



*Year of the Monster.
Intrigued?*

VISIT MOOOI.COM

m o o o i

FRAME

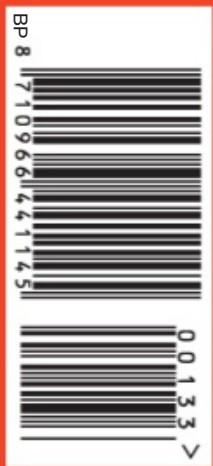
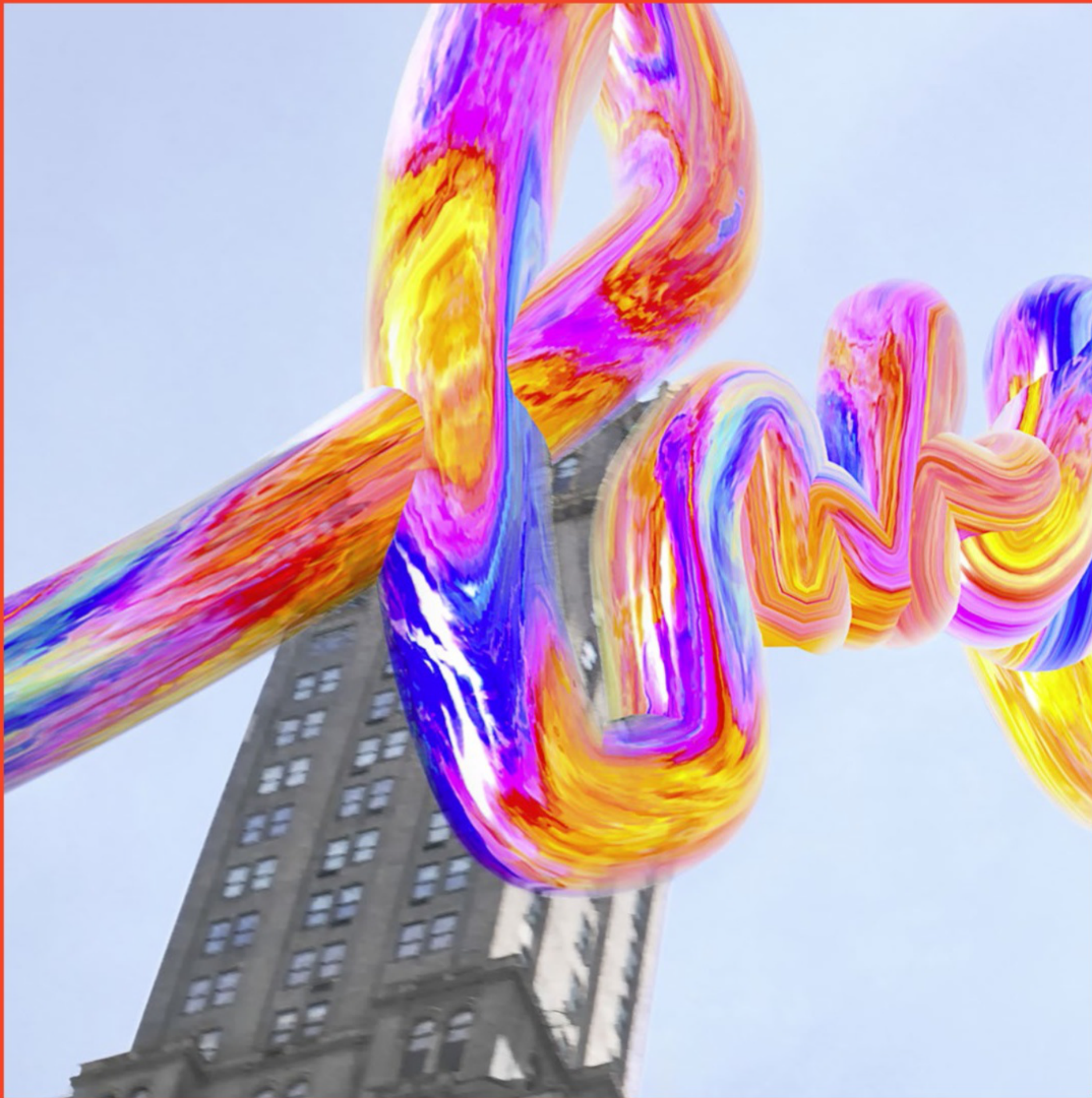
THE NEXT SPACE

MUSEUMS BREAK LOOSE

Wonderwall's founder on revolutionizing retail
3D printing takes affordable housing mainstream
How to reinvigorate tired trade fairs
Power to the people: next-gen Mexican design
Gentle Monster shoots the shopping mall to Mars

ISSUE 133

MAR — APR 2020



BX €19.95 DE €19.95 IT €24.90 CHF 30
UK £14.95 JP ¥3,570 KR ₩40,000

INTERIORS
FROM SPAIN

Interior Beauty

NEOLITH® ZAHA STONE Space | NEOLITH® Urban Boutique Milano (Italy) | Designed by Héctor Ruiz Velézquez | Photography: Nacho Uribe Salazar

Neolith® is an architectural skin capable of dressing up any interior or exterior space where it is used.

The large format minimizes the number of joints in tiling for esthetic and hygiene benefits. The minimal thickness allows Neolith® to be directly applied to an already existing surface without any need for prior removal

which saves on the time and costs involved with reform projects. Neolith®'s ability to resemble natural materials such as stone, wood and metal, coupled with low-maintenance and high-resistance qualities make it perfect for indoor and outdoor applications, private or public spaces, where a balance between aesthetics and functionality is essential.

CONTENTS

08 REPORTING FROM
Bali and Tel Aviv

13 BUSINESS OF DESIGN
From trademarked tower blocks to
carless car dealerships

Tada (Yukai)

48



Sun Liwen, courtesy of Harmay



54

27 IN PRACTICE

28 INTRODUCING
Mexico City-based Comunal

38 INFLUENCER
Set designer Gary Card

48 WHAT I'VE LEARNED
Wonderwall's Masamichi Katayama

54 THE CLIENT
Harmay CEO Damien Zhong

60 MINI
Vehicles for self-expression

Rodrigo Chapa, courtesy of Comunal



28



Wang Minjie, courtesy of Xianxiang Design

84

- 65 **SPACES**
Fitting rooms come out to play and ‘surretail’ goes extreme
- 84 **LOOK BOOK**
Synthesphere
- 122 **NEW TYPOLOGY**
Urban living rooms
- 132 **ROCA**
Battle of the bathrooms

104



136

Courtesy of Nick Cave and Apple

- 135 **MUSEUM LAB**
- 136 Moving from conservation to activation
- 152 What will we see in the museum of tomorrow?

