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Interior design

The essential guide for Middle East interior design professionals

An ITP Business Publication

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OF SERENDIPITY BY DESIGN

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Time for change



When I wrote my first editor's letter for *CID* back in 2008, the industry was booming. Designers were either turning projects around in record time or turning them away. Design was churned out rather than crafted and a host of sub-standard interiors were spawned across Dubai.

As I come to write my final editor's letter for *CID*, I can only marvel at how much things have changed. Projects such as this month's case study, The Pavilion, provide ample evidence of how much the industry has evolved. A fresh, unique interior brimming with wit and creativity, it is testament to the kind of design that the region can create when it puts its mind to it.

In the past, Dubai's design industry has come under fire – rightfully, I might add – for being far too reliant on the 'copy-paste' function. But times are changing, as a new generation of interior designers, eager to create work that is both different and meaningful, begins to make its mark.

There's no denying that things have been, and continue to be, tough. For many of the region's smaller design firms, the last couple of years have been a simple case of survival. Many didn't make it through the storm.

But there has also been an upside to that struggle. For the first time, Dubai's design industry is starting to behave like a community. And although this is a movement that is still very much in its infancy, there are definite signs that the industry is coming together, recognising that there is safety and strength in numbers.

The number of familiar faces at last month's APID gala dinner makes me hope that it was a turning point for the industry. APID used the occasion to officially launch the Festival of Interior Design, which will present the industry with further opportunity to rally round and prove its mettle. A tie-up between APID and Index means that the right people are working together and leading by example. This can only be a positive thing for design as a whole.

It has been thrilling watching this evolution occur. As I move on to pastures new, I would like to thank you for providing me with the opportunity to be a part of this progress, in whatever small way. It has been a true pleasure, and I look forward to continuing to watch you all grow from strength to strength.

SELINA DENMAN, EDITOR
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APID launches Festival of Design

THREE-DAY EVENT WILL HIGHLIGHT THE VALUE OF INTERIOR DESIGN

UAE: APID used its annual gala dinner on February 10 as a platform for the launch of the Festival of Interior Design 2011.

The three-day design fest will run from October 22 to 24 and will consist of a series of design-related events, anchored by a one-day congress. A pavilion at Index will act as the home of the festival and a lynchpin for various activities.

APID will provide a framework for the festival, in the form of a brand identity and website. From there, the event will evolve organically into a city-wide celebration of design, explained Christian Merieau, managing director, Middle East, of Samuel Creations, who is a member of the festival's organising committee.

"We looked at other such events in Singapore, Brighton,

Milan and London. They have created the kinds of festivals where there is a core event and then the city gets on board. So we are creating a platform with the website and with the logo and basically all kinds of events are going to grow from there."

The event is underlined by five primary objectives. 'Educate' will increase awareness of the interior design industry amongst the general public and industry professionals; 'Celebrate' will pay homage and celebrate the significance of the industry in both traditional and modern Arab culture; 'Encourage' will promote and discover emerging talent in interior design; 'Highlight' will provide the necessary attention and focus on innovation and new design trends; and 'Collaborate' will promote and strengthen

partnerships with like-minded interior design groups and associations. "It's not just for the interior design community," explained Karen Hay, founder of Stickman Tribe, who is also on the organising committee.

"It is for the whole community. It is really to create awareness and put a value on the services that we provide," she said.

The festival will feature a number of events, including exhibitions of design portfolios; city centric design trails and visits to key landmarks, hotels, schools and art galleries; lectures from world-renowned designers; open masterclasses; workshops; professional and student competitions; an interior design award programme aimed at honouring innovative designers; screening sessions of interior-design based

films, and other parallel events. Ultimately, the event will aim to increase the visibility and credibility of APID as an organisation.

"APID has done some great things but it does not have the visibility that it should. The Festival of Design will give it that visibility," said Merieau.

So far, response to the launch has been positive, said Merieau and Hay. "The feedback that we've had so far is that everybody wants to be a part of it," said Merieau. "If we create a platform that is reassuring enough, that doesn't cost much and is easily accessible, people will be interested. Of course, in order to obtain the log and access to the website, each project has to be validated by the committee. We will sure that it adds value to the overall event."

Summertown to go all green for 2020

DUBAI-BASED FIT-OUT COMPANY LAYS DOWN PLANS TO BE CARBON NEUTRAL BY 2020

UAE: Summertown Interiors has launched a green committee – a dedicated association of company employees who will be responsible for creating a plan of action to make the company carbon neutral by 2020. The fit-out contractor is already the first in the UAE to occupy LEED-certified interiors.

The committee is tasked with creating a strategy that speaks of Summertown's social responsibility but also stays true to financial realities and objectives. In this vein, the Green Committee has established five pillars that will

form the basis of the company's carbon neutral strategy. These are: clients, suppliers, people, operations and measurement.

The committee has engineered a series of specific objectives and activities based on each of these pillars. "The establishment of the Green Committee is an incredibly important initiative for the company as a whole – throughout our projects and services we are consistently advocating a greener workplace and considering our experience in this domain we have a key responsibility to

continually improve what we do," commented Marcos Bish, managing director, Summertown.

"At Summertown, we recognise that there are noteworthy cost implications and time requirements that come with implementing such environmental standards, as the market looks towards solutions such as renewable energy.

"Therefore, the basis behind our decision-making has been to develop a realistic line of attack with achievable goals that keeps Summertown in line with the pace at which the market is developing

as the UAE moves towards its goal of creating a platform for a greener future" he continued.

The Green Committee comes as a result of a series of successful green initiatives at Summertown. Strategies such as the LEED Gold certification of its own showroom and office premises, promoting the usage of cradle-to-cradle furniture and materials, and its Green in Action workshops have been the driving force behind Summertown's success in cementing its position as a market leader in this field.





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Zen-like charm

THE RECENTLY-OPENED CHI'ZEN IS NO RUN-OF-THE-MILL CHINESE EATERY

UAE: Unlike many Chinese restaurants, which tend to be quite casual, the newly-opened Chi'Zen at Dubai Festival City offers Cantonese fine dining. The interiors of the space had to effectively communicate this unusual brand positioning, explained Rashida Rajkotwalla, lead designer, Design Work Portfolio (DWP).

"Chi'Zen is a concept that already exists in China and Hong Kong. It is Cantonese food but fine dining. When we talk about Chinese food, we often associate it with casual dining, but the experience at Chi' Zen had to be very high end. So we were trying to create a very luxurious kind of atmosphere. That was the main theory behind the whole concept," she explained.

The restaurant is one of a new breed of high-end, more evening-orientated venues emerging at Dubai Festival City. The brief from the client, Foodmark, was very open, Rajkotwalla explained. "It was our task was to create an identity for this outlet. What we did inherit from the brand was the colours. We were given a palette with very strong red and black elements. So our challenge was to achieve a balance between the very strong colours and a very soft, rejuvenating experience in terms of justifying the name Zen."

Red is used predominantly as an accent colour, in cushions and lighting elements. This ensures that the colour does not become too overpowering. Rajkotwalla also played around with different, more muted shades of red to counterbalance the brighter 'Chinese' red.

The restaurant has a capacity of 160 people and is open for lunch and dinner. Two private

dining rooms offer an interesting dimension to the design. The first is dark and moody, with high-backed chairs and striking gold Murano lights dropping dramatically from the ceiling. The back wall is emblazoned with a simple gold motif, creating an almost regal feel.

The second private dining room works with a completely different palette. Sumptuous, dusky pink seats are set against a textured, off-white wall. An oversized lantern-inspired light fixture floats elegantly overhead. "The second private dining room is slightly more toned down. There is a really nice contrast between the two," said Rajkotwalla.

At the heart of the main restaurant is a central, curved seating element – representing the Yin and the Yang. An elaborate chandelier hangs overhead. "That's our point of origin. The outlet radiates out from here."

The restaurant is also home to over 200 pieces of authentic Chinese art, selected by art consultant, Nimmi Aunger. These include traditional Chinese tea pots, over-sized matchboxes and colourful hats, often set into the walls for added drama.

Furniture was predominantly custom-made. In some areas, walls are covered in a gold wall-paper with a gentle floral pattern, supplied by Warps and Wefts. The space is divided by a series of metal rods, set at varying angles to resemble bamboo.

"The initial inspiration was bamboo, but you see bamboo so often so we wanted to move away from that and do something different. This way is also more cost-effective and lasts longer," Rajkotwalla concluded.





Duravit celebrates a new era of opulence

GERMAN BATHROOM MANUFACTURER
UNVEILS FOUR NEW DESIGN LINES





GERMANY: The concept of opulence was put at the heart of Duravit's 2011 Design Days in Germany last month, where the company unveiled new products from a slew of designers including Philippe Stark, Sergei Tchoban and Matteo Thun.

Franz Kook, CEO, Duravit told designers, customers and journalists gathered at the company's factory and showroom in the Black Forest that the term opulence meant quality and value rather than lavish and over-indulgent design. He also said that Duravit had never had so many designers working for the company at the same time.

"We've never had such an armada of new bathroom concepts", said Kook. "We've done some quite far-reaching research and, in collaboration with high-profile international designers, have developed concepts that introduce a new style direction, and not just for the luxury sector."

There are 14 new projects in total – including four new design lines. The first new line to be revealed was by Russian-German architect Sergei Tchoban, known for his high-profile projects in Germany and Russia, including the Federation Tower, which is due to be the tallest building in Europe when completed.

Discussing the concept of opulence, Tchoban said: "It's luxury in a very reasonable way. So it's not lavish or over indulgent. It's a very flexible and nice design that fits into different environments."

"Contemporary opulence is about allowing that little bit more, yet keeping one's feet firmly on the ground," he said.

Speaking to *CID* on the sidelines of the event, Tchoban said that as an architect his belief was in maintaining the human scale of designs, a fact that architecture had increasingly forgotten.

"We have lost our love of the detail. We think of everything in big forms and big plans and designs, but we don't think any more about the human scale. We need to come back to the small elements."

Tchoban's new range, Esplanade, aims to recreate the tradition of baths, cabinets and sinks being furniture as well as being functional. In this respect, the Esplanade range has a very old-fashioned feel.

Next up was the new Nahho range by the EOOS design group, which incorporates a large floating bath tub and head rest to enable total immersion in the water. Nahho is the old German for 'dug-out canoe'. Part of the design is a wooden head rest inspired by

devices used by Ethiopian herds-men to keep their heads away from the ground while sleeping.

Another aspect to the design is technological. The set up includes a Bluetooth music system which allows an iPod to play music both above and under water.

Matteo Thun's new range was unveiled next. Wood is the most important feature of the Onto range, with consoles and the fronts of tall cabinets, low cabinets and vanities all made of plywood.

Thun believes that cost engineering defines the aesthetics of the 21st century, and that wood is a cheap but attractive material to serve this dual purpose.

Last up was designer Philippe Starck, who was in Germany to unveil his new range of washbasins, coming in circular, square and triangular forms. Starck's new geometric approach also redefines the mirrors and mirror cabinets. All variants feature a "light square" which provides for a very soft light diffused through a special film.

"It's unusual today to buy something and after six years the style is still good and the quality is still good. But the idea now is to keep everything for a long time. Now we don't only buy for ourselves, we buy for our children and grandchildren," Starck said.





Zumtobel launches Light Centre

NEW FACILITY WILL ACT AS A HUB FOR DUBAI'S DESIGN COMMUNITY

UAE: Zumtobel celebrated the launch of its dedicated Light Centre on March 2.

Located in Dubai's Al Quoz area, the new 750m² facility was designed to showcase the breadth of Zumtobel's product offering. The space is home to a range of different lighting scenarios, highlighting the various applications that Zumtobel can cater for. For example, the new showroom features an area highlighting Zumtobel's retail offering, which includes specialised fibre optic solutions for the food and cosmetics industry. Next up are the education and science rooms, which present solutions for schools and universities.

Also on show are lighting options for museums, spas and

hotels. "We also have office and communications application rooms, in two different styles. One room has recessed fittings within the ceiling and in the other, the fixtures are suspended," explained Gabriel Abdelhakmi-Gaisne, marketing manager, MENA region, Zumtobel Group.

On show are some of the most innovative technologies on the market, including LED and RGB luminaires. In the dedicated health and care area, Zumtobel is showcasing Ceilos, a special ceiling application that can help stimulate the recovery of the patient.

