarke says: "The style is relaxed, luxurious, intimate, bold and sophisticated." •





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DIFFERENT AREAS WITHIN HAKKASAN DOHA

- **Private dining:** Created as a nod to the Middle East culture, the private dining area includes intricate screens that separate it from the rest of the dining area.
- Ling-Ling: A sophisticated late-night lounge concept that incorporates stone floors and is made for a more intimate experience.
- The Main Cage: Here displays a more formal dining area that features a timber cage.

Outdoor dining: An extension of the Main Cage taken outdoors, the outdoor dining area acknowledges the pleasant winter weather in the region and the visitors' general preference toward outdoor dining.



5 Opening into bar area of Hakkasan.

Outside area.

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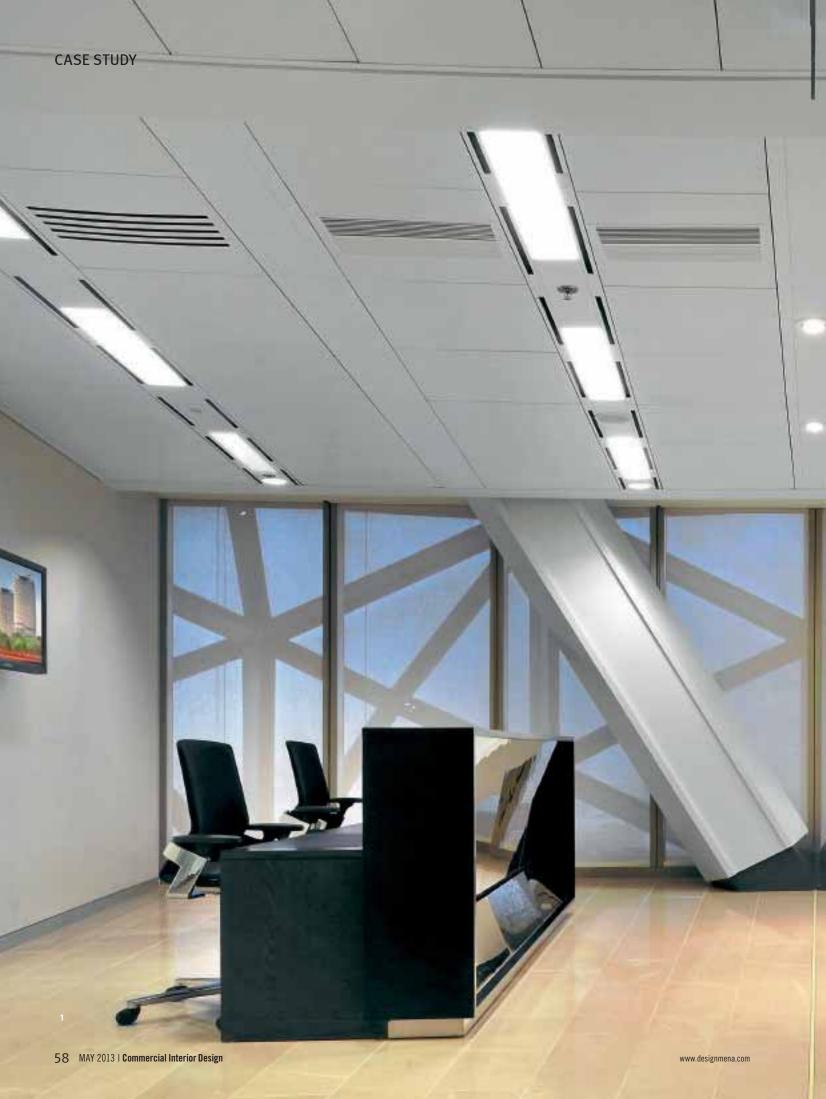
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ow is a good time to be shopping for premises in the UAE and the central business districts (CBDs) are attracting an impressive amount of tenants who are saving money and moving to better specified buildings.

Due to the depressed state of the commercial office market in the UAE – a consequence of the world downturn and over supply – conditions are right for companies coming into the market or those already established but may have lease breaks in a few years.

A common theme across many markets in the Middle East is a growing distinction between the prime projects and locations, where rentals are generally stable, and more secondary locations and projects, where average rents continue to decline.

According to Matthew Green, Head of Research & Consultancy at CBRE: "You really have to segment the whole market now." He went on," [The market] is performing differently depending on the specific location, overall quality of the product, and ownership structure.

"Hence, while there is an oversupply in the wider market, this is predominantly a cause of the fractional ownership space as opposed to a reflection on all office sub-markets and categories."

In general, the state of UAE commercial office space is a continuation of trends, such as cost neutral office moves, flight to quality, static rents, increasing supply in secondary and tertiary locations, etc. The key drivers of this trend are the oversupply of strata offices versus good quality, singleowned assets.

Sleek design marks Al Bahar Towers.

Al Bahar' Towers exterior viewpoint.

Vacancy in the Dubai CBD is around 15% against a market vacancy of 47% and it is expected that the CBD number will shrink over the course of the year, influencing developers to get back into the market. However, any future projects would have to offer high-efficiency space and be attractive for a number of large corporate occupiers, who are potentially in the market for space at this time.

In Dubai, rental activity remains focused on consolidating from multiple locations to a single office rather than establishing new operations or expanding. Most of the upcoming office space is in Business Bay, DIFC, Silicon Oasis and Dubai World Central. Despite the oversupply of office stock in the market and the number of new projects underway, there remains a shortage of completed, high quality, single ownership buildings suitable for large corporate occupiers.

Demand for strata titled buildings as well as lower quality office space in sec-

ondary locations remains constrained. Prime rents remain flat at approximately AED 1,450/m² but despite a minor decline in the average rate, some prime properties around the CBD have actually managed to grow their headline rents over the past 12 months, aided by the limited supply of good quality and efficient office spaces.

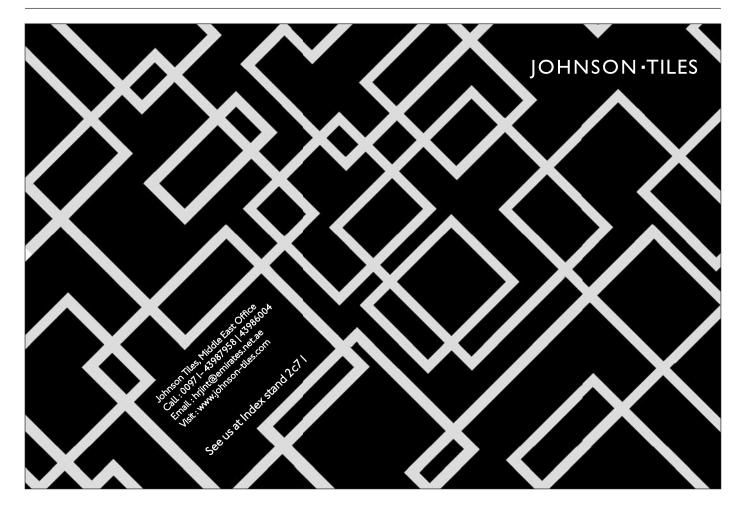
Alternatively, rents for poorer quality buildings in secondary locations continue to face downward pressure, widening the gap between primary and secondary office space. As a result, landlords remain flexible and willing to offer rental incentives in order to secure hesitant tenants.

In Abu Dhabi, the office inventory continues to rise resulting in demand for office space remaining largely stagnant. Over the coming three years, as much as 1.5 million m² of new office space could come on line and given current demand levels, this is expected to result in ever rising vacancy rates. Both prime and

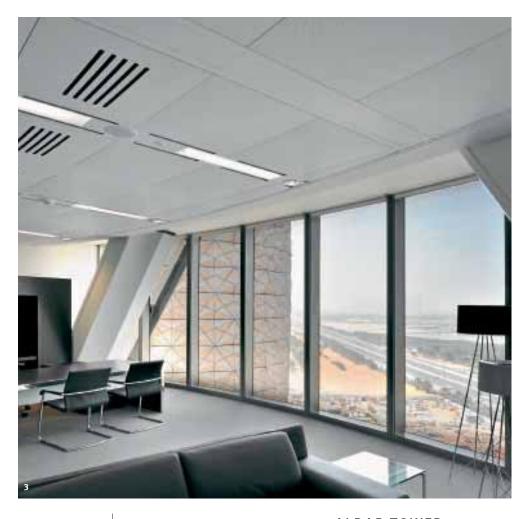
secondary locations are suffering from a reduced tenant demand, resulting in an increasingly competitive environment. However, while prime rents have remained static during Q4 '12 at approximately AED1,600-1,900/m², those in secondary areas have seen a decline.

True to history, government and public occupiers remain the primary source of new office demand in Abu Dhabi, particularly for good quality accommodation. During 2012, around 60-65% of total market take-up was directly attributed to government-related entities, including the Abu Dhabi Investment Council, which recently relocated to the newly-opened Al Bahr Towers.

While stock continues to expand, demand remains weak and limited to existing occupiers looking to upgrade their premises, rather than newcomers. As a result, landlords are becoming increasingly competitive in order to attract and retain tenants. Occupiers are able to upgrade their premises without incurring



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Modern office design located in Al Bahar Towers.

additional costs and are therefore gaining a variety of benefits from a number of rental incentives and inducements such as flexible terms and conditions, rent free periods and fit outs.

According to Andrew Jackson, a director at SAS International, a manufacturer of interior fit-out products: "We have been involved in a number of projects throughout the region and in the UAE specifically.

"As the market dynamic has evolved, we have seen the benefit to the owners and developers of prime properties who have invested in a top quality basic fit out. In combination with other factors such as location, it is a key component in attracting long-term corporate tenants into their properties."

So, in the flight to quality market that has taken hold in the UAE commercial market, the region's top tenants are attracted by high-quality specifications and fit-outs, appropriate floor plates and single building ownership.

