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TUMI.COM
Neon gutter: Canadian photographer Greg Girard’s nocturnal wandering around Hong Kong’s neon-lit streets, showcased in his book *HK:PM*
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ARCHITECTURE

48
COVER STORY | BUILDING HISTORY
A remarkable transformation of government offices, the Murray Building in Hong Kong, to an upscale hotel
By Kate Whitehead

76
UABB | A CITY AT THE CROSSROADS
Shenzhen’s spring biennale takes a good, long look at the problems facing a metropolis under transition
By Christopher DeWolf

100
DESTINATION | CLIMATE CHANGE
Miami Art Week, held in December, has placed the city firmly on the world’s design map
By Sophie Kalkreuth

DESIGN

27
FOCUS | KITCHENS
Put the kitchen centre stage with the latest technology and intelligent appliances
By Dennis Lee

40
DIRECTIONS | DESIGN SHANGHAI
Asia’s premier design event explores creative identity in an increasingly globalised world, and ways in which the workplace can be brought into the 21st Century
By Elizabeth Kerr

66
PROFILE | CHINA: DESIGN FORWARD
A snapshot of some of the homegrown talents taking the country – and the world – by storm
By Nan-Hie In

84
CO-LIVING | PINT-SIZED LIVING
As the price of land reaches astronomical levels, today’s urban spacemen are looking to downsize and live together
By Tamsin Bradshaw

PEOPLE

92
CLINT NAGATA | BALANCING ACTOR
The head of BLINK Design talks about the expectations involved in inheriting the legacy of Jaya Ibrahim
By Tamsin Bradshaw

108
Q&A | SHAPING NATURE
Italian architect Mario Trimarchi draws inspiration from nature for his idiosyncratic product designs
By Dennis Lee
Chinese artist Cao Fei's RMB City - A Second Life City Planning at UABB 2017

WeLive Crystal City
HONG KONG

58
ART | INDEPENDENT VISIONS
The city’s cutting-edge art spaces explore loss of identity and some of the issues facing people in the region
By Elizabeth Kerr

DIGEST

12
BULLETIN | Career moves, people news and other industry happenings

14
PREVIEW | Perspective’s 40 Under 40 Awards programme is now welcoming nominations for young design talents

16
AGENDA | Exhibitions, events, auctions, books

20
DEVELOPMENTS | Construction, sketches, blueprints, progress

24
PORTFOLIO | MAKING HAY
Alexander Lamont crafts a wallcovering collection entirely handmade in straw marquetry
By Dennis Lee

REGULARS

02
IMPRESSIONS | NEON GUTTER
Canadian photographer Greg Girard explores Hong Kong’s neon-lit streets by night

10
SPACE | ROOM WITH A VIEW
The Vue Hotel Houhai, Beijing gets a contemporary make-over but one that respects the period buildings around it
By Leona Liu

110
OPINION | TROUBLE ON THE HILL
Hong Kong’s Bishop’s House, like many heritage buildings in the city, is under threat
By John Batten

112
EDITOR’S SELECTION | COMFORT ZONE
German designer Kati Meyer-Brühl’s Floret chair is a blossoming success
NEW concept gallery @ Central

GRAND OPENING

54 Hollywood Road, Central, Hong Kong

Tat Ming Wallpaper new concept gallery is officially opening. In order to promote our brand image, the brand new showroom has been renovated and brings you into the trends of interior fashion spaces.
New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) are two of the world’s most important art institutions and, for me, must-sees on any trip to the city. In addition to showing the remarkable works of Van Gogh, Claude Monet, Henri Matisse and David Hockney among many others, the museums themselves are impressive architectural works of art. Art and architecture; artists and architects: all are historically associated.

Take MoMA for example. Built in a contemporary style, the structure has gone through several renewals, from respected architect Philip Johnson and Japanese designer Yoshio Taniguchi to the newest development proposed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro in collaboration with Gensler. Pritzker Prize-winner Jean Nouvel has also joined the party with schemes for the residential building 53W53 – on top of the museum.

Hong Kong, one of the world’s fastest-growing cities, is Asia’s counterpart to New York. Its urban landscape is ever-changing – buildings are constructed, renovated, expanded and sometimes demolished. The city faces the dilemma of pursuing the new while preserving the old. For that reason, The Murray hotel has become one of the city’s most anticipated developments. The structure’s original architect Ron Phillips, whose innovative energy-efficient designs were drawn up half a century ago, has assisted a younger generation of architects from Foster + Partners to breathe new life into this Hong Kong landmark.

Art is in the city’s air this month. Led by Art Basel and Art Central, Hong Kong will host world-class exhibitions and leading talents from the fields of art, architecture and design. At Perspective, we have been recognising Asia’s young creatives since 2007 with the 40 Under 40 Awards. The response to this year’s event has been particularly enthusiastic. Stay tuned to find out who this year’s winners will be.
Room with a view

BY LEONA LIU

The transformative design of Vue Hotel Houhai, Beijing pulses to the beat of the Chinese capital

Beijing’s Houhai district has transformed from an area known chiefly for its park to a lifestyle destination famous for its old hutongs, traditional courtyards and contemporary restaurants and bars. On the edge of the Houhai Lake, Singapore-based studio Ministry of Design (MOD) has added a futuristic gem to the eclectic neighbourhood: Vue Hotel Houhai, Beijing.

Housed in a series of 1950s period buildings, the hotel compound is draped in a soothing dark charcoal-grey colour palette, punctuated by gold patina highlights that accentuate the architectural details. Within, MOD drew inspiration from Houhai Lake and its fauna, dotting the 80-room hotel with whimsical art installations that echo the theme of local wildlife. Bold pink, electric blue and fluorescent yellow form contrasts with the muted tone of the traditional Chinese structures. Through spatial planning and a play with materials and patterns, such as sculptured balconies, latticed window frames and geometric walls, the guest rooms and public spaces are quirky and futuristic, yet still manage to achieve a sense of intimacy.

The hotel’s dining outlets also reflect local culture and Chinese vernacular architecture. French bakery Fab is inspired by the adjacent hutongs and alleys, while The Pink Rabbit – a Spanish tapas restaurant inside a former warehouse – has been modernised, and is another tasteful addition to the neighbourhood’s vibrant dining scene.

modonline.com
vuehotels.com.cn
New China head for Woods Bagot
Stephen Jones has been appointed regional executive chair, China, for global architectural practice Woods Bagot, leading a 250-strong China team. Jones, based in Hong Kong, has more than 25 years’ experience working around the globe in the lifestyle, education and commercial sectors. The firm currently has more than 100 active projects in China.

Double size expansion
New York’s New Museum is scheduled for a sizeable expansion from next year. International practice Cooper Robertson will team up with OMA New York to transform an adjacent property on the Bowery. Partner of the firm Scott Newman, FAIA, who has worked on more than 38 museum projects worldwide, will spearhead the development.

Perkins+Will acquires SHL
The world’s fourth largest architecture practice Perkins+Will, an American firm with more than 2,000 global employees, has acquired Schmidt Hammer Lassen (SHL), the Danish studio founded in 1986. SHL is likely to retain its name with the three founders — Morten Schmidt, Bjarne Hammer and John F. Lassen, who continue to lead the practice. The firm’s recent projects include designing the world’s largest waste-to-energy power plant in Shenzhen and Shanghai Library (pictured below), both scheduled to open in 2020.

London upbeat
Savills has reported that the City of London is bucking Brexit worries and on track to reach record levels of office space investment for 2017. The real-estate adviser anticipates total turnover will hit £12.5 billion; this means that total transactions in 2017 will double the 10-year average (£6.26 billion), Savills’ figures show Hong Kong buyers have taken the lion’s share of activity (31.5 per cent), mainly through two substantial transactions – The Leadenhall Building and 20 Fenchurch Street, which between them account for over £2 billion.

Design of the Year 2017
Ghanian British architect David Adjaye’s National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), in Washington DC, has been named the design of the year 2017. The building, created in collaboration the Freelon Group, David Brody Bond, and SmithGroupJJR for Smithsonian Institution was praised for “epitomising exciting and impactful design and capturing the spirit of the year”.

Perkinswill.com
shl.dk

Photo. New Museum: Dean Kaufman
EU agrees on building energy standards
The European Union has drafted new legislation on energy efficiency standards, focusing on new builds and improving efficiencies in existing buildings. Currently, new buildings within the bloc consume half the energy they did in the 1980s. At the heart of the proposals are measures to improve energy efficiency in existing buildings, which, says the EU, will bring multiple benefits to the community in terms of health, financial savings and the health of the planet.

Do we need more museums?
Britain has enough museums and should not build any more. That’s the message from the UK government, which said in a review that existing ones are struggling financially and that money should be spent on maintaining them and digitising collections. Despite this, new museums are still being built, including the highly anticipated V&A Museum of Design Dundee.

Cleaner air for Xi’an
The Institute of Earth Environment at the Chinese Academy of Sciences University has built a 100m-tall air-purifying tower in Xi’an, Shanxi Province. The structure appears as a plain, concrete cylinder when viewed – ironically looking much like a factory chimney – yet it is said to be capable of improving air quality in a 10km radius around it. The South China Morning Post reports the tower uses solar energy to filter up to 10 million cubic metres of air each day. The novel approach to pollution control is expected to be implemented in other black spots around the country.

Free-for-all learning
Harvard University is once again offering online courses in introductory architecture – for free. ‘The Architectural Imagination’ course teaches the fundamental principles of the discipline with an emphasis on buildings that have influenced designers through the ages. Four professors will teach the course, including K Michael Hays, Eliot Noyes professor of Architectural Theory.

Hong Kong office market buoyant
Knight Frank’s Hong Kong Monthly Report states that Grade-A office rents in Central are expected to continue to increase in 2018. While overall home sales volume decreased month-on-month in December 2017, the luxury sector remained robust and luxury residential prices are expected to increase by up to 8 per cent in 2018. Retail rents are set to drop by up to 10 per cent this year, the report says.

Knight Frank

Harvard

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Nominations now open for 40 Under 40 Awards

BY HANNAH GROGAN

Perspective’s annual 40 Under 40 Awards are back to recognise Asia’s leading young designers

Now in its 12th consecutive year, Perspective’s 40 Under 40 Awards recognise 40 young design talents from the fields of art, architecture, interior design and product design. Nominations are now open through the website, perspectiveglobal.com. You can nominate someone – or yourself – for contributions to a particular field.

The awards celebrate the achievements and talents of a young generation of individuals paving the way for design in Hong Kong and the Asia-Pacific region. This year’s event will take place on May 29 and will once again be held at The Annex event space in Sheung Wan. Last year, the event was attended by more than 200 industry professionals, including acclaimed architects, interior and product designers, artists, thought leaders and business influencers.

Prior to the celebration and awards ceremony, there will be a forum and Q&A session. Last year’s topic, 2020 vision: Creating a better urban environment – how can architects and designers rise to the unique challenges facing Hong Kong? sparked plenty of lively debate, with some 100 participants actively involved. This year’s topic will be announced soon; no doubt it will be the source of plenty of contributions from panellists and audience members. The forum discussion will be followed by the presentation of awards.

Some of the previous winners are already shaping the world in which we live. These include: André Fu (AFSO); Barrie Ho (BARRIE HO Architecture); Ma Yansong (MAD Architects); Aric Chen (M+); Joyce Wang (Joyce Wang Studio); Bryant Lu (Ronald Lu & Partners) and Bjarke Ingels (BIG), to name just a few.

Don’t miss out – enter now at perspectiveglobal.com
What benefits have the awards brought to you in your career?