"Very often in a healthcare setting you have very blue light, which is excellent for the doctors because they can see everything.

However, it is not great for the patients. So we have introduced a touch panel which allows patients to alter the light once their doctor has left the room.

"The patient can switch to a more comfortable coloured light, with a range of different scenarios on offer. The light can even follow their circadian rhythm."

Also present in the new Zumtobel Light Centre are examples from the company's Masterpiece collection, including the LQ Chandelier.

However, the centre was envisaged as much more than a simple showroom for lighting solutions. The space will also act as a hub for the design community, Abdelhakmi-Gaisne explained. A large multi-purpose space tucked

into the back of the centre can host events of all descriptions.

"We will run a programme of regular events where we will either target one design firm and invite them to hold their internal workshops here, or we will bring in a mix of firms so that they can network. We also intend to have a research hub here because we are developing products all the time and we want to hear the voice of our customer," he said.

"We will also look at co-branding opportunities with brands that have the same values but not the same products as us – brands such as Bentley, Porsche, Louis Vuitton and Wilkhahn. We want to use this as a hub to enhance knowledge across the board."

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Upgrading a Dubai icon

OVER 20 YEARS AFTER IT FIRST DESIGNED THE EMIRATES GOLF CLUB, BSBG WAS CALLED BACK IN TO GIVE IT A REFRESH

UAE: The story of the Emirates Golf Club renovation contains a certain symmetry. The original club was designed by Brewer Smith Brewer Gulf (BSBG), the same company that was called in to give it a revamp some 23 years later.

Originally designed to resemble a cluster of Bedouin tents, the Emirates Golf Club is amongst the most recognisable landmarks in international golf. Wasl, the asset management company that owns the club, wanted BSBG to modernise the facility but retain its Bedouin-inspired structure. "This is an iconic building for Dubai," noted Alistair McMillan, managing partner, BSBG. "It is a building with lots of character so we were conscious of the fact that we shouldn't tamper with its shell."

McMillan approached the project as an architect, a golfer and a father. He has been a member of the Emirates Golf Club for 13 years, and was well acquainted with its various strengths and weaknesses.

One of those weaknesses was the arrival experience. "Previously, when you came into the front door, because of the nature of the design, there was a reception desk and you were almost over the top of it by the time you could orientate yourself," he said.

Overhead, a mezzanine floor meant that you couldn't appreciate the clubhouse's tented structure – its defining feature. "We were conscious that we wanted an arrival point coming into the building. We wanted some sort of experience. So we took the mezzanine floor away."

In addition, BSBG introduced a double-height, spider-glass exterior wall, which offers uninterrupted views over the golf course.

"Now, when you come into the Emirates Golf Club, you experience the tent structure and you can see the entire golf course, which is a fantastic experience.

"Before, you came in and you couldn't orientate yourself, and you didn't really know where the golf course was. We thought it was important to draw the building and the course together."

Another priority was enhancing the flow of movement through the clubhouse. "Something that I always found difficult was the route through the building. So we tried to make sure that the routes were much clearer and flowed through the building much better," McMillan explained.

Routes around the building also had to be reconsidered. In its former guise, the club's members had to shuffle around the outside of the building in order to get to the sports facilities. "We extended and developed the sports side of things as a separate entity. We also devised a new route around the building," said McMillan.

A new SensAsia Spa, a more resort-type pool and an upgraded gym are amongst the sporting and wellness facilities now on offer at the club – meaning that sports members need no longer feel like second-class citizens.

The club's family restaurant has also been upgraded, as part of plans to make Emirates Golf Club more of a destination, particularly in the evenings. The lower level of the club, which is home to the Pro Shop and additional food and beverage outlets, has also been extended, meaning that the output of the club's hospitality operations has more than doubled.

"We wanted to add some value at the lower levels, which sit within a concrete parapet. We've tried to put a lot of glass in there, we've opened it up, and we've tried to create a feeling of space. One of the ways that we did that is the frontage to the Spike Bar and to the central areas are completely retractable. We tried to create more intimate spaces that people could identify with."







Heightened appeal

ADAM TIHANY TALKS TO *CID* ABOUT DESIGNING THE HIGHEST RESTAURANT IN THE WORLD

UAE: When Adam Tihany came to design At.mosphere, the highest restaurant in the world, he recognised the need to make it comfortable. Located on the 122nd floor of the Burj Khalifa, the restaurant was already brimming with 'wow' factor. It needed an interior that would counter this with a sense of warmth and intimacy.

"Being situated on the 122nd floor is exhilarating so my design concept caters to making everyone comfortable. The extensive use of wood, both on the walls and ceilings, creates a very soothing mood, promoting a sense of comfort and security," said Tihany, founder of the New York-headquartered Tihany Design.

Tihany's brief was to create a world-class, highly-memorable restaurant and lounge. He was asked "to leverage the full advantage of the altitude and views, and at the same time offer a warm and soothing ambience, suitable for day and night", he explained.

The space is divided into the At.mosphere Grill, which can accommodate 80 guests and includes a private dining room with a Chef's Table that can seat 12 people, and the At.mosphere Lounge, a chic venue that can cater for 170.

For the restaurant, Tihany favoured the calm shades of amethyst and cocoa, in sumptuous materials such as silks, velvets, and leathers. Hand-polished wood panels clad the walls and arch up across the ceiling, drawing the eye to the ubiquitous floor-to-ceiling windows. These bold architectural forms evoke an vault-like feeling.

"Composed of marble and surrounded by glass, a sleek exhibition grill at the back of the room separates the main dining area

from a private dining room and offers guests a discreet glimpse into the art of culinary creations," Tihany detailed.

In the lounge, deeper shades of amethyst, in a combination of patterned velvets, natural woven textiles and leathers, create an effervescent effect. "Here, the polished wood beams and panelled walls and ceilings gently undulate upward, suggesting a lighter, more animated atmosphere," Tihany explained.

The undulating wooden panels and glass railing add a sense of softness to the design, and pay homage to the curved architecture of the Burj Khalifa itself. Meanwhile, custom-designed light fixtures, furniture and carpets all speak of the bespoke, unique nature of the project.

The lounge and its surroundings rest on a marble-clad, elevated platform. Within the area is a VIP section decked in steel blue, chocolate and caramel, complemented with a touch of cream.

"Late at night, second to the mood and occasion, the DJ transforms the windows into canvases onto which dynamic contemporary images are projected from concealed state-of-the-art video projections – all while overlooking the Dubai skyline, a totally singular sensation," Tihany said.

But designing a restaurant 442m above ground, in a building as distinctly shaped as the Burj Khalifa, also presented its fair share of challenges, Tihany admitted. "The centre core of structure, elevators and stairs represented a planning challenge which we have overcome by designing all the public spaces around the perimeter of the floor, taking full advantage of the spectacular 360 degree views."



Hadid takes centre stage

HADID-DESIGNED PAVILION TO PLAY HOST TO LEADING PERFORMERS AT ABU DHABI FESTIVAL

UAE: A pavilion designed by 'starchitect' Zaha Hadid will play host to a number of leading Arab performers during the Abu Dhabi Festival 2011.

The pavilion is a touring venue that will showcase dynamic cross-cultural projects under the theme Arab Creativity in the Architecture of the Future. To date, the pavilion has also made appearances at the Manchester International Festival and Holland Festival.

An intimate venue with a capacity of just 200, the pavilion was designed to guarantee an acoustically superior environment

for each performance experience. The installation takes the form of an extraordinary chamber music hall. A voluminous ribbon swirls within the room, carving out a spatial and visual response to the intricate musical compositions being performed.

As the ribbon careens above the performer, cascades into the ground and wraps around the audience, the room is sculpted into a fluid space.

"We are thrilled to host the Zaha Hadid Pavilion at the Emirates Palace as part of the Abu Dhabi Festival 2011," said Her

Excellency Hoda Al Khamis Kanoo, founder and artistic director of the Abu Dhabi Festival, which is taking place from March 22 to 29.

"Together with our international partners, we have developed this beautiful organic space with the express aim of providing a place where people can come together from diverse backgrounds and cultures to explore the breadth and depth of the arts in all its forms," she added.

Co-commissioned by the Abu Dhabi Festival with its partners, the Manchester International Festival and the Holland Festival,

Zaha Hadid's striking pavilion is described as 'the perfect union of sound and space'.

"Within this beautiful structure we hope to explore the legacies of Arab art and music, and reflect on its power to inspire future generations of young Arab artists, poets and musicians.

"Our commitment to preserving our own musical heritage will be reinforced this year with the beginning of a long-term project to archive our traditions and build a library of written work that will document our history for future generations," said Kanoo.





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From the inside out

REBECCA GERNON HAS SPENT 18 YEARS DESIGNING IN DUBAI.
SHE SHARES HER EXPERIENCES WITH CID

Rebecca Gernon arrived in Dubai 18 years ago, a fresh-faced architecture graduate in a country where opportunity was as abundant as female professionals were rare. In a story that reads like an architect's dream, she found herself working on one of the most iconic buildings of all time, the Burj Al Arab. One of her most visible contributions was the hotel's helipad, a structure that was inspired, quite accidentally, by the Starship Enterprise.



1

1
Gernon was responsible for designing Burj Al Arab's helipad.

2&3
Although she trained as an architect, Gernon's portfolio includes plenty of interiors projects.

After her stint with Atkins, Gernon joined Italy-headquartered interior design firm Decorpoint, where she was tasked with heading up the company's Dubai office and developing its commercial interior design portfolio. In this capacity, Gernon worked on a series of high-profile hotels, including The Fairmont Dubai, Grand Hyatt Dubai, Meridien Mina Seyahi and Le Royal Meridien.

In 2001, she launched her own firm, Serendipity by Design, which specializes in master planning, architecture and interior and landscape design. While the Dubai-based company has a satellite office in Manila, Gernon remains lead designer on all projects.

Commercial Interior Design caught up with Gernon to find out more about her very Middle Eastern career, and about transitioning comfortably between interior design and architecture.

Tell us about your career so far.

I came to Dubai 18 years ago. Architecture is my background, so I started working for Atkins as an architect on the Burj Al Arab. There was a three-man design team on that project. Tom

Wright was the main architect and there were two other English architects, as well as myself. It was an amazing experience for me – I was straight out of college and working on this amazing, iconic building. This was also my first insight into interior design on an international level, and all of the drama that goes with it.

I worked for Atkins for a year, and my claim to fame is that I designed the helipad at the Burj Al Arab. Tom was my idol at the time. I was 24 and he was designing this incredibly iconic building. He asked me have a crack at designing the helipad and I was terrified because it was such a prominent thing on the building.

I tried lots of designs, but nothing was coming to me. I sat there for three days. I remember the night before I was supposed to present my idea, it was getting later and later, and I had nothing. Eventually I sketched the Starship Enterprise, out of Star Trek, as a joke. I left it on my desk and went home, wondering whether there was any point going into the office the following day. When Tom came in the next day, he had to walk pass my desk to get to his office. And

he saw this sketch on my desk. When he called the meeting, he brought the sketch with him and said: 'Look guys, this is the helipad, isn't it amazing!'

How did you make the move into interior design?

I worked at Atkins for a year and then I was approached by Decorpoint, which wanted to open an office here. That was the start of my interior design career.

I studied architecture and master planning but I always had an interest in interiors. I lived in Paris for six months and my flatmate at the time was a stage set designer for the Opera House in Paris. They were always behind schedule so I used to help him out, painting the sets and so on. So there was always an interest in interiors. And my design style is quite theatrical, which I think comes from there.

I was responsible for the Decorpoint office. They already had clients here but they were mostly residential clients. They wanted me to set up the commercial side of things. At that stage, hotels were just starting to be built here. They were building the Meridien Mina Seyahi and the Meridien at the airport and they



2

were also building lots of shopping centres. So there was a lot of work.

I did all of Decorpoint's commercial design work, so I was responsible for all of the Meridien hotels that were being built at that stage. I was with Decorpoint for eight or nine years and then I decided to open my own company.

Why did you branch out on your own? I'd been with Decorpoint for a long time. The office grew from two people to 55 people over that period of time. Also, I wanted the company to branch out into architecture and masterplanning but they weren't interested in that – they wanted to stay with interior design.

So we parted ways. But they were like my family here, so I didn't want to steal clients from them either. As such, in the beginning I concentrated more on masterplanning and architecture. I got my own clients. And it was the right time for it. Dubai was going into the real estate market and all these developments were starting to come up.