ALDAR TOWER

More than twenty companies now inhabit Aldar HQ, Abu Dhabi's iconic glass disk towering over the Abu Dhabi/ Dubai highway. Voted 'Best Futuristic Design 2008' by the Building Exchange Conference, the HQ is one of the most striking additions to the Abu Dhabi skyline in recent years, while also providing flexible office accommodation to attract corporate occupiers.

In addition to the distinctive design of its structure and impeccable finishes, the HQ's floor plans retain a high level of efficiency and provide functional, open plan office space capable of accommodating a multitude of fit out options. It is precisely for this reason that HQ have been able to attract the most desirable occupants including Aldar, Habtoor Leighton, Rolls Royce Engines, ABB, Al Futtaim Carillion & Boeing.

Whether new to the market or relocating from another local premise, HQ was designed and built as a class A project to provide corporate occupiers with an unmatched level of quality in a location convenient for valued employees within those companies.

Among the key criteria for prospective tenants were space requirements, attractive infrastructure, location, budget requirements and the quality of the basic fit already in place as part of the developer offering.

Because Aldar had the insight into future expectations to attract top quality tenants and the desire to make their own headquarters an icon of Abu Dhabi architecture the result is that some of the world's most well known companies now inhabit and thrive within its truly unique walls.

AL BAHAR TOWERS

The Abu Dhabi Investment Council recently took up residence in the Al Bahar Towers, moving from their old location in Markaziya West and will be joined in the future by Al Hilal in the second of the two towers.

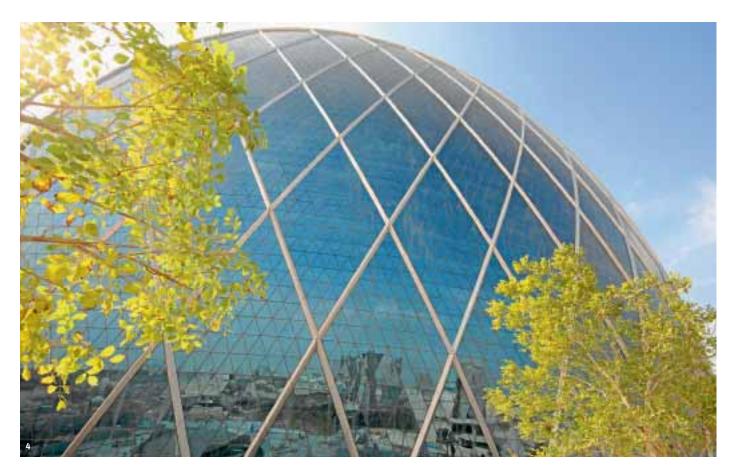
The project brief required two 25-storey towers to create an outstanding landmark building that would provide a contemporary design using modern technology while considering the region's architectural heritage together with the status of the clients' organisation. Overall, a building of such stature to house the ADIC and the vast number of international organizations involved in conducting the global business that is the ADIC.

The aspirations of the brief were consistent with a number of other initiatives within Abu Dhabi at that time, namely the recent publication of the Abu Dhabi 2030 Plan, promotion of the Masdar initiative on renewable technology together with the recently published Estidama standard.

Key to the requirements for ADIC was to find a way of protecting the building from the extremely high levels of solar heat gain which could be expected. Drawing on region's vernacular architecture the "mashrabiya" exterior was adapted which will reduce solar gain more than 50%.

"The new headquarters for Al Bahar Towers provides a modern symbol that is respectful of the culture and sur-







The iconic sphere shape of the Aldar Tower.

Triangular window design marks the long corridor in the Aldar Tower.

Angled perspective of the Aldar Tower.

rounding environment. Blending the latest technology with traditional design, our reinterpretation of the 'mashrabiya' used to reduce solar gain will be the first time such a moveable façade has been used on this scale. This, combined with the highest quality of materials, finishes and architectural features creates a distinguished and modern landmark for the Gulf region" commented Aedas director, Bryan Hamilton.

AMERICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL OF DUBAI & NORTHERN EMIRATES



Having recently moved from a residential villa location in Al Barsha into the Emarat Atrium building on Sheikh Zayed Road, the American Business Council (ABC) joined the many businesses and organisations able to take advantage of tenant favorable market conditions to move into premises that better meet their needs.

Primary in the decision making was the desire to move to a location that would enable the ABC to be in closer proximity to its business partners, membership and relevant government entities. As a non-profit body, another key consideration was the overall costs – not only for the annual rent, but also the utilities and monies for additional fit out or office customisation.

After careful consideration, an extensive search and the standard negotiation process the ABC selected Emarat Atrium as their new home. Located in one of Dubai's Central Business Districts (CBDs), the Atrium more than meets the needs of the ABC to be in a key business area and offers its employees amenities that were not readily available in their former Barsha location.

Equally importantly, the ABC managed their costs by choosing a location where incentives were in place by the management to attract top quality tenants and the fit out of the office was already in place.

"We have been very fortunate to ... move to a premise that meets our specific requirements at a cost viable for a non-profit entity." says Cara Nazari, Executive Director at ABC. "It was integral to our function that we be in a location making [interaction] much easier for our membership and partners."



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n Baku, the capital city of Azerbaijan where East meets West,
Reardon Smith Architects has
designed the newly opened Four
Seasons Hotel which stands as an homage to the French Beaux-Arts style of the
19th century.

Carefully researching the Beaux-Arts period to ensure authentic detailing and to avoid pastiche, managing director of Reardon Smith, Conrad Smith, explains that the hotel reflects an elegant rendition of iconic 19th century French architecture and design.

"By combining Beaux-Arts features

such as grand colonnades and graceful turrets with traditional materials such as the building's pale stone cladding, pre-patinated copper roof and iron balustrades, we have designed a hotel with classical proportions," he says.

However, in addition to the style of the French Riviera, the design also reflects the history of European design within Baku during an era where wealthy entrepreneurs were building residences in this same palatial manner.

"Inspired by the hotel's proximity to the edge of the medieval walled city, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site, we also drew upon the local historical architecture of the town," Smith explains. "We were sensitive to the nature of the site and the portion of the city wall that is adjacent to the hotel which has since been restored by the client."

Smith explains that the design very much focused on the idea of "form follows function" where the team was careful to consider the flow of operations.

"The external appearance of the building was as much influenced by its internal requirements as by the desire to create a certain style of façade. So, while this happens to be a quite tradi-

Banquet hall at Four Seasons Baku.

The hotel features splashes of ornate gold.

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Spa treatment rooms.

Zafferano restaurant.

8

tional building envelope, we very much observed the mantra of form follows function.

"We began with the requirement that the front entrance needed to be sea-facing and that, due to the hotel's location on a constrained urban site, the most streamlined pathway for vehicles to enter the underground car park was along this same frontage area."

He continues: "Since both vehicles and pedestrians needed to share this space, the creation of an arcaded, openair walkway along the façade proved to be a solution that was both practical and artful because it could be styled in the Beaux-Arts manner. As the meeting point for guests whether they are arriv-

ing on foot or by car, the colonnade has become a major focal point of the hotel."

The façade of the building is said to reflect the interior of the hotel, where the ground floor plan inside flows from the exterior.

"Since the preference was for the hotel to have only one public entryway, we needed to make sure it was grand so that guests could make an entrance," says Smith, explaining that once inside the lift lobby, visitors are greeted on one side by the main restaurant, Zafferano, and on the other side by the reception area and a majestic staircase leading up to the ballroom on the first floor.

"There is a formality to the spatial flow," he explains, "so that all areas are







clearly visible, less signage is required, and guests feel more relaxed because they aren't disoriented."

Adorned with a decorative ceiling that maintains classical-styled chandeliers and grass green and gold furniture pieces, with marble flooring and beige undertones, the lobby of the Four Seasons evokes a traditional yet sumptuousness ambiance.

Also located on the ground floor, the aforementioned Zafferano restaurant features white columns embellished with golden detailing and continuous arches. The restaurant combines gold and black chandeliers that loom luxuriously from the ceiling with the same beige undertones incorporated in the



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furniture and textile as in the lobby.

Just off the lobby is another eatery, the Piazza tea lounge, designed in a similar fashion to Zafferano with clean and calming tones of white, light mint green textile and beige tones.

A 600m² ballroom taking up an entire floor is created for glittering occasions and events, featuring no central columns. The reason for this, Smith explains, is due to the importance of guests being able to see- and be seenduring the events taking place in the glamourous ballroom.

He adds: "The freedom of space without any visual impediments increases the impression of volume and conveys a sense of grandeur."

Smith explains that the Four Seasons was destined to become the leading hotel in Baku, hence the chain hotel decided to dedicate an entire floor to its massive banquet centre.

The ballroom itself boasts a glitz and glam look consisting of mirrors reflecting off the walls and doors, as well as crystal chandeliers dazzling the space, with the gold and beige colour scheme dominating the area.

Moving on to the guestrooms, the hotel features a total of 175 guest rooms and suites which are all sized with an average of 52m², offering the option of viewing the Caspian sea or the historical part of the city. There are no internal facing guestrooms.

One of the highlights of Baku's Four Seasons is the grand Roman style swimming pool which is reminiscent of bathing pools in antiquity, set within a two-storey, stone-clad atrium topped by a vaulted ceiling where guests can enjoy views of both the sun and stars.

Surrounded by soaring white walls decorated in golden floral patterns, evoking a sense of nature and serenity, the 25m length blue water pool creates a bold and striking image.

"The swimming pool hall is actually a very clever use of space," says Smith before adding, "The pool is in the heart of the building and therefore we capitalised on the soaring volume that resulted from the decision to have only external-facing guestrooms. The effect is spectacular and truly does echo the form of a Roman basilica."

The rooftop spa with its numerous

treatment rooms, a hammam and wet areas nestles under a glazed roof with a marble-encased hot tub area extending into one of the domes.