- 161 **MARKET**
Highlights from IMM and Domotex

- 176 **IN NUMBERS**
Harry Nuriev’s Balenciaga sofa in facts and figures



Nivedita Gupta, courtesy of Studio Renesa



Courtesy of Wittmann

170

MILANO PARIS LONDON NEW YORK ATHENS BARCELONA BEIJING BUDAPEST CHENGDU CHICAGO DUBAI GENEVA HONG KONG ISTANBUL JAKARTA
LOS ANGELES MADRID MANILA MEXICO CITY MIAMI MOSCOW NANJING OSAKA SEOUL SHANGHAI SINGAPORE TEHERAN TOKYO TORONTO

#MolteniGroup



GREGOR SEATING SYSTEM— VINCENT VAN DUYSSEN

Molteni & C

FRAME is published six times a year by

Frame Publishers
Luchtvaartstraat 4
NL-1059 CA Amsterdam
frameweb.com

EDITORIAL

For editorial inquiries, please e-mail
frame@frameweb.com
or call +31 20 4233 717 (ext 921).

Editor in chief

Robert Thiemann – RT

Head of content

Floor Kuitert – FK

Editor at large

Tracey Ingram – TI

Editors

Anouk Haegens – AH
Lauren Grace Morris – LGM

Business editor

Peter Maxwell – PM

Editorial intern

Iryna Humenyuk – IH

Copy editors

InOtherWords (D’Laine Camp)

Design director

Barbara Iwanicka

Graphic designers

Zoe Bar-Pereg
Shadi Ekman

Graphic design intern

Deimante Jasiuleviciute

Translation

InOtherWords (D’Laine Camp, Maria van Tol)

Contributors to this issue

Karen Day – KD
Kanae Hasegawa – KH
George Kafka – GK
Gili Merin – GM
Kourosh Newman-Zand – KNZ
Amandas Ong – AO
Jonathan Openshaw – JO
Rosamund Picton – RP
Debika Ray – DR
Lauren Teague – LT

Cover

Image courtesy of Pipilotti Rist and Apple
From [AR]T Walks by Apple and New Museum
(see page 144)

Lithography

Edward de Nijs

Printing

Grafisch Bedrijf Tuijtel
Hardinxveld-Giessendam

PUBLISHING

Director

Robert Thiemann

Brand and marketing manager

Leah Heaton-Jones
leah@frameweb.com
T +31 20 4233 717 (ext 951)

Marketing intern

Renata Sutton

Distribution and logistics

Nick van Oppenraaij
nick@frameweb.com
T +31 20 4233 717 (ext 981)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

For subscription inquiries, please
e-mail subscriptions@frameweb.com
or call +31 858 883 551.

2-year subscription + book	From €209
2-year subscription	From €189
1-year subscription	From €109
1-year student subscription	From €89

Please visit frameweb.com/subscribe
for the latest offers.

ADVERTISING

Sales manager

Baruch Pichowski
baruch@frameweb.com
T +44 7471 093 909

Advertising representatives

Italy

Studio Mitos
Michele Tosato
michele@studiomitos.it
T +39 0422 894 868

Sara Breveglieri

sb@frameweb.com
T +39 3394 373 951

Bookstore distributors

Frame is available at sales points worldwide.
Please see frameweb.com/magazines/where-to-buy.

Frame (USPS No: 019-372) is published
bimonthly by Frame Publishers NL.

ISSN FRAME: 1388-4239

© 2020 Frame Publishers and authors

Back issues

Buy online at store.frameweb.com



Coat in chestnut
perforated lambskin.
Tri-buckle clasp
in palladium-finish metal.

UNCHAINED GALLERY

Museums preserve the past. I realized that as a child, when my parents took me to the Natural History Museum in my hometown of Maastricht. The bones of local dinosaur varieties, primitive flint tools and long-lost plant species were all displayed in glass cabinets. Yawn. Although I found visiting our local contemporary art accommodation, the Bonnefanten Museum, much more engrossing, I unfortunately also found it daunting. The fact that I hardly met any other visitors in either museum therefore did not strike me as odd.

Several decades later my outlook on museums has changed completely. In the Netherlands, museum visit numbers have been increasing by double-digit percentages year after year. This can be attributed partly to the streams of tourists that mainly visit the big cities. But the Dutch themselves are also showing up in museums more often than ever. Compared with the institutes of my childhood, museums have changed unrecognizably. Dwindling subsidies have forced them to become more enterprising and to market themselves better. They want to attract a more diverse audience: not only white nationals from the upper-income bracket, but also ethnic minorities and lower-income earners. Some museums even employ special diversity staff for this purpose.

As a result, museum programmes focus less on the white West and managers critically evaluate the structure of their collection and the way in which artefacts are described. The Amsterdam Museum, for example, has decided to stop talking about the 'Golden Age', because although the age it refers

to was economically profitable for many of the white people living in the Netherlands, this was only the case because the Netherlands colonized countries and enslaved people.

Through discussions such as these, museums make it clear that they no longer want to play a passive part, but would rather be actively involved in the public debate. In this issue's Lab, we discuss how non-Dutch museums are creating distinct profiles for themselves. The world's leading Western museums are increasingly stepping onto the political stage by entering into partnerships with institutions in China (V&A, Centre Pompidou) or opening branches in cities such as Abu Dhabi (Louvre). French institutions in particular seem to adopt an opaque role in a geopolitical power play.

Other museums monopolize attention by flexing their architectural muscles in special locations, hoping for their own variety of the Bilbao effect. And then there are the museums experimenting in the digital domain. Thanks to technologies such as AR, they can literally operate outside their walls or make visitors part of works on display.

Once sleep-inducing, museums now briskly play the cultural domain; no wonder my children like to visit them.

Robert Thiemann
Editor in chief

Plastron jumper,
in double-face silk knit,
open back and tri-buckle details,
in palladium-finish metal.



Innovation in the making.

BALI

Karen Day asks why there isn't more cross-cultural exchange between Western innovators and Indonesian designers to solve some of the world's socioecological problems.