Akshay Heranjal: The award enabled us as a studio to be featured on a global platform where we could rub shoulders with some of the great minds in the field of design. Being a winner of the 40 Under 40 2017 has been a great boost to our studio!

James JJ Acuna: There’s definitely more work than before. The awards have really helped – if anything, people take note of my project portfolio and capacity. It has helped people understand more about what I do professionally.

Why do you think it is important for young designers to participate in these awards?

Ben McCarthy: I think you need to measure yourself [every now and then] against your peers. If you’re like me, and you don’t get too involved in industry events, it’s a good way to see what’s going on. It’s a good opportunity to see what other people are up to.

Jane Luk: To show one’s work and be recognised, to understand where one stands in the market and to challenge oneself.

James: There are some people who are leaders, and [the awards] highlight these people – which can inspire others to do the same.

What advice would you give to this year’s entrants?

James: Self-promotion is one thing, but a lot of it is about inspiring others [and letting them know] that young people are helping to make a difference in the city through design work. I think it’s more about the dialogue that’s important.

Jane: Give it a try and show your best self to the world.

Akshay: [I would] advise the entrants to express versatility, since it only makes the design community richer by spreading and exchanging ideas across platforms.
Art Basel Hong Kong

The 2018 edition of Art Basel Hong Kong features 248 galleries from 32 countries, half of the exhibitors coming from Asia-Pacific. The show provides an in-depth overview of the region’s artistic diversity through traditional works and contemporary pieces by established and emerging artists. The Galleries sector presents art from leading modern and contemporary art galleries, showcasing paintings, sculptures, drawings, installations and digital works from the 20th and 21st centuries. The Kabinett sector returns with 30 carefully curated projects displayed within booths belonging to various galleries, with projects encompassing conceptual solo presentations by well-known and not-so-well-known artists. The Encounters part of the fair is dedicated to large-scale sculpture and installation works by leading artists, displayed in prominent locations throughout the venue.

March 29-31
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
artbasel.com/hong-kong

1. **Art Central**
   Running concurrently with Art Basel, the fourth edition of Art Central continues its quest to showcase contemporary, innovative art from across Asia and around the world. Established modern masters and emerging voices will share the floor, and among the highlights are sculptures from British artist Damien Hirst’s 2014 *Schizophrenogenesis* series, depicting a reworking of packaging for medicines; Hong Kong filmmaker and photographer Wing Shya’s *Sweet Sorrow* series, a photographic paean to desolation and despair and, at the same time, a loving testament to his home town, as well as collages from his collaborations with director Wong Kar-wai; and Malaysian artist Anne Samat marries found objects with urban detritus in her renowned textile sculptures.

March 27 –April 1
Central Harbourfront, Central
artcentralhongkong.com

2. **Asia Contemporary Art Show**
   In its 12th edition, the Asia Contemporary Art Show will showcase more than 2,500 art pieces by some of the world’s most promising artists from more than 80 art spaces across the world. The show features two popular sections – Intersections: China and Artist Dialogues – which aim to connect artists with collectors from across Asia and beyond.

March 23-26
Conrad Hong Kong, Admiralty
asiacontemporaryart.com

3. **Face-Off: Picasso / Condo**
   This exhibition, with works for sale, showcases portrait works and psychologically charged paintings of Pablo Picasso and George Condo, and examines their creative processes while celebrating the dialogue between their works. Picasso’s creative impulses transformed the realm of portraiture and the development of


Exhibitions
modern art, while a century later George Condo continues to revolutionise portrait painting by mining art historical references ranging from old masters to early modernists such as Picasso, to produce his highly distinctive vision.

March 16-31
Sotheby’s Hong Kong Gallery, Admiralty
sothebys.com

**CHINA**

5. **Digital Revolution**
Debuted in London in 2014, *Digital Revolution* is an interactive digital arts exhibition, presented by London’s renowned Barbican Centre in Asia for the first time. Held at the new lifestyle space WF Central in Beijing, it embraces over 140 artworks from a wide array of global creative minds and brings together a range of artists, filmmakers, architects, designers, game developers and musicians, the latter including will.i.am, the Chemical Brothers, U2 and Kanye West, all big fans of digital media. The show is set within seven specially themed areas and seeks to explore and celebrate the transformation of the arts through digital technology since 1970.

**Until May 20**
WF Central, Beijing
wfcentral.cn

**INTERNATIONAL**

In collaboration with National Gallery Singapore, this is Centre Pompidou’s first exhibition about Southeast Asian art to be held at its In-Focus Gallery. It traces a formative period in Southeast Asia’s leading modernist Latiff Mohidin’s practice in the 1960s as he journeyed across Europe and Southeast Asia. It showcases the emotional states of German Expressionism he encountered and the ancestral imaginary of his rural upbringing in British Malaya from his seminal *Pago Pago* series. It explores the interlocking connections that constitute a contribution to 20th-century modernism and one of the first artists of the region to imagine ‘Southeast Asia’ as a distinct aesthetic realm.

**Until May 28**
Centre Pompidou, Paris
Centrepompidou.fr
HONG KONG

1. Hong Kong International Lighting Fair (Spring Edition)
   Organised by Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Hong Kong International Lighting Fair (Spring Edition) is a premium trade fair showcasing the latest designs, technology, product range and services on professional, commercial and residential lightings. Also in focus is the Smart Lighting & Solutions Zone that feature a wide range of smart lighting systems, remote controls and products. The fair welcomes more than 21,000 buyers and 1,300 exhibitors worldwide and features seminars, forums as well as networking receptions for buyers to explore new business relationships.
   April 6-9
   Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
   hktdc.com

2. Hong Kong International Jewellery Show
   March 1-5
   Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
   hktdc.com

3. Hong Kong International Film & TV Market (FILMART)
   March 19-22
   Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
   hktdc.com

CHINA

4. Design Shanghai
   March 14-17
   Shanghai Exhibition Centre
   designshanghai.com

5. Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics
   March 14-16
   National Exhibition and Convention Center, Shanghai
   bk.messefrankfurt.com

6. China (Guzhen) International Lighting Fair (Spring)
   March 18-21
   Guzhen Convention and Exhibition Center, Zhongshan
   en.jiagle.com/lighting-fair

7. CIFF China International Furniture Fair (Guangzhou)
   March 18-21, 28-31
   China Import & Export Fair Complex & PWTC Expo, Guangzhou
   ciff.gz.com

8. Domotex Asia / ChinaFloor
   March 20-22
   Shanghai New International Expo Centre
   domotexasiachinafloor.com

ASIA

9. Architecture + Construction Materials / LED Next Stage/
   Commercial & Living Space NEXT
   March 6-9
   Tokyo Big Sight
   Messe.nikkei.co.jp

10. IFFS/ASEAN Furniture Show/NOOK Asia
    March 8-11
    Singapore Expo
    iffs.com.sg
    nookasia.com.sg

11. Malaysia International Furniture Fair
    March 8-11
    MITEC & PWTC, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
    2018.miff.com.my

12. INDEX Dubai design exhibition
    March 26-29
    Dubai World Trade Centre
    indexexhibition.com

INTERNATIONAL

13. EcoBuild 2018
    Mar 6-8
    ExCeL, London
    ecobuild.co.uk

14. KBB kitchen & bathroom fair
    Mar 4-7
    NEC Birmingham, UK
    kbb.co.uk

18. Light + Building Frankfurt
    March 18-23
    Messe Frankfurt
    light-building.messefrankfurt.com
AUCTIONS

1. Le Corbusier: Baigneuse, Barque et Coquillage
Bonhams is offering Swiss-French architect, designer, painter, urban planner and writer Le Corbusier’s keystone painting Baigneuse, Barque et Coquillage, created during the most important period of his career. A pioneer of modern architecture, Le Corbusier is considered one of the most influential and creative figures of the 20th century. The painting is a seminal expression of Le Corbusier’s Arcadian ideal and his incorporation of organic, sensual subjects that reform his clean lines of Purism. Purchased directly from the artist’s estate, this is the first time that the work will appear at auction, taking place at Bonhams Impressionist & Modern Art sale in London on March 1. bonhams.com

2. Prints & Multiples
Sotheby’s Prints & Multiples auction presents important works made during the course of 500 years of printmaking. The auction will begin with early works, moving on to more contemporary examples of the art. Pop highlights include Roy Lichtenstein’s two screenprints Reverie and I Love Liberty, as well as two spectacular works by Keith Haring, the highly influential artist and social activist. Up for sale are his humorous representations of Andy Warhol in the set of four Andy Mouse screenprints (which combine two of his heroes, Andy Warhol and Walt Disney) alongside his monumental and vibrant Retrospect featuring his signature distorted figures and clashing colours. The auction will take place in London on March 27. Sothebys.com

BOOKS

3. Mass Timber – Design and Research
by Susan Jones
This book focuses on the research and development of Mass Timber, an umbrella term for high-strength products composed of laminated and composite woods. Jones, founder and architect of atelierjones and a professor of architecture at the University of Washington, has been leading the Mass Timber design dialogue in the United States since building her family home with cross-laminated timber (CLT) in 2015. The book features the story of three generations of her family’s own sustainable forest practices as well as research into Pacific Northwest forestry, timber and CLT manufacturing practices and carbon analysis, carbon comparisons between standard building construction assemblies and technologies, and model buildings designed by her firm and her university students. These include a family house, a church, schools, multi-family housing and the 12-storey Tall Timber Wood Innovation tower on the University of Washington campus in Seattle. oroeditions.com
The Development Studio has unveiled show flats for 28 Aberdeen Street, Central – 40 upscale residential units, comprising 38 one-bedroom apartments, one duplex unit with a roof area, and one penthouse with a roof area.

Designed by Wong & Ouyang (HK), the building is framed in dark metals, while exterior walls of the lower-floor commercial space and the residential entrance are made of verde marina, a granite from India and a striking contrast with the metal.

Frank Leung of via architecture, multi-award winner of A&D Trophy Awards 2017, is responsible for the interiors, which the firm says are an update on the concept of an urban sanctuary. There is also an inner courtyard designed by landscape architect Adrian Norman, which features a sculpture by Masatoshi Izumi. The property overlooks the historic PMQ complex.

Global architectural practice Perkins+Will is to design the Suzhou Science & Technology Museum, the centrepiece in the new cultural district in Shishan Park, about 100km northwest of Shanghai. The new 56,000sqm museum is inspired by the Chinese expression of shan sui, meaning the union of mountain and lake. Situated at the foot of Lion Mountain and next to Shishan Lake, the museum will include a 6,200sqm industrial exhibition hall. It has several innovative environmentally friendly features, such as a green roof and measures to reduce solar gain. The museum is Perkins+Will’s most recent cultural project in China following the Shanghai Natural History Museum, which opened in 2015.

Wong & Ouyang and via architecture’s 28 Aberdeen Street on show

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Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSHP) and Aedas have revealed their designs for the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge’s Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities (HKBCF), already under construction. The joint project between the two architecture firms, working with engineering firm AECOM, will provide a new connection between Hong Kong, mainland China and Macau. It will cover 130ha on the new 150ha artificial island built to the north-east of Hong Kong International Airport.

RSHP says that much thought has been put into how users will navigate the facility. Full-height canyons allow natural daylight to penetrate through to all levels of the building and ensure there is a visual connection to the linear roof form, which will further reinforce clarity of wayfinding, the firm says.