On the more contemporary side, the rooftop restaurant Kaspia contains dynamic bronze-coloured wall paneling that appears wave-like due to the atmospheric lighting.

Although the colour scheme is maintained throughout the restaurant, the furniture pieces hold more minimal forms with a stylish edge. Natural light also enters through the curved windows, mixing with the golden beams of the futuristic lighting pieces.

"The rooftop restaurant - as well as the spa - takes advantage of the elegant forms afforded by the structure's cupolas and turrets.

These gracefully curved shapes have enabled the creation of private dining and spa facilities that feel especially exclusive due to their special architectural features," says Smith.

The Four Seasons has become the 'it' hotel of the city in terms of exclusivity, a delightful outcome at the satisfaction of Smith and the client.

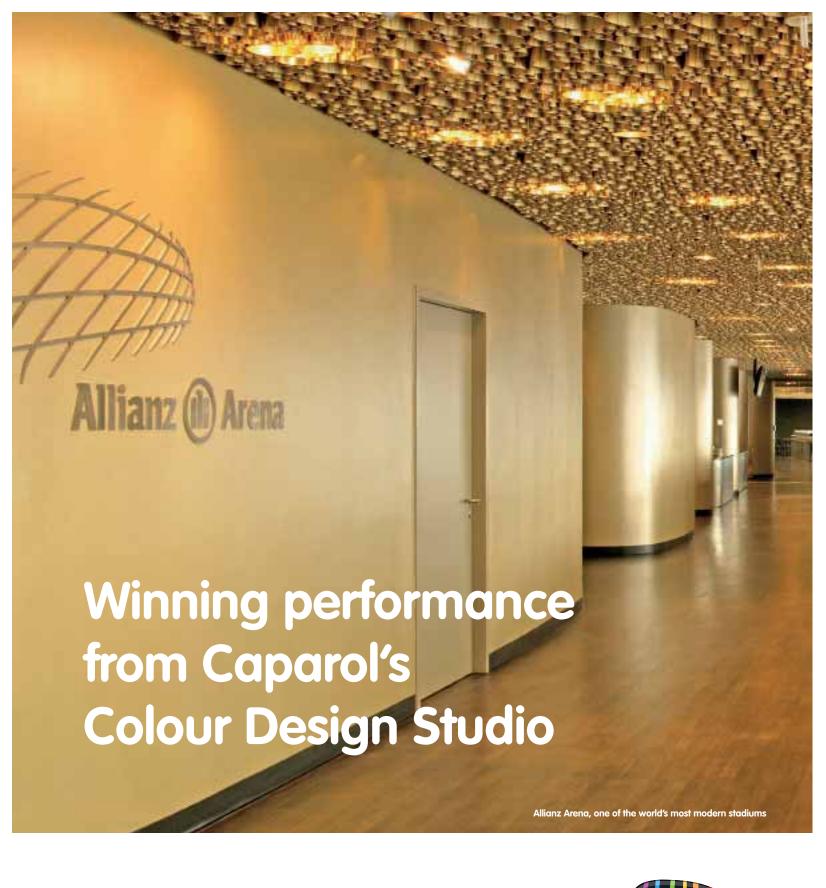
Piazza tea room.

10 rea at the

Waitng area at the entrance.

11

Facade of Four Seasons Baku.





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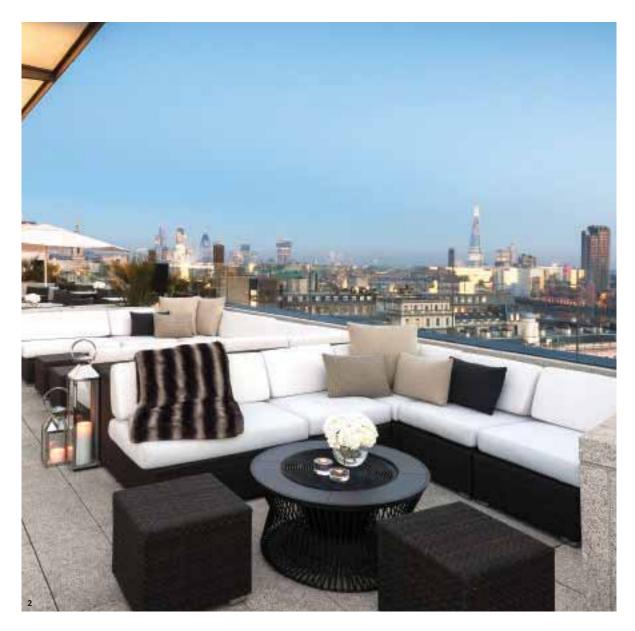






In the mood for monochrome

FOSTER + PARTNERS CREATES A BLACK AND WHITE FANTASY WORLD INSIDE LONDON'S ME HOTEL



n elegant fusion of interior and exterior design, the ME Hotel by Foster + Partners, demonstrates a new contemporary approach to London's boutique hotels.

It is the first flagship hotel in which every detail small or big, from the shell of the building to the bathroom fittings has been designed by the architecture and design practice.

"Foster + Partners has an unusual approach in that we bring together architects, engineers, interior designers and a range of in-house teams from the earliest stages of a project to deliver a completely integrated design," says Giles Robinson, partner at Foster + Part-

ners. He continues: "The opportunity to define both the interior and exterior experience of the ME Hotel meant that we could focus on quality in every detail. The result is uncompromising."

Located in the heart of London's West End, the triangular site of the ME Hotel that sits on the corner of Aldwych was once the home of the well-known Gaiety Theatre, which was damaged during the war and later demolished to create an office development.

Completing the grand sweep of buildings that make up the 1920's crescent, the new scheme repairs the urban grain and restores a little lost glamour to the heart of the West End.

Seamlessly integrating the construc-

tion of the new 157- bed hotel, it sits adjacent to the restored 1904 Marconi House whose exterior had undergone considerable alteration during the 70's. The mansard roof had been reinstated in natural slate tiles including recreations of the original dormer windows and a restoration of the masonry using matched Portland stone.

The new hotel building corresponds in height, scale and materials to its neighbour with its minimal detailing, simple, triangular oriel windows and Portland stone façade.

An elliptical tower on the corner of the hotel defines the end-point for the Aldwych Crescent and marks the main entrance at street level, which is shel-

Skylight from the atrium.

Rooftop bar RadioBar.

2



tered beneath a wide glass canopy that houses the living space for the ME penthouse, with its 360- degree panorama of the city.

"Our client wanted to create something unique in the London market and was committed to investing in the highest quality design. Melia's aspirational strategy for the ME brand made the process exploratory and dynamic," Robinson tells.

Arriving guests pass through the ground floor lounge, fine dining restaurant and bar, and ascend to the hotel lobby on the first floor, housed within a nine-storey high pyramidal space, clad entirely in white marble.

Robinson explains that the interior design concept fuses contemporary detailing with classical traditional design, using a dramatic monochrome palette with a combination of rich textures and luxurious natural materials.

"The experience draws on the idea of yin and yang, as guests move from dark to light spaces. The crisp white bedrooms are reached by reflective black corridors, sculpted by the angled walls of the central pyramid," he states.

Robinson continues by adding: "Our overall objective was to create a



3 Not all areas in the hotel are black and white.

Guest rooms at the ME Hotel. Curtain-like lighting piece in restaurant.

Monochrome is the driving theme throughout the hotel. memorable, exceptional experience for guests. In design terms, this translated into a range of spaces that were rich, varied and sometimes surprising.

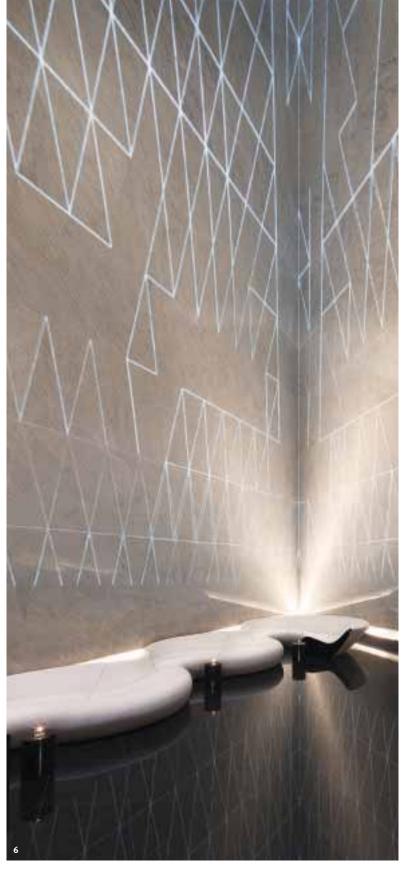
"The bold black and white interior palette gives the hotel a strong identity and allowed us to define the individual character of each space through variations in tone, texture and scale and a tactile, sumptuous range of materials."

The rooms in the hotel vary in types and layouts, from private terraces on the upper two levels, to individual suites with large, separate marble bathrooms. A black lacquered cabinet with a television and entertainment system is suspended from white leather walls with back-lit onyx shelves and a mini bar.

Discreet lighting and services are integrated into the design including the FLO table light by Foster + Partners.

The top floor of the hotel is described as an "urban oasis" and includes a sky bar and lush gardens. Robinson comments on the label, explaining: "It is a very calm space- above the traffic





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ME Hotel gives way to tremendous London views

RadioBarat dusk

and bustle of the Aldwych and Strand ... with incredible panoramic views of the rooftops of Covent Garden, the river and towers to the east. Our design draws attention to the views, with low sofas where guests can relax and enjoy the city around them."

The rooftop bar entitled Radio Bar is subtly divided into intimate niches to relax: deep sofas compose the indoor

seating that's set behind full-height windows and an onyx-clad bar, spectacularly backlit.

"Our main challenge was to maximise views and to create a space that would work at different times of the day, enabling the terrace to be used for lunch, dinner and as a lounge bar late into the evening," Robinson says. "The sense of drama and monochrome palette follows the striking formal language of the hotel, with minimal decoration."

