

designingways

ISSUE 295

KITCHENS

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DESIGN LUXE INTERIORS

THE ART OF LUXURIOUS LIVING

Design Luxe Interiors, the newest brand within the Design Plus Interiors Group, is passionate about bringing its clients the best in global design trends and innovations with collections inspired by artistic imagery and drawn from real life, where each piece tells a story of refined living that resonates beyond aesthetics. Design Luxe Interiors is celebrated for furniture and décor that embody timeless elegance and contemporary relevance, offering a curated range that showcases an array of exquisite materials, from the enduring beauty of natural woods to the striking presence of stone, the warmth of brass and the sleek sophistication of metals.

Each piece in the collection is meticulously sourced globally and curated into a portfolio of rare, bespoke

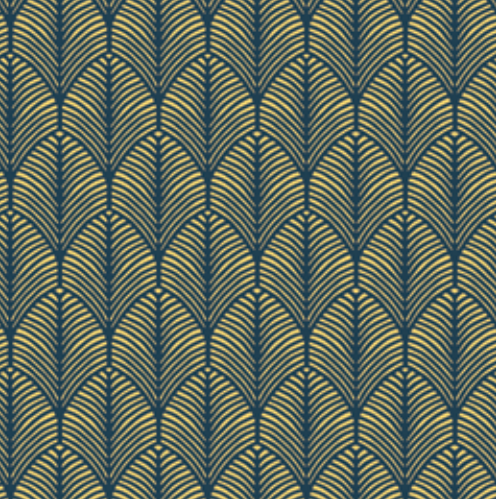
and exclusive designs that embody sophistication and individuality. Beyond its furniture offering, Design Luxe Interiors also extends its vision through complementary interior design services. Stepping into the Design Luxe Interiors showroom in Kramerville is an immersion into what the company calls the “Art of Luxurious Living” – an experience carefully crafted to engage every sense.

More than a furniture store, the company’s bespoke space is designed to

transport clients into a world of elegance and refinement. A symphony of textures invites touch, bespoke scents evoke a sense of calm and exclusivity and mood music sets the perfect tone, all within a gallery-like setting of breathtakingly styled interiors. This six-star boutique experience ensures each visit is not simply about viewing furniture, but about feeling the artistry, passion and uniqueness that define Design Luxe Interiors. dw

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The Kunene collection celebrates versatility and modern ease. Durable yet effortlessly stylish, its fabrics move gracefully between patio and lounge, inviting a sense of continuity between the home and the open air.

Design Team Fabrics' Serengeti collection introduces an African-inspired texture that captures the soul of nature - earthy, timeless, and quietly luxurious. It brings warmth and authenticity to spaces that seek a grounded connection with the natural world.

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www.designteamfabrics.co.za



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Design Luxe Interiors
Design Luxe Interiors in Kramerville blends timeless elegance with modern artistry, offering bespoke luxury furniture and curated spaces that redefine sophisticated living.
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A LASTING
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Editorial: editorial@designingways.com
Advertising: Stienie Greyling • 081 846 6214 • stienie@designingways.com
Contributors: Gill Butler • Stienie Greyling
Layout: Christo Van Eeden • 082 442 8176 • beyond@bdstudio.co.za
Subscriptions and Distribution: subscriptions@designingways.com
Accounts: accounts@designingways.com

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Orms x Canon: Chasing Contrast.

The Sea Point Promenade Photographic Exhibition
Competition is back!

Orms is thrilled to announce the return of its exclusive outdoor photographic competition, offering South Africans the opportunity to be featured along the picturesque backdrop of the Sea Point Promenade and win amazing Canon prizes worth R100 000.

Inspired by the remarkable talents of its local photographers and creators, Orms is committed to providing a platform for artists to showcase their incredible work and bring the beauty of photography directly to the public. Now in its sixth iteration, its Promenade competition offers 20 photographers this chance each year.

"This is a chance for our community to really push themselves as they try to find the magic in the everyday. It's about bringing the beauty of the everyday to the fore,"

says ORMS Marketing Manager Alex Ressel.

"With the sea as its backdrop, there is something incredibly powerful about this exhibition,"

she continues.

"Our key purpose and motivation for this competition is to create a showcase for those who may otherwise not have the chance to exhibit. At the same time, we're bringing photography to the public, helping to grow the appreciation of this beautiful art form."

Roger Machin, Canon's Product Manager says,

"Canon is excited and honoured to team up with Orms once again for the Sea Point Promenade exhibition competition. For the past six years, our collaboration has celebrated the remarkable photographic talents of South Africa's vibrant

community. This competition is a fantastic opportunity for amateur and professional photographers to showcase their work to the world. This year's theme invites us to get closer and view the world from a fresh perspective. We can't wait to see all the exciting competition submissions."

Building upon the immense success of its past exhibitions, Orms presents the sixth edition: Orms x Canon: Chasing Contrast, where photographers are invited to strip photography back to its raw power - Black and White.

Chasing Contrast celebrates South Africa's cities, heritage, landscapes, and everyday beauty through the timeless art of monochrome. No colour, no distractions, just light, texture, and emotions. From sweeping natural scenes to the details of urban life, the competition will depict how South Africans capture the essence of their country in Black and White.

The Top 20 images will also be displayed as an outdoor exhibition along the Sea Point promenade in close proximity to its current exhibitions and the exhibition will remain on display for a year, T&C's apply.

The competition is only available to South African residents who may enter five images at a time, as many times as they like.

To enter the competition which runs until 9 October please visit:

www.ormsdirect.co.za/blogs/community-news/the-sea-point-promenade-photographic-exhibition-competition-is-back-orms-x-canon-chasing-contrast

www.ormsdirect.co.za



MERCIS
by stuart graham

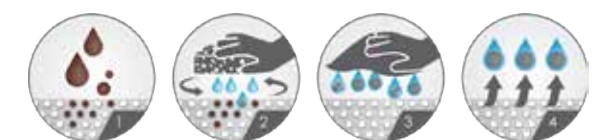


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HAND, made

Plascon's directional new colour forecast for 2026 focuses on the transformative power of the human touch

As our initial fascination with all things AI begins to normalise, 2026 welcomes a refocus on all things human. In compiling its highly anticipated colour forecast for next year, Plascon has embraced a shift towards a 'made by hand' approach, foregrounding HAND, made as its overarching theme.

'At the heart of painting is the hand. It's part of every step – choosing shades, testing swatches, and finally bringing colour to the wall. Paint is not abstract or artificial; it's tangible, textured, and deeply human. The hand makes it real: authentic, unique, and a mark of craft. Our new colour combinations reflect the same spirit of celebrating imperfection and individuality. They don't just cover surfaces, but respond to daily life,' says Plascon's head of marketing, Leslie Frank.

The Plascon team looked to aspects of our surroundings for inspiration – horizons, waters, city streets, and wild gardens. The captivating end result spans four distinct colour 'worlds' that are inspired by nature and daily life, and which celebrate imperfection and individuality.

Creating four distinct colour groupings or 'worlds' involved pairing earthy tones with daring brights, subtle neutrals with expressive accents. Each world celebrates contrast and harmony, offering curated colours that unite to form immersive palettes. These four worlds have been named Butter + Sky, Land + Sea, Fashion + Candy, and Orchard + Blooms.

**Butter + Sky**

This palette is optimistic and inspired by blue skies and warm yellows. The colours include Chocolate Chunk (O2-D1-1), Blazing Sun (Y4-A1-4), Sapphire (B7-A1-1), Athena's Dream (B4-A2-1), Cave Painting (O2-C1-1), Julia (Y3-A2-2) and Signal Red (G7).

Land + Sea

Rooted in earth and water textures, the Land + Sea palette embraces natural materials and biophilic influences. The colours include African Mud (O2-E1-1), Olive (G2-E1-2), Frog Pond (Y6-D1-1), Bashful Blue (B3-C1-4), Sparkling Lemon Lime (Y6-A1-1), Daily Lily Dream (O2-A1-1), and Evening Stroll (G6-C2-1).

Fashion + Candy

Here, the colours are vibrant, eclectic and bold. Inspired by street style, nightlife and pop culture, this palette includes Eclair (R7-D1-1), Ruby Tuesday (R5-B2-2), Bellagio Blue (B6-B2-1), Hot-N-Spicy (R6-B1-1), White Maas (Y2-A2-2), Lemon Essence (Y5-A1-2) and Ginger Biscuit (O1-C1-1).

Orchard + Blooms

This lush and vibrant collection, which is inspired by fruit markets and garden centres, focuses on abundance and vitality. The colours include Chocolate Delight (R6-E1-1), Hudson (26), Spanish Brocade (O2-B1-3), Swazi (R2-C1-1), Wanda (Y4-C1-1), Good Day Sunshine (O6-A1-1) and Just Terracotta (R7-C1-1).

The pre-existing Plascon colours comprising each world have been carefully curated for you to reflect the spirit of the times. The paint can be tinted in your choice of Plascon coating type at any leading retailer - ready for you to transform your home or premises.

'From swatch to wall, the process becomes a story told by the human hand and the transformative power of colour,' Frank concludes. dw

www.plascon.co.za

BIM in Practice. How far have we really come?

Written by: Marisca Deminey (University of Johannesburg)

Building Information Modelling (BIM) is significantly reshaping South Africa's built environment (BE), redefining collaboration, workflows, and the roles of professionals across the sector. The African Institute of the Interior Design Professions (IID) Winter Conversation Series (2025) provided an engaging platform for educators and practitioners to explore the growing impact of BIM and its implications for both Higher Education (HE) and professional practice.

The session was moderated by Marisca Deminey from the Department of Interior Design at the University of Johannesburg, representing a research team that includes Amanda Breytenbach. Their ongoing research investigates the adoption of BIM within the South African BE industry, with a particular focus on the Interior Design and HE sectors. Events such as the IID Winter Conversations provide ongoing dialogue, keeping their work grounded and connected to the real challenges and opportunities BIM presents in South Africa.

To facilitate the conversation, Deminey engaged three industry professionals:

Sonja Paul, Senior Interior Designer at Boogertman + Partners; Dewald Green, Senior Technical Manager at JLL Tétris; and Cameron Kane, BIM Manager and Interior Designer at Design Partnership and Morris & Co. Three interlinked themes: 'Advice for New Graduates', 'BIM in Practice', and 'Future Focus', were discussed, reflecting both personal journeys and collective industry transformation. The following observations were extracted from the online discussion.

Transition from Higher Education to Industry

The transition from university to industry emerged as a key challenge. Each panellist described their BIM proficiency as self-developed through experimentation, mentorship, and professional curiosity rather than formal training. Learning to navigate BIM, they agreed, is a continual process of trial, error, and adaptation. Paul advised emerging designers not to hesitate: "[you] don't have to know everything to start... just dive in". Her advice echoed a shared outlook that success in digital practice

depends on adaptability, lifelong learning, and active engagement with peers and mentors within the BE network.

BIM in Practice

While BIM's potential is widely recognised, its implementation across South Africa remains inconsistent. The panellists highlighted persistent challenges, including software licensing costs, fragmented workflows, and the lack of BIM know-how, which prevent active participation in BIM processes. Green reflected on the advanced implementation of BIM at a large scale, where BIM evolved into a Digital Twin. This digital replica allowed for integrated building life-cycle management, demonstrating how BIM can extend beyond design coordination to inform maintenance and operations. Despite the obstacles, the panel agreed that BIM significantly enhances collaboration, reduces costly errors, centralises project information, and provides individuals with the know-how to gain a competitive edge in an increasingly digital job market.



Cameron Kane



Dewald Green



Sonja Paul



Marisca Deminey

Dewald Green
Senior Technical Manager



Future Focus

The conversation concluded with an optimistic outlook on BIM's future as a driver of digital transformation in the South African BE. Kane envisioned a future where BIM and Digital Twins operate at an urban scale, supporting net-positive, sustainable design outcomes. From an academic perspective, Deminey called for a multi-stakeholder approach in which HE and industry share responsibility for advancing digital competency and continuous upskilling. Preparing students and professionals to adapt swiftly to technological change remains critical for sustaining the digital evolution of the BE sector.

As the industry continues to transform, collaboration among stakeholders will be crucial in bridging the gap between

theory and practice. BIM's success depends not only on technology, but also on the willingness of individuals and organisations to learn, share, and innovate together.

Contact details of panellists:

- **Marisca Deminey:** edeminey@uj.ac.za
- **Sonja Paul:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sonja-paul/>
- **Dewald Green:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dewald-randolph-green/>
- **Cameron Kane:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/cameron-kane-562b3418b/>

www.iidprofessions.org.za

Sonja Paul
Senior Interior Designer



Cameron Kane
BIM Manager and Interior Designer

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Why Being Part of the IID Matters More Than Ever

Your Voice. Our Industry. One Collective Future.

In a country rich with creative talent and diverse design perspectives, South African interior designers, decorators, and interior architects are making waves across the continent. But in a fast-changing industry, talent alone is no longer enough. To truly elevate the profession, and protect it, we need to stand together. That is where the

South African Institute of the Interior Design Professions (IID) comes in.

The IID is the only professional body representing interior design, interior architecture, and interior decorating in South Africa. And being a member is not just a nice-to-have, it is essential.

KSA update, October 2025.

The 2nd of October saw the KSA host its Cape Town Industry Showcase at the Building Centre Northgate Estate. This is the second time we have held this event, in this format, at the Building Centre and we are pleased to say it was another success. In collaboration with the IID we were able to host architects, interiors designers and members of the kitchen industry for a day of CPD talks, food trucks and most importantly networking and products.

We held three CPD talks on the day. We started with a talk by Blum called 'The Importance of Kitchen Workflows, Ergonomics, Space Planning and Zoning'. This talk took our guests through the fundamentals of good kitchen design. While this may seem a little simple for our already experienced industry players it was a vital recap and refresher to lead onto

our second talk. For us it was important that we refocused on the fundamentals of good cabinetry design before we could start to address specialised design for hidden disabilities.