I've been doing that since 2001. We've been very lucky. We've worked on great projects, from masterplanning all

3



the way down to interiors. I think what our office offered, which wasn't really available then, and still isn't available now in most firms, is we could take a project from a blank piece of paper, right until someone moving in.

We do everything from masterplanning to landscaping, to architecture and from interiors to fit-out. We do the whole realm. We've done that on quite a few projects.

Do you do much commercial work?

At the moment, interiors wise, we are mostly doing residential. Architecture-wise, we do resorts and residential resorts. We have one job that was awarded to us in Egypt but we are obviously not sure what's happening with that now. The project included two shopping centres in Cairo.

professionals here. I remember the first project management meeting that I went to for Meridien.

The existing hotel was there and they were building an extension. I went to this site meeting and there were 25 men sitting in this portacabin, all Arabic. One of them said: 'Excuse me madam, the hotel is over there'. I explained that actually I was the interior designer and the project manager and they were all stunned. But I found that once you gained their respect, they had the utmost respect for you.

When I first came to Dubai, there was no design style. It was only once the hotels came in that interior designers started coming in. Also, the Internet wasn't really in existence then, so it was a real challenge finding brands.

To what extent has Serendipity by Design been impacted by the economic slowdown?

It is still a challenge getting work. Anyone who tells you that they are busy is

exaggerating. At the moment, it is still about survival. But we were here before the boom, when there was half the population, and there was work then, so I'm hopeful.

Does this region offer greater opportunities to smaller firms than other markets, would you say?

The experience encompasses a lot more here. The client trusts you more in this part of the world. I would also say that it is less competitive here. It is not like Europe where the big firms are the gods and they get all the projects. Here even the smaller companies have a chance.

A lot of the bigger firms here have a very cookie-cutter style. I think that's because the principal designer is no longer designing, so their style is being replicated by the rest of the employees. With principles that are still designing, their style and work is constantly evolving. My style has changed dramatically over the last 18 years. With smaller firms you get that variety.

4
A private villa
designed
by Gernon.

How difficult was it setting up a business on your own in Dubai?

When I first came here, it was very difficult. There were very few female



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5&6
Gernon also designed these signature villas for The Palm, Jebel Ali.

You started out as an architect, then moved into interior design and eventually went back to architecture. How easy is it to switch between these two disciplines?

Architects do have a certain snobbishness when it comes to interior design. When I moved into interiors, my peers at college didn't really understand why.

But moving into interior design has taught me a lot about architecture. It

has definitely impacted my approach to architecture. We design from the inside out – and we create much better designs as a result.

Architects don't always consider how people will use a space. Interior design is the human scale of a building. The human experience of a building is at the interior design level.

People have an emotional response to interiors, and for an interior design

to be successful you need to get that emotional response.

People generally try and play it safe with interiors. But I always say that interior design needs to be theatrical – and it has to be right for the space. It is all about the ambience that you create. People do not have to remember the colour of the floor, but they need to remember how a space made them feel. **CID**



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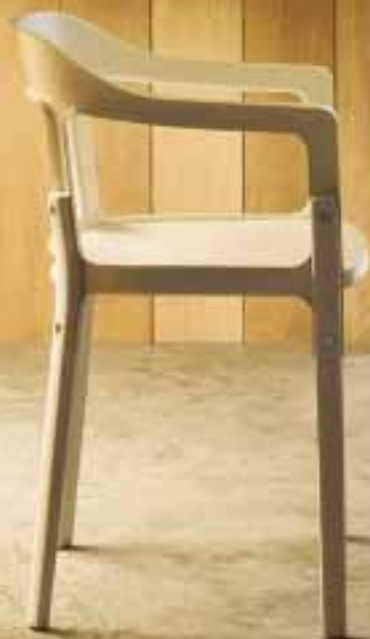


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Creative freedom

THE PAVILION IS A SPACE LIKE NO OTHER
IN DUBAI, SAYS SELINA DENMAN



The design of The Pavilion Downtown Dubai is summed up by the solid oak shed that sits at its centre. Simple but also heart-warmingly creative, it's that rare kind of design feature that inexplicably makes you want to smile.

"The shed is very playful," said Aboud Malak, who was responsible for the design of The Pavilion. "It's very cheeky. Everybody always talks about bringing the outdoors in – and we've literally brought the outdoors in."

The shed is a semi-private space furnished with a long oak table and chairs. Behind it, a towering vertical garden adds another unexpected dimension to an already intriguing design. It introduces life, texture and movement to what would otherwise be an over-sized, overly imposing wall surface. It is elements like this that make The Pavilion unlike any other space in Dubai.

ARTISTIC CONVERGENCE

The Pavilion was envisaged as a place where the artistic community, in its very broadest sense, could congregate. A brainchild of Ahmed and Rashid bin Shabib of Shelter fame, it will act as a platform for creativity and a facilitator of artistic expression. The facility is anchored by two gallery spaces, complemented by a library, screening room, lounge area, restaurant and espresso bar.

Located in what was formerly the Downtown Living Sales Centre, The Pavilion sits on Emaar Boulevard, directly opposite the Burj Khalifa. As the building is almost entirely glass fronted,





striking, uninterrupted views of the Burj become almost an extension of the interior, building on the 'outside in' theme epitomised by the shed and vertical garden.

In order to attract the attention of Dubai's creative community, Malak knew that he had to design a space that was unique and inspiring. After all, he was designing for some of the most discerning and design-conscious people in the city. "We felt that if we were going to get those people interested in this space, we really had to grab their attention," he said.

The bin Shabib brothers gave Malak free rein; their only request was that he create something that would make an impression. "They very much let me loose," he said. "And that's why The Pavilion looks the way it does. I wasn't restricted. The less interference there is and the less resistance there is, the faster we can do things and the better we can do them."

In many ways this was a dream project, but it also came with its fair share of challenges. The contract was awarded to Malak in October and The Pavilion was operational by early February, which made for a highly accelerated design-build programme.

"The challenges were with the budget and the timetable," said Mohsin Jawaheri, who was responsible for project management. "It was being designed as it was being built, which was very hard. We were told, this is the budget and you can't go over. And we didn't. But we also didn't compromise on quality," he added.

Luckily, Jawaheri was able to enlist the help of an "awesome" contractor in the form of AMBB. "The whole team was strong," said Malak. "Architecturally we were strong, project management was strong and the contractor was strong. We didn't cut corners."

TRANSFORMATION

When the team first took hold of the former sales centre, it had been lying unused for a couple of years. As a first step, the structure was completely gutted, leaving little but the shell. Next up, the building was repainted, the landscaping was reconfigured and the





5



6

interiors were cleaned up. Malak had his blank canvas.

Given the purpose of the space, Malak opted for a basic, understated palette of materials, dominated by concrete and wood. "We wanted to go back to basics. We wanted it to be timeless and we wanted it to be as pure as possible. The oak looks very natural and raw, and concrete is a very honest product. It's very durable and it doesn't require a lot of love," he said.

The Pavilion experience starts with Gallery One, a 30m-long space that acts as the main gallery and entrance area. The extended, corridor-like space is flanked on one side by the glass exterior wall and on the other by a bare white wall, which came with its own unexpected quirk. "We inherited a wall that sloped outwards – and we actually loved it," said Malak. "We could have very easily demolished it but we liked it so much that we kept it. It had that bunker-like feel to it."

Malak felt that this was a strong statement to kickstart the design with. At the same time, he recognised that a slanting wall is not the most conducive to effectively-displayed art. "So we

came up with the interesting solution of cutting into the slanted wall and carving a flat wall space out of it."

At the end of Gallery One, the space leads off to the left, into a more enclosed, sheltered area that is home to the reception. "In terms of an entry sequence, we felt it was strong because you walk in and there is that sense of anticipation. There is this long gallery space that you have to walk through before you actually reach the reception," said Malak.

Immediately after the reception, the space opens up into a cavernous open-plan area that is drenched in natural light. This is the heart of The Pavilion and home to a lounge, library, restaurant and the much-loved shed and vertical garden.

In the lounge, modular sofas by Cassina have been set up to point in a number of different directions. "We wanted to create these seating pods where people can have very different visual references. Not everybody has to face the Burj, or the restaurant, or the library – people have a choice."

Malak was keen to use furniture brands that weren't already part of the



region's design vocabulary, such as Foscarini, E15, Academia, Riva, Modular, Pianca and Magis. This generates visual interest and introduces a further layer of uniqueness.

Tucked off to the side, behind a veil of bookcases brimming with art and design books, is the library, which according to Malak is more of a "work space". "We created it for all those nomad artists that don't have an office and are working from home. We're saying, get out of your house, come and sit here, work out of this space, meet other people that are in your field or other fields, and maybe that will help you to grow and learn."

Furniture plays a key role in dividing up the different spaces. In what is essentially an oversized container, there are no definite walls telling you that you have moved from one space to the next. The furniture is the only real spatial indicator.

This also builds a level of flexibility into the design. "Our main concern was that we wanted the design to be versatile," said Malak. "So if you have an event and you don't want all that furniture in the middle, the design can

cater to that. There's nothing fixed – everything is loose."

CUSTOM MADE

When it came to the restaurant, all furniture was custom-made by AMBB. Five metre-long solid oak tables, bench-style seating and high-backed banquets make for a highly sociable eating and seating area for up to 50 people. Overhead, clusters of Torch lights from Established and Sons' Principal Collection drop dramatically from the ceiling.

All the while, the vertical garden towers enticingly overhead. The wall is composed of some 2,000 plants, representing 60 different species. "It has a great tropical feel to it. It's an evolving wall, and we love that," Malak commented.

But it also represented a considerable logistical challenge, Jawaheri explained. "Nobody could do it locally. That was the challenge. Because, actually, it would have been a liability if we fixed it up and in the short term it looked good and in the long term it failed. We had to fly in a specialist. He selected the right plants and he flew

them in from Holland. You didn't only have to be careful with the choice of plants; you also had to be careful with which plants were sitting next to each other, because of their proximity.

"One plant could completely overtake the one next to it. Another challenge was choosing suitable lighting," Jawaheri detailed.

The Pavilion is also home to the espresso bar, a 12m counter that faces an open kitchen. This builds an element of activity – and interactivity – into the design.

BROADENING HORIZONS

The F&B areas make the space more accessible to a wider range of people. Because although The Pavilion was envisioned as a haven for Dubai's creative community, it was not designed to be in any way exclusionary.

Its role is more that of a community centre. "It is for all walks of life. Your average person is also more than welcome," said Malak. "This is why we brought in the element of the restaurant and the espresso bar and the lounge. If you were just limited to the galleries and the library, it might seem

1, 2&3

A solid oak shed sits in the centre of The Pavilion, flanked by a vertical garden.

4

Gallery One opened with an installation by James Clarr.

5&6

Malak opted for furniture brands that were not part of the region's design vocabulary.

7

The reception area.

8

A 12m espresso counter overlooks the open kitchen.



a little more forbidding. You might feel like there is a kind of velvet rope that you can't get past. That is certainly not the case.

"The Pavilion is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. You are more than welcome to come in, read your newspaper and order a croissant and a coffee. You can make it what you want it to be," said Malak.

Leading on from the espresso bar is Gallery Two, a larger space that can be seen from the main road. "We'd like it to be a little more experimental as a space," said Malak and, indeed, the first installation being shown here is by street graffiti artist, The Bow Terrorist.

The final component of The Pavilion is a screening room for 35 people, which was created as a platform for more interesting, independent films, something sorely lacking in Dubai.

Here, Malak created a highly intimate space, with lounge-style seating rather than the typical fold up variety. Coupled with a striking lagoon-blue colour scheme and a goat-hair carpet, the space is sumptuous and inviting.

For both Malak and Jawaheri, The Pavilion represented a unique opportunity to do something truly different. "These opportunities come rarely," Malak admitted. "And you know when you are faced with such an opportunity so you take advantage of it. That's exactly what happened." 

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OObIQ ARCHITECTS
HAS CREATED A STRIKING
ADDITION TO SHANGHAI'S
COMPETITIVE CLUB SCENE

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When Hong Kong-based Oobiq Architects came to design the interiors of a new nightclub in Shanghai, it was tasked with creating a space that was trendy enough to attract attention in a highly competitive market, but not so trendy that it would date prematurely. Ultimately, the client wanted a club that would stand the test of time.