I often wonder why Indonesia isn't leading the way in sustainable design. I think about this as I wear a face mask to protect myself from the thick black smoke spewing out of scooters, cars and buses, as I pass a load of rubbish dumped into the island's irrigative waterways, or when I pick up takeaway food contained in plastic packaging. Bali – and the extensive archipelago it belongs to – is rife with opportunities for improving tomorrow, both for its own residents and the global population. But in an era of vocational nomads, serious design professionals seem to be overlooking the chance to leave their desks behind for a first-hand lesson in what are all too mistakenly shrugged off as third-world concerns.

There are plenty of eco-activists to be found in Indonesia, from teenagers who successfully managed a governmental ban on single-use shopping bags to cutting-edge hospitality companies reducing the impact tourism has on the island. However, the current roster of trained problem solvers is far too small for a region that has two major factors working in its favour: a long history of using raw materials *and* its proximity to the issues almost every country is now facing. If more of the Western world's innovators joined forces with

Indonesia's design leaders, their diverse backgrounds could create the perfect symbiotic relationship in which to tackle many of our socioecological predicaments.

The Balinese have been cleverly using the land they dwell on for thousands of years, from something as simple as using banana leaves to wrap up food to more complex ideas like their intricate *subak* irrigation network. As explained by Harvard professor of urban design, Julia Watson, in her new book *Lo-TEK: Design by Radical Indigenism*, the *subak* is a successful model of productive ecological design 'for today's cities that are facing water shortages and realising the negative implications of agrochemicals'. From Cape Town to Los Angeles, this ancient aquatic system could be used to manage the flow of water trickling down from higher elevations.

Designer Elora Hardy shows what can be done with the fruits of this labour. Her architecture studio, Ibuku, creates incredible bamboo structures that have the tensile strength of steel but the ability to be removed in the future without damaging the ground upon which they rest. The renewable tree-like grass was previously deemed an unsuitable construction material because of its susceptibility to termites, but Hardy's team bathes it in

boron, a chemical element found in nature, to render it inedible for insects and protect it for hundreds of years of use. Ibuku's approach is becoming more widely recognized and, last year, it brought the natural elements of Bali to a restaurant in Hong Kong.

Helping to solve a dependency on oil and the resulting pollution it generates is American entrepreneur Tony Fadell, inventor of the iPod. With Edde, his new Bali-based concept, he's on a mission to replace traditional scooters with electric bikes. And because its bicycle frames will be manufactured with plastic ocean waste, Edde will help to clean up local beaches in the process. Fadell believes individual electric transportation is the most energy-efficient mode for the future, but by living in Bali he also began to understand that the problem was bigger than fuel: the steep interest rate on purchasing a new scooter means the average person pays twice the amount of the sticker price. Fadell aims to change that by working with local banks to lessen the financial burden that comes with purchasing a set of wheels here and encouraging people to make the switch.

Proving there can truly be a lot to learn from cross-cultural collaboration is Dutch Design Foundation offshoot What if Lab, which has paired designers from

the Netherlands with counterparts in Jakarta to work on what it considers to be the major challenges defining Indonesia today: 'sustainable education, clean air, bio-based materials and resilient neighbourhoods.' The exchange is also concerned with solutions for socially complex issues plaguing humanity, such as 'how to build a respectful environment in which future generations will thrive and prosper'. The resulting projects have been exhibited in both Eindhoven and Java with testing happening across Indonesia.

These are just a few examples of what can happen when talented individuals with different knowledge bases put their heads together. It's time to stop designing in a vacuum, to start combining ancient techniques with future technologies, and to take advantage of globalization by creating an open-source system of exchange in the physical realm. Our Earth depends on it.●

Day is a Bali-based freelance journalist who covers the creative industry. In her previous home of New York, she was a long-time editor of *Cool Hunting* and contributed to design-led publications such as *Kinfolk*, *Mold* and *Nataal*.

AXOR

"MORE THAN A FAUCET, EACH PRODUCT
IN THE AXOR EDGE COLLECTION IS
A JEWEL, A MASTERPIECE, A UNIQUE
ARCHITECTURAL OBJECT."

— Jean-Marie Massaud



axor-design.com

FORM FOLLOWS PERFECTION

In the wake of Bauhaus's centenary, Gili Merin reflects on how the style has shaped a city.

TEL AVIV

Like many cities, Tel Aviv is captive to its historical legacy. In 2003, UNESCO declared a part of the inner city, the White City, as a Unique World Heritage Site of the Modern Movement for its unparalleled concentration of International Style buildings. Curved balconies, raised *pilotis* and a lack of ornament characterized this construction style, which was very much style-less. Functionalist and optimistic, it brought to the Mediterranean a dose of European idealism. Imported to Palestine by immigrants who fled Nazi Germany in 1933 (many of them from the Bauhaus school in Dessau, which closed that year), the so-called White City was built, literally, with means salvaged from Germany: not currency, but actual construction materials such as tiles and brick, transported to Palestine as part of a vast property exchange programme.

Today, Tel Aviv's monochrome Bauhaus buildings have become a coveted luxury: with their spacious interiors, shaded balconies and clean aesthetics, a capitalist interest is invested in these seemingly modest houses, not to mention the aura cast by UNESCO's declaration and the worldwide affection towards refurbished 'oldies' as opposed to shiny 'newbies'. Preservation laws dictate that the exterior must remain true to its austere sculptural form. But on the inside, one can run free with high-end finishes – from wooden floors to polychrome ceramics, bespoke appliances and designer chandeliers. There's no way to fight it: it was the free market that saved the legacy of the International Style from demolition. Unfortunately, it is also putting this modernist legacy at risk. Bauhaus is becoming a style. Its elements are now ornaments, applied haphazardly

to new buildings and even towers around Tel Aviv.