Our second talk was called 'De-Othering' and addressed the fact that while our industry has become very aware about designing for physical disabilities, it is less prepared for designing inclusively to assist those with hidden disabilities. This talk was a panel discussion and included Maria Day - Managing Director of the IID, Bo Bylin - Director of Spotlight Joinery,

the Excellence Group and Chairman of the KSA's National Executive Committee, Kate Wardel - owner of 'Include Me', a company that specialises in advising on recreating spaces and environments for hidden disabilities particularly neurodivergence, and Stephanie Forbes - national manager of the KSA. This talk was very well received and the feedback received was that it challenged current mindsets and opened up new perspectives on inclusivity and designing with intent.

The last talk of the day was by Sonae Arauco and was titled 'The tactile

evolution of melamine surface board'. This was an innovative presentation that looked at how industry has developed over the years to add more realistic textures and patterns to melamine faced board allowing it to become more adaptable and realistic in its application.

Guests had the opportunity to engage with our host suppliers: Kayline, Davidsons Boards, Unipanel, Rubio Monocoat, Upper Edge Products, PG Bison, National Edging, Sonae Arauco, Grass, Max on Top, Blum, Kwikot and Hafele. SA Décor and Design Guide were also there in support giving out copies of the latest guide to our guests. Our hosts also curated a little 'Oprah' moment after each of the talks by putting together some prizes that guests could win if they found a luck prize tag under their chair.

While the wind might have done its best to dampen everyone's spirits and may have forced our sponsors to take down their displays a little early, everyone was in agreement that it had been a great day. Huge thanks go to the IID and the Building Centre for their support with the event.

We also held our last talk of the year in October. We were pleased to have almost fifty KSA members join us online for a talk by Darryn Le Grange of Action Coach. The talk looked into how managers and business owners can hold their team accountable for their actions and performance but without creating a negative workspace. This highly interactive talk gave us valuable and practical tools that we will all find useful as it comes to year-end appraisals and bonus or increase considerations. We will be welcoming Darryn back to the KSA platform in February 2026 where he

welcome to the team

A big welcome to Patsy Govender who is joining the KSA team as our new KZN / EC regional representative

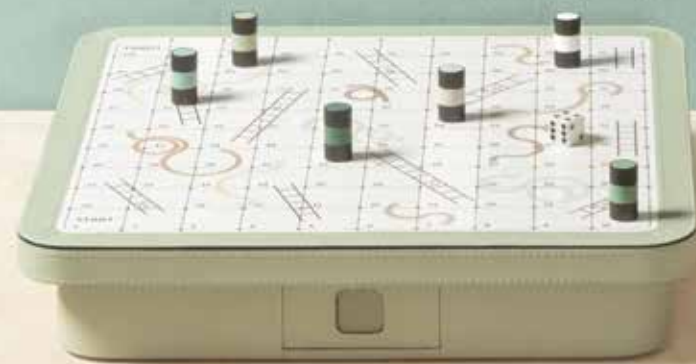


will be discussing practical tools to ensure good cashflow.

Finally, we are very pleased to announce that we have a new KZN regional representative. Patsy Govender joined the KSA at the end of September. She has been finding her feet and introducing herself to the membership. Patsy comes to the KSA with a wealth of industry knowledge having worked in the hardware space for KSA supplier members for most of her career. We wish her well and hope the industry will embrace her in her new role. dw

www.ksa.co.za





Delos Snakes & Ladders Game Set | cm 36 x 36, h. cm 7
Photo credit: Giobagnara



Mocambo Backgammon Set | (cm 57.5 x 46 x h. 5.5)
Photo credit: Giobagnara



Delos Snakes and Ladders Game Set | cm 36 x 36, h. cm 7
Photo credit: Giobagnara

Game Night, Elevated:

Giobagnara's Luxe Spin on Classic Pastimes

Known for redefining the everyday with extraordinary craftsmanship, Giobagnara now brings its unmistakable touch to the world of play. Designed for the discerning collector, the brand's latest gaming sets transform beloved classics into design objects that move effortlessly between function and form. Think game night, but with the quiet elegance of Italian leather and artisanal expertise.

Delos Snakes and Ladders Game Set

A sophisticated twist on a childhood favorite, the Delos Snakes and Ladders Game Set is crafted from a leather-clad wood structure with a printed leather playing field. Metal playing pieces, available in chrome, bronze, or brass finishes, feature fine leather inserts, while a hidden drawer keeps dice and tokens neatly stored away. With a broad palette of leather finishes available, Delos is less a board game and more a statement piece that is perfect for living rooms, libraries, or yachts.

Mahjong Game Set

Giobagnara's Mahjong Game Set is presented in a luxurious leather-wrapped wooden case with a removable top. Inside, players will find a complete set of high-quality bakelite tiles and sticks, three standard dice, a larger dice, and a finely crafted leather-covered directional dice to determine seating arrangements, giving a nod to the game's rich traditions, elevated with Italian craftsmanship.

Mocambo Backgammon Set

Designed by Simone Fanciullacci, the Mocambo Backgammon Set takes a bold approach to a centuries-old game. Solid walnut wood forms the substantial structure, while a printed marble playing field introduces an architectural contrast. The modeled, almost primitive lines evoke a connection to nature, craftsmanship, and timeless play. Complete with bakelite checkers, dice, a doubling cube, and a fine suede bag for storage, this set is crafted to become an heirloom.

Technical sheet

- Delos Snakes and Ladders Game Set - Dimensions: cm 36 x 36 x h. 7
- Mahjong Game Set - Dimensions: cm 43 x 27.5 x h. 8
- Mocambo Backgammon Set - Dimensions: cm 57.5 x 46 x h. 5.5

www.giobagnara.com

Mahjong Game Set | cm 43 x 27.5 x h. 8
Photo credit: Giobagnara



Delos Snakes and Ladders Game Set | cm 36 x 36, h. cm 7
Photo credit: Giobagnara



II BY IV DESIGN Unveils Sammarco

The Most Spectacular
Interior and Dining
Experience In
Toronto, Canada

IBY IV DESIGN is proud to announce the opening of SAMMARCO, a refined Italian steakhouse now open in downtown Toronto. This marks the third culinary venture by Michelin-starred Chef Rob Rossi and highly esteemed restaurateur David Minicucci, following the celebrated success of Michelin-starred Osteria Giulia and Michelin recommended Giulietta.

Rossi and Minicucci have established a reputation as industry pioneers by experimenting with colourful, fresh ingredients that honour their individual backgrounds. Together, their ties to the people and places that have influenced them throughout their prosperous careers have shaped the SAMMARCO experience.

Rooted in emotion rather than geography, SAMMARCO invites guests on a personal journey through memory, storytelling, and sensory immersion. Here, interiors and cuisine speak in harmony - each enhancing the other to create a richly layered experience where design, history, and culinary artistry intersect.





Inspiration

It all began with a sketch - an idea rooted in the client's desire to create a place that doesn't exist, yet feels instantly familiar. SAMMARCO is not defined by a person or a place, but by a feeling. The experience unfolds like a memory wrapped in heritage, inviting every guest to find their own connection. Here, design and cuisine exist in dialogue, reframing how we understand space, storytelling, and the sensory power of hospitality.

A design-driven dining experience

The design draws inspiration from Italian heritage and contemporary luxury. Guests are greeted by an amber glass portal, leading into the bar area that is layered with deep wood tones and Barolo-hued upholstery. It's a place where the first sip of a carefully chosen wine feels like an invitation to slow down and savour every moment.

A nod to Italy's automotive legacy, custom furnishings with sleek leather seating are inspired by iconic marques such as Ferrari, Alpha Romeo, and Lamborghini. The terrazzo is hand-poured and precisely swept into place, replicating an aerial macro view of Italy's cobbled streets. This use of terrazzo flooring was



not only a choice of aesthetics, but also to awaken the senses. Beneath the hum of excitable guests, listen for the tapping of waiters' shoes as they glide from table to table.

At the heart of the space lies the clover fountain, a bespoke sculptural centrepiece surrounded by intimate booth seating. Its curved form doubles as acoustic softening, while a polished illuminated orb is suspended beneath a sculptural ceiling that fans outward like sunbeams reminiscent of a Tuscan sunset. Light pours from the orb, casting a soft, diffused glow that accentuates the geometry above and anchors the space below. This ceiling isn't just a finish - it's a statement. It transforms the atmosphere, inviting guests to look up, linger, and feel immersed in a space where every detail has been carefully choreographed. A fusion of design and art, function and emotion, it sets the tone for an unforgettable hospitality experience.

Celebrating craft and Canadian artistry

More than a visual triumph, SAMMARCO champions generational craftsmanship and local production. Many of the restaurant's key elements - woodwork, stone, glass, and metal -



are handcrafted by Canadian artisans, echoing Italy's legacy of master fabrication through a local lens.

The space also features the largest collection of Canadian art ever installed in a restaurant setting, a testament to the country's rich creative spirit. This curated display spans from abstract to traditional, forming a cultural dialogue and reinforcing SAMMARCO'S role as a platform for both culinary and creative expression. Each work was personally curated by II BY IV DESIGN's founding partners, Dan Menchions and Keith Rushbrook, to enhance the restaurant's immersive ambiance, crafting a setting where art and cuisine come together in seamless harmony.

The Carlevale Room: An homage to legacy

Named in honour of revered Toronto restaurateur Michael Carlevale - an influential figure who helped shape the city's dining scene throughout the 1980s and 1990s and is often credited as a driving force behind Toronto's modern culinary identity - this space pays tribute to his enduring legacy. For Minicucci and Rossi, who were profoundly shaped by Michael's friendship and inspiration, it felt only fitting to celebrate him in this way.



The private dining room is a sanctuary of elegance and reflection. Its walls reflect the sun-warmed golds of an Italian vineyard, while regal blue leather chairs encircle a striking bespoke table. Crafted with individually veneered pattern pieces and installed by hand on-site, the table mirrors the unique floor it rests upon - a testament to the care and craftsmanship at the heart of this space. Much like Carlevale himself, the room offers guests a dining experience defined by warmth, refinement, and unforgettable detail.

A new icon in Toronto's culinary landscape

SAMMARCO is more than a restaurant - it's a landmark of cultural storytelling, craftsmanship, and immersive hospitality. Through the convergence of food, design, and emotion, it sets a new benchmark for dining in Toronto. dw

Photo credit: David Whittaker

www.iibyiv.com



Kitchens & Breakfast Nooks



Kitchens & Breakfast Nooks

by Stienie Greyling

The latest kitchen trend emphasises personal expression through bold colours, natural materials like wood and stone, and textured finishes like fluted cabinetry, and unique tile patterns.

Functionality remains key with concealed kitchens, multipurpose islands and smart storage solutions gaining popularity. Warm metallic colours, rich earthy tones and a move away from all-white palettes contribute to creating inviting bespoke spaces.

Kitchens are embracing the bold colour-soak trend, where a single colour or similar shades cover the entire space – from walls to cabinetry and ceilings. Deep jewel tones like emerald, navy and aubergine, as well as softer shades like sage green or dusty pink are gaining popularity. Colour soaking creates a striking look, turning the kitchen into a design feature. Matte finishes and textured surfaces are becoming common, with cabinetry, splashbacks and even appliances getting a colour makeover.

As we look ahead, the best kitchen design ideas are becoming more than creating just a place to prepare meals. They are transforming into multifunctional spaces that reflect personal style sustainability and advanced technology.

Extra wall units are making their mark in kitchens with high ceilings. These cabinets reach closer to the ceiling, providing ample storage space for rarely used items while giving the kitchen a grand appearance. Features like integrated ladders and decorative lighting highlight the tall units, which come in finishes such as natural wood tones, matte paints, or glass panels. Extra tall units offer a perfect blend of style and practicality.

This year, kitchen ceilings will take on more character. Darker ceiling colours are now being used, especially in rooms with high ceilings, to make the space feel cosier. Wallpapered ceilings will also emerge, adding texture and pattern to a usually overlooked area. Deeper coving will be another feature incorporated to create an elegant, architectural look. This trend reflects the kitchens shift from just a cooking space to a multi-functional area for living and entertaining.

Designers and homeowners are mixing different cabinetry styles, combining Shaker designs with sleek flat-fronted units. Pairing wooden cabinets with painted finishes is another growing trend offering warmth and interest. These mixed styles help create kitchens that feel unique and personal, moving away from standard kitchen designs.

Custom cabinetry is evolving with a more refined version of the classic Shaker style. The traditional shaker door now features a slimmer frame, giving it a sleeker, more contemporary look. This modern twist maintains the timeless appeal of Shaker cabinetry, but with a more sophisticated feel. Homeowners are increasingly opting for bespoke cabinetry to create kitchens that feel tailored to them.

Texture is becoming an important element in kitchen design.

- **Fluted glass and sinks:** Fluted glass is popular for cabinetry and sinks, adding texture and visual interest.
- **Textured stone and matte finishes:** Rough-hewn and matte finishes provide sophistication and are easy to maintain.
- **Ribbed cabinet doors:** These doors add a vintage touch with subtle texture.
- **Textured porcelain:** A low-maintenance, luxurious alternative to natural stone.
- **Slatted wood islands:** Slatted wood islands are becoming a popular design feature, bringing a natural, warm element to the kitchen.

Latest breakfast nook trends focus on creating multifunctional spaces through elements like built-in banquette seating, custom upholstery, natural light maximisation and the integration of greenery. Modern aesthetics lean towards



minimalism with clean lines, while farmhouse styles embrace comfort and traditional charm. The trend is towards personalised spaces that are functional for family life, offering a casual gathering spot that enhances a home's value and also liveability.

The use of bold colours, especially blues and greens, go alongside natural materials like wood and textured finishes,

and curved architectural details like banquettes and tables. Mixed materials, open shelving and decorative lighting also add a personal and unique character to these cosy kitchen spaces, creating warm, contrast filled environments.