Oobiq defined the client's desired style as 'contemporary classic' and built the design scheme around this basic premise. In the eyes of the Oobiq designers, this translated to mean classic textures, shapes and materials, intelligently adapted to create a more international feel.

The club's location played a key role in shaping the design, explained Giambattista Burdo and Samuele Martelli, directors of Oobiq Architects. The club is located in Shanghai's Bund area, which is tucked into a bend of the Huangpu River and is one of the city's most popular tourist destinations. According to Martelli and Burdo, this is one of the few parts of the city where traditional design and architecture have been maintained.

As an Italian-led architecture and design studio, restoration and reuse are a key part of the company's design vocabulary. Both directors are graduates of the University of Florence and both are members of the Unesco Forum. "Generally speaking, Shanghai is an international city, and only a few projects are really linked to its tradition. The area of the Bund, where the Drop project is located, is the only one where you can find good examples of projects that have a special relationship with history," said Martelli.

"Shanghai has a deep tradition, history and heritage. Unfortunately often it is not shown enough or it is totally forgotten," Burdo added. "Not all clients are interested in telling the story of Shanghai and its history. We were lucky as our client was interested when we mentioned preserving the building and showing off its true character."

The building acted as the headquarters and storage facilities for a British company during the 19th century. The original decoration of the ceiling and walls had been retained, although the previous tenant had opted to cover

it up, Martelli explained. "Before our renovation, there was a Chinese restaurant located here for several years. The original decoration was hidden by a false ceiling as the owner was not at all interested in showing it off. Once the false ceilings were removed, we decided to preserve these decorations, mainly on the columns and on the beams, and let them become one of the key design elements," he continued.

Retaining the original character of the building was central to Drop's contemporary classic style. Carefully-selected furniture pieces set the tone for the rest of the scheme. "A contemporary classic design led us to our first choice in terms of furniture: the Chesterfield sofa was used for all the seating. It is a classic design, but with a contemporary shiny colour, with a European feel," Burdo said.

Also reminiscent of Europe is the wooden boiserie panelling on the walls. In this instance, the ornate, intricately-carved panelling is detached from the wall, creating more of a floating element. Set on the walls are two custom-made installations. Famous European paintings have been pixelated to create a three-dimensional effect. This is a striking example of the interplay between traditional, contemporary and international design elements.

For the floor, Oobiq took inspiration from the concept of a kaleidoscope. "From this idea we created a sort of hexagonal pattern made of marble. This feeling reminded us a lot of Arabic decoration, especially Moroccan tiles. The floor has a strong impact when you enter the club, and at the same time when you are on the crowded dance floor it presents something of a surprise when you look down and your eyes discover this decoration," said Martelli.

The hexagonal patterning has also been taken from the floor and imposed onto the stainless steel bar and DJ booth, to become a recurring motif throughout the club. The bar and the DJ booth are striking in their modernity, creating a stark contrast with some of the more traditional elements in the design scheme. Both were envisaged as stainless steel sculptures in a champagne finish. They are covered in a three-dimensional patterning, creating warm



1
The new club
is located in
Shanghai's
Bund area.

2
The client wanted
a concept that
wouldn't date.

3,4&5
Oobiq Architects
responded with a
contemporary classic
design scheme.



CASE STUDY: DROP



6

6
The bar and DJ booth take the form of stainless steel sculptures.

7
Famous European paintings have been pixelated to create a 3D effect.

10
The Chesterfield sofa reappears throughout the club.

and vibrant surfaces that reflect light in a myriad ways.

Creating a sense of warmth was integral to the success of this interior. Drop was designed to exude a sense of sophistication and grandeur but, at the same time, offer an aura of intimacy.

The space is organised on a series of different levels, with VIP rooms and seating areas set on platforms. This creates layers of interest within the space and ensures that people can see and be seen – a key requirement in any club environment! The VIP room was designed as a box and is defined by a mix of soft and hard materials.

It is this mixing of materials and styles that defines the Drop interior. And this, too, links back to the club's location. "This area of Shanghai has always been one of the most international, as the headquarters of foreign companies were

often located near the river. You can see this in the architectural style of the building. It is a mix, influenced by all the different companies, of various nationalities, operating in this area," said Burdo.

Creating any successful club environment presents a number of inherent challenges, Martelli noted. "Designing a club where hundreds of people can be hosted is not an easy task, because you always have to match the design with the functionality of the space. Also, from a construction point of view, it was a big challenge. Sometimes in Asia the quality of construction is not that high.

"Luckily we worked with both Italian and local contractors, and the result was great. Sculpture-like elements such as the bar and the DJ booth, or the decoration of the VIP rooms, could have come out terribly if the contractors weren't skilled enough."

And it was essential that the design was truly striking, Burdo concluded.

"In a city such as Shanghai, the club market is quite tough, so it was important for Drop to launch itself with an outstanding design." 

FAST FACTS

Project: Drop
Location: Bund, Shanghai
Designed by: Oobiq Architects, an award-winning architectural and design firm based in Hong Kong, with partner offices in Florence, Beijing and Tehran. Oobiq Architects' founding partners are the Italian architects Giambattista Burdo and Samuele Martelli, graduates of the University of Florence.



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Designer heals

WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTHCARE DESIGN, ITS TIME TO PUT THE PATIENT FIRST



Of all the commercial design disciplines, it is healthcare, arguably, that allows designers to most genuinely impact the lives and experiences of those they are designing for. It is not often, after all, that interior designers can honestly say that their work is a matter of life and death.

Healthcare design has traditionally been very equipment-centric, suggested Phyllis Goetz, global director, A&D and networks, Nurture by Steelcase, but change is afoot. "When you are planning a hospital, there is so much large, heavy equipment involved that you really have to look at the right way to handle that. Of course, designers

and architects also always looked at localities and what departments should be close to each other. But I'm not sure that we really, as an industry, clearly understood the journey of the patient," Goetz suggested.

However, a shift towards the creation of more patient-centric facilities is undoubtedly underway. Public awareness



2

of the number of patients that die from medical error has increased, as has awareness of the potential for improvement. This has led to growing demand for more effective medical facilities.

"There is definitely a strong trend towards patient-friendly healing environments," agreed Norman Soto, senior principal, director of healthcare, MENA region, Burt Hill. "Not only is the patient's perception of their surroundings very important, but the families and friends that visit a healthcare facility should also enjoy a pleasant experience," he said.

Burt Hill is currently working on the Al Mafraq Hospital, a 750-bed facility under construction in Abu Dhabi, and on three prototype Dialysis Centres at

Al Mafraq, Tawam and Sheikh Khalifa Medical City. In addition, the company is involved in the design of a number of community hospitals serving the outer communities of Abu Dhabi, and is active in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait.

Governments in the region are looking to radically enhance their healthcare offering over the next few years, and are taking tangible steps to ensure that this is done in the most effective way possible.

The Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD), which is the emirate's healthcare sector regulator, recently unveiled the new Healthcare Facility Design Standard for the capital. The new standards set out requirements for health facility design and construction, and

also address the prequalification of healthcare design consultants.

According to HAAD, the standards aim at improving medical outcomes and minimising errors caused by inappropriate healthcare facility design. "All healthcare design consultants who wish to design and submit projects for licensing applications will need to be pre-qualified in accordance with the standards," said Adeeb Al Zaabi, manager of Health Facility Licensing, HAAD.

"Owners and operators of healthcare facilities will need to be familiar with the new standards as they engage consultants and embark on new projects."

The new standards are divided into five parts: administrative provisions; health facility briefing and planning;

1 Nurture by Steelcase is committed to creating patient-friendly solutions.

2,3,4&5 Burt Hill has designed a number of healthcare facilities in the region, including a Dialysis Centre at Al Mafraq.



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5

COMMERCIAL

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ergonomics, occupational health and safety; infection control; and building services and environmental design.

"These standards place emphasis on achieving health facilities that reflect current healthcare functions and procedures in a safe and appropriate environment. They represent patient focused, research based, modern and efficient planning principles," said Aladin Niazmand, global director of TAHPI Health Facility Planners.

'Patient-focused' and 'evidence-based' are the buzz words when it comes to current healthcare design. "In recent years, the medical profession has been adopting evidence-based medicine that uses research findings to guide best practice, rather than simply accept expert opinion, the traditional route towards clinical decisions," noted Andrew Sibley, sales director of international carpet manufacturer, Desso.

"Architects and interior designers have come to recognise that a healthcare facility is more than just its component parts. Good healthcare design, based on empirical evidence, aims not only to make the patient experience better but to improve patient outcomes," he continued.

It's all about putting the patient first, said Sibley. "Our view, based on long design experience, is that healthcare facilities should be designed with the user in mind, rather than simply designed for its use. Putting patients and staff centre-stage in the design process

ensures an evidence-based approach to healthcare design that will result in a better building and better patient outcomes," he insisted.

Hospitals are at the frontline of the age-old battle between aesthetics and functionality – taken to the very nth degree. Ultimately, designers are tasked with creating facilities that enable doctors and nurses to do their job properly, and at the same time put patients at ease. As Nurture by Steelcase's Goetz pointed out, if patients are placed in an environment that looks like it might harm them, or that they are not entirely comfortable with, they will be less open to healing, even with the right medicine.

"The primary challenge one needs to address when designing healthcare facilities is to get the balance right between functionality, ensuring that the facility is fit for its intended purpose, and emotion, ensuring the facility provides the correct emotional re-assurance to the patients and users that is it safe, relaxing, efficient and effective. Finding this balance is where the skill of designers comes to the fore," agreed Sean Hughes, vice president and chief design officer, Philips Healthcare.

Luckily, even the smallest of design features can have the most far-reaching of consequences. For example, Nurture by Steelcase has recognised that the average age of nurses is climbing and that, as a result, their eyesight may not be as good as it once was. In response,

the company has introduced lights beneath its monitor arms, to ensure that medical errors aren't occurring simply because nurses can't see properly.

American Specialties Inc has recognised that washrooms can often be cold, overly sterile, uninviting places, and has launched its Roval Collection in response. Available from Bagno Design, this new assortment of accessories offers clean lines and a compelling, curved design, as well as ease of installation and maintenance, and fully removable waste receptacles for easy cleaning. Meanwhile, Enware's New Leva Tapware, which can be teamed up with the Roval Collection, helps reduce the risk of cross contamination when hand washing, by offering easy elbow operation.

Beyond providing a softer floor for healthcare workers or using different carpet colours to help patients find their way around a foreign and often bewildering place, Desso has identified two main areas where its products can make a difference to the healthcare environment – air quality and acoustics.

As Sibley pointed out, indoor air has been named as one of the top ten health risks of the modern world, and is particularly perilous in a healthcare environment. "Indeed, The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that indoor air pollution is one of the most important risk factors to health and is responsible for 2.7% of the global burden of disease," he said.

Desso has long recognised that carpeting can improve indoor air quality by capturing and holding allergen-causing substances, keeping them from becoming airborne and minimising their circulation in the breathing zone.

As a result, the company has developed AirMaster, a next generation carpet with a unique yarn structure that captures even more harmful dust particles from the air. According to independent tests, AirMaster is eight times more effective in capturing and retaining fine dust than hard flooring – and four times more effective than standard carpeting.

“That, however, was only half the challenge that we gave ourselves, because the other problem in a busy hospital or healthcare facility is acoustics, and noise can be distracting, intrusive – and detrimental to health,” said Sibley.

The predominance of hard materials in many healthcare environments, which generally reflect sound rather than absorb it, means that sound levels remain high. “For many health professionals, the everyday sounds of a hospital are entirely normal. However, the experience of patients is quite different, finding themselves in unfamiliar and stressful surroundings. For patients, the evidence is that reducing sound in a healthcare environment can have significant benefits,” said Sibley.

Evidence-based research confirms

that this is true. For example, the Karmanos Cancer Institute in Detroit, Michigan, saw a 30% reduction in medical errors in one unit after it installed acoustical panels and introduced decentralised nursing stations. Meanwhile, research carried out in Stockholm among coronary intensive care patients found that, when sound-reducing strategies were introduced, patients slept better, were less stressed and reported that nurses gave them better care.

In response, Desso has developed a new carpet backing called SoundMaster, which has impact sound reduction properties of 10 decibels or more, compared to the standard average of between 20 and 30 decibels. “Importantly, we can also now offer both products in one carpet tile – a carpet that will both help to clean indoor air and reduce sound. In a healthcare environment, that’s a winning combination,” said Sibley.