Standing out in this landscape of commodification is the White City Center (WCC), which opened in September 2019 after four years of renovation. It is situated in the Liebling Haus, a 1936 structure designed by Dov Karmi, one of Israel's founding fathers of architecture. Here, architects Dan Hasson and Yonathan Cohen took a radical approach: rather than doing a 'fine' restoration, they opted for a 'rough' one. Working closely with the Bauhaus's own preservation architect, Winfried Brenne, and the municipality of Tel Aviv as the client, they produced a project of perpetual cultural and structural negotiation. Transforming a residential building into a public institute, the design had to carve the building from within. While every floor was initially identical, a blueprint of stacked apartments with a circular design around the core, it now had to accommodate various functions: a café on the ground floor, galleries for temporary and permanent exhibitions, and a laboratory for preservation. For this reason, every level is now completely different, creating a spatial gradation from the ground up – the first being the most open, to the top, which was remodelled to the exact layout of its original. This methodology led to new vistas that span former partitions *and* new relationships between spaces. In this surgical process, the 'scars' of demolition remain as they were, exposing all the original materials and leaving them as traces of the renovation: cast-concrete skeleton, solid concrete blocks and sand-lime bricks. Nothing was added, only removed: the hard-wood floor and ceramic tiles that were layered with time were peeled to reveal the original terrazzo. Every

window and door, made from cheap pine wood, was removed, cleaned, polished and returned to its frame. Walls were sanded and corrected with mineral pigments made from natural materials, as opposed to contemporary oil-based products. Systems could not be placed within ceilings, so electricity was installed below, in special fixtures, and air-conditioning units replaced former heaters that were located in alcoves within the walls.

'Preservation is like religion,' says Hasson. 'And once someone decides on a singular narrative, everything that fits this story becomes sacred.' In that respect, every original pipe, tile and faucet was to be treated as a treasure, regardless of its value or quality. But what is original? 'How far back do we preserve?' questions Hasson. 'There were wonderful glass bricks from the 1980s in the staircase and we left them in because they are equally a part of this place as the 1930s German components.' Luckily, there's some irony in this project: a building within a building that succeeds in questioning the political weight of such a cross-cultural enterprise. 'Above all, we want this place to generate a debate about design,' Sharon Golan, programme director of the WCC, tells me. It worked: what and how we preserve is not only questioned, but its results expose its inner contradiction and complexity by proposing a simple radicality: preservation through *demolition*. In a way, it is no longer, as Rem Koolhaas once said, that 'preservation is overtaking us'. Instead, it is liberating us.●

Gili Merin is an architect and photographer based in London and Tel Aviv. She teaches at the Royal College of Art and the Architectural Association in London, where she is also a PhD candidate.



Orizon Collection, Design: Livorno, Altherr, Forest Collection, Design: Roberto Comai, Altherr & Partners, Photo: Beppe Brancato

Outdoor Lifestyle

NaturAll: the first aluminium finish that reproduces the warm enveloping texture of wood.
fastspa.com

fast

LAUFEN

◆ SaphirKeramik



MILANO DESIGN WEEK_21-26 APRIL
HALL 24 | STAND E21 / F14

THE NEW CLASSIC
Design by Marcel Wanders

b o o d

Stefan Isaksson, courtesy of Polestar



BUSINESS OF DESIGN

014 Trademarked tower blocks **020** Car dealerships without the cars **022** Retail brands buy into sustainability **024** The world's first 3D-printed neighbourhood

1

MINI is using its live/work/play space in Shanghai to determine the concept's success before potentially expanding to other locations.



Courtesy of MINI Living

Why branded residential developments could transform mass-market housing

The public witnessed the premiere of MINI Living's first permanent development at the end of November 2019, an event that heralds an era of 'household brands' truly living up to that title.

MINI's live/work/play space in Shanghai will open fully in April 2020. Situated in the city's Jing'an district, the project occupies 7,600 m² of a former paint factory. Designed in partnership with Universal Design Studio, the programme stretches across five buildings, comprising 45 apartments, as well as a restaurant, shops, urban farm, a co-working space and cultural centre. There will of course be an attendant fleet of MINIs. If Shanghai proves a success, the car maker plans to open many more such compounds around the world.

The idea of consumer brands creating their own residential developments is not new, but it has recently taken off in a big way. A report by international estate agent Savills found that the market for branded residences had grown 198 per cent in the last decade.

A record 9,000 units across 21 countries were built in 2019. With nearly 70 schemes due to be completed in 2020, that record will likely be broken again.

Thus far these have mostly been at the luxury end of the market. The space is dominated by high-end hospitality brands such as Mandarin Oriental, Accor and Four Seasons. More recently luxury fashion brands such as Armani, Cavalli, Versace and Missoni have built or are building residential properties in high-net-worth hotspots such as Miami, Dubai and London. And as we featured two issues ago, premium auto brands such as Porsche and Aston Martin are following suit. Savills even reports that it has been in consultation with publisher Condé Nast about developing projects linked to its portfolio of titles, which includes *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, *AD*, *Wired*, *Tatler* and *GQ*.

But as MINI's venture suggests, the market is now widening in terms of both the types of brands entering this space and the

demographics they're targeting. The car maker doesn't stipulate who its ideal resident might be, but the inference is certainly that they're a lot younger and less materialistic than those who might purchase an Armani apartment – though one would expect still relatively wealthy in global terms.

Another entrant is Airbnb, which has already started selling condos in the Natiivo complex it is building with a local developer in Miami, set to be finished in 2022. Properties in the tower start at €270,000, though that price will naturally be offset by the rental income generated through short stays – the apartments are designed with sharing in mind and, because the buildings are classified as hotels, there are no statutory limitations on the number of days they can be rented out short-term.

Many are also waiting to see what will come from Amazon's 2018 investment in home builder Plant Prefab, which focuses on making affordable family dwellings. The e-commerce giant previ-

ously partnered with developers like Tishman Speyer to prebake their smart home products into residences.

It's these mass-market brands that could have the most dramatic effect on who provides housing in the future. At the top of the market, scale is by definition limited, and these developments offer few innovations beyond the translation of aesthetic principles between disparate sectors. For MINI, Airbnb or Amazon, however, the appeal is less in selling a standalone residential unit and more in tying consumers into their wider product ecosystem. Each offers purchasers added core value, be it seamlessly integrating mobility services, removing barriers to generating rental income or making the provision of goods as convenient as possible. That's a model that only makes sense for brands when such properties are both affordable and built at scale. **PM**

JUNG



light+building

8 – 13 March 2020

Visit us in hall 11.1, stand B56
and in hall 3.1, stand B90

Rethinking Light

Lighting mood for magnetic docking: The perfectly dimmable
Plug & Light LED wall luminaire redefines lighting design.