For a classic breakfast nook design, a built-in bench is a must-have. It adds to the inviting casual feel, and also offers lots of opportunities for interesting cushions.

dw

The lightness of glass in the kitchen

Elegance and functionality
at the service of
contemporary design

The transparency of glass doors holds the secret to their growing prominence in interior design.

Now recognised as true protagonists capable of striking the perfect balance between aesthetics and practicality, glass doors are redefining kitchen spaces. Their lightness introduces a new concept of spatiality and organisation in one of the most lived-in rooms of the home: the kitchen.

Designed as a smart storage solution, they also reveal another function: display. Ideal for showcasing everyday objects such as plates, glasses, and utensils, they transform the contents into an integral part of the décor, adding personality and character to the environment.

A perfect example is the illuminated framed glass wine cabinet, flanked by two open, luminous compartments that enhance the displayed objects.

This element is part of the new **Luce** composition, designed by **Studio Marco Piva** in collaboration with **ARAN Cucine**.



Ylenia



Luce Studio Piva



The natural transparency of glass visually expands and brightens spaces, as seen in the open glass unit within the kitchen island. Its luminous back panel adds a modern and airy touch. The doors in this composition are crafted from milled and matte-lacquered MDF in a delicate cloud blue shade, lending a refined and contemporary appeal. Additionally, the easy accessibility of displayed objects simplifies daily activities, enhancing efficiency. Integrated LED lighting in the vertical profiles highlights the contents while adding a sense of dynamism and sophistication.

Thanks to their versatility, glass doors adapt to any interior style.

Even the latest **Guadalupe** collection incorporates an equipped glass display case - an essential element that merges elegance and functionality, allowing everyday objects to be exhibited with style and reflecting a passion for cooking. High-quality materials, such as tempered, anti-glare, and scratch-resistant glass, ensure durability and resilience, while advanced technologies like soft-close opening systems guarantee silent and safe use.

Even in a classic kitchen like **Ylenia**, where the atmosphere is steeped in tradition and values of family and conviviality, glass doors provide a tailor-made solution that maintains stylistic and functional continuity. Paired with the **MATERIKA Majestic Aurum** countertop, the smoked glass wall units with black



Guadalupe

RAIL frames and the backlit **Magnetolab** splashback infuse the space with a soft, warm glow, creating an aura of well-being.

The restyling of **Volare**, designed by **Ulisse Narcisi** for the last edition of **EuroCucina**, unveils a renewed design through new curved elements, featuring rotating-translating storage units. These innovations enhance the overall user experience by providing additional storage—an essential solution, particularly for compact spaces, as they optimise every available surface practically and efficiently. In kitchen design, glass doors play a pivotal role in both functionality and aesthetics: their presence reflects a growing attention to detail and a desire to merge elegance and practicality into a seamless, harmonious solution.

www.arancucine.it/en



Volare_Ulisse Narcisi





Snack E-Wood Quercia



*snack E-Wood
rovere Matrix*

The snack top takes centre stage in the open-plan layout, bridging kitchen and living space

The snack top, a multifunctional and central element in contemporary kitchen design, is a defining feature of the “happy island” concept envisioned by Ulisse Narcisi for the R1 collection.

Originally conceived as a food preparation area, the kitchen has evolved into a true social hub, where family and friends gather to share daily moments. From breakfast to afternoon snacks, brunch to aperitifs, the **snack top** increasingly replaces the traditional dining table. Smaller in size and typically 90 cm high, it is ideal for pairing with stools or elevated chairs.

Narcisi describes the kitchen as an ever-changing environment, shaped by its users' needs and routines: «You eat alone or in company; that same table becomes a desk for homework, a place to chat, or watch TV». The **snack counter** reflects this dynamic, serving as both a functional



KITCHENS & BREAKFAST NOOKS

work surface and a convivial meeting point, a space where home life unfolds in all its richness.

This layout harmoniously merges kitchen and living space, embodying a contemporary vision where design meets functionality. The R1 model integrates the **snack counter** seamlessly within the kitchen system. A wide variety of materials, finishes, and components allow for full customisation, enhancing the cohesion of the overall living area.

From the round, brushed elm snack top with Majestic Materika porcelain insert, to the rectangular E-Wood oak Matrix version, the snack top remains the focal point of the kitchen, expressing both harmony and vitality. In the latter configuration, the bold Corinto Nero leg and the interplay of contrasting materials, the dark **snack top** with the



Snack tondo



Snack tondo

warmth of wood, evoke an elegant ambiance.

This material dialogue reaches new heights with the combination of E-Wood Oak, Majestic Materika porcelain top, and Fenix Nero accents - striking a refined balance between clean geometry and contemporary volumes.

Rastelli's "happy island" is no longer just a metaphor for a lifestyle; it becomes the true heart of the home, catering to the evolving needs of those who inhabit it.

Whether made from the same material as the kitchen worktop or a contrasting element, the **snack counter's** dimensions and positioning are tailored to the kitchen's layout and its intended function. Its size, whether generous or compact, adapts to space availability and the user's needs, supporting both intimate moments and sociable gatherings.

dw





Kitchen Worktops



Mirage, a minimal presence that 'lives' in the ceiling

Lightness, elegance and an almost 'invisible' effect. These are the distinctive features of **Mirage**, the new ceiling hood from **Falmec**. Designed to integrate discreetly into the kitchen environment, **Mirage** reveals itself in style, leaving the full scene to the kitchen. A minimal presence with a sophisticated and technologically advanced design enclosed in an object that is almost unseen, but makes all the difference.

In fact, **Mirage**'s two thin LED strips light up, creating a pleasant lighting atmosphere, thanks to the dynamic and dimmable light. The first adapts to different ambient tones, while the second ensures optimal visibility on the kitchen countertop during food preparation.

Available in only the 100 cm size, **Mirage** is equipped with a 3-speed + boost electronic control panel and can be ordered in three different finishes: scotch brite stainless steel, or painted steel in white or black.

Like all ceiling solutions, **Mirage** features the **Dialogue System** function, which allows the hood to be controlled directly from the **Falmec** induction hob,

providing a more practical and intuitive user experience.

Mirage is outfitted with a supplied 800 m³/h brushless motor, which can be easily rotated in all four directions to facilitate the ducting of fumes. Finally, the hood can be installed in filter mode, without the need for piping, thanks to the special **Carbon. Zeo Microtech** long-life regenerable filters, which guarantees high effectiveness in odour elimination and moisture absorption. dw

www.falmec.com





Kitchen Work Tops

by Stienie Greyling

Kitchen countertops continue to be a focal point in home design, balancing form and function in one of the most used spaces in the home.

This year, designers and homeowners are prioritizing durability, sustainability and bold aesthetics when selecting countertop materials.

Latest trends for kitchen worktops include natural stone like marble and granite with dramatic veining, the continued popularity of quartz and the rise in sustainable and recycled materials. Key aesthetic trends are bold veining, warm neutral tones, matte finishes over glossy ones and waterfall edges for a seamless look. There's also a focus on incorporating mixed materials and matching countertops with splashbacks for a cohesive design.

Sustainability and recycled materials.

Sustainability is still a priority in 2025. Recycled glass, paper composite and terrazzo-style countertops, made from reused stone or concrete fragments are gaining popularity for their eco-friendly appeal and unique appearance. These materials often come with certifications verifying their environmental credentials, which is increasingly important to homeowners aiming to reduce their carbon footprint. In addition, many of these options are surprisingly durable and

low-maintenance, making them both a smart and stylish choice.

Dark and moody tones.

While white and light countertops remain popular for their brightness and versatility, this year we will see a resurgence of darker tones. Think deep charcoal, rich espresso, slate black and even dark green or navy surfaces.

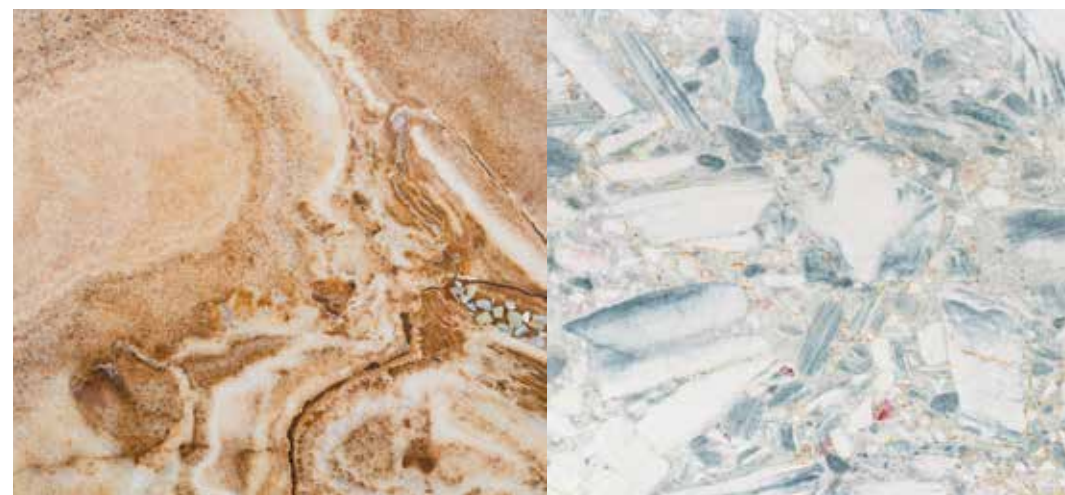
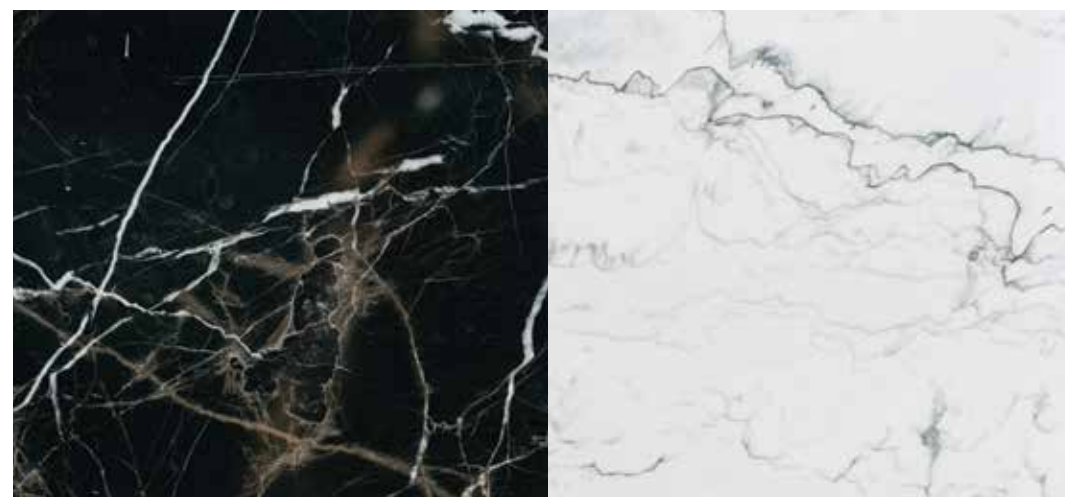
These bold tones add drama and contrast, especially when paired with light cabinets or metallic accents. Dark countertops are particularly popular in contemporary and transitional kitchens, offering a high-end look that feels both modern and luxurious.

To keep the space from feeling too heavy, dark countertops are often balanced with lighter splashbacks or open shelving.

Quartz continues to dominate.

Quartz continues its reign as one of the main countertop materials this year, thanks to its unmatched durability, low maintenance and endless design options. What's new, however is how quartz is being used. Manufacturers are introducing even more realistic natural stone patterns, bolder colours and finishes that mimic concrete or leather.

Designers and homeowners love quartz for its resistance to stains, scratches and bacteria. And because quartz is



engineered, it allows for custom colours and patterns that can't be found in natural stone, giving designers and homeowners more flexibility in their designs.

Integrated countertops and splashbacks.

One of the most seamless and cohesive designs trends is the use of integrated countertops and splashbacks. Instead of mixing materials, designers are running the same countertop material up the wall as a splashbacks.

This not only creates a streamlined, modern look, but also minimises grout lines and makes cleaning easier. It's a trend that works beautifully with veined material or quartz, allowing the natural pattern of the stone to continue uninterrupted.

Waterfall edges and thick profiles.

Waterfall edges, where the countertop material flows down the sides of the island or cabinets remain a show-stopping feature. These edges add a sculptural element to the kitchen and work well in open-concept layouts where the island is a major visual anchor.

In addition to waterfall edges, thicker countertop profiles are trending. While standard countertops are about plus minus three centimetres thick, we are seeing thicker designs, which make a bold statement and emphasise luxury.

Thick countertops work especially well with modern or minimalist cabinetry, allowing the countertop to stand out without visual clutter.

Smart surfaces and tech integration.

The kitchen of the future is here. In 2025, smart surfaces are becoming a reality, with

countertops that include built-in wireless charging statics, LED edge lighting and even touch-sensitive controls for integrated appliances.

While these tech-forward features are still emerging, tech-savvy product designers are incorporating them into high-end remodels to future-proof their kitchens. As these innovations become more accessible, expect to see more designers and homeowners embracing smart countertops for added convenience and innovation.

Concrete and industrial aesthetics.

Concrete countertops continue to gain attention among those looking for an industrial, minimalist, or modern rustic aesthetic. With customisable finishes, colours and embedded elements like stones or glass, concrete offers a unique artisan appeal.

While concrete needs sealing to resist stains, its natural variation and organic texture gives it an undeniable charm. It's especially popular in loft-style kitchens or spaces that lean into raw materials like exposed brick or reclaimed wood. dw





Warm, organic kitchen spaces:

the trends Sapienstone is
putting forward
for summer

Summer is more than a season—it is an atmosphere that permeates the spaces we inhabit. Light shifts and rhythms slow down. In the kitchen, the desire for warm surfaces is rekindled, where aesthetics and a bond with nature strike a new balance. Sapienstone answers this need with materials that tell a story of natural roots - textures that evoke the earth and colours that bathe the room and the senses in warmth. Organic patterns and mellow tones transform the kitchen into a vibrant, welcoming place in which every element contributes to a sensorial, harmonious setting.