Also recognising the benefit of reduced noise in the healthcare environment, Nurture by Steelcase developed the lightweight Pocket cart with one very specific aim in mind. “We were very selective in how it was designed and the castors that we use. Silence was our goal,” said Goetz.

Healthcare design is evolving rapidly. Forward-thinking manufacturers and designers are using evidence-based design to create products and spaces

that addresses the very specific needs of both patients and care givers. But there is still much progress to be made. “Evidence-based design puts patients first, by respecting their privacy and creating environments that are comfortable, clean and aimed at reducing levels of stress. However, it’s an approach not being observed universally,” Sibley pointed out.

Collaboration is key, he suggested. Designers must work with medical staff and representatives from patient groups to ensure that as wide a range of perspectives as possible are being built into the design. It is essential that everybody involved appreciates the complexity of the task at hand.

Never has it been more important to reassess how we treat those that are suffering, and those tasked with healing them, said Philips’ Hughes. “As society changes, so too must the healthcare system supporting it. People are living longer, and with chronic disease, lifestyle-related disease and different types of cancer on the rise, the number of people requiring medical attention is increasing. Expectations are high – patients expect and are demanding first class medical care. All this, combined with a shortage of qualified staff, is putting hospitals under pressure to find a new balance between efficiency, effectiveness and medical excellence in the changing healthcare landscape of the twenty-first century.” 

8&9

Zumtobel also offers specialised solutions for the health and care sector.



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THE LIFELINE AUTOALERT

Philips has recognised that healthcare design reaches far beyond the physical walls of a hospital environment. According to Sean Hughes, vice president and chief design officer, Philips Healthcare, an already overstressed healthcare system, coupled with an ageing population, is driving demand for home care. "At Philips we have taken up that challenge and are innovating to bring healthcare solutions to people's homes. A good example of a people-focused home

healthcare solution that we offer is Philips Lifeline with AutoAlert Help Button." The AutoAlert button is a pendant worn 24 hours a day. It contains a series of sensors and an advanced algorithm that can accurately depict when the wearer has fallen, sending notification to the Lifeline service. "The small unobtrusive pendant provides a direct connection to help in case of an emergency," said Hughes. The Lifeline AutoAlert has received an iF Product Design Award 2011.



BALSAN SILVERCARE

Messara has launched Balsan SilverCare, a flooring solution that offers effective protection against bacteria, unpleasant odours and dust mites in carpets. Balsan SilverCare is a protection system containing a base of silver ions. Silver occurs in nature and is a raw material of mineral origin, long used for its antibacterial properties. Balsan SilverCare

works by fighting bacteria, for example staphylococcus aureus and klebsiella pneumoniae; by targeting unpleasant odours linked to fermentation, decomposition caused by certain bacteria, and the activity of certain germs; and by tackling dust mites indirectly by cutting off their food supply. Silver ions may also help in reducing the longevity of dust mite allergens.



ASSISTED BATHS BY BAGNO DESIGN

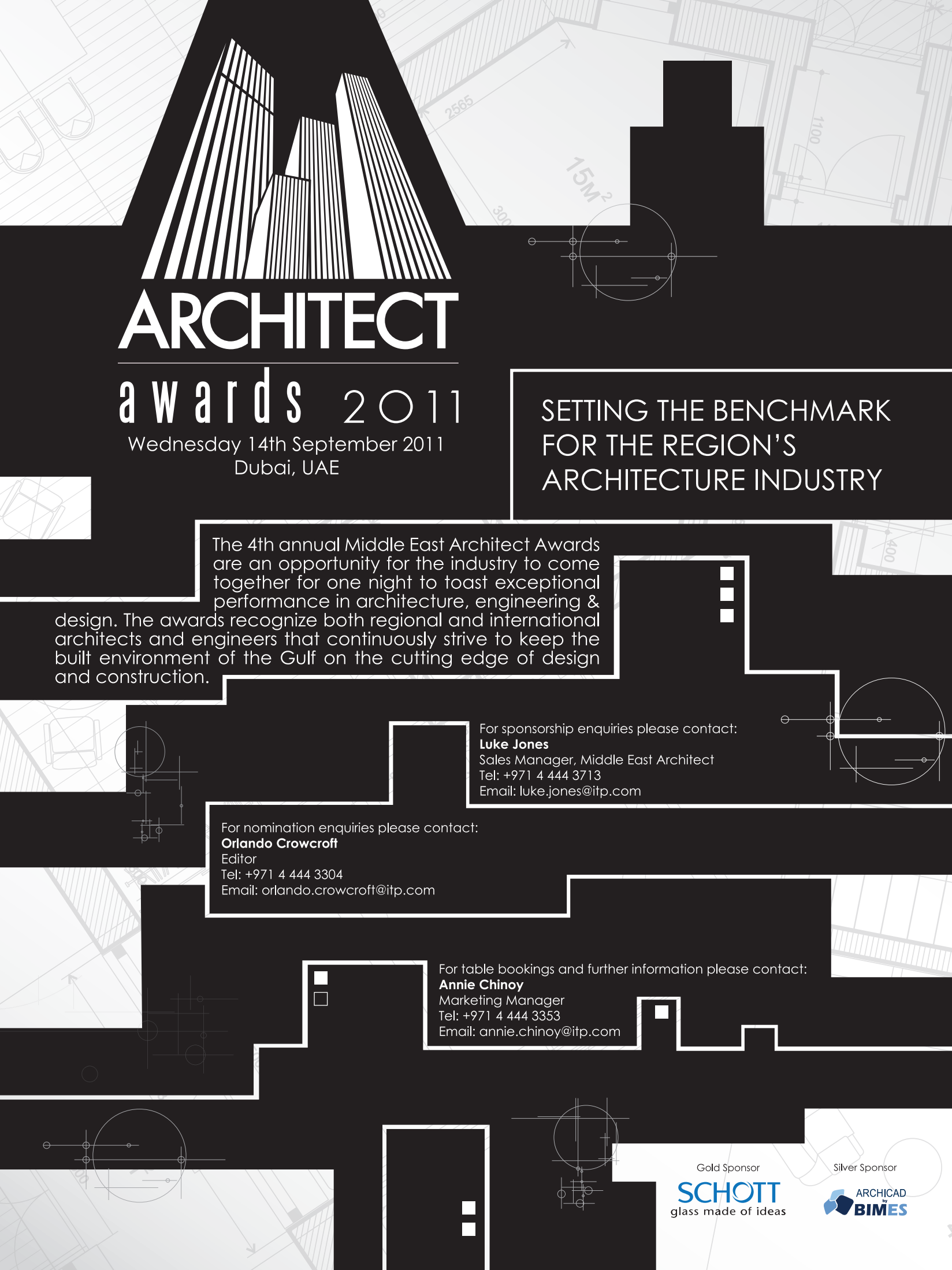
The assisted bathing range from Bagno Design is designed to suit people who have difficulty using a standard bath. There are a range of options that are suitable for nursing and residential homes or hospitals. These award-winning baths use water pressure to lift the seat out of the bath and are suitable for varying degrees of

mobility. If low water pressure is a problem, an optional booster pump is available to ensure trouble-free bathing. The options are unique in the assisted bathing market, offering not only deep baths but also airbath hydrotherapy spa and chromotherapy, which offer massage and relaxation – key for the patients' recovery.

CONBOARD MEDICAL SUPPLY SYSTEM

The Conboard Medical Supply System by Zumtobel is a supply unit that not only responds flexibly to technical and functional requirements, but at the same time blends into any architectural environment. A supplier of lighting solutions, Zumtobel also offers a range of medical units embedded with moisture-proof luminaires. Conboard is made of extruded aluminium sections and concentrates all supply outlets required in a patient room in one location. Several supply lanes can be individually composed and fitted, either horizontally or vertically.





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FURNITURE SUPPLIERS YOU SHOULD KNOW

When it comes to furniture, suppliers are dealing with an increasingly discerning client base.

And as awareness of design grows, clients will only become more and more demanding. "Furniture buyers are becoming more adventurous with their choices, moving towards glamour and edgy styles to replace the boring, austere, mass-produced looks of the last decade," suggested Atieh Sabbar, marketing and sales manager, Beby Italy & Diluce. "Vibrant colours, Venetian mirrored finishes, clean sinuous lines, and the piecing together of old and new styles are some of the new trends."

Recognising that clients are looking for something a little different, Patricia Boettcher last month launched B5 The Art of Living, a collection of high-end, fully customisable European brands. "The B5 philosophy encourages its clients to be creative and innovative

in their choice of interiors, and to ultimately select a piece of furniture as unique as they are, while maintaining the high-quality finish you would expect from handcrafted, European furnishings," Boettcher explained.

Successful furniture companies must keep abreast of the market's rapidly-changing needs. "A business is like a living being that must keep evolving with the times, registering information and actual and potential demands that come from the market," said Roberto Garcia, sales area manager, Andreu World. "Observing what happens around us is not a passive attitude, but a way to create opportunities and carve out new market niches."

Recent years have seen the UAE furniture sector become increasingly competitive, a trend that shows no sign of abating. "Due to the financial crisis, a few markets like the UAE have been adversely affected. This has resulted

in tough competition in the project business. The budgets on projects are being reduced and this affects FF&E packages. However, this has also made business more interesting and demanding as there are few projects and many competitors! It's a market where the fittest will survive," said Prashant Sharma, manager, Alshaya Trading Co, Furniture Division.

New entrants to the market that are willing to re-engineer at cut-throat prices present a major challenge for the region's furniture suppliers. Getting paid is another bugbear, noted Joe Hepworth, general manager, Middle East, Indigo Living. "Sadly, some clients still think that payment for project work is optional," he said.

Over the next few pages, *CID* speaks to a selection of furniture suppliers to find out more about the challenges they face – and how they are overcoming these obstacles.

SUPPLIERS YOU SHOULD KNOW



By Prashant Sharma, manager, Alshaya Trading Co, Furniture Division.

Tell us about your company.

The furniture division of Alshaya Trading Co specialises in providing the finest office furniture from Europe. We represent some of our industry's most reputed brands, like Estel, Sedus, Nowy Styl and Boss Design, supplying demountable partitions, executive and operative desks, task seating and soft seating. From humble beginnings in Kuwait, the Alshaya Group now spans 11 countries.

What projects have you worked on?

We have worked on prestigious projects in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar. To name but a few: Zayed University, the media offices of HH Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum and the Mohammad Bin Rashid Establishment For Young Entrepreneurs.

Recent developments?

Alshaya Group's history spans more than 100 years and there are always new developments underway within

the organisation. It is among very few organisations that continues to invest heavily in infrastructure and people, in businesses and countries where we see opportunities in the long run. We represent some of the best brands in the industry, dedicating state-of-the-art showrooms with an area of between 800m² and 1,500m² in markets like Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Key challenges?

Due to the financial crisis, a few markets like the UAE have been adversely affected. This has resulted in tough competition in the project business. The budgets on projects are being reduced and this affects FF&E packages. However, this has also made business more interesting and demanding as there are few projects and many competitors! It's a market where the fittest will survive.

How do we contact you?

Alshaya Trading Co, Furniture Division, Salahuddin Street, Deira, Dubai; Tel: +971 (0)4 6074200; Fax: +971 (0)4 269 2346; Email: furniture@alshayauae.ae; Website: www.alshayatrading.com.

By Joe Hepworth, general manager, Middle East, Indigo Living.

Tell us about your company.

Indigo Living has a 30-year history and we've been operating in Dubai since 2006. We're specialists in custom FF&E design and manufacture for the hospitality industry. We are also retailers, with three stores in Dubai and seven in Hong Kong. We're known for the fresh and on-trend seasonal collections that we launch four times per year. The third string to our bow is furniture rental – you can lease anything you see in our stores for up to two years. This is popular both with the UAE's transitory expat community and interior designers for show flats and mock-ups.

What projects have you worked on?

Over the last five years we've completed some big jobs in this part of the world: The Westin Dubai, The Address Dubai Marina, Traders Hotel in Abu Dhabi, Yas Links Golf Club and Dubai Marriott Harbour Hotel and Suites. We've also delivered around 4,000 units of staff accommodation for Emirates Airlines.

Recent developments?