Furthering his point, he continues: "For flexibility, the space can be extended into a private room in the pavilion of the 'ME Suite' inside the glazed cupola, where guests can enjoy 360 degree rooftop view of the West End."

Another key design concept for the ME Hotel is the Marconi Lounge, a luxurious retreat placed within the public ground floor of the hotel.

"To provide a sense of privacy, the lounge is separated from the corridor by an undulating wall of vertical chrome tubes," says Robinson.

He describes that the curves subtly define three different zones: a library with low shelving, candles, magazines and tapering armchairs; a central lounge with a fireplace and two feature sofas, centred on a 200-kilo disc of chocolate marble inset with real flames; and an intimate oval bar.

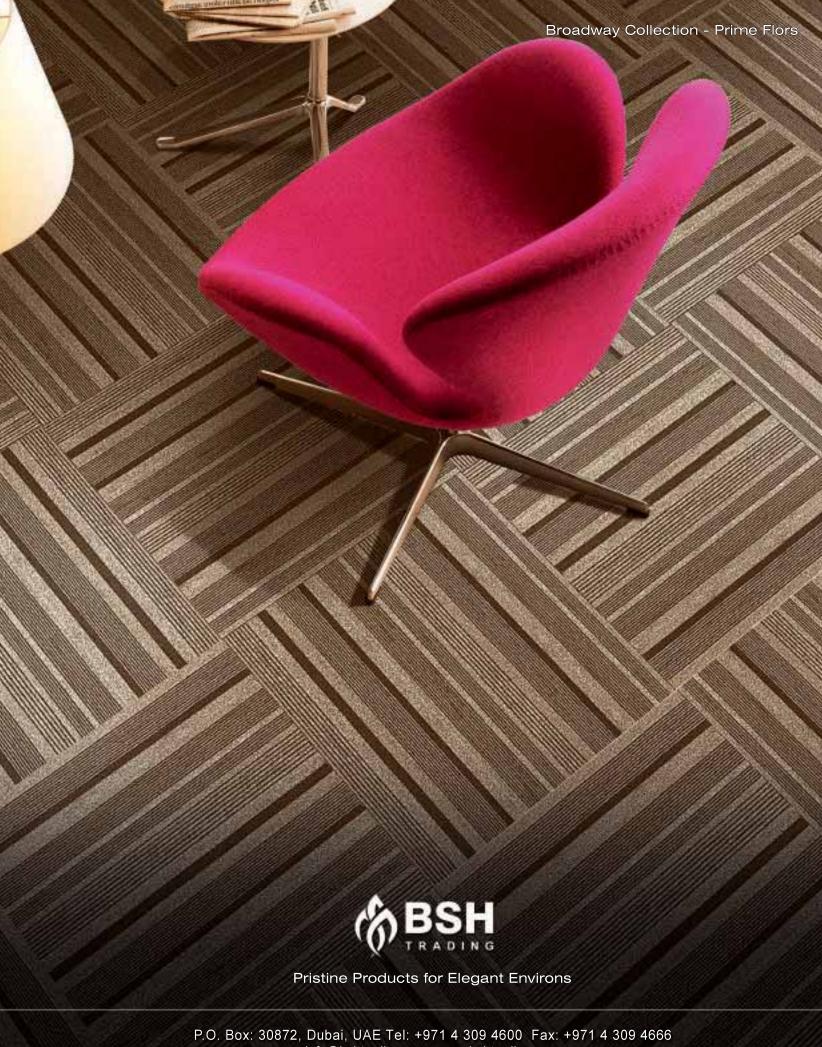
"Each space is lit by round chandeliers: simple rings of light, which, like many of the furniture pieces, were custom- designed by Foster + Partners," Robinson happily divulged.

Explaining how the bars fit in with the overall design concept, Robinson says in detail: "Spatially the Marconi Lounge follows the formal language of the central atrium and is defined by an angled black marble wall and white floor. But it breaks with the hotel's monochromatic interior palette with warm grey, natural textures and deep brown furnishings to create a softer, more muted space."

In terms of the Radio Bar and its role in the whole design, Robinson goes on to explain: "The overall design of the hotel is reinforced within the Radio Bar, where the black and white scheme continues. The central focus of the space is the steel lattice-clad peak of the nine- storey- high pyramidal core of the building."

Besides all other details, the hotel's black and white theme is definitely one to make a mark, leaving a glamorous gem standing on London's West End.

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Souk at Central Market, Abu Dhabi

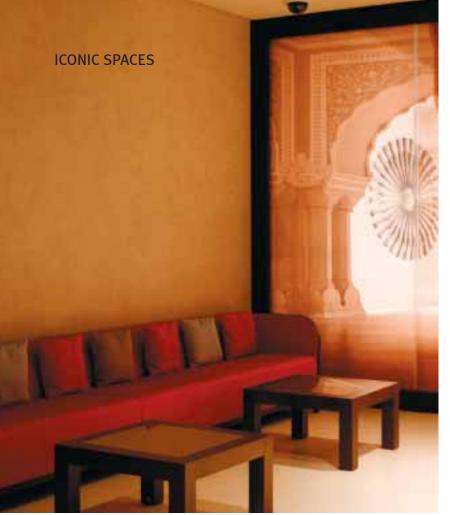
Of all the new projects in Abu Dhabi, the Souk at Central Market is arguably one of the most important. Designed by Foster + Partners, the Souk sits on the site of Abu Dhabi's old market place, and was billed as the development that would give the UAE capital a new civic heart.

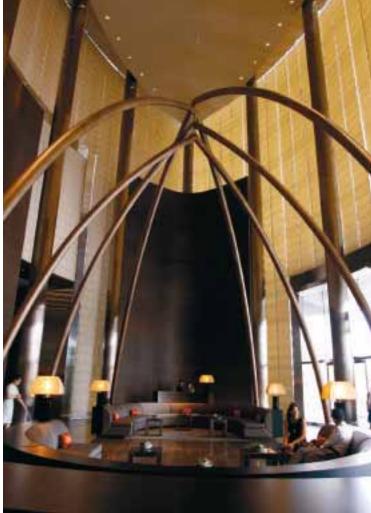
With its narrow corridors and small shop fronts, Central Market is an architectural homage to the traditional Middle Eastern souks found in such places as Morocco and Oman. Situated on two levels, Lord Foster's Central Market sets independent food markets and mobile phone shops alongside luxury brands, small coffee houses and other popular food outlets. In doing so, it recreates the ramshackle nature of the traditional souk, where aged shopowners hover outside coaxing potential customers to come inside and haggling over prices.

But the shops in Central Market are only one part of its design. Foster + Partners sought to create a commendably sustainable building in a country known far better for its glass monoliths than its ecological approach to design. The façade is able to keep the interior of the souk at a tolerable 25 degrees, rather than relying on ubiquitous, freezing cold air-conditioning to cool the building in the summer. Meanwhile, water setups, greenery and narrow pathways act as cooling features that are far removed from the glass atriums and gigantic floor plans of the conventional shopping mall.

Also, the perforations in the roof and interior panels developed by Foster, who consulted a scholar of Islamic art, are a nod to Islamic design. Based on octagonal forms, the panel's designs reference the region's traditional "zellij" tile work, while the landscaped garden on the market's roof adds to both the exterior aesthetics and the cooling of the interior.

Within these localised elements, as well as in terms of its sustainability, the Central Market's interior is one that admirably considers and reflects its local history, an increasingly rare find these days.





Armani Hotel, Dubai

When designer and fashion guru Giorgio Armani opened his first hotel in Dubai's renowned Burj Khalifa, it was considered a majour coup for not only the emirate, but also Emaar.

Armani admitted that he was sceptical when first approached by Emaar chairman Mohammed Alabbar in 2005, believing that his minimalist approach was far removed from the brash, extroverted tastes that Dubai's known for.

Speaking at the opening of the hotel in 2010, he said: "The real difference is that when you design some clothing, journalists say after six months 'it's off.' With Hotel Armani it cannot be really the same. So it's a much bigger commitment and a much bigger risk, which is why I love it."

The concept behind the hotel, which occupies the first eight floors of the Burj Khalifa, as well as levels 38 and 39, is simple: no pictures hang on the wall, no chandeliers hang from the roof, and the dominant colours include bronze and dark olive green mixed with shades of brown and grey. Intending

for a homey feeling, the designer is rumoured to have micro-managed the project to the very last detail, right down to the shape of the soap bars in the toilets.

And while the design is simple, it maintains a sort of mystery, with mirrors strategically placed in the hallways and room doors barely discernible from the corridors. Once inside any of the 160 rooms and suites – or the 144 Armani private residences – the element of secrecy continues to intrigue, with televisions, bathrooms and cupboards integrated into the walls, hidden by sliding panels.

The significance of the Armani Hotel lays in its divergence from all that Dubai is famous for. It's recognition that a hotel could simultaneously be luxurious and understated is only one element of its influence. The project was the first step for Armani into hotel design, a step that has since been followed up with a second hotel in his home city of Milan. The plan is, says Armani, to build ten more, including hotels in Istanbul and Marrakech.

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The Peninsula, Shanghai

The Peninsula's triumphant return to Shanghai in October 2010 was a considerably big deal as it came 60 years after its parent company left China in the early days of Communist rule. Hong Kong and Shanghai Hotels Limited used to run four of the city's best-known hotels in the 1920's and 30's, a time when Shanghai was a booming, exciting and entrepreneurial port city, commonly referred to as the Paris of the East.

Set on Shanghai's famous waterfront area, the Bund, the Peninsula tributes the past in almost every aspect, from its David Beer designed exterior, to the remarkable interiors designed by Parisbased interior designer Pierre-Yves Rochon. The interiors honour the 1920's art deco movement by recreating the style of a stately Shanghai home, blending intricate oriental design with Western influence.