The structure has a modular, prefabricated wave-form roof that enables an efficient construction process and a high level of quality, it adds.

sixsenses.com

Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas has restored two buildings as part of conservation projects in the Chinatown district of Singapore. Six Senses Duxton and Six Senses Maxwell have a diverse mix of Chinese, Malay and European elements, including Chinese porcelain-chip friezes, Malay timber fretwork and Portuguese shutters. Both properties have received the Singapore Urban Redevelopment Authority Architectural Heritage Award.

Six Senses Duxton features a row of trading houses that has been restored by designer Anoushka Hempel, acclaimed for her Hempel and Blake’s hotels in London. Six Senses Maxwell features 138 guest rooms and suites, while the interiors have been designed by French architect and designer Jacques Garcia, known for Hotel Costes in Paris and NoMad in New York. The Duxton is due to open next month, followed by the Maxwell in July.

sixsenses.com

HK-Zhuhai Bridge border crossing unveiled

Six Senses renovates two heritage buildings in Singapore
The new Embassy of the United States in London, which has been in the news due mainly to President Donald Trump’s decision not to officiate at the ribbon-cutting ceremony, opened its doors in January. Designed by Philadelphia-based practice KieranTimberlake, the new building is not in Grosvenor Square – the site of previous American embassies – but in Nine Elms on the south bank of the Thames. It has been designed with the ideas of transparency, openness and equality, and is set in a public park with a pond, while its form is a transparent crystalline cube set atop a monumental colonnade, with a facade made of laminated glazing and an outer envelope of high-tech polymer. Naturally, great consideration has been given to security – the lake forms a protective moat, while various landscaping features, such as earthworks and vegetation, conceal vehicle-repelling steel bollards.

KieranTimberlake’s US Embassy in London opens

Netherlands-based architectural firm, KANN Architecten, will design facades for iCampus’ new office buildings in Munich for R&S Realty II. Located in a former industrial and commercial area, the development will permit the creative industry to grow. The project comprises three buildings – named Alpha, Beta and Gamma – and is utilitarian in its aesthetic, mixing black metal with concrete framing.

The interiors, designed by RKW Architektur, are all about transparency. Wall divisions have been minimised within the design to create a feeling of openness throughout. Triangular glass atriums on the roofs bring light inside office spaces and prevent overheating. The project will begin in 2020, to be completed by 2022.

KAAN designs facades for iCampus in Munich

Heatherwick Studio’s design for a new residential project in Chelsea, New York: 515 West 18th Street. The two-tower development that links under the High Line elevated park, is a new interpretation of the area’s warehouse-building style. The studio said it wanted to create a new kind of visual connection for residents and has reconceived the bay window as a barrel-like sculpted piece of glazing that provides light-filled interiors. The raw brick exterior, influenced by Chelsea’s industrial brick buildings, will lend the building both texture and a feeling of artisanship, while the three-dimensional windows will add another textural layer to the building and its surroundings.

Heatherwick’s barrels for New York
Shenzhen is the site of the first ever hotel by Japanese home and lifestyle brand Muji. Located in the Futian district, the 79-room hotel occupies five floors of the new Shen Ye UpperHills complex designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. The minimalist hotel has been designed by its in-house design team Super Potato at Ryohin Keikaku around the premise of wellness and to reflect the “anti-gorgeous, anti-cheap” concept. Rooms are outfitted with the brand’s own furniture and bedding, which is paired with recycled wood flooring. The hotel features a library, a restaurant and a store. A second hotel opens in Beijing this month, while the brand’s first Japanese hotel will open next year.

Muji debuts first hotel in Shenzhen

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SHL to design new campus in Norway

The Norwegian Geotechnical Institute has chosen Schmidt Hammer Lassen Architects to design a new 3ha campus. The new facility will include public indoor and outdoor spaces, with provision for pedestrians and bicycle traffic.

The campus, to house up to 300 employees, will have two new buildings linked by a common entrance area across two levels. The NGI said it hopes the campus will attract start-up companies from a diverse range of sectors.

Muji debuts first hotel in Shenzhen
Alexander Lamont launches a contemporary collection of wallcoverings made of straw

British designer Alexander Lamont has transformed an everyday material into something quite noble. His new Le Mur 2017 wallcoverings collection is entirely handmade in straw marquetry at his studio and workshop in Bangkok. It combines meticulous craftsmanship with refined aesthetics that exude sophistication.

The new collection of panels features three new designs, each demonstrating a different approach to the use of straw as a versatile material. Sonja, designed by Brazilian artist Antonio da Motta Leal and overseen by Lamont, is presented in two colourways and inspired by the works of Ukrainian-born French artist Sonia Delaunay; it features strong abstract lines and large fluid shapes that bring an enigmatic energy to the technique of straw marquetry.

The Labirinto and the Hide and Seek collections feature two designs by famed Como textile designer Erasmo Figini. Labirinto layers reflective straw marquetry in beech wood or ebony with strong tribal patterns that change with the light or position from which they are seen, creating a delicate graphic form and drawing viewers into a three-dimensional world. The Hide and Seek collection takes the linearity and dimensionality of Figini’s art and adds a dash of colour. Brown, red and natural straw are applied in ‘boxes’ of lines that move and deepen dramatically to create a vibrant graphical surface as light infuses them.

alexanderlamont.com
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KITCHEN, CONNECTED

BY DENNIS LEE

Essential smart appliances and gadgets to modernise the kitchen with style
The kitchen has emerged from an isolated workspace at the back of the house to a focal point for hosting gatherings of family and friends. The popularity of open-plan kitchens, well suited to the small homes typical of Hong Kong, has done much to put the humble kitchen in the limelight. Research has shown that homeowners spend more time in the kitchen than ever before. So it is hardly surprising that manufacturers are focusing on ways in which kitchen technology can lead to a more pleasing cooking experience, and make the kitchen a desirable place to be.

When planning or creating a new kitchen, Isaac Yuen, designer at Hong Kong’s Royal Kitchen Design, says careful consideration should be given to added functionality and the use of high-tech appliances. Cabinets with cleverly organised interiors, for instance, and well thought-out kitchen islands can be key to creating a space that is both attractive and a joy to use.

In the age of the Internet of Things (IoT) when smart living can be enhanced through technology, kitchen automation is the obvious next step. The annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas this year showed that brands and companies are making substantial investments in connected kitchens: a host of smart kitchen gadgets, connected appliances and Bluetooth-enabled devices is shaping the kitchens of tomorrow. Homeowners can expect to see a refrigerator with a large display panel and digital assistant, a washing machine tailored to users’ preferences, and a set of scales that helps you with a recipe – perhaps informing you that you’ve overdone the salt. It’s a fair bet that it will only be a matter of time before artificial intelligence assumes the lion’s share of kitchen control.
Mantis from Italian brand Binova brings a futuristic concept to the kitchen: two frontal columns have a suspended worktop in Nero Marquinia natural stone. Each column has a 12mm aluminium door with Hungarian oak finishing and a herringbone pattern that lends a modern look to the design. The lightweight of the materials involved means there’s a wide range of shapes and heights.

COVE FOR BOFFI

Designed by Zaha Hadid Architects for Italian brand Boffi, Cove is a freestanding kitchen island based on the practice’s sinuously fluid buildings. The unit is equipped with an embedded sink and large countertop curving around a large cavity carved into the front, creating a parking space for stools, while cabinets fitted with storage containers are placed discreetly on the side. Available in two sizes and in a variety of materials including hand-finished natural stone, wood and Corian, the Cove comes in a range of materials and layouts and is fully customisable.

ARMANI/DADA SLIDE KITCHEN

A collaboration between Giorgio Armani and Dada, the Armani/Dada Slide kitchen system features a marble worktop central unit that exudes elegance. A marble slab with a horizontal sliding mechanism conceals functional elements of the worktop such as the sink, hob and cutting board. The wall system features oversized broad columns in sassafras wood with ceiling-height columns and setback wall units with horizontally sliding electric doors.

POGGENPOHL +STAGE KITCHEN

The +Stage offers a high level of flexibility with its highly functionally themed units that can be grouped together by means of clever engineering. The units, namely ‘bar’, ‘office’, ‘breakfast’, ‘wardrobe’, ‘kitchen’ and ‘tea’ are a compact 120cm in width and equipped with slide-in hinged doors that blend harmoniously with both kitchen and living areas.

BINOVA MANTIS KITCHEN

Mantis from Italian brand Binova brings a futuristic concept to the kitchen: two frontal columns have a suspended worktop in Nero Marquinia natural stone. Each column has a 12mm aluminium door with Hungarian oak finishing and a herringbone pattern that lends a modern look to the design. The light weight of the materials involved means there’s a wide range of shapes and heights.
Grohe’s new award-winning Blue Home drinking-water system features a slim faucet with an intuitive colour-lit touch activator, and a cooler with an integrated filter and carbonator that allows users to drink chilled carbonated water straight from the tap. Its compact design, with a width of 30cm, means it fits into most kitchen cabinets. Grohe Red, equipped with a titanium water tank, can supply water at boiling point if desired. Available in medium or large sizes and featuring a child lock, insulated spout and a filter protecting against limescale and other impurities, the system is able to cap the water temperature at 60°C for greater energy efficiency.

German brand Hansgrohe has partnered with Phoenix Design Studio for this combination unit of kitchen sink and mixer that merges innovative design and function. The mixer with a pull-out spout features a central control unit, and either the handle or selection button is located at the corner of the sink’s rim. The system also includes an integrated waste set and the sBox hose-storage unit.

Designed by Rodrigo Torres, the Sense faucet embodies form and function in a sleek design. The tap is turned on by a quick touch to its top, after which the water flows for six seconds, while a touch of one second ensures the water stays on for one minute. The temperature-control handle doubles as a flow controller, while an integrated aerator in the water spout can be swivelled into several positions.

Introducing at CES this year, Kohler’s Sensate LED faucet comes with the company’s intuitive Response technology for a touchless operation achieved through a precision-designed sensor that detects the wave of a hand. Featuring a two-function pull-down spout, the spray head can be secured with the new DockNetik magnetic docking system and can alternate between ‘stream’ and ‘sweep spray’ functions. A memory function means the water can be delivered at the temperature it was last used at, if so desired.
COMPLETE THE STORY OF GREAT TASTE

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These innovative and multi-purpose appliances with intelligent features are today’s answers to tomorrow’s kitchen.

**MIA CUCINA OVEN**

With an intuitive touch-sensitive control panel, the GYV65 multi-functional oven offers up to 15 functions, and features an automatic programme that optimises cooking conditions for different kinds and weights of food. A probe provides pinpoint accuracy, measuring the core temperature of a joint of meat and displaying the time left to cook it. The oven’s pyrolytic cleaning function breaks down fat and other residues by heating it to 250°C, so the resulting ash can be easily removed.

**GAGGENAU VARIO WINE CABINET**

This Vario Cooling 400 series wine cabinet stores up to 99 standard bottles of wine and replicates the conditions found in a wine cellar. The two separately regulated climate zones are precision-controlled for temperatures of +5 °C to +20°C with individually regulated humidity. The air is circulated through an antibacterial active-carbon filter to ensure the LED-lit interior is kept odour-free, while a glass door has UV protection.

**LG INSTAVIEW DOOR-IN-DOOR REFRIGERATOR**

LG has introduced an innovative energy-saving knock-on feature in its new elegant black stainless-steel InstaView Door-in-Door refrigerator. The 84cm glass panel turns transparent when knocked on twice, so that the contents of the fridge can be viewed without an unnecessary opening of the door. Other features such as Hygiene Fresh+ and Fresh Balance help filter bad odours and bacteria, while also optimising humidity levels. The fridge is also compatible with mobile app Smart ThinQ for controlling temperature and its air-purifying function at the touch of button.
Inspired by traditional wood-burning ovens, Gorenje’s rounded-shape combi steam BCS599S22X oven allows hot air to move around freely so that baking can be done on all five levels, enabled by the MultiFlow 360˚ ventilation system. The PureSteam function produces steam without any drops of water. Equipped with a TFT colour display, the oven provides fully automatic cooking programme with more than 80 recipes to choose from. The highly resistant SilverMatte coating of the interior can stand extreme heats, with pyrolytic cleaning at 500°C.