JUNG-GROUP.COM

Kriskadecor
info@kriskadecor.com
kriskadecor.com

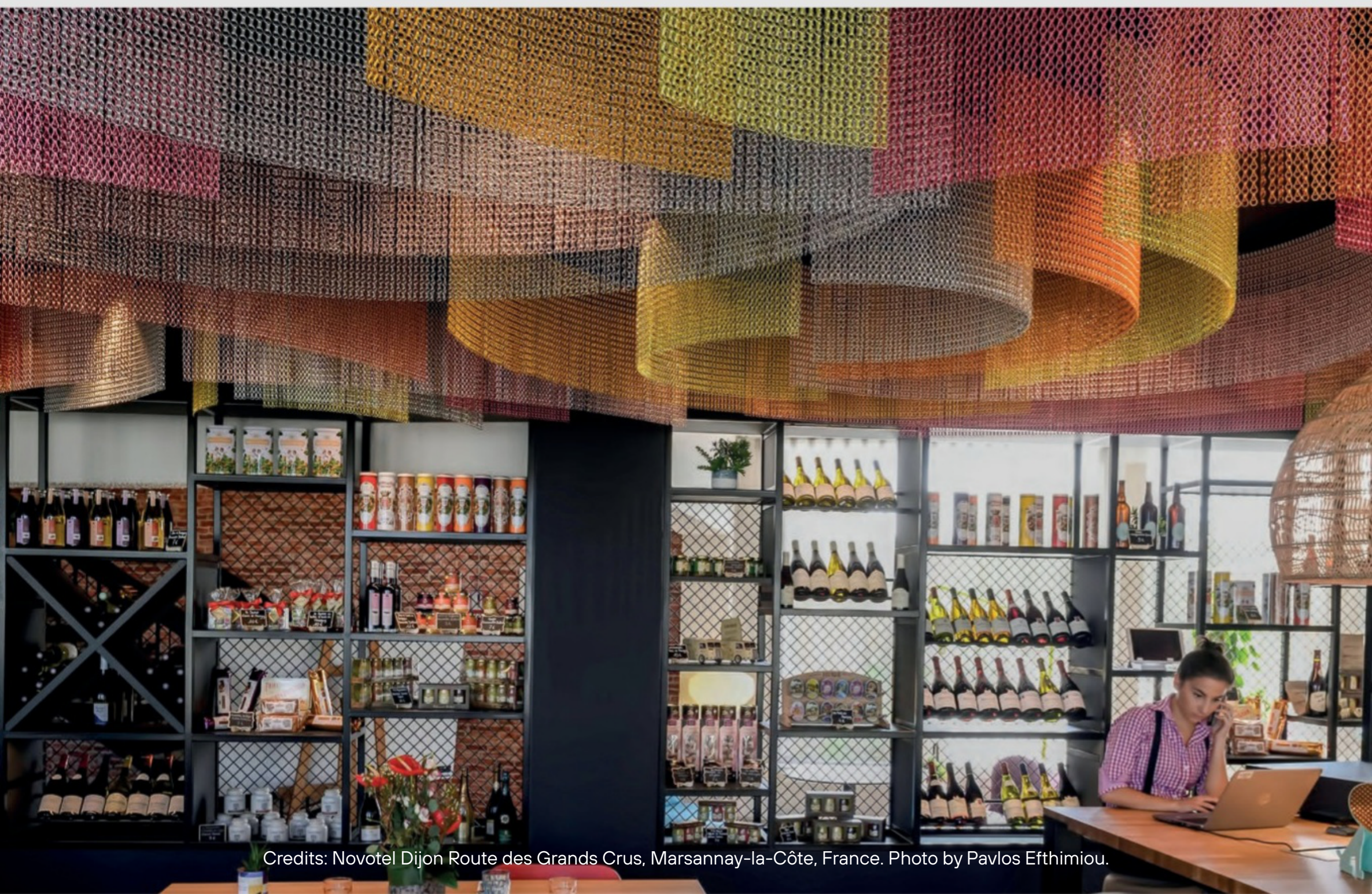
**INTERIORS
FROM SPAIN**



kriskadecor®



She is Kriska, a small piece that makes up a whole universe.
She is small, but she can be very large, elegant, serious or discreet but when she blushes she is an explosion of fun.
She is not simply what you see, she can be everything you imagine but always keeping its essence.



Credits: Novotel Dijon Route des Grands Crus, Marsannay-la-Côte, France. Photo by Pavlos Efthimiou.

How to make internships mutually beneficial

2

Simon Flöter



The appointment last summer of Junya Ishigami to create the Serpentine Pavilion in London sparked a global conversation about internships in design, after the Japanese architect was revealed to be using unpaid workers. While some, including architect Sou Fujimoto and designer Karim Rashid, defended the practice, others condemned it: in December, Cameron Sinclair – the founder of charitable organization Architecture for Humanity – said unpaid internships were exploitative and created a favourable environment for wealthy graduates.

Since then, Chilean firm Elemental is among those that have stopped taking on unpaid

interns, hinting at the potential for change across the sector. But exploitation is about more than just pay: in an industry known for long hours, interns are often overworked, with little supervision and few benefits. With mental health and wellbeing increasingly part of public discourse, the quality of internships is also now under scrutiny.

It's true, of course, that internships are time-consuming and complicated to administer properly. If they cost practices too much, many may simply not offer them. So how can design firms structure internship programmes that benefit both parties? It's a question that Rotterdam-based Studio Nauta has been asking

itself as part of a broader effort to reduce stress and improve work-life balance. Founder Jan Nauta says the firm has rethought its internships to ensure that, unlike many other examples in the industry, temporary graduate workers are not treated simply as cheap labour. He lists seven ingredients that he believes are key to this, including making sure any programme is tailored to the person involved, exposure to a wide range of work, and constructive two-way communication.

The six-person firm generally takes on two interns at a time, each of whom stays for six to nine months. 'At the beginning, we try to understand what interns want so we can set a road map for

them that's complementary to what they learned at university,' says Nauta. 'For example, one of our current interns has a strong technical background and wants more exposure to the conceptual side of projects. The other has had little technical exposure, so wants more of that.' The firm also tries to offer a broad view of the industry. 'Often someone might be working on one limited task, but it's important to engage them with the wider scope of the project so they understand why certain decisions are made,' Nauta says. 'We're dealing with highly educated people who are trained to think, not simply labourers.' Even so, routine experience can also be valuable. »

‘One thing that employers don’t always realize is how important the little things we learn are,’ says Teresa Marinoni de Athayde, a current intern at the firm.