The hotel's tribute to Shanghai's past isn't solely in its design elements, it's also in its layout, distinguished by a triple-height lobby lounge that overlooks the nearby British Consulate Gardens, where guests enjoy traditional English afternoon tea, and the Salon de Ning, a late-night lounge that evokes Shanghai's decadent and infamous heyday.

The Peninsula's reopening in the 1990's marked an important time in Chinese history, as it influenced Shanghai's transformation into an international hub once again. Today, the city is home to thousands of expatriates and remains a global centre for business and finance. The hotel, synching the art deco movement with modern design while fusing Chinese and Western inspirations, marks a combination of elements that reflect Shanghai's past, as well as its future.





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Hotel & Resorts

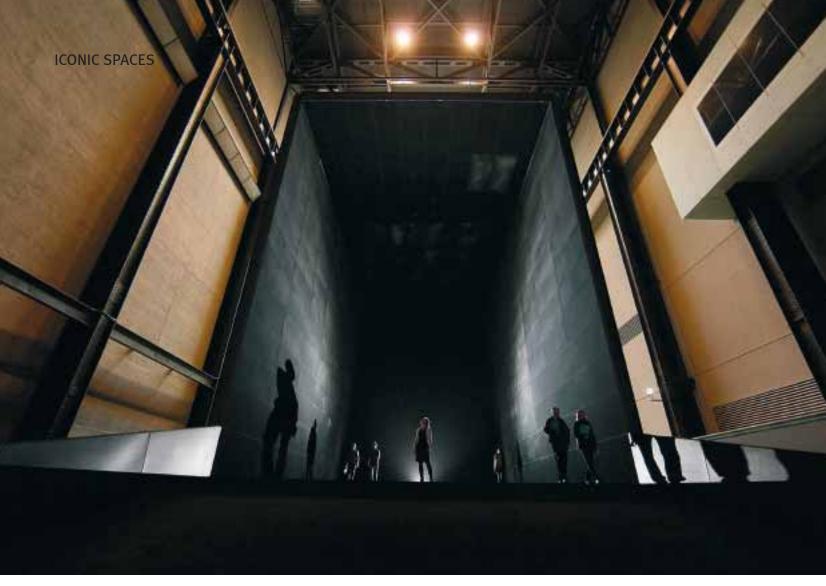


Celebrating 20 years of Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club











Tate Modern, London

London's Tate Modern was not always the beloved British landmark that it is today. In fact, the former power station that housed it was almost knocked down before being snapped up by the Tate as the new home for its collection in 1981. The design, by Swiss architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, left the exterior of the building largely intact – refusing suggestions that its now-iconic chimney be removed . Instead, the design team concentrated on the interior.

The new gallery spaces were created in the power station's old boiler house, sitting alongside the huge, five-storey Turbine Hall, which used to be home to the building's generators. The hall, a perfect canvas for special exhibitions, often has its vast concourse empty and open to the public. Far from being a waste of space, the Turbine Hall, with its soft palette and sunlight streaming

in from skylights and large gaps in the exterior, has become an important area for visitors to stroll, sit and reflect after viewing the exhibitions upstairs.

Plans have been undergoing for almost ten years to expand the Tate, which welcomes almost five million visitors every year, and in 2012, three, large, circular underground oil tanks were opened as special display spaces for live performance art.

The influence of the Tate on the use of Britain's old power stations and factories, both in London and the north of England, was crucial and has led to projects such as the redevelopment of Battersea Power Station today. Herzog and de Meuron, in their use of Britain's industrial past to embrace its art and its future, convinced emerging designers that exploring alternative options can be better than blindly destroying the old in favour of the new.

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here's a saying that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Evolution is inevitable and office design is no exception.

The concept of "workplace design" first appeared nearly a hundred years ago, conceived out of the desire to optimise industrial efficiency. Developed by American engineer Frederick Taylor, employees and their desks were repetitiously herded into spaces evocative of a factory. Meanwhile, management was isolated in private offices. Carrying the moniker "Taylorism," the theory sought a physical distinction between mental and manual labour.

"Burolandschaft," a German term meaning "office landscape," is a concept that dates back to the 1950's and consisted of free, open plans of furniture scattered within undivided spaces. Strategic placement of low dividers and plants offered a small degree of privacy and function differentiation. Burolandschaft presented a much more socialist approach that aimed to facilitate communication in a less hierarchical environment.

Action Office, a workstation designed by Robert Propst for Herman

Miller in 1960, took the Burolandschaft model of the 50's, but further privatised it. By integrating built-in partitions on the desk itself, it granted the employee even more seclusion and aimed to increase employee productivity. However, it moved away from the notion of free design associated with the previous Burolandschaft movement. Not surprisingly, Action Office was the predecessor to the work

cubicle popularised in the late 1960's.

The cubicle reigned for decades. Though its modular elements allowed for flexibility, they separated neighbouring workspaces by partitioned walls and were designed to isolate workers. Territorial in nature, they were an inexpensive alternative to private offices. Due to its uniformity, especially in large, regimented zones, the cubicle was derisively nicknamed "cube farm."

1 FrameOne integrated with media:scape by Steelcase.

Stem by Herman Miller.

Cove by Orange Box.



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3







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The new millennium has yielded change in office design. Incited by technology, the change has fuelled an evolution in not only office design, but also in how business is conducted - a movement away from the individual to the collective, from "I" to "us."

The terms: collaboration, mobility, shared workspace, in-between spaces and innovation have been at the forefront of current office design discussions in recent years. Interconnected concepts, these terms feed into one another, a manifestation of 'the sum is greater than all of its parts.' In short, new technology allows for greater mobility, which increases collaboration, enhances creativity and even furthers employee innovation.

"Technology, particularly Wi-Fi, now allows for increased mobility, promotes group discussions whilst reducing permanently used space and in turn the move towards touch-down [collaborative, in-between] spaces," says Siddharth Peters, managing director at The Total Office.

Mark Catchglove, Herman Miller's director of insights group EMEA agreed, saying: "Because our work happens so often in digital space, because we are so mobile, because we collaborate

with colleagues on the other side of the planet, the places we work [in] must evolve. For decades the tools we required to get the job done drove the design of offices, but that is no longer the case."

While Steelcase cited that in 2013, 35% of the global workforce will be mobile, it's important to recognise that there are varying degrees of mobility. Therefore, there also isn't a "one size fits all solution" in translating an increasingly mobile workforce into a new office landscape, and shared desk space won't work for every business model or employee.

Before implementing an office design reconfiguration, it's imperative that company executives clearly identify their business needs in context to the physical space. Careful decisionmaking must start at the top, and not be the burden of the interior designer. Otherwise, as Diane Stegmeier suggested in her book, Innovations in Office Design, "doing things right" can turn into simply putting a bandage on the current scenario.

Jeanne Meister, a consultant and speaker on the future workplace, mentioned in a recent Forbes article how credit card company American Express' BlueWork program categorises its employees in four groups based on their role: Hub, Club, Roam and Home.

Meister explained: "'Hub' employees' work requires a fixed desk and their presence in the office every day. 'Club' employees have flexible roles that involve in-person and virtual meetings; they have the opportunity to share time between the office and other locations. Those in the 'Home' category are based from home offices, set up with assistance from the company, on three or more days per week. 'Roam' employees are almost always either on the road or at customer sites, and seldom work from an American Express office."

While the categorisation and physical translation to its work environment worked well for American Express, others have taken a more drastic, but detrimental course. Steelcase identified that many organisations have taken an either/or approach, focusing all of the space on collaboration while sidelining work still done by the individual.

"We believe a better approach is one we call 'and/both'. It's all about balance," says Katie Hasse of Steelcase public relations and research communications. It includes the individual

Sidewise by Teknion.

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and the group. Hasse continues: "Our research shows people need a range of settings to accommodate focused, collaborative and social work in both open and closed environments – in other words, a palette of place."

However, the varied work spaces and their intended functions must be clearly identifiable, otherwise their existence is negligible. "Spaces must be identified for visibility – making it intuitive for workers to recognise the kind of spaces that support the work they're doing [boisterous collaboration vs. quiet contemplation], and provide the tools they need, while making it easy to identify available spaces," noted Steelcase in its 360 Magazine.

From individual and collaborative work spaces, to lounge inspired in-between areas, a plethora of sophisticated and innovative products are on the market ready to meet the market's varied needs.

Privacy Wall by Steelcase is a flexible moveable wall of aluminium and glass or solid steel. From enclosed private offices to completely freestanding individual workstations, the unit offers alternative planning flexibility. Privacy Wall can provide acoustical and visual privacy, as glass options are available in varying levels of translucency.

Room Wizard II by Steelcase is a solution that allows mobile or stationary workers to find and schedule a closed room or open collaborative space from a smart phone, computer, or from the touch screen itself. Its compact display physically mounts on the space structure, so on-site workers can visually see the room's availability status. Room Wizard II is an optimal component to Privacy Wall.

media:scape, also by Steelcase, is an integrated furniture range designed with media solutions to foster collaboration and connectivity. It's available in different configurations, ranging from lounge furniture to a wheeled mobile cart. media:scape also presents an HD videoconferencing option.

Teknion's Sidewise is a rather inclusive system that focuses on solutions for smaller spaces. "Sidewise is a fresh approach to addressing the unique needs of smaller workspaces such as enclaves resulting from today's shift towards more open-plan environments with increased collective work," says Christopher Wright, design principal and Sidewise designer.

"It is the first product to market that addresses the unique needs of these smaller, less formal spaces suitable for one to three permanent, resident workers, or mobile, non-resident workers. Sidewise supports both individual and collective work and their different levels of focus, teamwork and mobility. It answers a key workplace need for spaces in-between open settings and the traditional meeting room/private office," Wright adds.