V-ZUG ADORA DISHWASHER
The Swiss-made Adora is the first dishwasher to wash glasses, cutlery and plates with pure steam, employing its exclusive SteamFinish function, which is free of chemicals and detergents, ensuring spot-free cleanliness and a sparkling finish. It uses just five litres of water in its automatic programme that measures the amount of food residue on items, compared to 40 litres when washing is done by hand. Its newly developed drawer and adjustable baskets facilitates quick loading and provides an ergonomic solution for stacking cutlery.

MIELE VACUUM-SEALING DRAWER
This built-in vacuum-sealing drawer from Miele is perfect for sous-vide cooking. With a controllable vacuum level and sealing duration, the vacuum-packed food in plastic bags can be cooked in any Miele steam oven able to maintain a selected temperature or with a sous-vide operating mode. The vacuum-sealing drawer is also ideal for extending the shelf life of food items by eliminating unwanted oxidation and hampering the growth of bacteria.

MIELE WT1 WASHER-DRYER
Ideal for small households, Miele WT1 frees up space in the home. It features the automatic TwinDos system that dispenses the right amount of detergent at the required time by taking into account the load’s weight and composition, saving the hassle of manually adding detergent at certain times. With functions such as QuickPowerWash&Dry, Spin & Spray and SteamCare, WT1 makes doing the laundry a lot easier and reduces fabric wrinkles. It is also energy-efficient.

GORENJE STEAM OVEN
Inspired by traditional wood-burning ovens, Gorenje’s rounded-shape combi steam BCS599S22X oven allows hot air to move around freely so that baking can be done on all five levels, enabled by the MultiFlow 360˚ ventilation system. The PureSteam function produces steam without any drops of water. Equipped with a TFT colour display, the oven provides fully automatic cooking programme with more than 80 recipes to choose from. The highly resistant SilverMatte coating of the interior can stand extreme heats, with pyrolytic cleaning at 500°C.
HI-TECH SURFACES

Materials that combine state-of-the-art technology with craftsmanship make for the ideal work surface

FORMICA SURELL SOLID SURFACING

With over a century of manufacturing insulation materials, Formica has long been an expert in innovative surfacing products for kitchen countertops and restaurant tables. The Surell product is a smooth, robust and non-porous material that combines practicality and durability; it is ideal for countertops, baths and sinks, as the material’s colour does not wear away. It is also NSF-51 certified and therefore suitable for food-preparation areas.

FENIX NTA

FENIX NTA (NanoTech Alloy) is an innovative, smart and versatile nanotech metal that is resistant to scratches, fingerprints, abrasion and heat. It is also easy to clean and possesses thermal-healing properties that do away with minor blemishes. Suitable for vertical and horizontal applications, and ideal for both countertop and door panels, its low reflectivity and matte surface make it pleasing to look at, too.

LOTTE STARON

Lotte Advanced Materials’ solid and high-performance surface Staron has a natural texture and colour, and a flexibility that allows it to be formed into many shapes and applications. It is widely used as a finishing material for kitchen worktops, vanity countertops and furniture. The Supreme collection has a soothing pattern inspired by nature and comes in a variety of colours.
GET SMARTER

Add these kitchen gadgets and utensils for greater convenience

ISOMMELIER BY IFAVINE

The iFavine electronical decanting machine ensures that wine is ready for consumption within minutes, while enhancing its taste and aroma. Oxygen extraction technology purifies the air used to aerate the wine to 90 per cent oxygen – removing chemicals including sulphur dioxide. The appliance is available in two versions, iSommelier and iSommelier Pro, the latter allows users to customise decanting programmes configured to their specific wine of choice, via a mobile app.

LE CREUSET BERRY COLLECTION

Le Creuset’s expertise in casting and enamelling means that its cast-iron casserole is meticulously engineered. It is efficient in retaining heat, dishwasher-proof, easy to clean, and is suitable for use on all hob types, including induction tops. The round casserole is available in a limited-edition Berry collection with an on-trend vibrant pink finish, highlighted by its rich gradient and gold accents, and a signature gold-coloured metal knob.

FELLOW STAGG EKG+ KETTLE

This good-looking electric pour-over kettle by Fellow is perfect for coffee lovers as it can heat water to an exact temperature – displayed on the LCD screen in the base. With an added app and Bluetooth connection, users can remotely turn the unit on or off, set the goal temperature and keep track of recipes.
THE INDEX
Kitchen systems, fittings, appliances, devices, accessories and materials: where to find them

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Binova
Equal Plus Limited
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equalplus.com.hk

Boffi
2577 5764
boffi.com

Poggenpohl
Kitchen Infinity
2890 1522
kib.com.hk

KITCHEN MATERIALS
FENIX NTA
Jilpool International Ltd.
2512 8806
fenixforinteriors.com
jilpool.com

Formica
Formica (Asia) Limited
2598 1000
formica.com

Lotte Staron
Toptech Co. Limited
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lotteadms.com
toptech.com.hk

KITCHEN APPLIANCES
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Design Shanghai returns with an exploration of creative identity in an increasingly globalised world – and an in-depth look at the shifting landscape of the workplace.

From March 14 to 17, the Shanghai Exhibition Centre once again throws open its doors to welcome Design Shanghai, Asia’s pre-eminent design event. Leading international brands including Zaha Hadid Design, Kelly Hoppen Interiors, Lalique, Swarovski and Miele, as well as emerging and innovative studios, make it the year’s best opportunity for networking and industry exchange, for architects, product designers, developers and retailers based in Asia and beyond. Featuring five themed halls – Contemporary, Classic & Luxury, Workplace, Kitchen & Bathroom and Collectible – and more than 40 of the brightest design minds in the world offering insights at Design Forum, the 2018 edition demonstrates why Design Shanghai has become established as one of the world’s most keenly anticipated design events.
The panel at the Design Forum
Winners’ pieces at Emerging Chinese Designers platform
At work in the Collectible section of the event
Zaha Hadid Architects – one of the many famous names at the expo
Kvadrat’s Cloud modular room-dividing system
Furnishings and decoration on display in the Contemporary section
Bathroom art: Flying toilet at the Roca Garden
DESIGNERS TO WATCH

Over the course of four days, Design Shanghai’s Design Forum provides a platform for some of the world’s most renowned and innovative creatives to share their insights. This year it explores the need for wholesale social change and authentic cultural identity, and how they inform each other in the global marketplace.

FRANK CHOU
As founder of what is widely regarded as one of China’s most prominent independent design studios, Frank Chou has chosen to focus on the interplay between object and material, and the relationship between East and West to create design pieces that are the pinnacle of modern Chinese expression in a global context. Chou is best known for his Salone del Mobile SaloneSatellite Award-winning Ping Screen and HC28’s Bold Armchair, a NYCxDESIGN Awards nominee.

STEFANO GIOVANNONI
Milan-based Stefano Giovannoni is one of Italy’s most successful and best-selling industrial designers, having worked with brands such as Lavazza, Alessi, Magis, Fiat, Oregon, Honeywell, and SodaStream among countless others over the course of his 30-year-plus career. The Design Plus award winner recently launched the affordable, “new generation brand” Qeeboo, the ethos of which is exemplified by his Rabbit chair.
YABU PUSHELBERG
Emerging from Toronto to become one of the most recognisable global design brands, the multi-disciplinary Yabu Pushelberg is also one of the most collaborative, having worked in product design, lighting, textiles, architecture and interiors. Its work can be seen and felt in 16 countries, in locations as diverse as residences at Brickell House in Miami, retailing at Barneys New York, and products from Avenue Road Furniture to Czech glass and lighting brand Lasvit.
DB KIM
With the world’s biggest hoteliers focused on Asia, South Korean interior designer, architect and product designer DB Kim will be busy for the foreseeable future. Bringing his signature cross-cultural humanism to the hospitality industry, Kim’s fingerprints can be seen on the Wanda Group’s luxury hotel division and its vision for the future, and on the reinvigoration of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide (for W, Westin and Sheraton).

Jiang Qiong Er
Founder, artistic director and chief executive of lifestyle brand Shang Xia, Jiang Qiong Er’s bi-cultural experience (after studying in Europe for many years) can be seen in her designs – be it a porcelain teapot or a ready-to-wear tunic dress – which elegantly balance tradition and modernity, heritage and innovation. Jiang has created a truly international 21st-century brand, with her creations finding a place inside Paris’s Musée Guimet and Musée des Arts Décoratifs, as well as the British Museum.
The workplace is changing at a dramatic speed. This year’s Design Shanghai devotes a gallery to workplace design, showcasing the innovations, trends, manufacturers and designers that are shaping the way we work now, and how we might in the future.

**WORK PACE**

**INFINITI**
Founded just over a decade ago, Italian design company Infiniti defines itself by its alternative take on office furniture and what it means in the modern world. As a manufacturer of steel, wood and plastic furniture, Infiniti marries differing cultures – and collaborations with Marc Sadler, Marcello Ziliani, Claus Breinholt, Brogliato Traverso – with a singular Italian aesthetic in its Beetle, Tondina and Loop chairs for a dynamic world – and work – view.

**MAARS**
Co-working has not only influenced how we conduct business, it’s also had an impact on how the traditional office is built. The sharing economy has given rise to something beyond the open plan workspace, and Netherlands brand Maars’ integrated clear partition wall solutions – for healthcare, education, hospitality and retail as well as office – embody that new economy.
MOORGEN
Technology has a great deal to do with the current shift in how we work and where. Germany’s Moorgen, a pioneer in smart-home systems, specialises in bus control for computers and cloud-server technology development, and currently boasts nearly 200 different smart-home products. Featuring classic German industrial design engineering, the IoT leader is poised to make the workplace as smart as the home – or redefine the home office – with help from its security, lighting, air-conditioning control modules and smart remotes.

NOVO WORKSTYLE
Aiming to blend functional office furniture with high-end design, China’s NOVO Workstyle took a cue from Japan’s Itoki office furniture brand to create a range of ergonomic solutions for classical office settings and those more futuristic, incorporating ‘workcise’ concepts and other contemporary demands. The origami-inspired Flip Flap chair (originally by Itoki), which reacts to the way the body moves, and the back- and neck-friendly Spina office chair exemplify the firm’s design philosophy.

designshanghai.com
• COVER STORY: The Murray hotel
• Art Hong Kong
• Designer profile: China
• Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture (UABB)
• Co-living spaces
• Clint Nagata
• Miami
A Foster + Partners refashioning of a 1960s’ Hong Kong government office building as a 21st-century luxury hotel demonstrates best practice in enhancing heritage for a modern world, thanks to input from the original architect
Breathing new life into heritage buildings is nothing new for Foster + Partners, but Hong Kong’s Murray Building in Central offered an unusual opportunity – the chance to talk things over with the original architect, Ron Phillips. What’s more, Phillips, now aged 90, was way ahead of the game in terms of sustainable and energy-efficient design when he conceived the Murray Building in 1969.

Phillips was working in Hong Kong’s Architectural Services Department when he was handed the brief for a 27-storey government office block on Cotton Tree Drive. When it was built, it was the tallest building in Hong Kong: its distinctive arches at ground level, deep square-punched windows and brilliant white facade made it an immediate landmark.