One concern about recent graduates is that they don’t have sufficient experience to contribute meaningfully or take on responsibility in a way that’s beneficial to a firm. Nauta believes this idea can be misguided. ‘You’d be amazed how much responsibility interns can take on,’ he says, recalling one who had a knack for speaking to clients. De Athayde agrees it’s vital for her to feel she’s playing a meaningful role in the office. ‘It is important not to underestimate what an intern can contribute.’ She adds, though, that finding a balance is crucial. ‘In order for it to work, the responsibility given to an intern cannot be too much or too little.’ Nauta agrees: ‘You have to be careful to not overly rely on interns because, after all, they’re not qualified.’

Keeping the lines of communication open is vital to this. In addition to the substantive initial and final meetings, interns have monthly sessions with their mentors to monitor progress, as well as informal daily contact. It’s through this process of engagement that internships become beneficial for the practice, too. ‘We have people coming from universities that are amazing hubs of innovation, who know all the newest tricks,’ Nauta says. ‘We want to learn from them and we are open about that.’ Beyond the intangible rewards of contributing to somebody’s career development, the firm has also recruited two of its interns as permanent staff. **DR**

MAKING INTERNSHIPS WORK

five key tactics

- 01 PERSONALIZE THE PACKAGE** Establish a plan for the duration of a programme that is tailored to the abilities, experience and requirements of each intern, with a structure that allows someone’s strengths to shine through, as well as creating room for growth.
- 02 CREATE A CONNECTION** Focus on engagement with the intern, rather than just assigning a series of tasks for them to complete. This will allow the firm to reap the benefits of their presence and adapt their working patterns as time goes on.
- 03 KEEP IN CONTACT** Ensure that you stay in touch with your interns, even if for only a brief moment each day. Without sufficient guidance and contact, the process will be beneficial to neither party.
- 04 PUT THEM TO GOOD USE** Use their time as wisely as you would use that of any other staff member, as recent graduates bring fresh knowledge and valuable experiences.
- 05 TAKE YOUR TIME** Don’t make internships too short, as this leaves little time for the person to develop and for the firm to enjoy what the intern has to offer.



Beauty, tradition and innovation



Salone del Mobile.Milano

April 21-26, 2020

Hall 10 | Stand B19-C28

www.pedrali.it

PEDRALI®

Will auto retail need to evolve in an age of online sales?



Stefan Isaksson, courtesy of Polestar



Since it only offers cars via subscriptions, Polestar focuses more on forging customer allegiance than on the hard sell in its showrooms.

The car dealership typology as we know it is an endangered species. KPMG's Global Automotive Executive Survey 2019 found that almost half of the industry's leaders believe that between 30 to 50 per cent of car dealerships will be closed by 2030.

The report cites factors such as the shift from physical retail stores to digital channels, the rise of ride hailing and a decrease in interest in car ownership among younger consumers in mature markets.

This decline in brick-and-mortar automotive stores isn't terminal, however; as the authors outline, the challenges now are 'how to reinvent, reimagine and eventually rebuild and reorganize existing structures and how to identify new revenue streams for retailers'. For KPMG, any successful new strategy necessarily includes 'small customer touchpoints, where a seamless brand experience and brand path is top priority'.

What might such spaces look like? We profiled a standout example in Lexus's latest Intersect venue in New York in *Frame* 129. This hybrid restaurant-cum-embassy, parked between Chelsea Market and the local Soho House, certainly makes a much stronger case for urban consumers to spend time with the brand than any peripheral, product-stuffed showroom.

Another example opened in the centre of Oslo at the end of 2019, the first European location of young Swedish automaker Polestar. As the business only offers cars on a full-service subscription model, the customer relationship is far more focused on the wider brand entity and less fixated on the product than that with legacy car makers. As such its venues need to work doubly hard to convince customers that the brand is a partner that can fulfil their desires for the latest innovations, design excellence and high levels of convenience. And not once, but in perpetuity.

'The Polestar Space is our way of changing the face of automotive retail,' says Jonathan Goodman, chief operations officer at Polestar. 'With no

salesmen and no vehicles on the forecourt, there is no hard sell, no requirement to shift stock and an entirely customer-focused journey.'

Without the imperative to chase commissions or shift prebuilt units, staff can concentrate on helping visitors use a range of retail technologies to explore and spec their potential vehicle. Central to this is an 'atelier' table that recognizes an RFID tag in individual trim modules, allowing customers to create a material mood board that will automatically be digitized and uploaded to their account. Polestar recognizes that its customers have a developed interest in subjects such as design and technology, which is why it hosts in-store talks. You're more likely to spend time in a Polestar Space learning about architecture than kicking tires.

Perhaps the surest sign that automotive makers will retain an interest in brick-and-mortar venues came from Tesla's 2019 missteps. The brand set an early precedent for elevating the car buying experience with its Bang & Olufsen-esque stores in heavy-foot-traffic city-centre and mall locations. But last year it announced that it would close many of its locations in favour of pushing digital sales, passing on the savings to customers. CEO Elon Musk had previously revealed that 78 per cent of all orders for its Model 3 were placed online. But after shares took a hit and analysts questioned whether the average consumer was ready for this zero-touch approach, the company backtracked, committing to retaining about half of its stores and even raising the price of its vehicles by three per cent to pay for it. **PM**

3

rocagallery.com



A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Views on ARCHITECTURE
Eye on DESIGN
The FUTURE
SUSTAINABLE World

RocaGallery.com is an online platform where you can learn more about design, architecture and innovation.

A **space for dissemination** that aims to take a **critical look** at our changing society and an uncertain future.

Roca Gallery

Sharing Knowledge on Architecture and Design

Roca



Courtesy of Prada

One of the stipulations of Prada's sustainability-linked loan is that a set number of retail stores meet strict green building standards. The brand's Iconsiam concept store in Bangkok is pictured.

How sustainability-linked loans could affect retail design

4

Prada has signed the first business loan in the luxury goods sector with an annual interest rate that is linked to its environmental practices. The five-year, €50-million loan with France's Credit Agricole Group will see interest rates lowered based on the 'achievement of ambitious targets related to sustainability'. Key among these is ensuring that a set number of retail stores meet gold or platinum LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) green building standards.

Prada is one of an increasing number of businesses exploring how they can link access to capital to their sustainability programmes, to the benefit of both. Data from Bloomberg shows that sustainability-linked loans have grown in value from €9.5 billion in 2017, the year they were introduced, to just over €72 billion in 2019. For many of these deals, reducing the environmental impact of building developments is a core stipulation.