Kitchens become the beating heart of the summer home - lived-in, shared spaces where enveloping hues and calming designs redefine the environment. With this in mind, Sapienstone offers a selection of products whose textures, inspired by





the elements of nature, create inviting interiors with a strong, tactile presence.

Among the marble-inspired options, **Taj Mahal** stands out for its delicate, exotic allure: inspired by the Brazilian quartzite of the same name, its golden veining on a beige backdrop brings warmth without sacrificing sophistication. **Crema Avorio**, with its luminous, velvety palette, enlivens the room while preserving a pronounced material character - perfect for those who seek warmly lit surfaces.

In the realm of natural stone, Sapienstone suggests finishes such as **Ceppo Varese**, a newcomer inspired by Lombard stone, whose solid character and deep texture recall the strength of the earth. Another 2025 novelty, **Crema Neve**, moves in softer shades that evoke lightness and restraint, while **Platinum White** and **Luna Limestone** present two complementary takes on naturalness:



KITCHEN WORKTOPS

the first, clean and essential; the second, warm and slightly chalky.

Wood and concrete effects round out the range, channelling a more contemporary aesthetic yet still rich in material warmth. **Rovere Baio** and **Rovere Buckskin** restore to the kitchen the heat and visual depth of wood grain, expressing a lively, authentic look, while **Balance Ivory** and **Balance Nude**, inspired by the warm tones of earth and natural resins, shape surfaces that speak a sober yet strongly distinctive language.

This selection rediscovers authentic values - materials already in the collection that prove ever relevant. Because warmth is not merely a matter of temperature; it is a tactile emotion born from contact with living surfaces, able to convey the beauty of time and of nature. dw

www.sapienstone.com



Furniture & Furnishing Trends.



Furniture & Furnishing Trends

by Stienie Greyling

Comfort meets style with richly upholstered furniture in fine textured fabrics. There is nothing more inspiring than the world around us and in that world, are new ways of doing things and fresh approaches to sometimes, old and forgotten ideas. It is in these ideas that trends will emerge.

In the dynamic world of interior design, furniture trends play a pivotal role in shaping the aesthetics and functionality of living spaces. From sustainability to versatility, these trends promise to elevate living spaces to new heights of style and comfort.

The rise of sustainable materials.

As sustainability becomes more and more important in all areas of design, designers are experimenting with new and old types of sustainable materials. Furniture options made from sustainable and eco-friendly materials are a rising trend leading to the emergence of furniture pieces made from reclaimed wood, recycled materials and even upcycled items. Not only do these materials help reduce waste, but they also add unique originality to interiors.

Another aspect of the sustainable materials trend is using organic fabrics and natural fibres. Furniture upholstered with organic cotton, linen or hemp not only looks beautiful, but also promotes a healthier living environment by reducing exposure to harmful chemicals. Sustainable materials are often durable and long lasting, making them a wise investment for any interior design project.



Minimalism and functionality.

Minimalism is a design philosophy that emphasizes simplicity, clean lines and a clutter-free environment. This trend has gained popularity due to its timeless appeal and ability to create a sense of calm serenity. Minimalist furniture is characterised by its sleek and streamlined design, often with hidden storage solutions to maximise functionality.

In a time when living spaces are getting smaller, functionality is a key aspect of furniture trends in interior design. Furniture that can adapt to different needs and spaces is highly valued, with versatility and efficiency being essential to everyday living. People are increasingly looking for pieces that both look good and serve a practical purpose. This includes multifunctional pieces such as sofa beds, storage ottomans and nesting tables.

Mixing vintage with modern.

Mixing the old with the new can add character and personality to a space. Combining vintage or antique furniture with contemporary elements makes a room unique and offers an opportunity to be as eclectic as you wish. The trend allows

for the personal touch of integrating sentimental and meaningful items into a setting suitable for modern needs.

Balance is the goal here, so designers need to focus on pieces that complement each other in colour, shape and texture. For example, pairing a vintage wooden dining table with modern chairs can create a visually exciting and harmonious combination. This trend also encourages one to search in second-hand and charity stores where one can find one-of-a-kind furniture pieces with a history and charm.

Bold colours and patterns.

Colour is back and many designers are more than happy to say goodbye to a palette of grey and beige. This also applies to patterns, adding energy and excitement to living spaces. Whether it is a vibrant accent chair, a bold patterned wallpaper or a colourful area rug, incorporating bold colours and patterns into furniture can instantly transform a space.

Again, balance is vital. Think of the overall aesthetic of the space and the use of the room. One can choose to make a bold statement with a single piece of furniture

or incorporate smaller accents throughout the room. Mixing and matching patterns can also create a visually dynamic and playful atmosphere. The key is to have fun and let your personality shine through in furniture choices.

Multifunctional and modular pieces.

Apartment living and smaller living spaces require a certain level of flexible, multifunctional and modular furniture pieces. These pieces are designed to serve several purposes and can adapt to different room layouts. Modular sofas can be arranged to fit different spaces, storage beds provide extra storage space and folding dining tables can be expanded or collapsed as needed.

The beauty of multifunctional and modular furniture is that it allows you to make the most of a space without sacrificing style or comfort. These pieces can assist to maximise storage, create flexible seating arrangements and optimise functionality.

Incorporating multifunctional and module furniture can greatly enhance the families living experience, whether in a small apartment or a spacious home.

Luxurious gold accents.

Shifting from large, eye-catching features, the use of gold accents is set to bring a luxurious feel to furniture trends this year. Gold has long stood as a symbol of wealth and taste and its application in furniture design maintains this tradition. Looking ahead, expect to see gold play a more prominent role, becoming a central

aspect that contributes to the visual appeal of home interiors.

The incorporation of gold into pieces reflects a broader trend toward bringing classic luxury into contemporary design. It's not simply about the visual impact; gold accents can also increase the perceived value of the furniture and create a sense of timeless elegance.

dw



Ares and Mirea

Two Souls, One Signature

The modular sofas Ares and Mirea embody Roberto Lazzeroni's design vision for Lema

Lema continues its longstanding collaboration with Roberto Lazzeroni with the launch of Mirea, the latest addition to its collection released at the 2025 edition of the Salone del Mobile. One year after the launch of Ares, the creative dialogue between the designer and the brand continues, reaffirming a shared vision of elegance, balance and artisanal excellence.

Both modular in concept, Ares and Mirea offer two distinct interpretations of contemporary living: the former bold and sculptural, the latter soft and inviting. Together, they enrich Lema's design language with two refined and expressive solutions created for fluid, sophisticated interiors.

True to Lema's identity, Ares and Mirea share a meticulous attention to detail, exceptional material quality, and a unique construction approach that ensures each piece is unique. Modularity becomes a design philosophy: both collections offer a wide variety of compositions, adapting effortlessly to the spaces and lifestyles of those who inhabit them.



Ares sofa
Roberto Lazzeroni

ARES – Refined Boldness

Ares makes a striking statement with its sculptural presence: a sofa with a bold personality, designed for those who appreciate pieces that are both elegant and unconventional. Its defining feature is a high, curved backrest that gently wraps

around the seat, descending seamlessly into the armrests to form a majestic, enveloping silhouette.

Available in linear formats (two- or three-seater) or as a modular system featuring corner elements, chaise longues and end units, Ares also stands out for its distinctive base: slim, horizontal crosspieces in heat-treated, oak-stained ash wood that elevate the structure with a sense of lightness and sophistication.

Strength and softness are held in perfect harmony. Generous cushioning complements the bold form to deliver impeccable comfort: both visual and physical.

MIREA – A Sensory and Harmonious Refuge

Mirea speaks to a desire for serenity and softness. Its flowing, continuous lines trace a silhouette inspired by the gentle movement of water: each curve is designed to embrace, each detail crafted to endure.

Resting on a high, tapered base that enhances its lightness, Mirea balances generous volumes with graceful proportions. Its modular nature allows for tailor-made configurations, ideal for both residential and contract spaces.

At the heart of the project lie comfort and craftsmanship: ergonomic cushions with multi-density padding, a solid internal frame, and tailored stitching. Mirea is available in a vast selection of fabric and leather upholstery, offering many customisation options and a uniquely tactile experience.

With Ares and Mirea, Roberto Lazzeroni gives form to two designs united by a contemporary language in which shape becomes soft architecture, and space comes alive with comfort and beauty.

Style Icons: Lazzeroni's Signature for Lema

The introduction of Ares and Mirea marks a new chapter in the enduring creative partnership between Roberto Lazzeroni and Lema, a relationship that has already produced a number of iconic pieces now central to the brand's identity. Among them: the Flowers coffee tables, with their irregular, elliptical lacquered tops offering a light reinterpretation of 1950s design; the Victor writing desk, a sophisticated balance of classical reference and contemporary rigour; and the Lucille collection, including chairs, armchairs, lounge chairs and stools, each one an expression of timeless, inviting design with a unique feel. Like Ares and Mirea,



Coffee table FLOWER
Roberto Lazzeroni



Victor desk
Roberto Lazzeroni

these pieces reflect Lazzeroni's sensitive and coherent vision, one that seamlessly weaves memory, innovation and style into a distinctive, enduring aesthetic. www.lemamobili.com

www.lemamobili.com



LUCILLE
Roberto Lazzeroni



LUCILLE
Roberto Lazzeroni



Gervasoni presents Strap: a new piece for the Night Area by Neri&Hu

Autumn invites us to rediscover the pleasure of slow living: there is a growing desire to slow down the pace and find new harmony in our home spaces. Cooler days and shorter daylight hours naturally lead us to spend more time at home - especially in the bedroom, which becomes the ideal refuge for daily relaxation. A cosy double bed, soft textiles, and carefully curated bedroom furniture transform the sleeping area into an intimate and comfortable space, designed to help us recharge and face the new season with energy.

In this context, Gervasoni proves to be a valuable ally in furnishing the night area with a designer bed that blends style and comfort. From this philosophy comes a wide and refined collection of beds designed by renowned names such as Paola Navone, Oscar and Gabriele Buratti, Federica Biasi, and Neri&Hu. A

versatile offering for all tastes and styles—for those who appreciate essential design, as well as for those who view furniture as the centrepiece of the room, with bold and generous forms.

STRAP

The Strap bed perfectly blends elegance with functionality: its eclectic yet essential design makes it a standout piece in any night area. Designed by the Neri&Hu studio, it features a refined combination of materials and shapes that define its unique character. The ash wood headboard is enhanced by a soft padded insert that drapes over the structure like a blanket. The padding is elegantly secured by an eco-leather strap—a sophisticated, innovative, and distinctive detail that adds a touch of unexpected elegance. [dw](#)


gervasoni1882.com/en



The Origata console by Nao Tamura for Porro honoured with the Archiproducts Design Awards

The Origata console by Nao Tamura for Porro was honoured with the Archiproducts Design Awards, celebrating the world's design excellence and the synergy between designers and brands in the name of creativity, innovation and sustainability.

The Origata console showcases a monolithic design, drawing inspiration from the art of making kimonos, the traditional Japanese garment. Similar to how kimonos are crafted from a flat, rectangular fabric that is cut in straight lines and sewn together to minimise waste, this furnishing is created from a single sheet of aluminum that is cut and assembled using screws, maximising the use of material.

Exhibited among the winning projects on the occasion of the Award Night last 14 October at Superstudio Più, Via Tortona 27, Origata is a project that combines simple gestures and aesthetic simplification, giving voice to the values shared by the designer and the brand: cultural identity, internationalism, respect for materials and a propensity for the future. 

www.porro.com/en



Mercis' Quick Clean Fabric Technology

Available from Stuart Graham Fabrics

Keeping your furniture looking fresh and clean has never been easier! With Mercis' Quick Clean technology, everyday spills and stains are no longer a big deal. This smart fabric treatment makes cleaning quick, simple, and stress-free.

How Does Quick Clean Work?

- Invisible Protection: Every fibre in the fabric is coated with a special layer that acts like an invisible shield.
- Designed to make life easier: The coated fibres release the stains when water is added.

Why You'll Love Quick Clean Easy Cleaning

- Most stains can be removed with just water and a clean sponge.
- For tougher marks, a little mild soap does the trick.
- Works on common accidental stains like coffee, wine, juice, ketchup-even ballpoint pen ink (*except alcohol-based pens).




Perfect for Busy Homes

- Less scrubbing, less stress.
- Ideal for families with kids, pets, or anyone who wants beautiful, low-maintenance fabrics.

How to Remove Stains

1. Act Fast: Blot spills gently with a paper towel.
2. Thicker Messes: For things like tomato pulp, scoop off the excess first, then clean with a damp sponge in light circles.

3. Dry It: Use a fresh paper towel to absorb moisture. Repeat if needed.
4. Stubborn Stains: Use a mild soap solution. Test on a hidden spot first, then rinse and dry well.
5. Still There? For tougher stains repeat the process, using more water and rinsing again.

With Mercis' Quick Clean, your fabrics stay looking new for longer - without the hassle. Perfect for everyday life, so you can relax and enjoy your home. 

www.stuartgraham.co.za





Papel and Papelito

The new stars of the dining area

Cattelan Italia celebrates the ritual of dining together with two new designs: **Papel** and **Papelito**.

These families of tables share a common inspiration - the natural flow of waves - and the same design vision: to bring a new idea of sculptural elegance to the dining room, capable of shifting the perspective with every gaze.

The voluminous dimensions of the **Papel** table in the 3.5 Glass version highlight the transparency of its crystal top, which reveals the undulating silhouette of the base, emphasising the contrasts between solid and empty spaces. This family of tables expresses its identity through all its versions with models such as **Papel Keramik** and **Papel Keramik Premium**. The latter is distinguished by the brushed finish of the base, handcrafted by the skilled artisans who faithfully embody the Made in Italy heritage of Cattelan Italia. The exploration of materials and masterful



craftsmanship is fully expressed in the curved metal base, created from a single piece - enhancing the personality of this dining table.