There's lots going on! We're opening a new flagship store in April on Sheikh Zayed Road, near Safa Park, having closed our Al Quoz branch at the end of February. It's a great space in a great location and we're going to have the Kelly Hoppen Home and Esquire Home collections in store, which we expect to be a major hit with the interior design community here. On the projects side, we've just hired a new project sales director to take advantage of the undoubted demand that's out there. We're also casting a wider net around the GCC.

Key challenges?

Sadly, some clients still seem to think that payment for project work is optional.

How do we contact you?

The Indigo website is a good source of info: www.indigo-living.com. Otherwise, I'm always available on email: jhepworth@indigo-living.com. For project specific enquiries, speak to Gavin, our new project sales director: gmcDonald@indigo-living.com.

Indigo Living





Andreu World



By Roberto Garcia, sales area manager.

Tell us about your company.

Andreu World is a leading international company operating in the field of production and sales of designer tables and chairs. The primary focus of Andreu World since its creation as a workshop in Valencia, Spain, in 1955, has been to unite industry and design. Nowadays it has a team of over 230 highly-qualified professionals with a clear vocation towards design and quality. Today Andreu World is well placed to interpret the requests and trends of the international market with a varied range of chairs and tables which are suited for the residential, contract and office sectors, as well as outdoor use.

What projects have you worked on?

In Dubai, our furniture is present in the Fairmont, Hilton Creek, Novotel World Trade Centre and Jumeirah Beach hotels, and restaurants such as the Noodle House, Bella Donna, Japengo, Havana and Mosaico. One of our latest projects is the Jal Hotel on Sheikh Zayed Road.

Recent developments?

This year, we have launched some new collections based on innovative, sustainable materials. In 2011, Andreu World will present its latest collections of chairs and tables, including the new upholstered version of some collections, like Nanda, and the new Vogue

collection of wooden seats, all designed by Lievore, Altherr and Molina. Also, we are presenting new finishes for our Zarina Collection, designed by William Sawaya. In terms of tables, mention must be made of a table base designed by Piergiorgio Cazzaniga and belonging to the Reverse collection, and the Pure table, designed by Joan Lao. Finally, Andreu World Outdoor combines all the natural elements of outdoor products with the comfort of interior products. Andreu World Outdoor is made with highly resistant and sustainable materials.

Key challenges?

Innovation, design, quality, comfort, technology and sustainable development are our unique selling points. At Andreu World we believe in constant work, consistent with our planned strategy, and with a positive attitude, so that we can learn and improve each day. A business is like a living being that must keep evolving with the times, registering information and actual and potential demands that come from the market. Leadership comes as the result of this working process. Observing what happens around us is not a passive attitude, but a way to create opportunities and carve out new market niches.

How do we contact you?

Contact Roberto Garcia, sales area manager, at r.garcia@andreuworld.com or +346 3696 4384.





Four Frontiers

By Ole Dahlsen, managing director.

Tell us about your company.

Our core strength is working closely with our suppliers and interior design companies, providing hotels and restaurants with the optimal solution for furnishing their restaurants, lobbies, guestrooms and outdoor areas. For restaurant furniture we work closely with Andreu World from Spain, for whom we have been the exclusive agent in the UAE since 2004. We are also the exclusive agents for a number of leading brands offering a wide range of lighting, outdoor furniture, rugs and wallpaper for hotels, restaurants and the residential market.

What projects have you worked on?

We furnish mainly five-star hotels, restaurants and beach clubs, but are also able to offer excellent solutions for projects with entry level budgets. Some of the projects we have worked on lately include the Movenpick at JBR, the new Jal hotel on Sheikh Zayed Road, Staybridge Hotel in Abu Dhabi, and the new Holiday Inn in Danet, Abu

Dhabi, Centro hotels, as well as all of the Noodle House restaurants throughout the MENA region.

Have there been any recent developments at your company?

We have strengthened our ability to offer competitive furniture packages for furnished and serviced apartment towers, and we have a close co-operation with manufacturing experts in this field.

Key challenges?

2009 and 2010 have been a challenging period for Four Frontiers and for most of our colleagues in the business. The UAE has fewer projects than previously, all of which have substantially lower budgets, meaning that we very often come up against new competitors who are willing to re-engineer at cut-throat prices.

How do we contact you?

Four Frontiers JLT, PO Box 454617, Fortune Tower, Jumeirah Lakes Towers, Dubai. Email: admin@fourfrontiers.com; Website: www.fourfrontiers.com.

CID speaks to Suood Abdul-Rahman, general manager, 2XL Furniture and Home Décor.

Tell us about your company.

2XL is a world where elegant design combines effortlessly with comfort and support to bring a home furniture concept that is attractive, inspirational and practical. At 2XL, we understand that our customer requires furniture that not only fits the physical dimensions of the room, but a complete furniture solution that conveys a message about their lifestyle. We offer variety, style, comfort, convenience, inspiration and value that sets new standards in home furniture. Our range is stylish, versatile and affordable, but most importantly adds a touch of personality and uniqueness.

What projects have you worked on?

We have an office design team that takes care of commercial requirements. One of our recently completed projects is the recently reopened flagship store of 2XL in Sharjah, which is approximately 5,000m² in size and located behind

Mega Mall. It offers our complete range of products – furniture, furnishings, home décor art and kitchenware.

Have there been any recent developments at your company?

We have opened our flagship store in Sharjah which has over 100 room settings, along with a dedicated accessories area that allows our customers to take time in choosing their style.

What are the key challenges facing your industry?

With the influx of new international furniture brands in the UAE over the past two years, we are expecting tougher competition in the furniture sector, which we are prepared for.

How do we contact you?

We have five stores in the UAE: two in Abu Dhabi at Mina Centre and Abu Dhabi Mall; two in Dubai, at Al Ghurair City and Uptown Mirdif; and one in Sharjah in the Regus Building, behind Sharjah Mega Mall. We can also be contacted through our toll free number: 800 2XL (295).





Beby Italy & Diluce

CID catches up with Atieh Sabbar, marketing and sales manager, Beby Italy & Diluce.

Tell us about your company.

Beby Italy & Diluce, recently launched and exclusively distributed through RA Middle East, is an Italian ultra-luxury furniture and lighting company, dedicated to master Italian craftsmanship and style. Founded in 1960, it has emerged as an Italian renaissance atelier for the new millennium, integrating high artistry, workmanship and quality with technology and research. While the heritage collection, Beby Italy, has since 1960 been producing highly exclusive and magnificent lighting, catering to elite hotels, resorts and world-renowned theatres such as The Fenice theatre in Venice and the Scala theatre in Milan, to mention a few, the company has taken its art further into the new generation with the Beby Italy Light and Living collections and DiLuce Living Design collections.

What sets Beby Italy & Diluce apart from the competition?

Beby Italy & Diluce is about designing and delivering total luxury lifestyles through co-ordinated lighting and furnishings. Our creative director, Silvia Broggian's vision of each lifestyle, her attention to the smallest details and the mastery of the artisans, all work together to create unique lifestyle

collections, each with a distinctive personality, while always keeping in line with the company's heritage of fine Italian craftsmanship.

When it comes to furniture, what are the key trends right now?

Furniture buyers are becoming more adventurous with their choices, moving towards glamour and edgy styles to replace the boring, austere, mass produced looks of the last decade. Vibrant colours, Venetian mirrored finishes, clean sinuous lines, and the piecing together of old and new styles, are some of the new trends.

Have there been any recent developments at your company?

The company has recently introduced the Stone lifestyle collection by Diluce, and the Platinum lifestyle collection by Beby Italy. Meanwhile, it is currently working on a children's line, Beby Baby, to be launched in April. We are also expanding our distribution within the Middle East and will be relocating to our flagship showroom on Sheikh Zayed Road very soon.

How do we contact you?

Beby Italy Diluce, Showroom No. 5 364, Road 15A, PO Box 34514, Al Quoz Industrial 1, Dubai, UAE.
Tel: +971 (0)4 323 3681; Email: sales@bebydiluce-me.com; Website: www.bebygroup.com.





B5 The Art of Living



By Patricia Boettcher, founder, B5 The Art of Living.

Tell us about your company.

Drawing its inspiration from the five principles of art and interior design, B5 The Art of Living is a new concept in bespoke interior furnishings. Bringing the art of customisation to contemporary interiors in the region, B5 represents Europe's most innovative brands on the bespoke interiors scene, including kitchens by Eggersmann, beds by Jensen, luxury safes by Döttling, wood flooring by Junckers, furniture by Lambert, rugs from Casador, lighting and furniture by F+M Fos, cabinetry by Schmalenbach and mirror televisions by Ad Notam.

What projects have you worked on?

All B5 brands are globally respected and considered innovators in their fields, having been commissioned for both commercial and residential projects throughout Europe, the US

and Asia. Brand new to the Middle East market, B5 opened its doors in Dubai at the end of February and is looking forward to introducing its concept to interior designers in the region.

Have there been any recent developments at your company?

B5's brand new 6000ft² showroom recently opened in Dubai, showcasing the luxury European bespoke interior furnishing brands. The showroom beautifully demonstrates founder Patricia Boettcher's desire to create an individual living space that embraces both luxury and creativity yet remains comfortable and functional.

What are the key challenges facing your industry?

The demand for individual, high-quality interiors means that designers and clients are becoming more discerning. The B5 philosophy encourages its clients to be creative and innovative in their choice of interiors, to ultimately select a piece of furniture as unique as they are, yet maintaining the high-quality finish you would come to expect from hand-crafted, European furnishings.

How do we contact you?

B5 The Art of Living showroom: ground floor, Sidra Tower, Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai. Tel: +971 (0)4 447 3973; Email: info@b5living.com; Website: www.b5living.com.





facilities management awards

11

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New on the market

DREAMCATCHER

Kenneth Cobonpue's new seating option, Dreamcatcher, sees the Filipino furniture designer draw inspiration from a traditional native American charm. Made of polyethylene fibres, nylon and

steel, Dreamcatcher stools come in various sizes. Every piece in the Kenneth Cobonpue collection is handmade by Filipino artisans, using skills passed down from generation to generation.

KENNETH COBONPUE
+351 2297 41542
www.kennethcobonpue.com



CRYSTAL FOUNTAINS

Designed for swimming pools and commercial fountains, this latest technology from Crystal Fountains provides a dramatic focal point and is pre-engineered to make it easy to install.

Crafted from a variety of materials including hand-hammered copper and coloured concrete, these water features come in various shapes and sizes and have proved popular with architects designing luxury resorts in Europe and the

Middle East. Fire-Water Bowls require low water flow (10-12gpm) to work and are CSA approved.

CRYSTAL FOUNTAINS
+971 (0)4 430 9443
www.crystalfountains.com





CREATION CLIC SYSTEM

Gerflor has launched the revolutionary Creation Clic System. The new vinyl flooring system has the appearance of wood and is waterproof, easy to maintain, quick to install and 100% recyclable. The Creation Clic System is a synthetic, decorative, flexible, anti-static floor covering available in

17.2cm x 100cm planks with bevelled edges. The interlocking planks can be laid without adhesives, allowing for easier installation.

GERFLOR
+971 (0)4 295 4443
www.gerflor.com



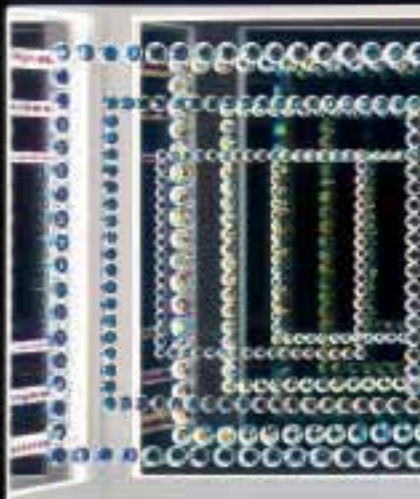
THE RUG COMPANY

The Rug Company has teamed up with Spanish designer Jaime Hayon to create a new collection, which consists of three rugs, Captione, Silhouette and Vases. Captione is a sumptuous, textural rug with a diamond design, created

using a new weaving technique. Silhouette features an intricate and highly decorative design that demands the use of an extremely fine knot count. With Vases, the vase motif is translated into a subtle but dynamic rug.