Brands across sectors such as hospitality and workplace have

pursued such arrangements in the last couple of years. In 2018, AccorHotels received a €1.2 billion banking credit whose margin will be dictated by environmental and social performance, particularly the creation of more carbon-neutral buildings. And last summer Chinese developer Swire Properties converted an existing €58 million loan into a sustainability-linked one that will be partly used to fund ongoing green developments such as Two Taikoo Place, a major new office tower in Hong Kong.

Such financial products make particular sense for retailers – a notoriously debit-hungry sector – helping to reduce the cost of maintaining their liabilities as well as satisfying consumer desire for better climate stewardship. And the growth in sustainability-linked loans could have a particularly dramatic effect on retail spaces as more brands aim to achieve green building certifications such as LEED – the most widely used – in order to meet creditor demands.

What could this look like in practice? Achieving a high LEED score would require retail designers to maintain more non-structural elements such as interior walls, doors, floor coverings and ceiling systems. It would even promote a kind of proxy localism, as points are awarded for using materials drawn from each store's immediate region. Access to light would be key, as well as offering external views in any regularly occupied areas of the building. At a time when store design is going through a maximalist period, both in terms of the extravagance of interior aesthetic and the pace of change, meeting such criteria will be challenging. Retail currently makes up only 12,873 of the 100,000+ LEED-certified projects around the world. If that number is to grow, retail designers will likely be required to rethink how to achieve excess. **PM**

R|O|D|A



Could affordable housing take 3D-printed structures mainstream?



Construction technology company Icon and housing non-profit New Story have teamed up to create the 'world's first 3D-printed neighbourhood' in Mexico.



Few construction methods have been as feted as additive manufacturing (AM) – 3D printing in more colloquial terms – and few have had as many false dawns. Consider how long you've been reading about AM's transformative potential for the architectural profession, and then ask yourself when was the last time you read about (let alone visited) a project that was more than a prototype or proof of concept? But now that state agencies are grasping the role AM can play in resolving an almost universally pressing concern – affordable housing – they're finally supporting enterprise to help make the technology practicable.

Up to now, real-world applications have been slow to catch up with the hype. It wasn't until 2018 that the first family moved into a 3D-printed house, created as part of a collaboration between the University of Nantes, the city council and a housing association. That same year, construction technology company Icon became the first in the US to print a dwelling that even satisfied local building codes.

But things are now starting to move much more quickly. In December, Icon and partner New Story – a housing non-profit – revealed that they'd completed several properties in what they dub the world's first 3D-printed neighbourhood, situated in Southern Mexico. Three of the 46.5-m² homes can be printed at a time using Icon's 10-m-long Vulcan II system, each offering two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom. The target total of 50 units is planned to be completed and occupied by the middle of 2020.

The residents selected to live in these homes earn a median income of \$76.50 a month and have been selected by the local government – which has provided the land and attendant infrastructure – based on greatest need. Most will be leaving behind basic

metal-shack-style dwellings that, apart from having few modern amenities, are far more vulnerable to local environmental threats such as flooding and earthquakes.

But it is Vulcan II's ability to operate in unpredictable field conditions that is the real news story here. Unlike previous iterations, Icon's machine can leverage AM's key advantages – speed, cost and adaptability – in housing contexts where they're most valued, such as remote communities and disaster relief zones. New Story says it's already had several enquiries from several Latin American governments keen to replicate what's being achieved in Mexico.

December also saw construction company Apis Cor complete what it claims is the largest 3D-printed building in the world – a 640-m², two-storey office for the Dubai Municipality. As with Icon's Mexico project, the real production breakthrough was in being able to print the building without putting in place any environmental controls, no easy task on the Emirati coast. The state-backed venture is part of the city's expressed aim to have a quarter of all new buildings constructed via 3D printing by 2030.

Crucially, lessons learned in Dubai will help Apis Cor in its plans to build affordable housing in the US this year. Projects are slated in several states and advanced discussions have taken place with the Housing Trust Fund of Santa Barbara County. Similarly, Icon has just started printing 37-m² homes for a community of previously homeless residents in Austin, Texas. And analysts believe the rest of the sector will start to take note. Market forecaster SmarTech is predicting that the 3D-printed construction industry will be worth almost €36 billion by 2027, up from just €0.27 billion in 2019. **PM**





— HEAD Genève

Master in Interior Architecture

Master of Arts in Interior Architecture (M A I A)
Unique program in Switzerland
Online Applications, until 3rd April 2020
www.head-geneve.ch

HEAD—Genève
Haute école d'art et de design
Follow us on    
#headgeneve #headarchi

in pra cti ce



Dirk Weiblen, courtesy of Harmay

028 Comunal on
empowering communities
through cooperation

038 Gary Card on
combining craziness
and commerce

048 Wonderwall's
Masamichi Katayama
on revolutionizing retail

054 Harmay's CEO on
shopping experiences
worth savouring

The female force
behind Mexico
City-based
practice **Comunal**
discusses how
participatory
design empowers
communities,
why architecture
education should
be more inclusive,
and what it takes
to work within
their country's
economic and
political contexts.

Words Floor Kuitert
Portrait Jake
Naughton

Mariana Ordóñez Grajales (left) and Jesica Amescua Carrera collaborate closely with communities across Mexico to improve habitability in rural areas.





Trained at the Autonomous University of Yucatán in Mexico, Mariana Ordóñez Grajales started Comunal in 2015, but it wasn't until 2017 that her current partner Jesica Amescua Carrera joined. They met while teaching as part of a workshop on Regenerative Architecture at the Universidad Iberoamericana, led by colleague and mutual friend Juan Casillas. During their first joint project – the Rural Productive School, a prime example of the studio's participatory design approach – they hit it off and have been allies ever since. 'It was pure magic!' says Ordóñez Grajales. 'I had previously tried to find an associate, but was never able to find someone with the same visions and goals. I believe much of the success of our alliance is the horizontal relationship. That would never have been possible with a man in the patriarchal context of Latin America.'

Although the duo's office is in Mexico City, the real work happens in the country's rural areas, where they collaborate with local communities to improve habitability.

You are a women-run studio in a country that I feel has been a springboard for quite some strong female-led offices – from Frida Escobedo, Gabriela Carrillo and Fernanda Canales to Tatiana Bilbao. What's the secret?