The family is completed by the **Papel Wood** table, available in a variety of shapes and natural wood finishes.

Papelito, more compact and versatile in size, interprets with the same artisanal expertise the theme of the sinuous curved metal base — also made from a single piece. In the **Papelito Glass** version, the lightness of the structure and the complexity of its volumes are fully revealed, changing appearance depending on the light. The family also includes the models **Papelito Keramik** and **Papelito Wood**, designed for those seeking both formal elegance and functionality in one single design.

Both novelties are defined by the contrast between sculptural form and perceived lightness. Whether in the large size of **Papel** table or the more compact dimensions of **Papelito**, each version showcases expert craftsmanship and highlights materials like glass, ceramic, and wood with a contemporary touch.

dw

www.cattelanitalia.com/en

The Art of Reclining

Why Suffa Defines Today's Furniture Trends

In the evolving world of interiors, furniture has transcended mere function. It's no longer only about where we sit - it's about how we live. As we enter 2025, global furniture trends point towards designs that celebrate comfort, craftsmanship, and conscious living. At the intersection of these ideals stands Suffa - a Portuguese-born brand now redefining South African living spaces with its sophisticated approach to modern lounging.

Trend 1: Comfort as the New Luxury

The post-pandemic design world has softened its edges. Plush, inviting sofas and recliners that encourage slow living are taking centre stage. Suffa captures this movement flawlessly - combining ergonomic reclining technology with sculptural aesthetics. Every piece is an invitation to unwind in style, proof that true luxury lies in how you feel, not only what you see.

Trend 2: European Craftsmanship, Tailored for Africa

Consumers are seeking authenticity and provenance - pieces that tell a story.

Suffa's heritage in Portugal's artisanal furniture tradition brings European precision, sustainable materials, and timeless design to African homes. Each sofa or recliner is handmade with meticulous attention to detail, ensuring longevity and personality - qualities that stand out in a market flooded with mass production.

Trend 3: Modularity and Movement

Today's spaces are fluid - multifunctional rooms that adapt to how we live, work, and entertain. Suffa's reclining systems and modular designs echo this shift. From the Lady Recliner to the Sandy Sofa, flexibility meets elegance - whether in a penthouse, hotel suite, or family living room. The ability to personalise finishes, fabrics, and configurations keeps Suffa one step ahead of global trends.

Trend 4: Sustainability with Soul

The modern consumer is conscious. Suffa's sustainable manufacturing processes, long product life cycles, and use of eco-responsible materials align perfectly with the green design ethos


defining this decade. "Buy less, but better" has become a mantra - and Suffa delivers furniture designed to last a lifetime, not just a season.

Trend 5: The Experience of Living Well

Designers and homeowners alike are looking for pieces that elevate well-being - furniture that supports posture, relaxation, and rejuvenation. Suffa brings this philosophy to life through the art of reclining - merging comfort science with elegant design. It's no wonder the brand has become a talking point among South Africa's top interior designers, developers, and hospitality spaces.

Suffa is more than furniture - it's a lifestyle.

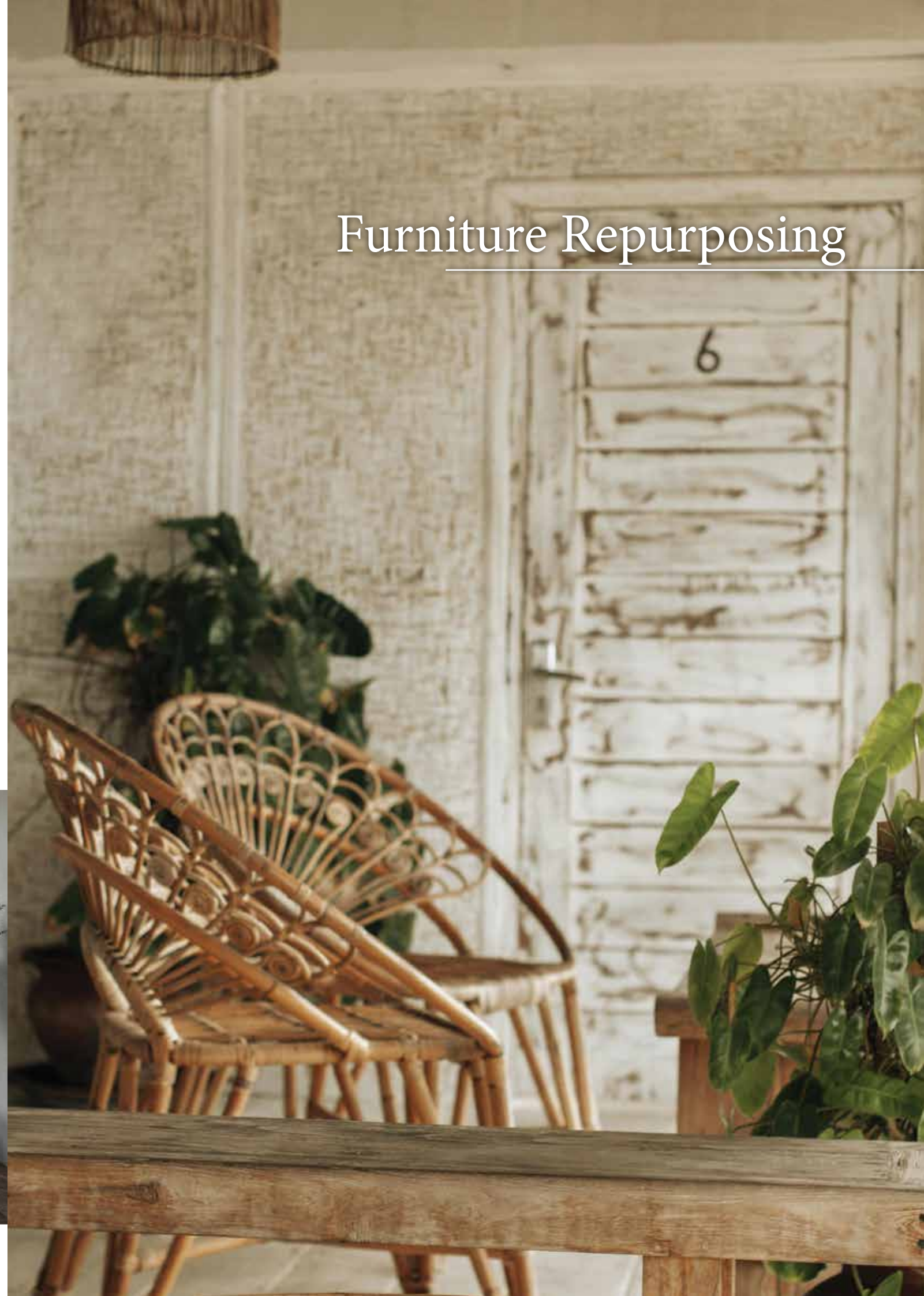
Portuguese elegance meets African sophistication. Comfort meets craftsmanship.

It's no surprise that the world's most discerning homes are saying: Sit back. This is the art of reclining. 

www.vencasa.co.za



Furniture Repurposing



Furniture Repurposing Ideas

by Stienie Greyling

Repurposing furniture is a resourceful creative and eco-friendly way to upcycle old furniture that would otherwise end up on a waste dumpsite.

With a bit of imagination, repurposed furniture can be used to express a unique style or give a modern touch to an older piece. Instead of throwing it out, repurposing furniture allows us to both preserve memories and create something new.

Common ideas include converting chests of drawers into vanities or TV stands, using step ladders as shelving, turning doors into headboards or tables, and giving a chair a new look with paint or upholstery. The process often involves creative changes like adding new hardware, applying a fresh coat of paint, sanding, refinishing or altering the piece's original function.

Wooden, weathered recycled furniture can serve all sorts of surprising purposes if one thinks creatively; a filing cabinet becomes a clothes storage solution, and office drawer units can be turned into

kitchen cabinets. Upcycling furniture ideas like these are ecological, wallet-friendly and full of personality.

A vintage sideboard can be repurposed to create a functional vanity top in a spacious bathroom, where it doesn't have to be placed near the shower. The sideboard is coated with boat varnish for moisture protection.

Art deco, particularly using gold leaf or paint on walnut, remains popular particularly for drinks cabinets, as do dark colours for painted furniture together with heavenly patterned découpage papers. We also see more artisans turning their hand to other types of upcycling, such as creating lighting, art pieces and home accessories.

The centrepiece in a kitchen can be a repurposed store counter, bought after a shop went out of business. By attaching caster wheels strong enough for heavy

furniture and an electrical outlet, kitchen appliances can be used on top.

Discarded wooden office furniture can be repurposed as timeless lower kitchen cabinets. A custom wooden countertop can be made on top of the drawer units, with a stove and sink installed in it.

Building a kitchen island from scratch can be costly, and relocating an island is not like relocating a regular piece of furniture. Instead find a beautiful table, attach a butcher's block on top, and create a ready-made kitchen preparation surface in no time. Plus, it can be moved around from room to room, doubling as an innovate spot for a cheeseboard or dessert table.

Paint is your best friend when it comes to entry-level upcycling. Make a statement piece out of repurposed furniture by painting a one-off piece with bright, bold colours. For example, take a dated side

table, sand off the old paint with medium grit sandpaper, clean off the debris, let it dry, then finally apply two coats of bright, glossy paint.

Who needs to buy a drinks cabinet when you can make one yourself? Add wheels to a table to convert it into an entirely new piece of furniture. This works best on a small piece (like a side table), flip over the table and attach one wheel to each leg with a power drill. Fill the new rolling table with your favourite drinks, books or whatever you would want to make mobile.

The only real difference between a changing table and a chest of drawers is sometimes just the name. To change a chest of drawers into a nappy changing table is a great and very useful idea. Some changing table models, however will have a small edge on the top to keep the changing pad from slipping off. Adding your own,



however, is super easy. Create a short-sided box out of wood that's the same dimension as the chest of drawers, then screw it into the top of the chest of drawers; that will prevent it from slipping off.

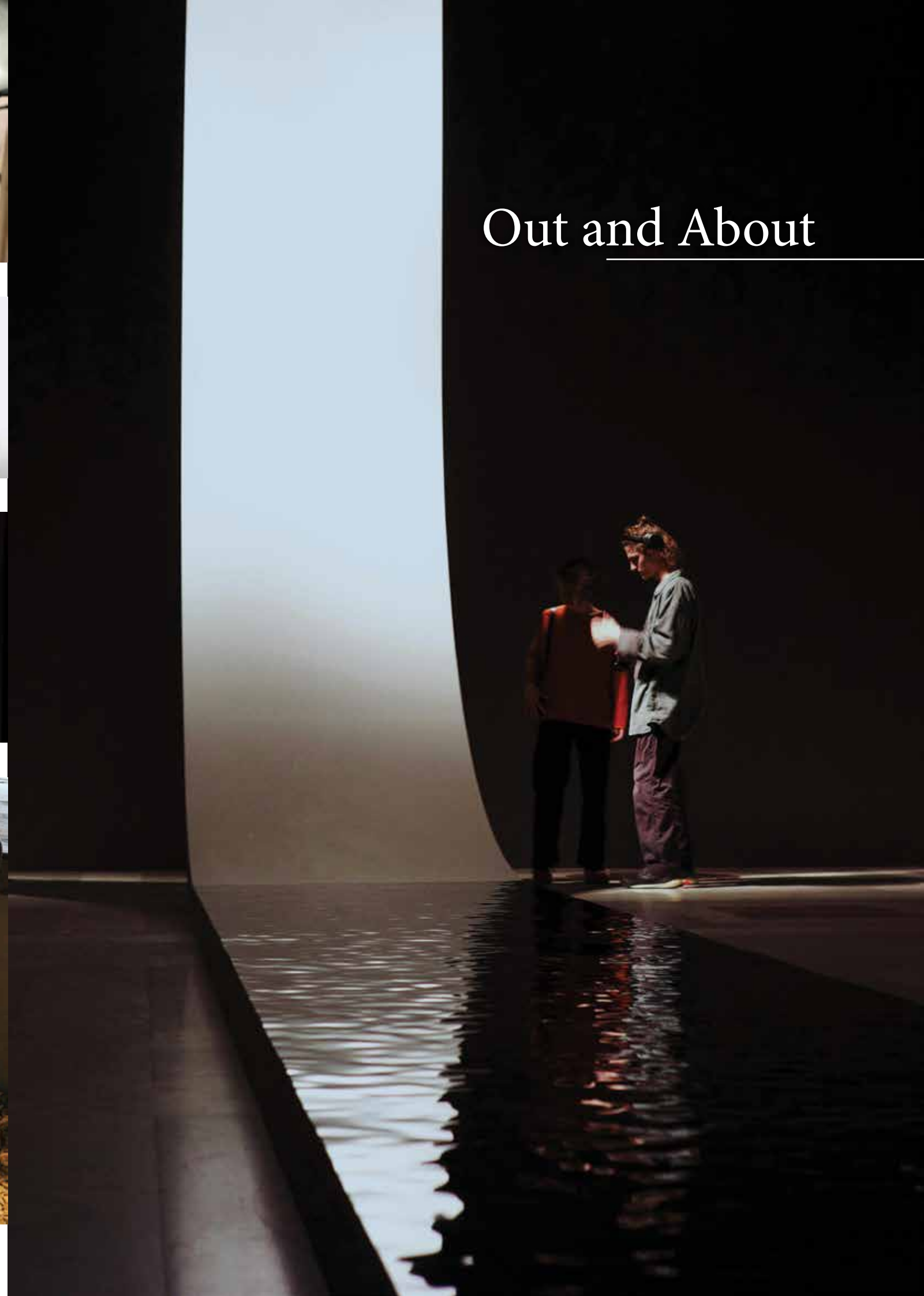
If the living room is lacking seating and there is an extra low table lying around, attach cushioning and upholstery fabric or leather to the top to make an ottoman. All one needs is some sturdy foam, your choice of fabric, and a staple gun to make it work. Make sure the table is sturdy enough to withstand the weight before you go crazy with the staple gun.