Air-conditioning had already become commonplace in office blocks but, while mindful of cost, Phillips saw an opportunity to design a building that reduced solar gain. He achieved this through a series of concrete blade walls at 45 degrees to the plane of elevation and 90 degrees to the windows. This meant the sun hit the walls and not the glass, resulting in a building less prone to solar heating.
Located at 22 Cotton Tree Drive, Central, the 27-storey building was originally government offices above floors of car parking. The architect, Ron Phillips, was consulted about changes to the distinctive 2m x 2m square windows.
“Way before sustainability was on anyone’s radar, Ron said he was aware that Hong Kong has a hot climate, so should be designing buildings that respond to that,” says Colin Ward, a partner at Fosters + Partners.

As he speaks, Ward looks out of his Lippo Centre office and across the swathe of glass buildings in Central. “Glass buildings heat up and we have to spend huge amounts of money cooling them down – and yet we are still building them. It’s insanity. We are advocates for not building this way; Ron brilliantly and pioneeringly did this 50 years ago,” he adds.

Ward was the lead architect on the redevelopment project to turn the landmark government office block into a luxury hotel. In January this year it opened as The Murray, Hong Kong, a 336-room Niccolo Hotel. This is a transformation that will have an impact not just upon the hotel’s guests, but all Hongkongers who frequent Central, because it opens up the area. “It was quite a locked-away building, quite hostile and inhospitable to anyone who went there. You entered the building by car and went up a ramp, the lower levels were all car park,” he says.

The redesign does away with that fortress-like feeling, opening up the building and introducing a lot of greenery. “We reworked the lower and upper ground planes and introduced a series of terraces and gardens at the lower levels,” says Ward. “The whole thing is now very public. We were keen to make it an inclusive part of the city.”

Foster + Partners was behind the £100-million makeover of the Great Court at the British Museum in 2000, transforming the inner courtyard into the largest covered public square in Europe. The redesign knitted together pedestrian spaces, making the whole area much more accessible. “You don’t need to go into the museum, you can just walk through and have a coffee. It’s a way of demystifying the ivory tower feeling you might get from a museum. And we wanted to do the same with The Murray hotel,” says Ward.
Suite interiors: the newly opened hotel is designed in a contemporary style with a sophisticated oriental touch
There's a bar at ground level, and the ground floor and lower levels of the hotel are open to everyone. Guests, visitors and passers-by can now stroll past a heritage tree – one of the kapoks from which Cotton Tree Drive takes its name.

The interiors incorporate plenty of stone, wood, stainless steel, leather and glass – what Ward describes as "honest materials put together in a simple way, but with depth". He believes this reflects not only the design studio’s ethos but also the character of the city.

"Hong Kong and Hongkongers have a real strength – a strength of clarity of thought and a hard work ethic – and the city reflects that in all sorts of ways, including in the architecture. We wanted to build into that using honest materials in an expressive way."

Though The Murray was once the tallest building in Central, Citibank, the Bank of China and other buildings now look down upon it. Taking this into account, a roof terrace was designed as a continuation of the green landscape, connecting Hong Kong Park and the Zoological & Botanical Gardens. And a transparent glass pavilion on the roof terrace – with a cafe and bar – makes the most of the views.
Cotton Tree Terrace (above) and Garden Lounge (below) are some of the public spaces that were reclaimed when several levels of car parking were transformed.
Postcard views of Hong Kong are also afforded by the 2m x 2m square windows made of treated glass. Ward discussed changing the windows with Phillips, who fully supported the plan, saying the original windowsills were designed to accommodate a desk and A4 lever arch files. He even wrote a supporting letter for the design studio to submit to the Buildings Department to request permission to alter the windows.

What Ward most enjoys about heritage projects is going back and discovering what the building was originally intended to be and then working forward from there. “When you’ve uncovered the truth you can use it as a springboard to go forward again. What’s really interesting with architecture is that the old looks better for being against the new and the new better for being counterpointed against the old,” he says.

“WAY BEFORE SUSTAINABILITY WAS ON ANYONE’S RADAR, RON SAID HE WAS AWARE HONG KONG HAS A HOT CLIMATE, SO SHOULD BE DESIGNING BUILDINGS THAT RESPOND TO THAT”
Duncan Palmer, The Murray’s managing director, says it won’t be just any other hotel – it is also the preservation of an important cultural landmark and will give the site a new lease of life. On top of this, Palmer, who previously worked at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group and managed The Savoy and The Connaught in London, says it will bring a new level of luxury to guests, taking its inspiration from upmarket fashion.

“Through the articulate architectural treatment, lighting and material finishes, the overall result is a hotel that conveys an air of sophistication. This is what a modern luxury hotel should be today in the visual sense. There will be longevity in the chic design of its interiors and these can be interpreted in the placement of art, selection of day and night uniforms and equipment, down to the music, scent and the behaviour of our colleagues,” says Palmer.

fosterandpartners.com
In the lead-up to Art Basel Hong Kong this month, memory, identity and the world’s marginalised people take centre stage in Hong Kong’s independent art spaces.

With Art Basel once again descending upon Hong Kong from March 29 to 31, nearly 250 galleries (half from Asia-Pacific) from 32 countries provide buyers, dealers and art lovers with the chance to gain new perspectives and immerse themselves in an unrivalled depth and breadth of artistic diversity. But there’s always more, and as Hong Kong continues to cement its place as a major art market, local galleries, art spaces and collectives prove there’s plenty of art to appreciate beyond the walls of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

artbasel.com/hong-kong
Arguably the grandfather of independent art galleries in Hong Kong, 20-year old Para Site is now one of the region’s most vital and influential art institutions. It could be argued that without Para Site, Art Basel would never have come to town. While the gallery is showing off local, emerging talent at its Art Basel booth, *A Beast, a God, and a Line*, curated by Cosmin Costinas, will showcase work by 50 artists from South and Southeast Asia that examines politicised religion, nationalism, faltering democracy, ongoing decolonisation and resurgent indigenous identity. *A Beast, a God, and a Line*’s medium is textiles, which the gallery suggests is a brilliant reflection of the layers of our shared past. The exhibition challenges the fundamental notion of geography and views the world from a critical moment – the present – in its history.

17 March-20 May
para-site.art
The repurposed slaughterhouse 1a Space is one of Hong Kong's most influential – and architecturally engaging – interactive galleries. Curator Justin Hoover selected four female artists to examine and "interrogate" capitalism, intersectional identity, folk ritual and mysticism for *Our Bones are made of Starlight*. Works by Ranu Mukherjee (*Extracted Trilogy*), Mail Order Brides – comprising Jenifer Wofford, Reanne Estrada and Eliza Barrios – (*Manananggoogle*), Fang Lu (*Canton Novelty*), and Desirée Holman (*Sophont*) riff on identity politics and societal contradictions. They deflate the sparkling promise of technology, revolution and assumed freedoms, and debunk the promise of economics by reinventing myth in performance, video installation and film.

*24 March – 29 April*

[oneaspace.org.hk](http://oneaspace.org.hk)
Hong Kong pen-and-ink artist Leah Clough revives the thrill of the campfire story – among others – in *At Midnight*, a series inspired by the artist’s childhood recollections. Whether song lyrics, book titles, fictional landscapes, or the lilt of a father reading out loud, Clough’s nostalgia for the imagination and fantasy of childhood is simultaneously a celebration and a discovery. *At Midnight*’s images are “pieces of escapism that pay homage to childhood, magic, mystery, and the thrill of going on a journey, whether it be in art, fiction, or our own life’s adventure”, and engage the intersection between artist and observer. Clough’s abstract lines leave room for inference and interpretation and delicately challenge the tension between looking back and looking ahead.

*Until March 10*

artprojectsasia.com
Since its opening in 2010, Above Second has made a name for itself as Hong Kong’s premier gallery focused on urban art – graffiti, illustration, pop art – and for creating a platform for the form’s emerging artists worldwide. The gallery has previously hosted Pure Evil, Kristopher Ho, and The London Police; next up is Australia’s Anthony Lister. Lister’s signature collision of acrylic, oil, spray paint, charcoal, and film, and his marriage of so-called high and low culture, has catapulted him to international renown and influence. “Celebrating the essence of Western popular culture and everything it has yielded, Lister reshapes this joint legacy into something that has the same seductive power and absurdity, thus perfectly representing his quest to describe the society,” says Widewalls online art magazine.

abovesecondgallery.com
Designed by architect Annabelle Selldorf who created David Zwirner’s space in Chelsea, New York, the newly opened Hong Kong outpost launches with Belgian artist Michaël Borremans’ first solo exhibition in the city. The Fire from the Sun series focuses on the subtly sinister side of toddlers, recalling Renaissance-era cherubs but remaining disconnected from time and space.

While maintaining the technical innovation that is a hallmark of Borremans’ work, Fire from the Sun, “[Shows] a state of being or society in which the primal is uncontrolled, without bearings, in a state of anarchy – the Id of Freudian primary process run riot, with no Ego to mediate between instinctual behaviour and ‘reality’,” says critic Michael Bracewell. “The art of Borremans seems always to have been predicated on a confluence of enigma, ambiguity, and painterly poetics – accosting beauty with strangeness; making historic Romanticism subjugate to mysterious controlling forces that are neither crudely malevolent nor necessarily benign.”

Through March 10
davidzwirner.com

DAVID ZWIRNER
Located in Hong Kong’s Wong Chuk Hang art hub, Charbon is a multi-purpose space that delights art aficionados with still exhibition as well as live performances. In *Contamination*, French filmmaker and photographer Antoine D’Agata is spotlighted in a retrospective of his 30-year career of turning the lens on taboo subjects and the darker side of human nature. Curator Lalie Choffel points to D’Agata’s ceaseless, radical quest to capture the lives of the world’s prostitutes, and its culture of urban violence and drug addiction – and to find the grace, beauty, life and humanity that lurks in those spaces that are wilfully overlooked. In D’Agata’s own words: “I started to tell a story that goes against what we see on TV, which goes against the different photographic traditions, and I want to go to the end of this story; I want to show whores who enjoy or kind criminals: a deeper, more complex humanity.”

**30 March – 25 May**
charbonartspace.com

**CHARBON ART SPACE**

**BLINDSPOT GALLERY**

Chinese multi-media artist (video, installation, poetry) Jiang Zhi is spotlighted in *Going and Coming*, a solo exhibition of the artist’s two newest painting and photographic series, a reflection on the current cycle of Jiang’s own life. The paintings in *Going and Coming*, capture moments and movement of the dried flowers from his breakthrough *Love Letters* series from their place on a spinning table. The photographs of *Faded Looks* substitute the real, but transient, subjects with acrylic, silk and glass. In an examination of recreation, permanence and the march of time, Jiang reconstructs a typical 1980s-era Chinese household and the resulting allegory is one for a specific past and its aesthetics, as well as “romantic imagination of a good life”. It is a vivid contrast to the pace and volatility of the contemporary world and a philosophical reflection on “things [that] are neither new nor old, neither going nor coming”.

**27 March – 12 May**
blindspotgallery.com
While China’s urbanisation has given the world’s architects a playground for skyscrapers, home-grown talents and innovative projects are changing the design landscape within the country and abroad.
ATELIER ALTER

Atelier Alter is led by Harvard graduates Yingfan Zhang (below left) and Xiaojun Bu (below right). The duo eschews conventional architectural styles, seeking to reinvent them in a more artistic manner that also retains elements of modernity – all the while seeking to keep to the spirit of the venue in question. With bases in Beijing and New York, the studio specialises in cultural buildings and is active in commercial, hospitality and residential projects, as well as large-scale urban planning.