THE RUG COMPANY
+971 (0)4 323 1161
www.rugcompany.ae

PRODUCTS



LMW LIGHTFORMS

The Collection by LMW Lightforms is inspired by Philip Johnson's Glass House, Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House and Frank Stella's early black paintings. With its clean, clear lines and shapes, this contemporary lighting collection features crystal elements from the Crystallized – Swarovski Elements collection, hand glued onto glass panels, and LED illumination integrated into the frame. The Square Table Lamp measures 25 x 25 x 60cm, with an aluminium frame and choice of finishes.

LMW LIGHTFORMS

+49 3425 905 1920

www.lmw-lightforms.com

CARRÉ MODULAR

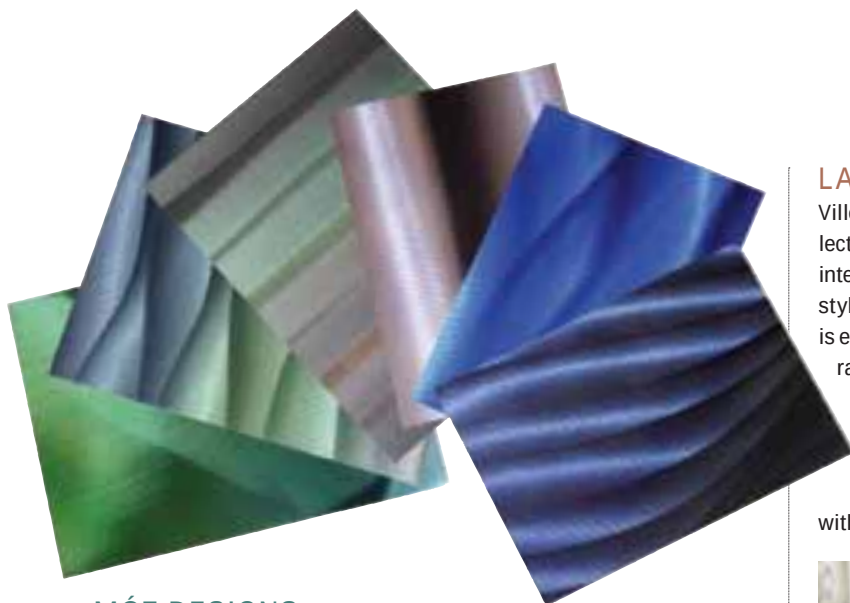
In keeping with efforts to reduce its carbon footprint, Danish carpet manufacturer Ege has launched a new collection, Carré Modular, which is made of materials recycled from the company's own waste products. The Carré Modular collection is an addition to Ege's sustainable Ecoline range.

EGE

+1 45 97 11 88 11

www.egecarpets.com





MÓZ DESIGNS

US-headquartered Móz Designs, a supplier of wall surfaces and trims for hospitality, healthcare and commercial installations, is promoting products in two new colour streams. Móz's trendy new tones include the Minerals Collection with its vivid accent colours and cool neutrals. Meanwhile, the bold new Arctic Blue series offers shimmering shades

of gray, pewter, ice blue, ice green and silver rose. All Móz architectural metals are composed of 80% post-industrial recycled aluminum and contribute to LEED 2.0 MR Credit 4—Recycled Content.

MÓZ DESIGNS
+1 510 632-0853
www.mozdesigns.com

LAFLEUR

Villeroy & Boch's LaFleur collection of fittings is a modern interpretation of classic floral-style elements. Villeroy & Boch is expanding its existing LaFleur range, adding three new fittings that combine a range of different materials: a Strass Swarovski crystal handle, a clear crystal glass version with a soft, frosted finish, and a

pure, undecorated white porcelain handle. LaFleur encompasses a total of five different fittings for washbasins and a large selection of tap fittings, shower mixers and valves for bathtubs and showers, as well as one bidet fitting.

VILLEROY & BOCH MIDDLE EAST
+971 (0)4 364 2613
www.villeroy-boch.com



ARCHETTO

To celebrate the 70th edition of Pitti Uomo, architecture firm Marzorati Ronchetti entrusted Sybarite with the task of creating a design concept that would furnish an area while combining aesthetics and multi-functionality. The result, Archetto, is an organic and free-flowing form. Designed to be an autonomous island, equipped with sockets

to recharge mobile phones and computers, Archetto is simultaneously open and closed, and visible and private. Archetto is made of high density polystyrene covered in fibreglass with a gloss paint finish.

MARZORATI RONCHETTI
+971 (0)56 759 2012
www.marzoratironchetti.it



OPUS ROMANO

Bisazza is expanding its popular Opus Romano collection. The latest edition of Opus Romano will feature new rectangular tiles measuring 20x41.5mm, along with two new sizes in the classic square shape, measuring 8x8mm and

15x15mm respectively. The existing 12x12mm size will remain unchanged.

BISAZZA
+39 02 7602 1313
www.bisazza.com

GIÒ

The Giò hanging light was designed by Angeletti Ruzza Design for Nemo Cassina Lighting. De-materialised to its very essence, Giò incorporates the electric cable within the lamp structure so that it serves a dual supply

and support function. The body comes in chromed aluminium or a smooth white matt varnish.

NEMO CASSINA LIGHTING
+39 3 175 7571
www.nemo.cassina.it



BLACKLIGHT & DESCRIPT

This year's edition of Big Boys Toys will showcase the ultra luxurious billiards table, BlackLight. The tailor-made, atypical billiard table is designed and created in collaboration with six designers from the French Institut Supérieur du Design and Billiards Toulet, which has been producing billiards, snooker and pool tables

since 1857. BlackLight, which can also be turned into a dining table, features a high-quality Atoa audio system and a unique DiscoLight system which synchronises built-in lights with the music being played. The table is currently available in two versions, standard and luxury, and in more than 30 different colours. Also present at

Big Boys Toys 2011 is DeScript, a Russia-based company specialising in graphic DNA portraits. The DNA scripting process starts with the harvesting of the cells by scraping at the inner part of the cheek with a special brush. A solution saturated with millions of DNA copies will be applied to a gel and run through an electric current,

which will then form an inimitable graphic pattern unique to each individual customer. Big Boys Toys will run from March 16 to 19, 2011 at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre.

BIG BOYS TOYS 2011
+971 (0)4 321 4747
www.bigboystoysuae.com



PRODUCTS



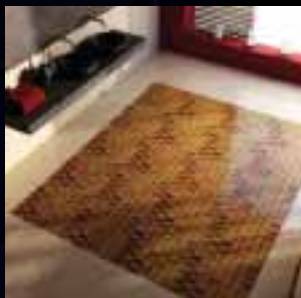
MOUNTAIN DIVA

Mimicking the way water and wind shape nature in smooth and gentle forms, even in the most inhospitable environments, Jordi Mila's Mountain Diva combines the

natural warmth of wood with the delicacy of its handcrafted curves. The seat's organic feel contrasts with its thin stainless steel legs. Two and four seat models are

available, in ash grey or a natural wood colour. The Jordi Mila collection will be showcased at Big Boys Toys 2011, taking place from March 16 to 19.

JORDI MILA
+971 (0)4 338 8276
www.jordimila.com



AFRO FABRIC

The latest product from local ceramics giant RAK Ceramics, Afro Fabric was one of four new ranges unveiled at the Cevisama exhibition in Valencia. Afro Fabric brings a touch of African culture to tiling, with flora and fauna playing a prominent role in the design. Meanwhile, RAK Ceramic's Fossilwood Collection draws inspiration from historic fossilised wood.

RAK CERAMICS
+971 (0)7 2445046
www.rakceramics.com



Project Focus

COMMERCIAL INTERIOR DESIGN IS COMMITTED TO HELPING ITS READERS GROW THEIR BUSINESSES, SO WE HAVE TEAMED UP WITH VENTURES MIDDLE EAST TO BRING YOU THE LATEST TENDERS FROM AROUND THE REGION ON A MONTHLY BASIS.

BAHRAIN PROJECTS DATABASE

PROJECT TITLE	CLIENT	CONSULTANT	MAIN CONTRACTOR	VALUE / VALUE RANGE (US\$. MN)	PROJECT STATUS	PROJECT TYPE
Ajmera Mayfair Tower	Ajmera Group	Mohamed Salahuddin Consulting Engineering Bureau	Not Appointed	101 - 250	Project under design	Mixed Use
Awal Gulf Warehouse in BLZ	Awal Gulf	Alhandasah Centre	Not Appointed	31 - 100	Project under design	Industrial Park
Zawia 03	Nardin Properties	Mohamed Salahuddin Consulting Engineering Bureau	Charilaos Apostilides	16 - 30	Project under construction	Residential Buildings
Jeyoun - Phase 1	Alargan International Real Estate	City Engineering	Abdulla H. Al Darazi & Sons Company	16 - 30	Project under construction	Residential Development
Al Matrook Tower	Mr. Faisal Ali Al Matrook	Mohamed Salahuddin Consulting Engineering Bureau	Charilaos Apostilides (Chapo)	19	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Apartment Building in Juffair	The Islamic Association	Modern Architects	Middle East Contg. & Trade Center	16 - 30	Project under construction	Residential Buildings
Sarat Tower in Seef	Savah Almoayyed	Arab Architects	Al Qaed Contractors	30	Project under construction	Mixed Use
Muharraq Mall	Muharraq Mall Company	Leigh and Orange Architects	Not Appointed	64	Award awaited for the main contract	Shopping Centre
DCR Apartments in Juffair	Mr. Yousef Gulub	Architectural World	Bassman Contracting	13	Project under construction	Residential Buildings
Reflections of Bahrain	Ithmaar Development Company	DP Architects	Not Appointed	101 - 250	Project under design	Mixed Use
Six Villas in Saar - Pack 2	Mr. Turani	City Engineering	Not Appointed	2.5 - 15	Project under design	Residential Development
Light of Bahrain	Ithmaar Development Company	DP Architects	Not Appointed	101 - 250	Project under design	Residential Buildings
Jeyoun - Phase 2	Alargan International Real Estate	City Engineering	Not Appointed	16 - 30	Award awaited for the main contract	Commercial Buildings
Frsan Palace Hotel in Hoora	Mr. Fadel Al Bado	Arab Architects	Not Appointed	20	Award awaited for the main contract	Hotel
156 Townhouses at Darkulaib	Ministry of Housing	In House	Abdulla H. Al Darazi & Sons Company	13	Project under construction	Residential Development
Ajyaal Residence	Al Dahiya Constructions & Real Estate	Middle East Architects	Bassman Contracting	16 - 30	Project under construction	Residential Buildings
Riffa Views- The Lagoons Estate	Riffa Views	Mohamed Salahuddin Consulting Engineering Bureau	Terna Contracting/PCC	114	Project under construction	Residential Development
Amwaj Gateway	Amwaj Gateway Company	Davenport Campbell Middle East, Bahrain	Garantikoza/Cukurova Construction	183	Project under construction	Mixed Use
Injaz Building in Juffair	Ms. Haifa	Architectural World (Archworld)	Al Dahiya Constructions and Real Estate	16	Project under construction	Residential Buildings
34 Storey Building in Seef	Mr. Essa Bukhowa	Arabian East Bureau	Al Ghanah Contracting	31 - 100	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Amwaj Waves	Lona Real Estate	Davenport Campbell Middle East	Charilaos Apostilides (Chapo)	396	Project under construction	Residential Buildings
Renaissance Bahrain Hotel at Amwaj	Ossis Property Developers	Davenport Campbell/MSCEB	Charilaos Apostilides (Chapo)	16 - 30	Project under construction	Hotel
Future Bank Head Quarters	Future Bank	Middle East Architects	Al Ghanah Contracting	16	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Academic Building in Sanad Elementary School	Ministry of Education	In House	Saraya Contractors	1	Project under construction	Educational Facilities
21 Storey Residential Building in Juffair	Sea Star Propeties	Modern Architects	Juma Construction Company	16 - 30	Project under construction	Residential Buildings
Albaraka Banking Group Head Quarters in Bahrain Bay	Albaraka Banking Group (ABG)	MGA+C	Not Appointed	31 - 100	Award awaited for the main contract	Commercial Buildings
BFB Tower	Bin Faqeeh Investment Company	Andalus Engineering Consultancy	Master Construction & Maintenance Co.	80	P[roject under construction	Commercial Buildings
Car Park & Office Building in Seef	Stratum	Mazen Al Umran Consulting Engineers	Abdul Rahman Al Mansoori Contracting	9	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Dream Tower - II	Orchid	Akbari Architects/Arsinal Consulting	Orchid Construction	31 - 100	Project under construction	Residential Buildings