Stack wooden crates, one on top of the other, to create an alternative side table. The open element of the design is ideal for storing everything one needs to stow neatly beside the bed, from books to electrical gadgets and more. The distressed nature of the wooden crates is stylish as is, but that's not to say one couldn't gently sand them down and give them a coat of paint to suit the bedroom colour scheme.

Perhaps there is a piece of furniture that has served you well for years in a living room or bedroom, but you wish to give it a makeover fit for a child's room. Painting patterns on the front of the drawers is enough to totally revamp the look. To keep the costs quite low use sample pots to carry out this savvy furniture makeover, making it cheerful and cheap at the same time. [dw](#)



Out and About





The Fourth Wall

Laval, Canada

An immersive and monumental installation takes over Place Claude-Léveillé, in Laval's Montmorency district. The Fourth Wall, the third landmark of the Métamorphoses créatives initiative, offers a unique experience that blurs the lines between art, architecture, and public space. Designed to spark curiosity, this dynamic structure invites passersby to become active participants in a collective, year-round experience.

Launched in 2019 by the City of Laval, the Métamorphoses créatives initiative aims to transform the Montmorency district into a major cultural hub by integrating art, architecture, and design into urban development.

Taking inspiration from both theatre and the street performance, NÓS presents an installation that references the famous "fourth wall" that traditionally separates performers from the audience. Here, that wall becomes an open, curved, and dynamic structure designed to stimulate curiosity, encourage interaction, and transform the public square into a living stage.



Modularity

Designed as a modular structure with interchangeable components, the system consists of steel masts and curved rails from which translucent orange vinyl strips are suspended. Commonly used in commercial and industrial settings for their cold-shielding properties, these strips also serve as effective barriers against noise and dust, particularly relevant in areas near upcoming construction sites.

Urban activation

Conceived as a space for gathering, observation, and spontaneous expression, the installation serves as a true artistic and community meeting point, rooted in the heart of a transforming neighbourhood. Its modular system offers a sustainable solution, adaptable to the site's evolving needs, or reusable for future installations.

Urban furniture

Within this immersive structure, raw-wood urban furniture completes the layout: wooden beams painted bright orange at their base are transformed into warm, convivial seats. The orange colour, part of Métamorphoses créatives' visual identity, reinforces the association between culture, nature, and urban transformation.

Experience

This striking curtain filters the space, reflects the movements of passersby, hosts public performances, and transforms the site through shifting perspectives and evolving uses. This dynamic structure sparks curiosity, nurtures creativity, and invites the public to become active participants in a shared, year-round experience.

The Fourth Wall is a temporary yet symbolic artwork: it accompanies the



renewal of downtown Laval, while offering a vibrant public space for the next four to six years where everyone can be either a spectator or a performer in a collective scene open to the imagination.

Technical sheet

- **Location:** Place Claude-Léveillé, Université de Montréal campus in Laval
- **Client:** Ville de Laval
- **Architects/designers:** Charles Laurence Proulx, Gil Hardy, Eve St-Jean, Maxime Déom
- **Collaborators:** Ariane Leblanc
- **Manufacturer:** Atelier Gris
- **Photographer:** Raphaël Thibodeau

dw

www.n-o-s.ca

Arché

The Immersive and
Modular SPA Experience
by Studio Apostoli and
Balich Wonder Studio

Designed in collaboration with the creative team at Balich Wonder Studio, the Arché Water Path Luxury Experience is a wellness area that can be freely configured to meet the needs of both the facility and its guests.

Described as a Grand Tour of Wellness, it offers an immersive experience that engages the spiritual, emotional, and sensory dimensions. At the same time, it represents a new frontier in wellness design: modular, bespoke, and adaptable to a wide range of contexts and requirements. Arché Water Path Luxury Experience is a project that becomes a product, offering maximum versatility and immediate usability.

Developed through the partnership between Studio Apostoli and Balich Wonder

Studio, the concept is built on a grid system of three distinct modules - independent, customisable, and freely combinable.

The overarching theme is water, explored in all its possible forms, expressions, and manifestations. It becomes the common thread that unites the different settings and the eight proposed zones, shaping their organic design.

This solution blends wellness with exclusive entertainment and is designed to deliver long-term benefits. Water is used as the core design principle: it represents the primordial origin of wellbeing (from

which the name Arché derives) and serves as a bridge to our deeper emotions.

The creative concept was devised by Balich Wonder Studio, while Studio Apostoli developed the layout, selecting the most contemporary finishes, treatments, and technologies.

Hence the extensive use of tactile textures, metallic and mirrored surfaces, vegetation and natural elements - alongside aromatherapy, immersive soundscapes, digital content, engaging lighting, and dramatic effects - all intended to stimulate all five senses.

The Arché Water Path Luxury Experience begins with the Threshold: a suspended walkway over water, interspersed with cascades, symbolising the transition to the Purification Tunnel - a mist-filled space designed to help guests disconnect from the outside world and prepare for the wellness journey ahead.

From here, guests enter the Aquatic Maze: a circular labyrinth divided into interconnected zones, marking their first immersive encounter with water in its many forms. Visitors can enjoy freestyle

swimming, a spacious hot tub encircling a central fire pit, water features with cascading showers, and a beach of dark volcanic sand illuminated by fibre optic lighting to promote complete relaxation. The immersive experience is further enhanced by diverse digitally projected wall patterns and soundscapes.

An underwater passage, known as Navel, leads to a cave illuminated with bioluminescent effects. From there, guests proceed to Latitudes: concentric tunnels that replicate journeys through contrasting regions of the planet - jungle,

desert, Arctic, and volcanic landscapes - recreated with multi-sensory sound, visual, tactile, and olfactory effects.

The fourth area, Greenhouse, is a tropical decompression garden that also hosts the first food and beverage space and leads into Biosphere - a square-layout space whose walls and ceiling are LED screens continuously displaying natural phenomena in a modern reinterpretation of the Romantic sublime. This is followed by Cocoon, a sensory-deprivation dome for meditation, where guests can float in salt infused water.





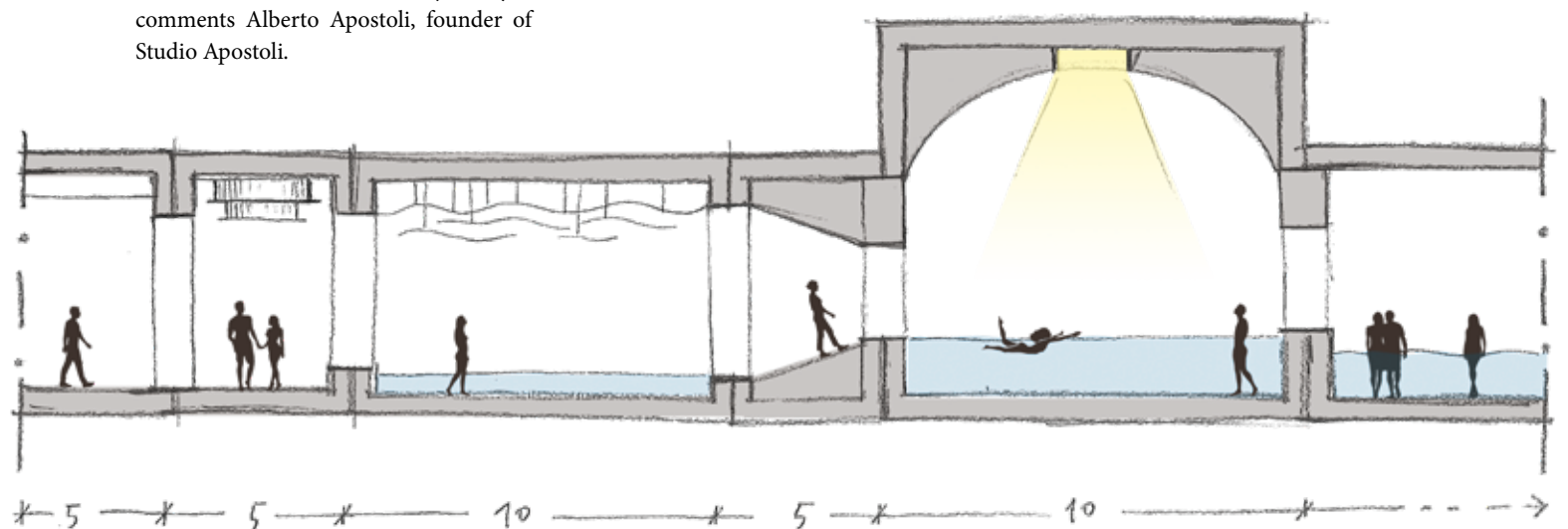
Next is Rain Renewal, a bamboo forest with a rain effect, featuring four private treatment areas: a halo room with negative ion salt therapy; a hammam; a Finnish sauna; and salt baths. The journey concludes with Eden, a lush garden complemented by a food and beverage offering.

"Arché Water Path Luxury Experience is not simply a project but a concept: wellness is 'on demand' and tailored to the needs of each guest as well as the requirements of the hospitality venue, including its spaces and the type of offering. The entertainment component is a central element, responding to the growing leisure trend in getaways and more structured wellness journeys," comments Alberto Apostoli, founder of Studio Apostoli.

He adds, "Designing Arché alongside Balich Wonder Studio has been an invaluable experience: their expertise in major international events and technical and engineering expertise has been the perfect complement to our more than twenty years of wellness design experience."

Gianmaria Serra, Co-founder and Group Executive President of Balich Wonder Studio, adds:

"We are delighted to have collaborated on the Arché project, a sensory, emotional, and spiritual experience that brings together our two worlds: on one



hand, the realm of wellness, in which Studio Apostoli is a recognised expert; on the other, live entertainment, a sector in which Balich Wonder Studio has operated for years, exporting wonder across the globe.

Supported by the emotional masterplan underpinning our creative concept, mind-body wellbeing is elevated through encounters with hypnotic, immersive landscapes crafted from water, light, and materials. Through a diverse range of experiences, water - in all its forms and states - becomes a medium for play, contemplation, and regeneration, blending with video, lighting, and sound within immersive, ever-evolving environments that bring to life fluid and surprising worlds.

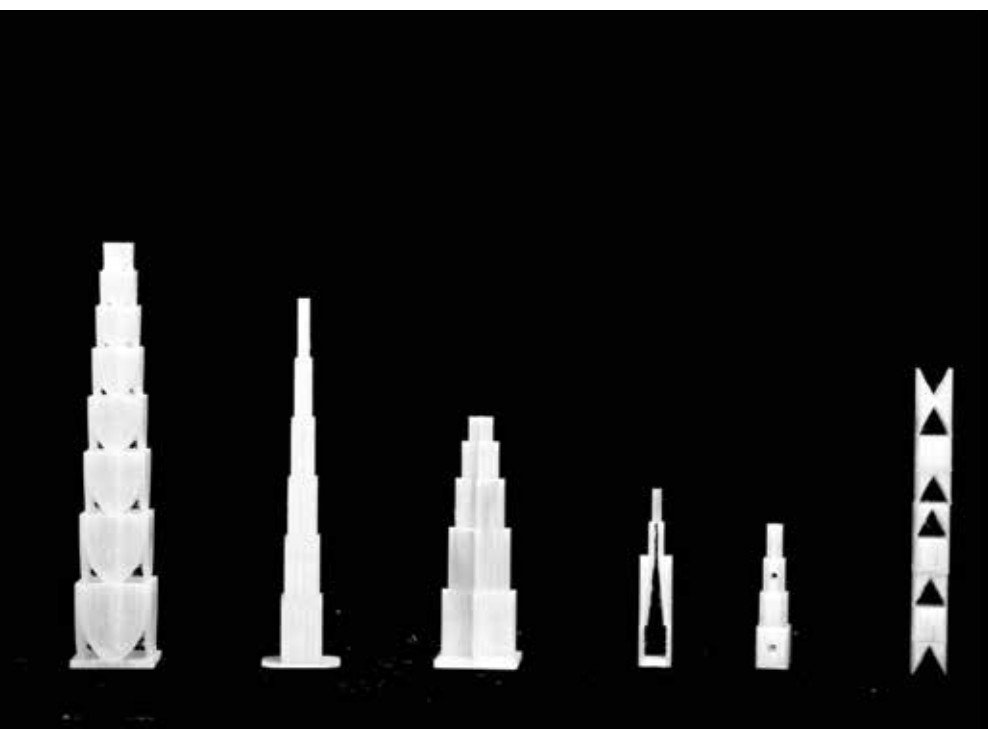
By recreating external landscapes and internal spaces through the transformative power of water, we have been able to offer visitors an intimate journey of discovery - both of the world around them and of themselves." dw

www.albertoapostoli.com



Ten Caskets of the River Flow

Anhui, China



Along the riverbank, and amidst the woods, scattered in the shallow currents, ten small caskets of plain wood rest, varied in height. They range from eye-level to near the water's edge: some stand as tall as a low ginkgo branch, beside a blue stone in the grove; others are short, knee-high in the shallows, semi-submerged in a river spit. The wood, reclaimed from old branches, has been steeped by frost and rain, and baked by the fierce sun until its colour is a deep black, with many fine cracks in its grain—the fresh breaks of the wood gleam pale gold, while the old stubs are dark brown.

Their base forms are also distinct. Those under the trees are either a simple cube, eye-level in height, with black wood bearing rain spots; or carved with a cross, reachable by an uplifted hand, with ginkgo petals collected in the pattern's gaps.

Those in the river are either cut with a triangular base, half-height near the water, the wood body wrapped in a thin layer of mud; or cut into a diamond shape, standing low at knee-height, with fine sand accumulated in the pattern's gaps.

The remaining few, either square or slanted, stand at shoulder-height to eye-level under the trees, and between knee and waist height in the river, all marked with the traces of wind, dew, and water.