One of the firm’s key works is the Museum of Qujing Cultural Center in Yunnan, China, a concrete space ship-like structure (pictured left) that turns heads with its jagged looks akin to an upside-down staircase. The project was carried out in collaboration with Hordor Design Group; the “anti-gravity” vibe was intentional, a nod to the spatial and temporal context of a structure purpose-built to house ancient artefacts.

culturalcenter.com
CONTINUATION STUDIO
When Zhai Wenting (left) and Fan Jiujiang (right) established their Hangzhou-based boutique practice in 2015, they called it Continuation to reflect how architecture, users and its designers continuously affect one another.

For the Vanke Future City at Xuzhou (pictured), they designed a 1,200sqm demonstration and sales centre with a centrepiece of a timber-intersecting-arch bridge suspended mid-air, an ode to Chinese bridge-making craftsmanship.

Fan Jiujiang toured China to study ancient bridges: “When you look up at them from right underneath, ancient short timbers overlap and altogether construct a long-span structure – some have a span of over 30m.”
MAD Architects

MAD Architects, led by Ma Yansong, has won much praise from many quarters since it was established. The firm’s recently completed Chaoyang Park Plaza sits on the edge of Beijing’s Chaoyang Park, the largest remaining park in Beijing’s CBD.

The 220,000sqm development, pictured here, comprises 10 buildings dominated by twin tower office buildings, and includes Armani apartments. The architects say that the development’s profile and ‘borrowed landscape’ are reminiscent of the peaks in a Chinese ink painting. The asymmetrical twin tower office buildings – the tallest is 142m high – are adjacent to the park’s lake, while a transparent and bright atrium connects the two towers with a glass rooftop. The two multi-storey Armani apartments have staggered balconies, offering natural light and views of the park.

i-mad.com
At HHDFUN, architecture, interiors, landscape and installations are driven by intellectual rigour, research and a technical and mathematics-based approach inspired by Pritzker Prize winner Frei Otto. Director Zhenfei Wang studied in Europe and the practice borrows from this ethos to solve issues in projects. Details of past work are stocked in the firm’s library to help solve future projects. “In the real world we have a short time to design... In most cases we find a solution at this library, if not, we find new solutions,” he says. Speedy successes include large-scale project Heavenly Water Services Center for the International Horticultural Exposition in Qingdao (above), a luxury foie gras venue for Grand Gourmet (below) in Shanghai with a geometrical fractal design that has garnered several honours, notably a 2017 A&D Trophy Award.

hhdfun.com
VECTOR ARCHITECTS

Founded by Gong Dong, Vector Architects (translating as vertical architecture in Chinese) has gained a creative reputation in China, Venice and the United States. Leading a team of 30, Dong excels in taking advantage of local context, light and climate in his design process.

The results reflect a poetic quality evident in the studio’s many feted works, such as a 1950s-era sugar mill factory transformed into the Alila Yangshuo hotel in Guilin (above). Other works include the 450sqm concrete Seashore Library in Beidaihe in Hebei, with a 20m-long horizontal window in the main reading room that provides an oceanic panorama. Principal Gong Dong is always conscious of the power of light to transform and lend an emotional resonance, and credits his experience at the University of Illinois and the wisdom of scholar Henry Plummer for shaping his method.

vectorarchitects.com
Solving large-scale urban issues is the strong interest of the 15-year-old One Design Inc, says founder Bing Bu, alumnus of Tsinghua University and Yale University. Its portfolio includes big landscape-driven urban designs, innovative tech venues, commercial properties and cultural projects. Bu prefers designing a project from scratch, but is also content to let outside forces – nature, human nature or urban nature – introduce an element of unpredictability, as in the Ningbo Hangzhou Bay Center Lake Park facilities (pictured). The 2015 project in Zhangzhou Bay has a jagged roof design and is a collection of distorted boxes in various but similar sizes that collectively appears unified.

onedesigninc.com
For X & COLLECTIVE DESIGN, top priorities when approaching a project are study of the site, materials, venue functionalities and, importantly, the location or owner’s historical roots. The history informs design decisions, says founder and chief designer Alex Xie. “Each project that we do, we try to create a space that contains mood and memories, so the owner can trace back and feel attached to some of the stories.”

Women’s fashion retailer UOOYAA’s office in Shanghai, pictured here, was previously a spaceflight factory and the facility’s sloped roof and high-ceilinged interiors were retained in the latest incarnation.

x-collective.com
V STUDIO
According to the founder of V Studio Hu Quanchun, people’s physical and psychological needs inform design decisions because designing a concept is essentially a creative understanding of people and things. This is reflected in the studio’s recent work, a bamboo forest on the roof of a massive shopping complex in Beijing (pictured), where Hu created a Zen oasis away from the hustle and bustle of the mall. High walls enclose private and tranquil spaces with a bamboo forest-bedecked courtyard and patio at its heart. Hu and his team created predominantly white spaces accented by green bamboo, with natural light illuminating the many angles of a serene space where moods differ depending on the time of day.

vstudio.com
A CITY AT THE CROSSROADS

CHRISTOPHER DEWOLF

Aerial View of Nantou Old Town
Shenzhen’s spring Bi-City Biennale examines the problems and opportunities facing one of China’s most rapidly changing cities

To reach this year’s edition of the Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture – better known as UABB – you need to pass through a centuries-old stone gate and walk up a crowded street past dumpling restaurants, fishmongers and hardware stores. It’s an unusual setting for an architecture biennale, but that’s exactly the point.

“It is not only an exhibition – it is a starting point for experimentation,” says chief curator Hou Hanru. For three months, until March 17, UABB has been immersing itself in the alleyways of Nantou, a 1,700-year-old town that has been absorbed by Shenzhen’s urban sprawl. For centuries, the capital of Dongguan Prefecture, which covered much of the Pearl River Delta, Nantou was the gateway to the Pearl River. It was fortified nearly 1,300 years ago, and the existing city walls date back to 1394.

Despite its long history, the town fell into obscurity a hundred years ago, when the Kowloon-Canton Railway was completed and the market town of Shenzhen became more prosperous. Today, Nantou is one of Shenzhen’s many urban villages – former rural enclaves that have become dormitory towns for migrant workers.
It's a particularly relevant location for a biennale that has sought to be a guide to Shenzhen's urban growth. In the 37 years since the late Chinese ruler Deng Xiaoping established the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, the city's population has grown from around 300,000 to more than 15 million today. From its early days as an industrial hub funded by state-owned enterprises and Hong Kong investors, Shenzhen is now one of China's wealthiest cities, and a tech-capital home to many of the country's most influential businesses.

After decades of breakneck growth, Shenzhen finds itself at a crossroads. It's a new city, but not one without a history. It's a city of migrants, some more settled than others. And it's a thoroughly middle class city peppered by urban villages – bastions of the working class. "We are entering the mature stage of Shenzhen and we are looking for new models of growth," says Hou.

Given the context, UABB sees its role as a wider one than merely a stage of exhibitions. "The biennale is a driving force of the growth of the city," says Liu Xiaodu, a founder of Shenzhen architecture firm Urbanus and a co-curator of the biennale, along with his partner Meng Yan.

Sponsored generously by the Shenzhen municipal government and several property developers – this year's budget was around RMB 40 million – the biennale has served as a bellwether for new areas of growth. In 2011, it took place in the up-and-coming OCT-Loft arts district; the following two editions took place in a former glassworks and grain silo in Shekou, a former port and industrial area that is now being reinvented as a centre for high-end culture, business and tourism.

This time, the biennale has peppered Nantou with hundreds of installations and exhibits. Some are located in the middle of the village, whose 100ha expanse is home to more than 30,000 people. A vacant lot has been transformed into an urban farm and public garden; historic village houses play host to public workshops; a new bookshop and civic space has been built in the centre of town.
Shipshape: Chinese artist Wang Zigeng’s imaginings of the future of urban villages
Most exhibits are located in a former factory built by village leaders in the 1980s. Dutch architects MVRDV have created a colourful 9m-tall installation that serves as a visual representation of high-density living. Nearby, American photographer Mark Leong records the vibrant street life of urban villages. Many other projects are based on months of research that examined the complicated nature of these communities, which grew after indigenous villagers redeveloped their houses into tenements for migrant workers – often dubbed 'handshake buildings', because they are so densely built, neighbours can reach out of their windows and clasp hands.

According to Juan Du, a University of Hong Kong assistant professor of architecture who has spent years studying Shenzhen, urban villages act as a moderating force on the inequalities that have resulted from the city’s rapid growth. “I actually think it stabilises the social disparities of Shenzhen, because the villages can absorb the social needs of migrants,” she says.

At the UABB’s opening press conference, one Hong Kong reporter raised the question of Beijing’s recent eviction of so-called ‘low-end people’ from makeshift housing on the city’s fringes. The curators and government officials in attendance were understandably hesitant to respond, but the existence of Nantou itself raises an interesting point: unlike Beijing, Shenzhen is defined by its urban villages, which occupy prime spots in the very centre of the city. Shenzhen playwright Yang Qian says this has symbolic resonance. “Anyone can become a Shenzhen person,” he says.

But Shenzhen’s transition to a high-value service economy has created huge development pressure on the villages. Many have been redeveloped into office towers, shopping malls and hotels, with the original landowners receiving compensation, but not the tenants who actually lived there. The wrecking ball hasn’t yet approached Nantou, but government initiatives to restore its historic buildings and revamp its public spaces have already changed its character.
Games of cities: Netherlands-based architecture firm MVRDV and The Why Factory developed EgoCity, a multi-user, real-time computer game that imitates urban design.
CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Works at UABB include those by internationally recognised Cao Fei, Chinese artist Li Jianlin and famed architect Yona Friedman
On the opening weekend of UABB, artist Yin Yilin staged a performance that referenced the street hawkers that have recently been displaced by a government initiative to clean up Nantou. Tracing a line from Nantou’s East Gate, Yin and his assistants placed raw meat, fish, vegetables and dry goods that had once been sold by hawkers in a line punctuated by actors that lay prostrate on the pavement. It was a provocative scene.

Wang Qian’s biennale exhibit, *Hubei 120*, proposed an alternative model of urban village development that gives tenants and business owners more of a say. Looking closely at Hubei Village, a Hakka settlement now inhabited mainly by Chaozhou fishmongers, the project suggests conserving not just historic architecture but the people that occupy it. “Design must involve public voices,” says Wang.

That may not be a message the authorities want to hear. After French-Chinese artists Hu Jianmin and Marine Brossard were arrested for their UABB exhibit – a mural that was later revealed to be a tribute to the late human rights advocate Liu Xiaobo – government censors took a second look at the biennale’s exhibits and removed some of the more critical installations, including *Hubei 120*.

UABB’s curators have not yet responded to these new developments, but they bring to mind something Meng Yan said at the exhibition’s opening, when he was asked by a reporter about the biennale’s impact on Shenzhen’s urban development. “We don’t know where this will lead – but uncertainty is the purpose of any art intervention,” he said. In Shenzhen, it seems some things are more uncertain than others.

* Tradition co-created: on the facade of the industrial building hosting the biennale, Spain-based art collective Boa Mistura invited locals to jointly paint the Chinese characters for ‘tradition’.
PINT-SIZED LIVING

BY TAMSIN BRADSHAW

O-pod, a tube-shaped apartment by James Law Cybertecture exhibited at DesignInspire in Hong Kong
As space comes at more and more of a premium, some designers are shifting towards microhomes. But can an 80sqf unit ever feel like home? Co-living environments present one possible solution.