The sinuous design of Cove by Orange Box reaches the pinnacle of flexible design, figuratively and physically. It combines work surfaces, seating enclaves and screening in a highly adaptable system of configurations. Cove can accommodate staff desk options, collaborative work space, videoconferencing, and chill-out space. Available with upholstery options, Cove is assembled on-site by a simple hook and bolt system, enabling a vast array of configurations that can be created quickly and easily. Orange Box and Teknion are represented in the UAE by The Total Office.

Meanwhile, Herman Miller's Stem storage line, very much like the stem of a plant, connects, supports, divides and saves. "The goal was to make the space work harder, for both our business and the user. We achieved this by using 'systems' furniture thinking to provide a solution which is multifunctional and can be completely integrated," notes Herman Miller's International Research and Development Team.

Many manufacturers, in their efforts to address the needs of a more mobile worker, don't concentrate on storage. However, the need for storage is still very relevant. Stem's multitude of configurations dually provides storage as well as space dividers, creating an inviting and comfortable environment for individual work or collaborative efforts and projects.

As technology continues to constantly evolve, our spaces change to support that technology. The past few years have witnessed a dramatic shift in the modern office. As Hasse poignantly and cleverly points out, "Space influences behaviour, so if you want people to share information, collaborate better and innovate more, you have to invest in the kinds of spaces that help them do that."

Privacy Wall with Room Wizard II by Steelcase.

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INDEX 2013

INDEX RETURNS FOR ITS 2013 EDITION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE OFFICE EXHIBITION BRINGING NEW TRENDS, EXHIBITORS AND ACTIVITIES

ince its inception
23 years ago, INDEX
International Design
Exhibition has brought
together countless amounts of designers and innovative creations,
and INDEX 2013 promises to mark
a big step forward. Experiencing
a solid 20% increase in preregistered visitors since last year,
this year's INDEX is set to feature
nearly 850 companies from up to
45 countries.

The trade fair will be taking place from the 20th to 23rd of May at the Dubai World Trade Centre featuring 20 national pavilions including INDEX regulars such as Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, UK, Turkey, Greece and Egypt, in addition to new comers from Peru and Morocco.

This will also be the first year that INDEX merges with the Office Exhibition, Middle East's trade show for commercial fit outs and interior design, now opening its 12th edition.

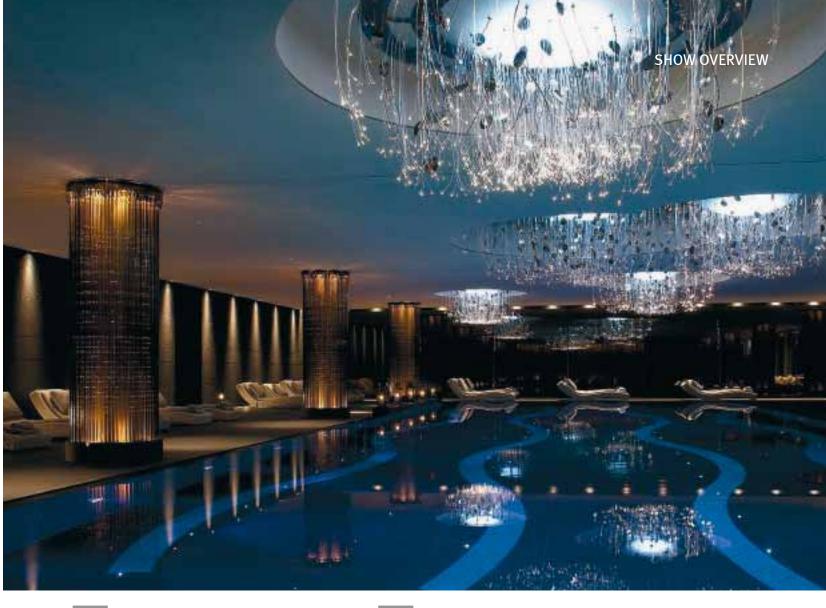
The 20,000m² space will be organised in seven product-specific show sections such as Furnishing, Kitchen and Bathroom, Lighting, Outdoor Living, Objects, Surfaces and Finishes, as well as Textiles.

"After extensive research and discussion, we decided to bring the two shows together," says Frederique Maurell, exhibition director at INDEX. "The reason for this decision is the two-fold benefit it provides our visitors and exhibitors, as well as to reflect the trend of aggregation that we see occurring at a global level."

Maurell explained that 61% of those at INDEX 2012 visited to source products for their commercial, retail, healthcare or educational fit-out projects. The merging of the two shows makes it convenient for visitors and exhibitors as they are able to fulfil both sourcing and sales needs at a single platform.

Maurell continues: "Secondly, combining these two well established platforms will create an 'interior super show' and provide the Middle East and North Africa's architect and design community the exhibitors and consumers with increased opportunities to do business."

Combining the two shows also reflects the increasing overlap of interior design and office fit out market trends that are currently occurring globally.



ACTIVITIES AT INDEX 2013

Design Talks: Four day programme of talks and workshops held by international industry experts focusing on four key topics: project management, interior design, architecture and hospitality design & retailing. The Society of Engineers will also be running an accredited Project Management Professional in Engineering and Architectural Projects workshop.

Artists Avenue: Here's an area where artists and galleries will display their artworks, appealing to those procuring art for residential, commercial and hospitality projects.

INDEX & Office Exhibition Product Design Awards: Open solely to exhibitors, the INDEX & Office Exhibition Product Design Awards honours manufacturers and designers for excellence and innovation in product design for the residential and commercial office industries.

The Middle East Interior Design Competition: Open to interior designers and architects. The competition rewards outstanding interior design/architecture projects in the Middle East and encourages new ideas and techniques in the design and furnishing aspects of interior design.

Contemporary Majlis Design Competition: Jury Award winners will be announced on the first day, while winners of the Public Vote will be revealed on the last day.

Student Design Competition: Targeting students of post-secondary school academic institutions within the MENA region.

Trend Tour: A guide to the most innovative and trendy design products across the show.

"Manufacturers and suppliers are expanding and diversifying their range of products and services to target the entire spectrum of design, interior fit-out and refurbishment projects," says Maurell. "Equally, more and more architects and design companies are expanding their consultancy capabilities to cross the boundaries between commercial, residential, hospitality and retail design."

In terms of trends, this year's show includes the continued growth of green and environmentally- friendly products such as recycled and up-cycled objects and materials. In lighting, the main focus is specialised and custom-made lighting and fittings with a marriage of coveted classical decorative chandeliers with a modern twist.

Additionally, this year will include modern home automated technologies which are shaping new trends in the design sector.

The textile sector's geologist trend will be focusing on organic and imperfect textures with a significant growth and demand for varied textural finishes across surfaces including both tiles and flooring.

In regards to office trends,
Maurell tells: "We are witnessing a move towards exclusivity,
designer products and towards
environmentally friendly technology. We estimate that in the future,
we will see high street designer
brands staging their entry into the
office space."

Darren Clanford, creative director at Johnson Tiles, a regular exhibitor, says: "INDEX will always get a big tick on our exhibition calendar. It's a great opportunity for us to truly demonstrate our creative capabilities and forward-thinking approach to modern surface design. It gives us the perfect platform to reveal our latest products and up-coming

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trends in a stimulating and exciting environment."

Major exhibitors in the lighting section include Lights of Vienna from Austria whose chandeliers are hanging in some of the best known hotels in the Middle East including Dubai's Burj Al Arab, Jumeirah Beach Hotel, as well as in the Dubai International Airport.

The lighting firm will be exhibiting some of its latest designs including the chandeliers designed for the third expansion of the King Abdullah Bin Abdullaziz project of the Holy Haram in Makkah.

Soher, a Spanish brand specialised in manufacturing bronze

items and high-end furniture will also be exhibiting at this year's fair. Its designs are present in places such as the Equestrian Club in Abu Dhabi, the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Sydney, as well as in luxurious private residential projects in Riyadh, KSA.

Other brands that will be exhibiting this year will include the likes of Faustig, Galaxy Trading, Inspirations Décor, Legrand, SNC FZE, Nordic Homeworx Real Wood Flooring, Simexa Limited- Skyline, Solea, Francesco Molon, Greenwood, Richard Fischer, Rattan House, Nakkash Gallery, Sentient Furniture, Ceramiche Maroso,

Porada and D Tales.

"I invite all visitors to stop by the Lasvit stand in Hall 7. The Czech-based glass manufacturer and design company will be displaying two unique lighting installations: Infinity, an art piece representing the symbol of the infinite eight, comprised of 1,400 hand-blown S-shaped leaves and Fractals, a creation that embodies movement in a geometric manner," says Maurell.

Concerning this year's show, Maurell comments: "Considering a shorter sales cycle between the last two editions of INDEX as well as the tough economic climate in the Euro Zone, the number of participants to the INDEX and Office shows is particularly positive."

Maurell went on to explain:
"For INDEX we note a clear surge from BRIC countries like Brazil,
North Africa such as Morocco and Egypt, but we also identified a good response from the UK.
Taking into account all macro and micro economic factors, this is an encouraging situation and reflects various positives including the popularity of the shows, the growth of design, architecture and fit-out sectors and the overall strengthening of the regional economy."

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BATHLINE DESIGNER BATHROOMS

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CIELO













Interface

Tell us about your company?

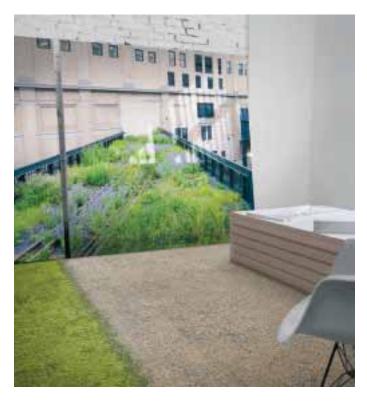
Interface is a global leader in the design and production of carpet tiles. Its products combine beauty and innovation with functionality and environmental credentials to help customers bring their design vision to life.