The carved signs

Each casket's front is lightly carved with a sign, all derived from the leaf veins of the surrounding trees, differing according to the wood type and form:

The sign on the cube casket—a ginkgo vein with a wide central line, the carving shallow and pale white, standing at eye-level;

The sign on the cross casket—the side veins slightly curved, the engraving marked by rain and clinging petal fragments, within reach of the hand;

The sign on the triangle casket—the end point slightly rounded, the indentations slightly darkened by water immersion, made of deeper, more solemn *Pteroceltis* (Qīngtán), the sign hidden by water moss, half-height near the water;

The sign on the diamond casket—the side veins branching, the carving

embedding fine sand, made of ginkgo wood, which reflects the sand's pale gold, the sign near the water, standing low at knee-height.

These signs hold no profound meaning; they merely record that each casket was born here, a companion to the forest wind, following the river waves.

The small rites

Upon arrival, visitors often perform a small ritual corresponding to a casket. Upon encountering the eye-level cube ginkgo casket under the tree, they place a riverbank smooth stone inside—the stone bearing the river tide, its whiteness contrasting with the black wood and pale gold fracture.

Upon encountering the reachable cross *Pteroceltis* casket under the tree, they tuck a fresh *Pteroceltis* leaf into the wood gap—the leaf holding spring sunlight, setting off the black wood and golden petals.

Upon encountering the half-height triangle casket in the river, they cup river heart water to drip upon the moss—the

water flowing over the mossy coat, lightly touching the wood's edge.

Upon encountering the knee-height diamond ginkgo casket in the river, they gather short river grass to stick into the mud seam—the grass carrying morning dew, swaying beside the mud-wrapped wood.

Ordinary memories

The ten small caskets were never intended to commemorate great events. One might recall listening to the ginkgo rustle with an old friend, the rain spots resembling old marks. Another might recall a child standing on tiptoe to pick up petals, the petal fragments concealing laughter. Another might recall an unprompted mood, seeing the wood grain mirroring the water's flow, a fingertip touching the mossy dampness. Yet another might recall squatting to watch fish pass, the sand embodying ripples.

The remaining caskets, too, harbour ordinary thoughts, with the sun-and-water marks upon the black wood, the high and low points all bearing the traces of visitors' pauses.

OUT AND ABOUT

Things have no fixed form, but intention flows long. The wood is old, its colour a deep black, its grain bearing the marks of wind, dew, and flowing water, its fractures revealing its essence.

The signs are shallow signs, carved upon the black wood, some within sight, others near the light touch of a finger, or hidden beside water moss, each placed according to its height. Though the forms are varied—cube, cross, triangle, and diamond—their positions separate the tree-side from the river-midst, and their heights are scattered between eye-level and knee-height; both the ritual and the memory are light.

Just as the river flows without stopping, the ginkgo leaves yellow and grow green again, and the Pteroceltis branches wither and revive, the ten black wooden caskets, either standing or immersed along the grove and the bank, are neither intense nor passionate. Yet they form one whole with the wind, the dew, the flowing water, the ginkgo, and the Pteroceltis.

Technical sheet

- **Location:** Anhui, China



- **Type:** Landscape architecture installation
- **Design and Drawing:** Lin Lifeng, Chai Zongrui, Dai Jiaye
- **On-site Construction team:** Fu Zhen (serving as Management) Xu Fanyu, Qi Yi, Gao Mengxin, Wu Youran, Ye Sitong, Li Qiangrui, Lai Xun, Xu Yijia, Gong Wanying, Wang Tianqi, Cen Xiangyi, Sun Xianggui, Ge Yuchen, Zhou Ziwei, Huang Weitao, Wang Zijun, Xu Zhensou, Lan Ling, Dan Jiarui, Luo Yujie, Shen Guoqiang, Bao Shijin, Chen Kai, and Hou Yutong, among others
- **On-site Operations:** Hai Jie and Xiao Ye
- **Collaborators:** Shan Li Mei, You Hai, RAC International Art Education, Lan Architecture, Jingxian Dieying Fangzhou Culture & Tourism, Jingdao Yuanzhu
- **Area:** each 0.5m²
- **Height:** 0.5m-3m
- **Completed date:** 2025/08/01
- **Material:** Raw wood, mixed paint
- **Photo credit:** lin lifeng dw

www.lin.archi



ECHO VILLA - Where Architecture Follows the Mountain Line

Taipei, Taiwan



ECHO VILLA - Where Architecture Follows the Mountain Line

Taipei, Taiwan

Echo Villa is a private residence located in Taipei, Taiwan, entirely renovated by Peny Hsieh Interiors. Completed in January 2025, the home spans 990 square metres and draws inspiration from the surrounding mountain contours. Its design expresses a unique spatial language through fluid lines and soft materials.

Custom-designed curved elements shape furniture, partitions, and ceiling transitions, creating a continuous sense of movement. These forms echo the dynamism of the landscape, establishing a cohesive visual rhythm throughout the residence. The choice of materials reinforces the organic concept. Mineral-toned plaster adds depth and texture to the walls, while natural teak flooring brings warmth and harmony. A subdued colour palette and handcrafted details cultivate a calm and balanced atmosphere.

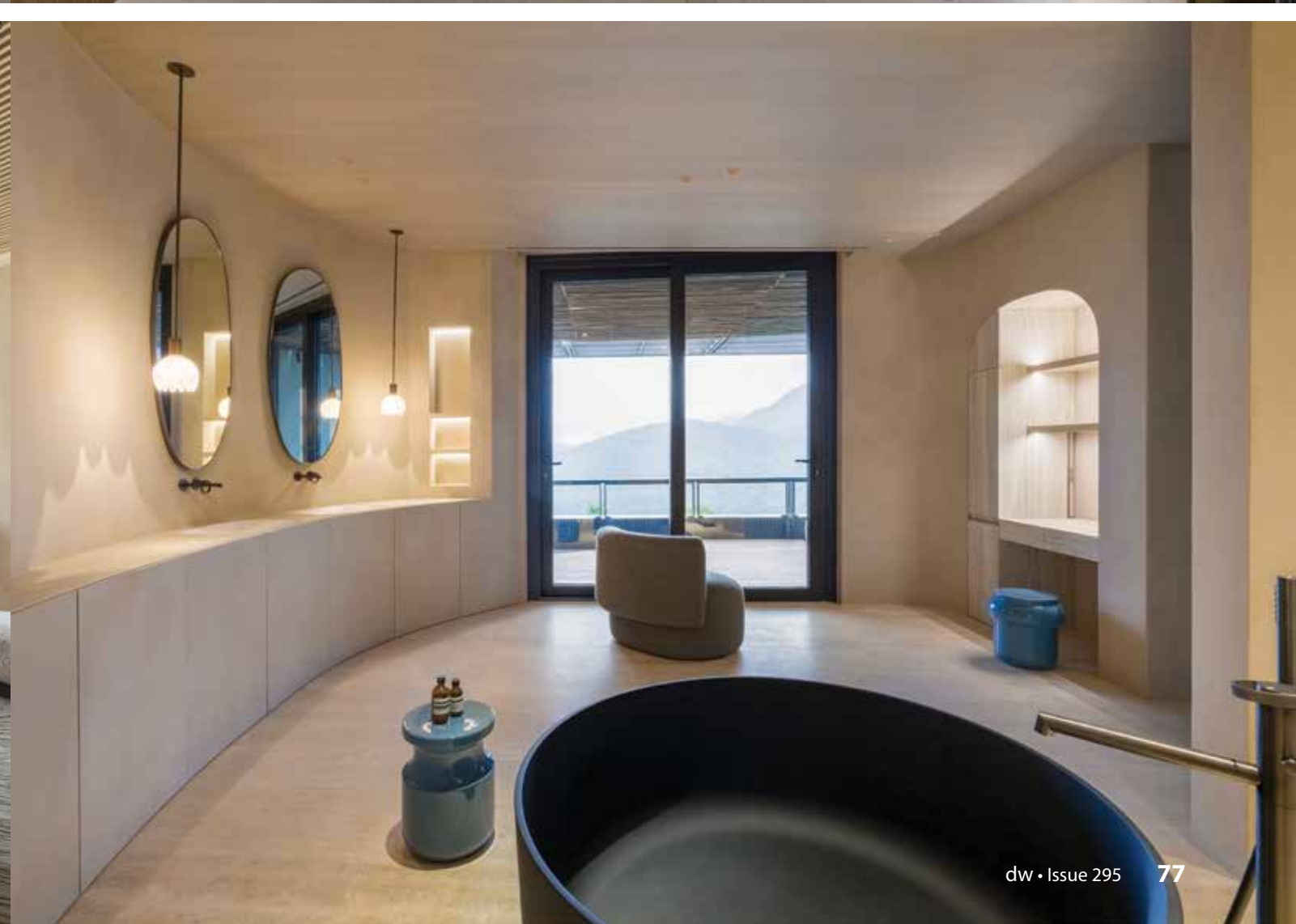
Lighting plays a key role in the composition. Natural light is softened by architectural volumes, while indirect artificial lighting accentuates transitions and textures. Together, they create a serene environment that prioritises clarity and comfort.

The residence also showcases curated artworks by Draga & Aurel, Bruno Moinard, Christophe Delcourt, and Paul Bik. Each piece was thoughtfully selected to align with the project's core concept: transforming the surrounding landscape into a lived interior experience.

The result is a seamless integration of architecture and interior design—a tranquil, cohesive, and sensorial living space.

dw







Technical sheet

- Project Name: Echo Villa
- Location: Taipei, Taiwan
- Completion Date: January 2025
- Type: Private residence / Interior renovation
- Surface Area: 990 m²
- Client: Confidential
- Interior Design: Peny Hsieh Interiors
- Project Team: Peny Hsieh, founder & creative director
- Peny Hsieh Interiors design team collaborators: Draga & Aurel, Bruno Moinard, Christophe Delcourt, Paul Bik
- Main Materials: Mineral-toned plaster, Natural teak wood, Custom concrete finishes, Curved built-in elements, Handcrafted furniture, Glass, metal, fabric
- Photographer: Peny Hsieh Interiors

www.penyhsieh.com



Casa Tao: Shade as a Space for Life

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico





Top Aerial View of Pedestrian Entrance and Courtyards
Photo credit: Hugo Tirso Domínguez



Pool
Photo credit: César Belio

Casa Tao: Shade as a Space for Life

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

Some houses are not designed - they are remembered. Casa Tao was not born from a technical drawing, but from the silent memory of those who inhabit it. It is a house that does not seek to respond to an image, but to a life. Or rather: to a way of living.

Gustavo grew up in a humble house made more of effort than of materials. The son of farmers and craft merchants - people with rough hands and generous eyes - who, though their studies were prematurely interrupted, managed to instill in him a desire to understand the world. He grew up in Puerto Vallarta, a place on the Pacific coast of Mexico, where sun and humidity define the rhythm of the days, and where shade is not an accident, but a precious asset - a true refuge. From the beginning, the house needed to translate that need for shelter, for seclusion, for coolness. The concept of shade was not understood here merely as a physical phenomenon, but as an emotional condition: a promise of calm, of breath, of silent protection against a clamorous world.



Pedestrian Entrance
Photo credit: Hugo Tirso Domínguez



Bedroom Courtyard
Photo credit: César Belio



Master Bedroom
Photo credit: Gustavo Quiroz



Aerial View of Southeast Façade
Photo credit: Hugo Tirso Domínguez



Living Room
Photo credit: Hugo Tirso Domínguez



Guest Bedroom
Photo credit: Gustavo Quiroz

But it was Gustavo's personality - as rich and complex as the place of his childhood - that deeply shaped the design. With uncommon curiosity, he is a man who has made self-taught knowledge his path. Philosophy, architecture, music, photography: we get the impression that little is foreign to him. His library, filled with special editions by Alberto Campo Baeza, Fan Ho, Tarkovsky, and more, reveals an affection for formal clarity, for essential geometry, for quiet courtyards that converse with emptiness and light. Speaking with him is to immerse oneself in a view open to the world - deeply sensitive, and at the same time precise.

His story with Cynthia, the second inhabitant, is also an essential part of this architecture. Together with their two daughters, Mila and Anto, they took their first trip abroad to Japan. That journey left an indelible mark on their imagination: the aesthetics of emptiness, compositional cleanliness, and the stillness contained in every architectural gesture. They told the architects, with a smile, "We'd like to feel as if we were living inside a Japanese museum." But they did not mean the solemnity of the museum as an institution, but rather that type of space where time slows down, where light filters gently, where silence becomes tangible.

And that is what HW Studio tried to do. In a neighborhood with no remarkable views, except for a tree-lined plaza that offered shade and breeze, they decided to orient the architecture toward that freshness. But they did not do so frontally. They avoided large glazed surfaces that might intensify the heat. Instead, they proposed an oblique, angled relationship that allows the presence of the plaza to be sensed without being fully exposed to the heavy sunlight. The act of dwelling

Top Aerial View of Pool
Photo credit: Hugo Tirso Domínguez



Pedestrian Access Corridor
Photo credit: Hugo Tirso Domínguez



is framed indirectly, as if the house were observing at a diagonal, modestly—letting only the wind and the fragrance of the not-so-distant sea pass through.

They placed the larger programme - the bedrooms, garage, and service areas - at the base, and above it, they suspended a light, double-height box containing the social areas. This strategy allowed them to raise social life above street level, surround it with air, and open it toward the trees and the salty breeze that crosses the plaza. The elevated patios act as terraces for contemplation - small platforms from which to better breathe the scent of flowers and hear the murmur of wind among the treetops.

The bedrooms are organised around a patio, seeking silence and air. Here, intimacy is expressed through enclosure - not as confinement, but as an interior world. A curved wall receives the visitor gently, marking a welcoming threshold, while a tree greets you like a floral arrangement. The house does not look toward the neighborhood; it turns inward, like someone seeking refuge. But it does not close itself off: it opens to the sky, the shade, the plaza. Everything is arranged so that living happens in a slower, fuller way - more open to the invisible.

The materiality was inevitably tactile and sensory. Whiteness dazzles under the coastal sun, while concrete - heavy, honest - absorbs the light with delicacy. It is a concrete that becomes warm through use and time. In this material, light does not bounce; it settles.