Grey rain pours off the windows that separate police officer K’s apartment from the outside world. Inside, there is a sofa that could fit two people at a squeeze, there’s a narrow kitchenette and a bed. This is the world envisaged by Blade Runner 2049, and yet, for many, cramped living quarters are already a reality. And for some, this much space is a pipe dream, albeit a fairly soulless one.

GOING MINI
“We’re moving towards microliving, especially in overdeveloped cities like New York, Hong Kong and London,” says Rodrigo Buelvas, a professor of interior design at SCAD (Savannah College of Art and Design) Hong Kong. “There’s a general reduction in footprint underway, not only in residential, but also in hospitality and in workplaces.”

Another reason for the move towards microliving is the rapidly rising cost of real estate – in Hong Kong and elsewhere. Microliving is a necessary response to growing urban populations (worldwide, 3.5 billion and counting) and the rising cost of living in general, but, as K’s home so eloquently demonstrates in the Blade Runner sequel, a nanohome just 80 to 100sqf in size is likely to feel cold and clinical.
UNDER THE SAME ROOF
The answer might just lie in co-living environments. Most of these feature spacious communal areas, and communal resources and facilities; alongside the shared facilities are the personal spaces in which residents sleep. Some offer residents their own toilets and showers, perhaps a cooking hob and a mini-fridge, and maybe a small, multi-purpose living-dining-work space.

“Co-living is an elegant solution for modern-day professionals and students,” says Wang Tse, chief executive of Campfire, which already offers co-working spaces targeting different industries. Next on the cards for the company is a co-living space in Sham Shui Po. “It will offer "premium furnishings throughout a 5,000sqf shared space, privacy in a comfortable 100sqf, a sense of community, all the necessary services – Wi-Fi, laundry and security, among other things," he says, "all at a significantly lower rent and flexible lease terms. There will be a gym and cafe as well."

There are already some active players in Hong Kong’s co-living sector. There is, for example, Mini Ops, which features 270 units of 80 to 100sqf in size, all designed in a simple, crisp, loft-like style. Located in Wong Chuk Hang, Mini Ops promises friendships, happiness and memories alongside fast (and free) Wi-Fi, a "super-large social area", shared washer dryers and more.

Pit Stop, a mini living space designed by Hong Kong students
Bibliothèque is also in the making, although personal space at this Yau Ma Tei co-living environment will be confined to a sleeping capsule, or 'bed space'. The emphasis here is on attractive, contemporary shared spaces: a chic communal living room with sofas, TV and plants; shared areas for working or studying, and an expansive rooftop where residents can chill, party and make friends.

Hong Kong students are also coming up with exciting co-living concepts, including one called the Pit Stop, which won the Hong Kong Institute of Architects’ Innovative Youth Housing Design Competition at the end of 2016. Five students came up with a space that has the bed located in an attic, freeing up space underneath for living, and a bookcase that doubles as a door – which then slides open to connect personal space with shared community living space.

At the heart of co-living is this idea of community and connection through space and other facilities. An international example is WeWork’s WeLive, which offers spaces ranging from studios through to four-bedroom homes, in New York and Virginia. Each WeLive home is ready to move into, fully equipped with high-speed internet, HDTV, dinnerware, bed linen... and flexibility. You can bed down at one of WeLive’s spaces for a few days – or a few years.
“We see WeLive as a housing solution for anyone looking for more community, convenience, and flexibility in their lives,” says a WeWork spokesperson. “It’s not just younger people moving to either city for the first time, it’s parents with children, it’s retirees spending part of their year with us and part of it somewhere else, it’s professionals cutting down on excessive commutes.”

Both WeLive Wall Street and WeLive Crystal City feature a chef’s kitchen where residents can come together for family-style dinners; there are cinema rooms where residents can enjoy film nights; and workout studios where you can attend fitness classes. All of these shared environments provide the space in which to meet people.

MORE TO CONSIDER
It all seems as happy and empowered as the images you will find online when you search for ‘co-living’. There are, however, downsides to this communal lifestyle, and it doesn’t appeal to everyone.

A lack of privacy is one obvious problem: when your only personal space is your bed, you don't have anywhere you can really go to switch off, to cry if you need to, to have a private conversation with your parents, or to have a lover’s tryst. WeLive says this isn’t a problem in their New York City and Virginia spaces: “Each unit is a complete apartment and members choose how much to engage with each other,” says the firm.

There are other considerations, however. As SCAD’s Buelvas points out, “You’re losing the sense of belonging to a place. If you travel a lot, you would get tired of being in a small hotel room. The fact that you can cook and perform different activities in your living setting – that’s what makes you feel attached to your home.”

No matter what Buelvas thinks of co-living spaces on a personal level, he understands growing urban populations make it inevitable. “We have to adjust ourselves to this kind of living,” he says. The next step, then, is to maximise not only spatial efficiency, but also energy and water consumption.
BEYOND IMAGINATION
Both AMIE 1.0 and SCADpad have tackled this topic. One is an experimental, nanoliving pod that Buelvas worked on when he was an architect at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), and the other is SCAD Atlanta’s foray into communal housing, SCADpad, which repurposed an unused parking structure as student housing.

Short for Additive Manufacturing Integrated Energy, AMIE 1.0 saw SOM collaborate with the US Department of Energy’s Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the University of Tennessee. Using 3D printing technology, it incorporates a bed, micro-kitchen/living area and bathroom into an attractive, zero-waste, energy-conserving enclosure that is 12m long, 4m high and 4m wide.
SCADpad, meanwhile, was initially intended as a temporary project. It’s now been operational for three years. Consisting of a series of 135sqf residences with sustainable waste management, grey-water filtration systems and plenty of multipurpose furniture, SCADpad is also fun and individual. Designed by students for students, it features customised elements such as tiles and art that lend the living units personality, while there is space for students to grow crops between the living containers. No doubt LAPD Officer K would approve.
Parador is Premium Quality in all areas, made in Germany. www.parador.eu

SOLE AGENT 總代理： PACIFIC WOOD FLOORING (HK) LTD. A member of PACIFIC LIFESTYLE GROUP
17/F, Kwan Chart Tower, No. 6 Tonnochy Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong
Tel: +852 2526 2230 E-mail: project@pacificbuilding.com.hk
Hong Kong · Macau

SHOWROOM： PARADOR by PACIFIC
353 Lockhart Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong
Tel: 2789 2261 shop353@pacificbuilding.com.hk
www.pacificbuilding.com.hk

OAK white, Modul 2
OAK natural, Modul 2 and 4
OAK grey, Modul 4
Capella Shanghai, transformed from an early 20th-century heritage property, the Jian Ye Li estate.
Inheriting the legacy of the late Jaya Ibrahim, Clint Nagata of BLINK Design is taking his existent upmarket hospitality design portfolio to the next level. Here, the Japanese-Hawaiian talks to Perspective about his design for the newly opened Capella Shanghai, Jaya and the meaning of luxury.
“After he passed away, a lot of his projects went through this grey period of unknown,” says Nagata. “Jaya’s partner Bruce was quite adamant that whoever he sold the firm to should make sure Jaya’s legacy stayed intact in some sense. He had many offers from companies wanting to buy the firm, but he felt that, with BLINK, it was the best alignment.”

For Nagata, too, the acquisition is a great fit – and a “romantic” one, as he and his team point out. Nagata and Jaya had been friends: “We met on a project eight years ago,” says Nagata. “I still remember; it was in Indonesia, in Jakarta. I had only heard of Jaya Ibrahim at that point. He walked into the room and he was very shy. For someone of his stature, he was very unassuming. He was like, ‘I’m just Jaya.’ ”

For Nagata and for BLINK as a whole, the Capella project in Shanghai was significant and highly personal: “To finish it off under his name was quite rewarding for us.”

At The Capella, the references to Jaya’s style come through in the sense of balance that reverberates throughout the hotel and its villas. “Jaya was very symmetrically driven,” says Nagata. “I don’t follow symmetry so much, but I believe in balance.”
Maldives getaway Jumeirah Dhevanafushi, where BLINK was behind the building, interior and landscape design
Materiality was also important to Jaya, and this comes through in the innovative finishes: “We created pieces using rattan that’s had lacquer applied to it. It’s painted and sanded several times.”

Latticed screens were also a hallmark of Jaya’s work and they appear throughout the hotel, alongside French and chinoiserie-inspired furniture, in the villas’ living rooms and in the cosy, comfortable lobby. “Jaya was passionate about screens – he would lock himself away in his house outside Jakarta and do all this research on screens.”

The Capella Shanghai is one of a number of projects BLINK inherited when they acquired Jaya’s studio in 2017, apart from the multitude of hospitality projects already on BLINK’s books at the time of acquisition. These include the Alila Salalah in Oman; a wellness resort in Costa Rica; and a resort in the Seychelles that BLINK is working on with young Saudi Arabian clients. “Their vision is a very Mies van der Rohe-style of architecture. It’s a very different statement for the Seychelles,” says Nagata.

In addition, there are four hotels in Chengdu – and possibly a fifth. “There’s a Ritz-Carlton, an Alila, a Conrad and a DoubleTree, and each of the stories is completely different,” says Nagata.

Stories are at the core of each BLINK project. “We’re trying to evolve from just an ordinary architecture and interiors firm. Our presentations are about telling a story first. For clients, everything is getting more personal these days. It’s about what has happened in their lives, and what they see.”
ABOVE Conrad Sanya Haitang Bay BELOW Fairmont Sanur Beach Bali
Spa House, luxury resort Amanoi’s newest architectural addition by Nagata in Vietnam
Just as the story is unique each time, so too is each client’s interpretation of luxury. “Luxury means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. That’s always been the challenge: trying to interpret luxury for our clients.

“There’s a generation difference in understanding luxury and people’s tastes. I always compare brands: Gucci – the old Gucci that is, with the ‘G’ everywhere – to Hermès. With Hermès, it’s not so obvious, but you know it’s Hermès. But then again, even Gucci has evolved, too.”

And what about Nagata: what does luxury mean to him? “It’s a connotation of feeling comfort – but maybe I view it that way because of where I’m from,” he explains.

Perhaps, then, The Capella Shanghai encapsulates everything Nagata defines as luxury. “I love the sense of home at Capella, and I love the fact that you feel like you’re not in a hotel. Even after a long day, I’ll walk through the gate and I’ll be home.”

blinkdg.com
CLIMATE CHANGE

BY SOPHIE KALKREUTH

The Institute of Contemporary Art, designed by Madrid-based Aranguren + Gallegos Arquitectos
Miami’s reputation for design invention, once hemmed within the city’s Art Deco district, has broken free with a plethora of art and architecture statements while elements, such as innovative Parkitecture, address the Florida city’s climatic and topographical realities.

One of the first works visitors to December’s Miami Art Week encountered was a human skeleton, cast in bronze, lying splayed on a stainless-steel bench with a steady trickle of water dripping onto its anodised skull. *Bus Stop*, by New York-based artist Urs Fischer, is a near replica of the standard Miami Beach bus shelter and about as effective. The sculpture, which was commissioned by developer Craig Robins, stands in the corner of Paradise Plaza, the latest mall to open in Miami’s Design District.