Interface was one of the first companies to publicly commit to sustainability, when it made a pledge in the mid-nineties to eliminate its impact on the environment by 2020.

Known as Mission Zero, it influences every aspect of the business and inspires the company to continually push the boundaries in order to achieve its goal.

What are you exhibiting?

The focus this year will be on our new collection, Urban Retreat, inspired by people's instinctive love of nature, a science known as



'Biophilia.' The collection comes in three distinctive designs and is an elegant solution for built environments wishing to create a connection with the outside indoors.

Interface worked with designer David Oakey to create the collection which includes a variety of hardwearing carpet tiles that can be mixed, matched and installed in a variety of methods to create a unique and calming interior. Reflecting the core elements of Biophilic design, colour palettes within the Urban Retreat collection are evocative of heritage stones, forests and savannah grasses.

Visitors at our stand will also be able to learn more about two other recent collections: Fotosfera and Biosfera.

What do you hope to achieve from the show?

Index is the best place in the UAE to reconnect with peers and find out about the latest launches in the region. Our team will be networking with designers, landscapers and architects. Our main objective is to create a buzz about the products we're introducing to the market which are unlike any others currently available.

Where can we find you? Hall 4, Stand number 4 B174.

Johnson Tiles

Tell us about your company?

Johnson Tiles is the UK's largest manufacturer and supplier of ceramic, porcelain, glass and mosaic tiles. Our tiles are supplied to almost every country in the world thanks to our reputation for our high standards in product and service, excellence in quality and timeless design.

Our dedicated global network, including our base in Dubai, ensures we can bring our stunning products to international markets.

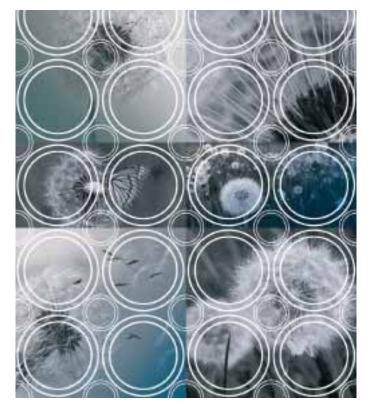
With a history in tile manufacture for over 100 years, we lead the ceramic industry in production development. We are one of the most environmentally conscious manufacturers in the UK with years of experience in supplying tiles to all sectors of the market, building close relationships with architects, international designers and end users.

What do you hope to achieve from the show?

Index is a great opportunity to showcase our latest designs, products and creative innovations and get direct feedback. It's an ideal networking opportunity for us to inspire and educate the design community and keep abreast of emerging regional trends.

Almost anything is possible with surfaces now. At the event we will be showing: how we can digitally print any image onto a tile with our Artile; how we can reproduce the intricate variations of marble and concrete to the tiniest detail on a ceramic tile; and how jewel colours and droplets of liquid gold are used to stunning effect on our Middle-East inspired Arabesque range.

Visitors will leave our stand feeling truly inspired and excited about the amazing products and



finishes they have seen, with a whole new creative world opened up to them.

Where can we find you?

Visit us at stand number 2C71 in the Surfaces and Finishes Hall.

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Muraspec



Tell us about your company?

Muraspec designs and manufactures wall coverings for professionals in the interiors industry worldwide. With over 125 years of British heritage, our name is synonymous with inspiring design, high quality and service second to none. Our wall coverings are available in hundreds of designs and colours, with a choice of backers in different weights and widths, plus the option of a bespoke service. Muraspec is still the only UK contract wall coverings company able to offer Environmental Product Declarations (known as EPDs) from BRE Global, for credits towards environmentally responsible fit-out schemes - something we're incredibly proud of.

What are you exhibiting?

The last 12 months have been really exciting for the Muraspec product development team, who have been busy working on a

range of new designs. Visitors at Index will be some of the first to see the results of this work.

We've expanded our 20oz Type II contract wall coverings collection, with two new designs produced with the hotel and hospitality markets in mind.

For interiors where understated elegance is key, we'll be showcasing our updated Opulence collection of silks and printed suedes. Plus, we'll have the eye-catching new paint effects available on Impressions panels.

What do you hope to achieve from the show?

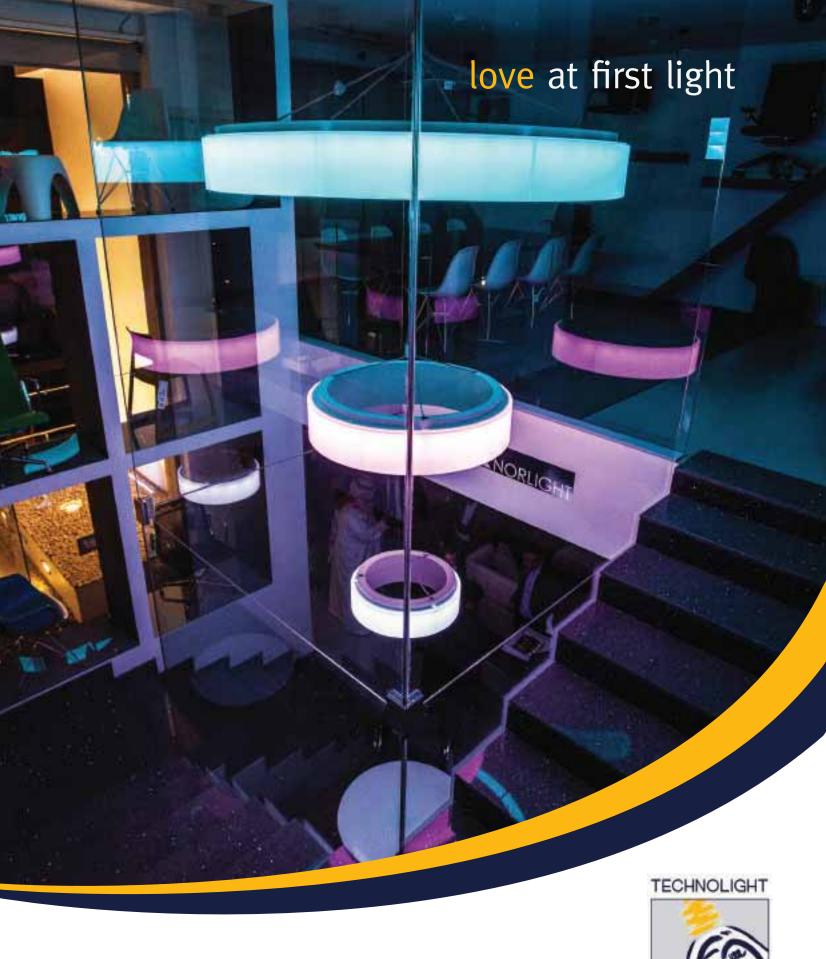
For us, Index is the perfect platform to launch new designs in the market. It also gives us the opportunity to meet potential clients, as well as catching up with existing ones. It's why we keep coming back every year.

Where can we find you?

Muraspec will be located in Hall 2, Surfaces & Finishes on Stand B80.



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Suppliers for over 35 years of modern architectural lighting and contract furniture.

SUPPLIERS YOU SHOULD KNOW









Tell us about your organisation?

UBIFRANCE agency is a part of France's Ministry for Economy. It's the French agency for international business development. It promotes French technologies, products, services and knowhow and enables French-based companies to communicate their technologies and products. UBIFRANCE accompanies French-

based innovative companies in their international expansion.

UBIFRANCE — The French Trade

Commission in the UAE is organising the French pavilion in Index show 2013.

What are you exhibiting?

Over 20 French companies will be at the National Pavilion at INDEX. They will embody the excellence



and the French know-how in French-style decoration, providing contemporary designed furniture, outlandish collections in seats and small furniture, highlights in fine gold, hand engraved crystal motifs, decorative objects, canvasses and material displays featuring sculptures that touch upon pop art, cubism and a slew of contemporary trends including vintage stain-glassed windows, cushions, lampshades and upscale gift items such as bags, jewellery, gift boxes, scents, sweets and accessories.

Moreover, firms will offer advice in urban development, architecture and interior design. Companies participating at the French pavilion are: Gautier, Lodge Collection, Table Top, Crystal De Paris, Les Verreries Du Chateay De Rivals, Jean Dubost, Pulltex, Boismage, Art Diffusion, Atelier De Mosaique, Atelier De Saint Didier, Prelonge, Zolinia, La Marelle Editions, Maryse A Paris, Merci Gustave, Namaste,

Pauline H, Upper & C° and Dragan Architecture.

What do you hope to achieve from the show?

We have several goals that we want to achieve during Index. First, we would like to organise B2B meetings during the show. Secondly, we want to showcase the French know-how and products in order to find distributors and partners.

Finally, through these actions, we hope to open new markets for French products in the UAE, GCC and others countries in Asia and Africa. Our target is always to expand the international expansion and export for the French SME's. We facilitate business relations between French SME's and their counterparts outside France.

Tell us where to find you?

All these companies will exhibit their products in the French Pavilion, in Hall 4 of the Dubaï World Trade Centre at Stand 4B165.

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UAE Distributors: Abu Dhabi: Danube Building Materials, Mussafah, Tel: 02 5544 120, Dalma Mall, Tel: 02 5506 610, Mushrif Mall, Tel: 02 4470 966. Al Taif Building Materials, Tel: 02 5556 111. Dubai: Danube Building Materials, Tel: 04 2667 699, Ibn Battutta Mall, Tel: 04 4404 920, Dubai Bath Solutions, Tel: 04 2977 020, Dubai Festival City, Tel: 04 2325 220, Bur Dubai, Tel: 04 3862 465, Al Quoz, Tel: 04 3470 413, Aweer, Tel: 04 3201 958. Modern Rana General Trading, Salahuddin Road, Tel: 04 2977 111, Airport Road, Tel: 04 2595 995. Bymet General Trading, Tel: 04 2622 422. In Step Trading, Tel: 04 2855 996. Al Ain: Danube Building Materials, Al Ain Mall, Tel: 03 7376 905, Bawadi Mall, Tel: 03 7840 318, Sanaiyya, Tel: 03 7223 003. Sharjah: Danube Building Materials, Tel: 06 5326 982. Ajman: Danube Building Materials, Tel: 06 7488 281. Fujairah: Danube Building Materials, Tel: 09 2249 848. Ras Al Khaimah: Danube Building Materials, Tel: 07 2355 761.