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SAUDI ARABIA PROJECTS DATABASE

PROJECT TITLE	CLIENT	CONSULTANT	MAIN CONTRACTOR	VALUE / VALUE RANGE (US\$. MN)	PROJECT STATUS	PROJECT TYPE
Taibah University in Madina - College of Science For Men	Taibah University	Zuhair Fayeze & Partners	Ahmed Al Hurafi Company	31 - 100	Project under construction	Educational Facilities
8000 Residential Units - North Jeddah	Kinan/Savola Group/Eleba Company	Not Appointed	Not Appointed	640	Project in concept stage	Residential Development
Al Barari - Luxury Villas in Jeddah	Al Barari	Not Appointed	Not Appointed	27	Project in concept stage	Residential Development
100 Bed Hospital in Qatif	Ministry of Health	Beeah Planners	Saeed Radad Al Zahrany	17	Project under construction	Hospital
Prince Mohammad Bin Abdulaziz Airport Expansion in Madina - Phase1	General Authority for Civil Aviation (GACA)	Zuhair Fayeze & Partners	Not Appointed	2,400	Project under design	Airport
Taiba Aramas Hotel in Madina	Taiba Investment / Al Aqeeq Real Estate	Dar Al Riyadh	El Khareiji Company	16 - 30	Project under construction	Hotel
Dar Al-Qeblah Complex	Munshaat Real Estate Projects Company	Zuhair Fayeze & Partners	Saudi Binladin Group	180	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Ministry of Hajj Complex in Makkah - Phase 1	Ministry of Hajj	Dar Al Omran	Projects & Trading Company	150	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Alesayi Tower in Downtown Jeddah	Saudi Real Estate Development Company	Innovators Consulting/Said Al Elsaie Engg.	International Center for Commerce & Contr.	28	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Olaya Towers in Riyadh	General Organization for Social Insurance (GOSI)	Zuhair Fayeze & Partners	Nesma & Partners Contracting Company	250	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
King Fahd National Library	Arriyadh Development Authority/King Fahd National Library	SaudConsult/Gerber Architects	Saudi Binladin Group	78	Project under construction	Recreational Facilities
King Faisal University in Al Ihssa - University Hospital	King Faisal University	Zuhair Fayeze & Partners	Al Arrab Contracting Company	31 - 100	Project under construction	Hospital
Tabuk Domestic Airport Expansion	General Authority for Civil Aviation	Saudi Consolidated Engineering Co;	Saudi Binladin Group	59	Project under construction	Airport
ITCC Park in Riyadh Phase 1	The Public Pension Agency	Zuhair Fayeze & Partners	Al Rajhi Projects/Al Yamamah /CCE	1,500	Project under construction	Mixed Use
King Abdulaziz University - Nuclear Research Facility	King Abdulaziz University	Not Appointed	Not Appointed	150	Project in concept stage	Others
South Obhur Project	Rayadah Investment Company	Sulaiman Al Khorashi Office	Not Appointed	15,000	Project under design	Mixed Use
Three 100-Bed General Hospitals	Ministry of Health	Al Naem Engineering/Arplane Engineering	Saudi Pan Company for Trading & Contracting	70	Project under construction	Hospital
Pediatric & Maternity Hospital in Raffa	Ministry of Health	Al Mashriq Contracting	Al Mashriq Contracting	53	Project under construction	Hospital
Imam Islamic University in Riyadh - Phases 1 & 2	Imam Islamic University	Tibsa	Al Fouzan Trading & General Construction	133	Project under construction	Educational Facilities
Souq Okaz in Taif	Supreme Commission For Tourism	Not Appointed	Not Appointed	50	Project in concept stage	Shopping Centre
Laboratory for General Products in Jeddah	Authority for Management & Specification	Soleiman Abdullah El Kheraji Consult.	Naif Abo Ryash Est.	3	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
King Saud University For Health Science	Saud National Guard Health Affairs	Dar Al Handasah Shair & Partners	Saud Binladin Group	101 - 250	Project under construction	Educational Facilities
Nasamat Al Riyadh	Talaat Moustafa / Aloula Development Co;	Zuhair Fayeze & Partners	Saudi Constructioners Establishment	2,700	Project under construction	Residential Development
Sheikh Saleh Al Rajhi Center	Ministry of Health	Al Majaz Engineering Office	Al Areeel Contracting & Industrial Co. Ltd.	10	Project under construction	Hospital
Princess Noura Bin Abdulrahman University	Ministry of Finance	Dar Al Handasah Shair & Partners	Saudi Bin Ladin/Saudi Oger/ El Seif Eng.	3,332	Project under construction	Educational Facilities
Industrial Institute in Dammam	Zamil Industrial Investment Company	Al Awami Planners & Consulting	Amjad Shami Contracting Est.	20	Project under construction	Educational Facilities
Business Village at Jeddah	Omar Kassem Alesayi Group	ERGA Art & Design	Not Appointed	80	Project under design	Mixed Use
Al Rajhi Landmark Tower in Riyadh	Saleh Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Rajhi Business Council	Atkins	Not Appointed	266	Award awaited for the main contract	Mixed Use
Central Hospital in Arar	Ministry of Health	Al Mashriq Contracting	Al Mashriq Contracting Company	53	Project under construction	Hospital
Umm Al-Qura University Expansion in Makkah - Female Campus - Phase	Umm Al Qura University	SaudConsult	Al Arrab Contracting Company	41	Project under construction	Educational Facilities
Lamar Towers in Jeddah	Cayan Investment/Zahran Real Estate	Saudi Diyar/RMIM	Arabtec Construction	504	Project under construction	Mixed Use
Durrat Arriyadh Project	Durrat Arriyadh Company	Abdulelah Al Mohanna Engineering Cons.	Dallah Developments/Addax Group	810	Project under construction	Residential development

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OMAN PROJECTS DATABASE

PROJECT TITLE	CLIENT	CONSULTANT	MAIN CONTRACTOR	VALUE / VALUE RANGE (US\$. MN)	PROJECT STATUS	PROJECT TYPE
World of Salalah	Ministry of Tourism / United Real Estate Company	Option One	Wara Construction Company	101 - 250	Project under construction	Shopping Centre
Renovation of Intercontinental Hotel in Muscat	Omran Office	Pentago Spowers International	Not Appointed	31 - 100	Project under design	Hotel
Radisson SAS Hotel & Resort at Sohar	Al Nabri Global Investment	Atkins	Not Appointed	101 - 250	Award awaited for the construction contract	Hotel
Al Bustan Residences at Muscat	Silver Circle Overseas	ME Design	Not Appointed	50	Award awaited for the construction contract	Residential Development
M.E.D.C Headoffice at Azaiba	Muscat Electricity Distribution Company	Abdullah Mukadam & Partners	Not Appointed	2.5 - 15	Project under design	Commercial Buildings
Development of Jabal Al Akhdar Resort Hotel	Omran Office	AW2	Not Appointed	31 - 100	Project under design	Hotel
Fairmont Hotel	Fairmont Hotel & Resorts/The Wave Muscat	Echo Designer Consultants	Not Appointed	101 - 250	Project under design	Hotel
Crowne Plaza Duqum Hotel	Omran Office/Inter Continental Hotel Group	KEO International	Not Appointed	251 - 500	Award awaited for the construction contract	Hotel
Beyout Al Faye Project	Alargan Towell Investment	Al Abraj Consulting Engineers & Architects	Juma Al-Sadoon Trading & Contracting	80	Project under construction	Residential Development
Psychiatric Hospital at Al Amerat	Ministry of Health	Khatib and Alami	Bahwan Contracting Company	107	Project under construction	Hospital
Renovation of Sheraton Hotel	Al Hasher Group	Atkins	Zubair Furnishing	25	Project under construction	Hotel
The Malkai at Barka	Al Maeen Real Estate Services Company	Triad Oman/AW2	Not Appointed	250	Project under design	Mixed Use
Musandam Airport	Ministry of Transport & Communication	Not Appointed	Not Appointed	101 - 250	Award awaited for the consultancy contract	Airport
Commercial Building in Saham	Mr. Rashid Al Kalbani	Abdullah Mukadam & Partners	Century Harwes Trading and Contracting	6	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Residential/Commercial Building at Wadi Kabir	Al Taqdeer	Al Saqf Consulting	Technical Trading Company	10	Project under construction	Mixed Use
National Cardiology Centre at Royal Hospital	Ministry of Health	Asi Etudes	Galfar Engineering & Contracting	21	Project under construction	Hospital
Redevelopment of the Crowne Plaza resort Salalah	Ministry of Tourism	Consulting Engineering Services	Not Appointed	31 - 100	Project under design	Hotel
Court Complex at Al-Buraimi	Ministry of Justice	Sundaram Architects	Al Adrak Trading & Contracting	15	Project under construction	Others
Natural History Museum in Muscat	Ministry of Heritage & Culture	Consulting Engineering Services	Not Appointed	16 - 30	Project under design	Recreational Facilities
Cultural Village at Ghala	Ministry of Heritage & Culture	Dar Al Mahara Engineering Designers	Not Appointed	75	Project under design	Mixed Use
State Audit Institute	State Audit Institute	National Engineering Office	Abu Hatim Co	2.5 - 15	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings
Khasab Family Resort	Majan Gulf Properties	Not Appointed	Not Appointed	779	Project in concept stage	Hotel
Commercial Building for Al Noor Association	Al Noor Association	Muamir Design & Engineering	Atlas Integrated	8	Project under construction	Commercial Buildings

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The Market Leader

FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT INFO IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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middle east



Artwork for hospitality

BY MICHAEL BANKS

It is ironic, and somewhat paradoxical, that the specification of potentially the most visible element in a hotel guestroom – the artwork – is, for a number of reasons, often left until the last minute and therefore selected in a rushed manner.

A recent survey asked over 1,000 hotel guests who had stayed in an international four- or five-star hotel environment in the last 12 months what item they noticed most in a room interior. The answer, in order of perceived visibility, was first, the artwork, second, the bed, third, window treatments and fourth, furniture.

From this simple analysis, it can be presumed that artwork selection is fundamental within an interior design FF&E scheme, and should not be left until last. Indeed, considering the artwork at an early stage in the design process will result in a more cohesive scheme.

Artwork has, historically, often been given lower importance in a hotel interior because it is perceived as having less value in the 'functional' scheme of things. More importance was placed on supplying a comfortable bed, adequate lighting, relevant furniture items and an enjoyable bathroom experience.

Of course, all of these items are critical to the success of the client experience. However, in recent years, these things

have become more of a norm; it is taken for granted that they will be supplied.

As such, the importance of the visual experience, and the design experience, has risen. The offering of beautiful things – shapes, forms, colours, sensuality – is now a fundamental part of the guest's expectations. So, returning to the perceived visibility level of different guestroom items, artwork is now more important than ever.

WHY SPECIFY ARTWORK?

Much research has been done over the years on the relevance of artwork in any interior space. The most commonly drawn conclusions are that artwork finishes and completes an interior environment, gives it more personality, makes it friendlier and, ultimately, a more stimulating space to be in. Clients have been known to ask, in a guestroom that has no artwork: Why isn't this room finished? Artwork can be highly important in determining mood and atmosphere, and can even dictate whether customers will return.

HOW TO SPECIFY?

Artwork can be sourced in a variety of ways, including using an art consultant, purchasing from an art gallery, or direct from an artist supplier. Whatever the source, the fundamental issues remain

the same. Try to specify early in the design process, be clear on whether you are looking for local flavour or a more internationally-generic theme, and pay attention to the basic issues of appropriateness of media for the environment, durability, ease of maintenance, and security requirements.

WHAT KIND OF ARTWORK?

In a guestroom interior, the usual choices are between painting, drawing, print, tapestry or photography. In the early years of this century, there has been a discernable rise in the use of photographic art, since it is viewed, perhaps, as a modern, 21st century media. It also has obvious advantages in terms of reproducibility, and with new print technologies available, it has high creative potential, as images can be printed onto a host of exciting substrates, including fabrics, wood, aluminium and even ceramic tiles.

So, enjoy the process of artwork specification. From primeval cave drawings to the latest digital art, the creation of art and the visual pleasure derived from it, is one of our most basic human instincts. 

For more information, see <http://www.michaelbanksart.com>, or contact British photo-artist Michael Banks directly on michael@michaelbanksart.com.



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