Over the last decade, the Design District has transformed into a colourful retail destination complete with dazzling flagship stores; Fischer’s Bus Stop joins a wave of public installations from designers such as Zaha Hadid and Buckminster Fuller. Positioned beside an open-air escalator, the work draws wry smiles from passers-by who pause to snap photos or take selfies with the reclining cadaver. Apparently, the corpse’s fate resonates in a city where Bentleys outnumber buses.
Miami has long been a playground for the wealthy, and its flamboyant excesses follow dramatic boom-and-bust cycles, each crash paving the way for reinvention. The last market crash stalled construction and sent real-estate prices plummeting, but the latest boom, fuelled largely by overseas investors, has been impressive. Scores of new towers are under construction, including a large-scale project by Swire Properties: Brickell City Centre, including the East, Miami hotel, which aims to introduce a taste of Hong Kong-style urbanism to the downtown area. And a number of big-name architects are busy reshaping the skyline: Zaha Hadid Architects, Bjarke Ingels (BIG), Renzo Piano, Rem Koolhaas and Jean Nouvel all have projects underway.

As part of its latest renaissance, Miami has effectively rebranded itself as a hub for art and design. The city now hosts Art Basel and Design Miami each December, as well as America’s instalment of Maison & Objet in May, and boasts close to 100 galleries and a dozen contemporary art museums.

At Design Miami, where galleries once again traded in collectible furniture and decor, exhibitors seemed to eschew synthetics, focusing instead on traditional materials such as leather, bronze, copper and marble. Highlights included Maniera Gallery’s solo exhibition by Bijoy Jain’s Studio Mumbai – the studio incorporates skilled craftsmen trained in traditional Indian building techniques – as well as London-based gallerist Sarah Myerscough, who showed expert woodturning by Eleanor Lakelin, Gareth Neal and John Makepeace. More investigational showings included Maison Perrier-Jouët’s room of rippling light and colour created in collaboration with design studio Luftwerk, and Beijing-based Gallery All, which showed the MAD Martian collection by Ma Yansong. The sci-fi-inspired range – to be used when humans colonise Mars – includes tables, chairs and floor-to-ceiling lights all finished in a fluid, highly reflective metallic skin.

Back at the Design District notable launches included Nuage, a new pergola by French designer-duo Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec. Located along a pedestrian promenade, the steel structure is composed of coloured glass ‘clouds’ that filter the Florida sun and cast graphic shadows on the surrounding buildings.

Urs Fischer’s installation Bus Stop at the Miami Design District
The Bouroullec brothers created a canopy for Miami Design Week, inspired by clouds and climbing plants.
A few blocks away, Miami’s new Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) also celebrated its long-awaited opening. The 3,400-sqm cube-shaped building, designed by Madrid-based architecture firm Aranguren + Gallegos Arquitectos, has its name spelled out in giant letters; it also features a facade covered in geometric panels that glow softly at night.

‘Parkitecture’ is becoming an increasingly common building typology in Miami. Due to the fact the city is built on sand or swamp and has a high water table, subterranean parking garages are rarely built. Instead, above-grade car

AS PART OF ITS LATEST RENAISSANCE, MIAMI HAS EFFECTIVELY REBRANDED ITSELF AS A HUB FOR ART AND DESIGN
parks have become bold, sculptural statements. An early example is Arquitectonica’s Ballet Valet, which is wrapped in fiberglass mesh. More recently, Herzog & de Meuron’s 1111 Lincoln Road features a ziggurat of bare concrete linked by precipitous ramps.

But not all architects use car parks as set pieces. Brandon Haw – who previously ran Foster + Partner’s New York office – has taken a more understated approach with his design for Torino, a mixed-use parking garage structure going up in South Beach. The neighbourhood is known for its pastel-hued buildings – a palette used by artists Leonard Horowitz and Barbara Capitman in the late 1970s – and Haw selected from this palette to create a double-skin facade with an outer layer of white vertical fins and an inner skin of pastel hues. The double skin shields neighbours from car headlamps while also providing interior ventilation. To passers-by, the light reflecting between interior and exterior will create a subtle and ever-changing wave of colour.
Designed with Miami’s climate realities in mind, Jean Nouvel’s Monad Terrace is a 15-storey condo tower currently under construction on the bay-facing side of South Beach. It features many of the French architect’s trademark qualities: prolific use of glass, hanging gardens, water features and undulating reflections of light. Nouvel also designed the lavish interiors with marble and teak floors, generous terraces and a special saw-tooth building profile that gives every unit views of Biscayne Bay. However, the project’s polished design was also conceived in pragmatic response to Miami’s vulnerable seaside setting. The residences will start at 4m above grade, almost double the six feet stipulated in local building codes. The building will also include two emergency power sources and have a specially formulated base that Michael Stern, chief executive of JDS Development describes as a “waterproof bathtub”.

But when it comes to Miami’s other core challenge – its overwhelming dependence on cars – Stern is less optimistic. Getting public transit approved requires consensus among three municipalities as well state funding where climate change is highly politicised. “I just don’t think the political will exists,” he says.

As Miami’s art and design events continue into the weekend, one can’t help but reflect that if the city truly wants to establish itself as a design hub, it will need to do more than facilitate design commerce. The city will need to address its lack of public transport and connectivity and find innovative solutions for climate resilience. In the meantime, Urs Fischer’s Bus Stop serves as a winking reminder of the alternative scenario. designmiami.com
Korean artist Do Ho Suh’s polyester fabric and stainless-steel tubes form translucent ‘rooms’

Double Collier Emeraude by Jean-Michel Othoniel, on show at Galerie Perrotin
How would you describe your design ethos?
Designs should not be just functional, or of a particular style. I try to create objects that give something more than just aesthetics and function, but speak to you deeply.

You came from an architectural background. How does this help with your design?
I practised architecture when I was younger, then I was doing a lot of interiors. Designing in different scales is not a problem, it is always the universal relationship with light and shape that matters. When I design, I can imagine something extremely big or very small, like a skyscraper or lipstick. The only problem that I have is how you see the light that goes around the object and changes the surface.

How do you see the difference between product design and architecture?
Creating buildings is a much more complicated process. It’s a job involving different groups of people with different scales. For designing objects, I can do it alone. It’s a more intimate approach that allows me to create something more unpredictable.

Tell us about your obsession with drawing and nature. How did you infuse such elements into your designs?
I come from Sicily where wind and turbulence are a natural wonder. I tried to capture the infinite beauty of changing nature through my drawings in relation to their surroundings. My design of the La Stanza dello Scirocco [baskets] was inspired by playing with a house of cards when I was a child, and the moment they were blown away by the wind.

I also like drawing shadows. When you design something, start with the shadows – the whole universe is turned upside down.

You have won numerous awards for your designs, including the La Stanza dello Scirocco baskets and Ossidiana coffeemaker for Alessi. What was your approach to these products?
I don’t start designing from functional and marketing points of view. I am attracted by the geometries of the universe. Through the understanding of unstable geometries, in the form of sculptures, I create objects with the touch of my hands. It’s important you touch the objects – you feel the beauty. That’s why I like to design for blind people, to create something by touch.

What is the process in designing objects?
I create the objects from aesthetic experiments. I research a lot at the early stage. By creating this kind of obsession –
starting from complex or simple or fragile, I start to build models to see what they are like. I build paper models, models with food and vegetables – everything that can be cut or assembled. I like working with actual models rather than with computers.

As a designer, how do you place objects to enhance ambience?
My idea of dwelling is well represented by a special, new approach: we must first select an object, and then we can start to design the house around it. Of course, the chosen object has to be strongly symbolic, and its main feature is to find the balance among art, design and craftsmanship.

Please tell us about your latest projects.
I just designed a glassware collection called Drops for Turkish brand Paşabahçe, based on the concept of fragility and inspired by the vertical direction of the rain. I’m also working for the next Salone del Mobile Milano in April, but everything else is top secret.

Is there any product or project you’d like to design but have not yet had the chance to do so?
I am currently concerned in designing a new aesthetic for a motorcycle. I am working on the opportunity to find new materials and new shapes in this mature design context. I don’t know if I will succeed, but I hope so.

mariotrimarchi.eu
fragile.eu
Trouble on the hill

BY JOHN BATTEN

A site in the heart of Central – one home to several important heritage buildings – is under threat
The Bishop’s House on Lower Albert Road, across from the Foreign Correspondents’ Club in Central, is one of Hong Kong’s most historically significant buildings, on a site that housed the original St Paul’s College. It is one of the oldest colonial buildings in Hong Kong and, despite its bona fide heritage credentials, it has only been accorded a Grade 1 heritage grading, rather than the higher Monument status – a grading that would ensure its preservation and protection from demolition.

A long land lease for this site was granted to the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (SKH, or Anglican Church) in the first years of British rule in Hong Kong. The lease allows the SKH to operate a theological college, a school, St Paul’s Church, a hospital and accommodation on the site. For more than 160 years, Bishop’s Hill has been the home and office of the Bishop of Hong Kong, the most senior Anglican cleric in the city. This site is perfectly sited mid-distant between the former Governor’s, now-Chief Executive’s House, and St John’s Cathedral. It occupied a traditionally advantageous and symbolically important position in the colonial pecking-order: Government Hill with its Central Government Offices and government decision-makers was just across the road.

The site’s heritage is subtle and not obvious from the street. However in addition to Bishop’s House, there are three other graded heritage buildings on the site. With the exception of the Tai Kwun/Central Police Station site, Bishop’s Hill has the greatest concentration of graded heritage buildings in Hong Kong in one dedicated area.

Following the controversial demolition of the Star Ferry building in Central in 2006 and the success of the Central & Western Concern Group’s advocacy to preserve the modernist PMQ buildings, the government was pressed to formulate a heritage policy for the city’s Central district. In 2009, the Development Bureau announced the Conserving Central policy of “eight initiatives to preserve many of the important cultural, historical and architectural features in Central while adding new life and vibrancy to the area”. The SKH site was one of those initiatives and in 2011 it was announced Bishop’s Hill would include a redeveloped 12-storey hospital and the church’s theological college and kindergarten, now operating inside St Paul’s Church, would be relocated to a property owned by the SKH on Mt Butler. However, this plan was stymied by strong opposition from the well-connected residents of Mt Butler who argued, among other considerations, there would be greater traffic congestion if the kindergarten were relocated.

In early 2017, documents were tabled to the Central & Western District Council outlining a new initiative for the site by the SKH. A few months later, illustrated plans for a 25-storey “non-profit-making private hospital” were unveiled, with the new building – to replace the now-closed six-storey Hong Kong Central Hospital – wedged in-between the site’s historic buildings. This plan, with no discussion by the public or Central residents, was a shock. The proposed hospital is out of all proportion to the site’s other low-rise heritage buildings. It seems an ill-conceived proposal: traffic congestion and visual impact are not addressed nor has a detailed heritage assessment been done of the site.

Heritage and conservancy groups have again come together under the umbrella of the Government Hill Concern Group, which successfully campaigned for the retention of the West Wing of the former Central Government Offices. A planning application has been filed with the Town Planning Board that proposes any redeveloped hospital should have the same footprint and height as the existing one. That is the only appropriate redevelopment of the historically important Bishop’s Hill heritage that should be approved by government.

For planning application details, visit: www.info.gov.hk/tpb
Comfort zone

BY LEONA LIU

Floret chair by Kati Meyer-Brühl

Created by German furniture designer Kati Meyer-Brühl, who’s mindful of sustainability and eco-friendliness, the Floret chair has been imagined to resemble an opening bloom. With an inviting organic form, three ‘petals’ that function as arms and a backrest emerge from the oval seat base with effortless elegance. A tropical floral print of strelitzia flowers (also known as bird of paradise) adds an extra touch of nature.
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*Perspective* is excited to say that it is now taking nominations for the annual 40 Under 40 Awards, recognising the young generation of talented individuals who will lead the future of design in Asia-Pacific.

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