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Allsteel

Dubai Arki Group 971.4286.5855 Abu Dhabi Arabian Company 971.2445.7600 Oman Fahmy Furniture 968.2448.9812

Qatar Projex Company 974.4450.0771 Kuwait Trends by Midas 965.2434.5870 Saudi Arabia Alraja Furniture 966.1473.7373



Clarity[™]

Designed in collaboration with BMW Group DesignworksUSA, Clarity preserves only the essential elements of form and function. Choose from four stylish frame finishes and eight distinct mesh colors to create chairs that complement a variety of environments, from playful to executive.



KOI

Koi carp is a recurring symbol of Japanese culture, highly appreciated for decorative purposes. Its scale-colour mutations reveal its capacity to adapt, just like the set of Koi tables with table tops in either glass or marble to better fit different moods and settings. Koi and the Japanese word for love or affection are homophones, making the carp also a symbol of love and friendship.

BRABBU TEL: +351 914 470 214 www.brabbu.com



2013 COLLECTION

This new Lelievre Collection for 2013 explores classic style with a contemporary edge. The fabrics include Chaillot, a delicate jacquard design in chiseled velvet and Odalisque, a brocatelle fabric with silk for sheen and depth. A contemporary version of an archive design, Galliera has a woven linen and lace effect for a supple relaxed look. Inspired by delicate wrought iron work, the Camondo damask is overstitched with a silken chain while Odeon is a timeless geometric strong enough for upholstery, despite a soft silky appearance. Carrousel has a relief design spectacularly mirrored across the width, and Cosmos is soft multi-purpose cotton velvet with a beautiful matt appearance in 50 colours to blend with all the fabrics in the Lelievre collections.

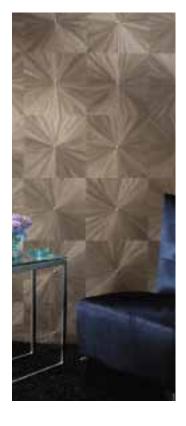
LELIEVRE
TEL: +44 789 039 4482
www.lelievre.eu



AJIRO SUNBURST PEARL

Ajiro Sunburst Pearl is a stunning wood veneer wall covering with decorative pearl embellishments by Maya Romanoff. Utilising micro-thin, genuine Paulownia wood on a paper backing, Ajiro is so flexible it can wrap columns and even turn corners. Ajiro is a wood veneer that is a beautiful, cost-effective and environmentally-sound alternative to traditional wood surfacing materials. Ajiro Sunburst is offered in two sizes and six colour ways and is rated ASTM E84 Class A. Additionally, Ajiro is offered with Swarovski crystallized embellishments.

Maya Romanoff, Represented in the Middle East by Pierre Frey SAS TEL: +971 4 446 4214 www.mayaromanoff.com www.pierrefrey.com





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DORNBRACHT
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www.dornbracht.com



GRANDERA

Inspiration for Grohe Grandera was drawn from design classics and architectural masterpieces found in metropolitan centres around the world. Design lovers will detect references to Paris, Lausanne, Moscow and New York, all fused into a distinct design. Its unique geometry, which merges circular and square elements, has prompted the Grohe design

team to coin the term 'squircle'. It allows for maximum design flexibility in the bathroom. The coordinated portfolio comprises faucets, matching showers and thermostats, as well as white porcelain accessories.

GROHE
TEL: +971 4 305 0259
www.grohe.com



LED FRAME

The LED Frame is a design and innovative product developed and manufactured in France by Switch Made. Equipped with Led, LED Frame offers a homogenous and adjustable light with an incomparable life expectancy of 50,000 hours without any maintenance. It is available in various shapes, sizes, colours and lighting effects. It can be used for three types of

applications including "king size" advertising, decorative lighting or dynamic functional lighting.

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REGENERATION

Knoll's ReGeneration chair was newly launched in the Middle East, designed as part of the Generation by Knoll family. The chair is much lighter in weight than most office chairs and is a more affordable version of the Generation chair. The Flex Back Net of the chair gives the feeling of being cradled. Much like the Generation chair, ReGeneration features the concept of "sit how you want." It uses renewable materials derived from corn by-products in the Flex Back Net and bio-based upholstery foam.

AL REYAMI TEL: +971 4 336 4666 www.knoll.com/www.reyami.com





CROIX

Recently presented at Milan's Salone del Mobile 2013, the Croix armchair is designed by Claudia Melo for Mambo Unlimited Ideas. This piece of furniture combines comfort, modernity and sophistication all in one piece. Available in two different versions, this armchair has a strong character and is

highly versatile as you can choose its fabric, making it suitable for any setting.

MAMBO UNLIMITED IDEAS
TEL: +351 21 813 33 91
www.mambo-unlimitedideas.com

JOYCE

With individuality remaining one of the strongest trends of the present day, Villeroy & Boch has seized upon this trend to launch Joyce. Joyce gives consumers the flexibility to adapt their bathrooms around everyday requirements with an innovative collection of interchangeable and functional accessories that can be moved around the bathroom, instantly transforming the

bathroom's function. The apps – dishes, vases and sets of soap dishes – are complete with soft magnetic pads so they can be securely placed around a bathroom and easily relocated. These apps are available in a selection of colours.

VILLEROY AND BOCH TEL: +971 4 344 4901 www.vileroy-boch.com





ORGANIC

Representing the art of nature through a cubic form filled with organic shapes, MDD's reception desk takes its design straight from Mother Earth to provide some relaxation in today's stressful world. White colour gives the reception desk a fresh look and grants many possibilities for arranging the place according to individual styles. The natural design is emphasized by a backlighting system of fluorescent lighting. The final impression is completed by the glass top, giving the reception not only splendour, but also nobility.

MDD MIDDLE EAST
TEL: +971 52 923 5238
Mdd.mena@mdd.eu





Designed by MK, the Elements
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glass effect finishes pair up with
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the aesthetics of the MK Elements
Collection. Beyond complementing the latest interior design

trends, the innovative electronic touch dimmers and switches provide a unique user experience via an intuitive, visually striking interface.

HONEYWELL TEL: +971 4 450 5800 www.mkelectric.com www.honeywell.com





STASIS

Founded in 2010 by Italian architect Pier Francesco Galuppini and Swedish designer Caroline Bauer, Milan-based design firm Studio BAAG is known for its products that combine functionality with creative refinement. The Stasis lamp is one such product that brings an unconventional element to interior lighting. Made from metal sheet powder coated with rubberised paint, Stasis lamp vertically stacks four domes of industrial production in a quirky alignment.

STUDIO BAAG TEL: +39 024 547 2462 www.studiobaag.com

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REIMAGINING STORAGE

BY LIAM KING

urnishing offices for more than half my life, I have witnessed the ever-developing dynamics of workspace. The advances in information technology and lifestyle changes have resulted in a shift of demographics in the workplace. The advent of wireless technology has led to a substantial reduction of traditional paper usage in most offices. This has its own advantages from making the workspace more environmentally friendly to reducing carbon footprints. However, the decrease in demand for paper storage is offset by the requirement for other types of storage, and here lies the disparity between the needs and aspirations of the work force. Offices have come a long way from being stuffy cubicles to more open and interactive spaces. Modern offices are required to operate via wireless systems while maintaining a fluid workspace defined by easier accessibility and movement. Office furniture and equipment are designed keeping this in mind.

However, when it comes to space management the main focus used to be on the work stations. Storage has been treated as a sedentary and purely functional element of a workplace. Hence, the majority of the furniture industry has focused more on research and development of cutting edge designs and technologies that concern workstation and chair ergonomics. Whereas, the designs of the pedestals, filing cabinets and other storage units never really moved away from the basic concept of their functionality.

Bisley, Europe's largest storage manufacturer, has a dedicated research and development program that constantly challenges conventional perceptions of storage design

and pioneers creative solutions. They recognise that there is room for superior contribution to a space or zone surrounding a storage cabinet. And through a combination of carefully considered, interchangeable secondary work settings, such a seamless solution can provide more efficient uses of both space and capital investments. They explained how we should all be approaching and analysing our clients' storage requirements, as well as our own. Let's face it, the workstation looks good, but it's the storage space and the ability to retrieve the information and equipment we need quickly and efficiently that can really make all the difference.

There are many ways in which Bisley products ensure an office space is designed as efficiently as possible, and it comes down to planning and design. By compressing storage, you can save nearly 43% of the cost of purchasing the same amount of storage cabinets and 50% of space, saving you half the space or doubling the capacity.

Apart from the functionality and usage, storage units can also be an important design element in a workplace. For example, Innerspace offers aesthetically pleasing cabinet and storage solutions that are designed to be in a front

office environment. With 27 colours to choose from, storage can be a focal point rather than a hidden eyesore.

Besides adding colours to your workspace, you can also reduce the level of noise in an open office setup by selecting storage units with acoustic panels that absorb sound.

From having your compact mobile storage units decorated with graphics, to topping off cabinets with planters to add a bit of greenery in the office, to mounting low mobile pedestals with foam to create soft seating, the options are seemingly endless and most manufacturers are happy to accommodate their client's needs.

There are more and more viable and creative options to choose from as the competitive markets have pushed the manufacturers to develop products that are unique and functional. Choosing the best storage solution is no longer a dull process where one needs only to measure the volume of space needed. With a little bit of creativity and research, it can not only make your workspace more efficient while saving you money, but it can also make it a livelier place to be in.

Liam King is the sales director of Human Space



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