Casa Tao is, ultimately, an architecture born of the desire to inhabit the world with greater attention. It is a house that withdraws discreetly



Dining Room
Photo credit: César Belio



Photo credit: César Belio



Bedroom Courtyard
Photo credit: César Belio

and offers its spaces as atmospheres for contemplation and memory. In it, dwelling becomes a form of study, of pause, of gratitude. Every corner invites one to remain, not to pass through, and every shadow is a promise of well-being.

This deliberate search for shade - as refuge and poetic quality - brings us closer to a spatial understanding similar to that described by Junichirō Tanizaki in 'In Praise of Shadows'. There, Tanizaki does not celebrate darkness as the absence of light, but as a subtler way of seeing. In his text, shadow is not an obstacle, but a veil that ennobles - a way of amplifying the depth of things, of allowing beauty to emerge slowly, with humility. So too with this house: it is not illuminated assertively, but lets the penumbra suggest; it allows light to filter in without violence, and each space becomes a nuanced, contained sensory experience in which time thickens and life grows quiet.

dw

Project description

- Architects: HW STUDIO
- Contact e-mail: info@hw-studio.com
- Facebook: [@hwstudioarquitectos](https://www.facebook.com/hwstudioarquitectos)
- Instagram: [@hwstudioarq](https://www.instagram.com/hwstudioarq)
- Location: Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, México
- GoogleMapslink: <https://goo.gl/maps/DK5R2RUy15PvEGND7>
- Completion Year: 2025
- Size: 472 msq

Technical information

- Lead Architect: Rogelio Vallejo Bores
- Architects: Oscar Didier Ascencio Castro & Nik Zaret Cervantes Ordaz
- Team: Juan Pablo Camacho Ayala
- Structural Engineering: ARGA Constructora
- Construction company: COMAQSO
- Budget: 940,000 USD

www.hw-studio.com



Pool
Photo credit: Gustavo Quiroz



Study
Photo credit: Gustavo Quiroz



Guest Bedroom
Photo credit: César Belio

Youshan Meidi Villa

Zhang Ling Design Studio,
Shangceng Design Institute





Youshan Meidi Villa

Zhang Ling Design Studio,
Shangceng Design Institute

Designer Zhang Ling's latest project, the Youshan Meidi Villa in Beijing, has been designed to give the individuals who inhabit it a sense of effortless connection to the surrounding landscape, within an atmosphere of calm tranquility fostered by abundant sunlight and an elegant, minimalist aesthetic.

Harmonics of Light

The villa's central hall serves as the fulcrum of the interior, vertically connecting multiple levels and naturally illuminated from above and the sides through a generous skylight and floor-to-ceiling windows, creating a lively rhythm of light and shadow akin to a musical composition. Reaching a height of 6 metres, the space extends into the lounge area, creating an ample yet comfortable openness, while allowing direct views into the adjacent garden.

A baseline palette of white walls and off-white stone flooring and furnishings provides a classic yet understated environment, in which boldly coloured or shaped furnishings have been placed to maximise their visual and emotional impact. Here, a delicate chandelier reminiscent of a floating three-dimensional grid hovers above, a carefully crafted piece recalling works of contemporary art. The custom fireplace, constructed from specially crafted steel, appears as a minimalist opening in the lounge's wall, its subtle, abstract form seamlessly blending into the atmosphere of contemplative elegance. On the opposite side of the lounge, the distinguished presence of a grand piano appears against the backdrop of a wall clad in grey





stone panels, evoking the sound of exquisite melodies lingering in the tranquil air. As the double-height curtain is drawn open, as on the stage of a grand theatre, the garden outside is revealed, seemingly extending out from the interior without obstruction. Meanwhile, the black double-height open bookshelf serves as a visually striking architectural feature, while also serving as a valuable repository of culture and knowledge.

Outside, the trees grow unceasingly, even the most ordinary of them possessing a strong yet undefinable presence. During breakfast in the dining room, the low shrubs keep the inhabitants company, their verdant layers intermingling and leading up to the taller trees in the background. While curled up in a corner of the living room, reading a book, one may also relax in the presence of the hydrangeas outside, silently blooming adjacent to the wall.

Opening Boundaries

Zhang Ling has created a series of flowing spaces via an open plan layout, allowing for freedom of movement throughout the project. The entrance area and staircase serve as horizontal and vertical axes that gently guide movement. By opening up the walls as much as possible and using transparent balustrades at the stair landings, inhabitants are brought into a more intimate proximity with the outdoor environment, connecting the vitality of nature to the rooms which look out onto it. The dining and living areas have been conceived with a minimalist materials palette and overall aesthetic, with light, nature, and scale acting as the main design elements, a reflection on the core necessities of human existence.

Peaceful Respite

The study acts as a place of peaceful respite, away from the bustle of everyday life. Large floor-to-ceiling windows provide a view filled with an abundance of trees, initiating an atmospheric dialogue between the tranquility of the interior and the dynamism of the natural world outside. As foliage rustles in the breeze and birds flit in and out of view, the space is filled with a sense of calm energy and serene beauty. Here, one can immerse oneself in calligraphy or drawing, thoughts flowing as freely as the strokes of a brush. As life's rhythm slows down, each moment becomes that much richer and more meaningful.





Sensory Comfort and Detail

The bedroom has been designed with the inhabitants' sensory, emotional, and spiritual needs in mind. The timber flooring provides a warm tactile experience, while large windows allow plentiful natural light into the room, creating a sense of spaciousness and calm. A selection of understated yet sophisticated furniture furthers the restful atmosphere of the space. Meanwhile, a minimal oval tub surrounded by the natural patterns of black and white marble in the bathroom offers an animated counterpoint to the rest of the space, a vital yet serene retreat for the body and mind. The luxury here lies in the carefully curated attention to detail, taking into account the small everyday needs of the inhabitants.

An Experience to Savour

The villa's interior presents a setting where a fusion of the body, the environment, and imagination takes place, offering a subtly heightened and immersive physical experience. Whether watching a movie, dining, exercising, or drinking tea, the intangible flow of time is felt here through the architecture's atmosphere of sophisticated ease and elegance. Nature and the man-made world coexist and communicate harmoniously in this home. As night falls, soft recessed lighting and views of the courtyard create a warm and comfortable ambiance, where the joys of life can be experienced and savored. dw

Project information

- **Project name:** Youshan Meidi Villa
- **Location:** Shunyi District, Beijing
- **Chief Designer:** Zhang Ling
- **Design team:** Wang Chenyi
- **MEP Consultant:** Kang Zheng
- **Project year:** 2024
- **Site area:** 1200 sqm
- **Interior Space:** 1088 sqm
- **Budget:** 10 million RMB
- **Photographer:** Hanmo Visual





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Opera in One Act

A delightful opera presentation from Florence came to Jozi recently. Reminiscent of the fringe festival productions in Edinburgh and Grahamstown, it was an hour long, and featured parts of opera from Monteverdi (1567-1643) to Puccini (1858-1924), including Pergolesi, Mozart, Rossini, Bellini, Verdi and others.

Five young people came on stage – three in white trousers, shirts and sneakers, two in black. The white-clad were the singers (tenor, soprano, mezzo-soprano) and the black-clad the musicians (piano and accordion). The singers wheeled on four white suitcases and set up two stands with a crossbar at the back of the stage, with a filmy white fabric thrown over it to create a dressing

room or theatre wings for the actors. Two cases stood at the front of the stage, and two behind the curtain, all four containing props. The tenor represented Love, the soprano Music, and the mezzo-soprano Hatred. The props were small pieces of clothing such as a veil for the bride, a bowtie for the groom, pieces of armour (helmets, shoulder pads, wooden swords), different hats relating to different periods.

After the vicissitudes of love and separation, hate and reconciliation, the final trio ended the performance with a celebration of opera itself “a spectacle where everything is fake, and nothing is false” according to the programme notes. As it ended, the curtain and stands were folded away, the props were packed back into the

suitcases, which were then wheeled offstage.

It was a delight and transported the audience with its magic and simplicity. This was a travelling production done by the Accademia Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, which trains young opera singers, répétiteurs, conductors, set designers, stagehands, prop makers, technicians, costume designers and makers, anyone who wishes to learn and develop specific skills in the field.

The group had travelled through Africa, giving performances in Nigeria and Kenya before coming to Johannesburg. Despite being at the end of the tour, they were invigorating, youthful and totally inspiring.

Gill Butler

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Jakobsson Table lamp

YAMAGIWA's Jakobsson Lamp to be Showcased at Messler Gallery, Maine, USA

Rockport, United States

YAMAGIWA Corporation (Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan), a distinguished Japanese lighting design company renowned for high-quality and innovative illumination solutions, is pleased to announce that its Jakobsson Lamp collection has been selected for inclusion in the “Everyday Heirlooms: Exquisitely Designed Wooden Objects of Use” exhibition at the Messler Gallery, Center for Furniture Craftsmanship, in Rockport, Maine, USA.

Curated by Heide Martin (Heide Martin Design Studio) and Anne Quigley (Editor-in-Chief, Remodelista.com), the exhibition highlights how thoughtfully designed wooden objects - practical yet timeless - can transform everyday experiences and endure as cherished heirlooms for generations.

The Jakobsson Lamp, created by Swedish designer Hans-Agne Jakobsson, brings out the natural beauty of pine wood


and has long illuminated Scandinavian homes as one of his signature works. Its thinly sliced pine shades, naturally dried over time, diffuse light with warmth and softness reminiscent of a bonfire. Faithfully reproduced today through Japanese craftsmanship, each lamp is carefully assembled by traditional artisans, carrying forward Jakobsson's legacy of combining natural materiality with poetic light.

The Messler Gallery

Dedicated year-round to the exhibition of studio furniture and wood art, the Messler Gallery advances design and craftsmanship in wood as a vibrant medium of expression. As an educational forum, it provides opportunities for students, the public, and accomplished makers alike to engage with works firsthand, while also reaching a national audience through juried competitions,

Jakobsson lamp Craftsmanship



invitational exhibitions, and traveling shows. 

Exhibition information

- **Everyday Heirlooms:** Exquisitely Designed Wooden Objects of Use
- **Venue:** Messler Gallery, Center for Furniture Craftsmanship
- **25 Mill Street, Rockport, Maine, USA**
- **Dates:** September 22, 2026 – January 15, 2027
- **Opening Hours:** Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
- **Photo credit:** YAMAGIWA

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Bespoke Creations

Meljac's Signature

Meljac, France's leading producer of luxury switches, has been honing its unique expertise for more than 30 years as a creator of quality electrical fittings crafted to fit perfectly into every interior. For the French brand, which epitomises elegance and quality, this bespoke approach is central to its creative strategy.

The art of bespoke for harmonious interiors


Every interior is unique. Meljac provides a personalized approach, meeting the needs of architects, interior designers, and homeowners by offering a choice of materials, finishes, engravings, and dimensions, as well as the option of creating exclusive models. With its workshops expertly handling all stages of the production process, the brand tailors its creations to the smallest details of each project, from contemporary residences to historical palaces.

Blending expert craftsmanship with state-of-the-art technologies

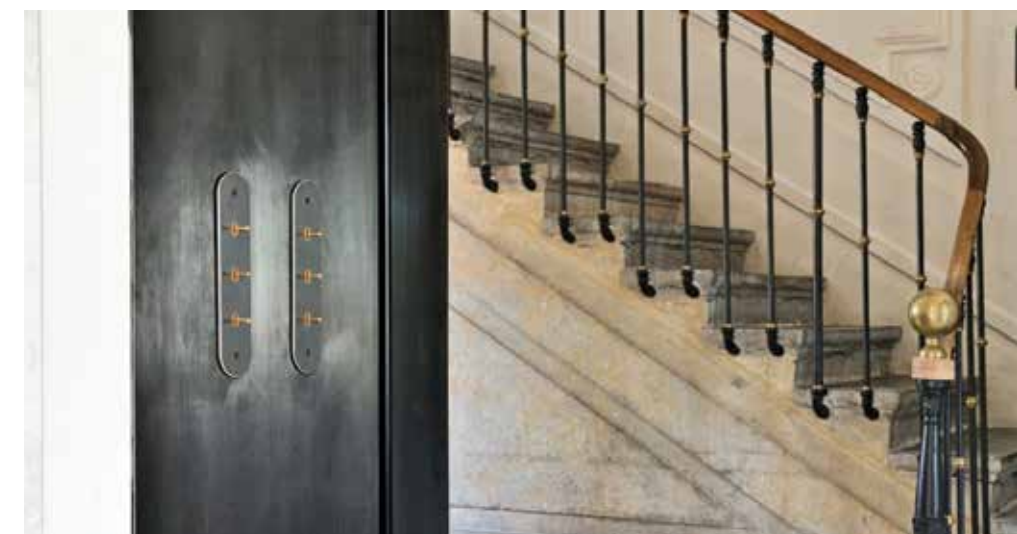
Behind every tailor-made creation lies a combination of artisanal skill and precision engineering. Meljac's professionals apply the highest standards as they transform brass and other quality materials, while the R&D teams develop innovative solutions to integrate modern features such as home automation, LEDs, and specific controls.

Prestigious projects worldwide

Meljac's bespoke creations can be found in the most inspiring settings: luxury hotels, cultural venues, the premises of renowned architects, and private homes. The brand is recognised internationally for its ability to combine elegance, precision, and customisation, with each product serving both a decorative and a functional purpose.

All Meljac's models bear the prestigious “Origine France Garantie” (OFG) label. 

www.meljac.com/en



DESIGN TEAM

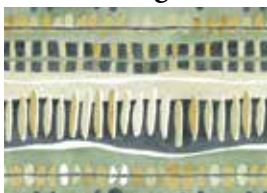
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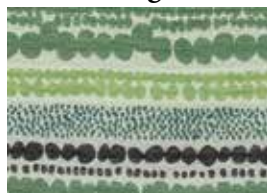


Tidswell Interiors, at
Turbine hotel Knysna

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