MARIANA ORDÓÑEZ GRAJALES: Resistance! In our professional life we face daily challenges for being young women, such as mansplaining, sexual harassment and not being given the same credit as our male colleagues. Beyond our personal experience, our country is facing a level of violence against women never seen before. In 2019 there were almost 3,000 victims of femicide in our country; in December alone there was one every 27 hours. Being a woman in Mexico is resistance. Being a woman who works in a highly patriarchal industry is resistance. From Comunal we shout #VivasNosQueremos! #NiUnaMás! (#LiveWeWant! #NotOneMore!).

Besides the issues you face as females, what are the other challenges that come with starting an architecture practice in Mexico City?

MOG: In our case, the challenges already started during our academic years. It became evident that there is quite a hegemonic vision of the role of the architect. We are taught that we, as architects, are the only holders of great ideas and solutions to habitability problems, which completely excludes other types and sources of knowledge. We are rigorously taught the technical and artistic side of architecture – form, function, composition, spatial relationships, construction details and so on.

But the human aspects – from cultural identity to people's ideals and aspirations – are often overlooked. To us these are the most relevant.

JESICA AMESCUA CARRERA: It was a battle to find an academic discourse that approached architecture as a participatory social process that arises from the exchange of knowledge between *different* actors, not only academics. One that would recognize the vast amount of building skill that the native cultures of our country possess. But we experienced, with great disappointment, the rejection of some professors who refused to tutor projects that addressed participatory and sociocultural aspects in architecture.

So the academic landscape – especially architectural courses – can be limiting?

MOG: Yes and this is directly impacting the social and professional aspects of life. In Mexico there is a very large economic inequality. Very few have the privilege of going to university and there is only a small social circle that has the contacts to develop those great architectural projects taught in classrooms – think museums, hospitals and large residential developments.

JAC: So, why do we continue to train architecture students for the economic reality of a select few? We believe that both universities and professional practices should include and recognize the diverse economic, political and cultural realities that exist in our country. Today, 70 per cent of the homes in Mexico are built without technical advice and through self-construction processes. Our practice focuses on improving habitability in local rural communities, and we do so through collaborative design processes. »»



Carried out collaboratively with the Union of Cooperatives Tosepan Tepetzintán, Social Housing Production: Exercise II responds to the customs and traditions of Nahuatl people. The permeable kitchen helps to expel the smoke from burning firewood.





Productive Rural School was project-managed, designed and self-built by students in Tepetzintán with the objective of reviving traditional knowledge, utilizing local production chains and preventing young people from migrating.

If you talk about a collaborative approach towards architecture, what do you think the role and responsibility of an architect should entail?

MOG: We believe that the main objective of our role as architects is to demonstrate that architecture is a social, living, dynamic and open activity in which it's necessary to recognize people as 'subjects of action' and not as 'objects of intervention'. It implies abandoning the idea of 'author' to meet the role of facilitator, mediator and technical advisor. People should always be at the centre of the project and the decision making process.

JAC: We view architecture as a tool that can help improve people's quality of life, as long as it is carried out in an inclusive way. We understand our profession as a service that should be available to everyone, regardless of the social, economic and cultural context.

What does Mexico's economic context mean for your work?

MOG: Without doubt, the economic aspect is one of the factors that makes young people move away from participatory architecture. The first question we get when speaking at conferences is: How *do* you pay your rent and personal expenses? Even though there's a lot of interest in developing community-centred practises, there are only few economic strategies to do so. In addition, this work is often confused with volunteering or humanitarian labour, free of charge. This way of thinking demonstrates a lot of ignorance and classism. It's assumed that professionals only work on such social projects for charity, not to tackle

a complex professional challenge that deserves to be a full-time job.

JAC: Public policy does not finance participatory community projects because they go against the logic of government programmes, which only seek to increase the popularity of politicians through short-term results. Social processes that could trigger major changes and could be measured through qualitative indicators in the medium-to-long term are disregarded financially.

So how *do* you finance socially orientated architecture projects?

MOG: Private parties, too, unfortunately find very few economic, fiscal and social incentives to engage in the wellbeing of rural communities in a committed way. However, there *are* some companies that seek to have a positive social impact through donations and knowledge transfer. Novaceramic and Rotoplas, for instance, with which we collaborated on projects in Sierra Norte de Puebla.

JAC: The projects we work on contemplate the economic context and have autonomy as their main objective. Proposals build on local knowledge, traditional trades, local materials and construction systems that trigger production chains. The funding process always begins in the communities. Contributions vary from providing local materials or labour to economic contributions and lodging and food. In addition, we carry out funding campaigns, workshops and conferences to support the projects.

Can you give an example?

MOG: The Rural Productive School. Students

from the community of the rural Mexican village Tepetzintan came up with this concept during a series of participatory design workshops. Besides restoring traditional trades and techniques, they were interested in setting up culturally appropriate education to avoid the migration of young people and reduce disintegration of families in the communities. The local youth proposed an educational space dedicated to generating productive workshops that will enable them to have local jobs and thus prevent migration to cities. The school was completely self-built, using local materials such as bamboo and stone.

JAC: Nowadays more women attend. They carry out workshops for the production of organic gardens and biofertilizers, and the conservation of traditional embroidery. Also, students have been able to develop local crafts through technical construction workshops with bamboo, furniture, carpentry and blacksmithing. In addition, adult women are receiving training to produce jams and traditional medicine from local plants, which is generating an income for families.

At the World Architecture Festival in Amsterdam, the jury of the Emerging Designer award cited your fight against a political lobby that is vastly supportive of replicable, commercial housing development over housing seen as a human right. Can you explain?

MOG: The Political Constitution of our country recognizes housing as a right of all Mexicans. However, this is far from the national reality. In the 1980s, with the ➤





Social Housing Production: Exercise I
– conducted in conjunction with the Tepetzintán community – explored the creation of a culturally appropriate residential model using local materials such as bamboo, stone and wood.

arrival of neoliberalism and President Salinas de Gortari, the Mexican State stopped providing housing and left the production up to private developers. Housing ceased to be a right and instead became a market asset. Then, in 2000, President Vicente Fox focused on the massive construction of houses, from a commercial perspective. Many were located outside urban centres where land was cheap. Quality and access to urban equipment and public space were set aside. This generated territorial, economic and social crises, forcing many residents to leave the houses because of the long commutes, violence and lousy housing quality. Both in rural areas and in cities, the same housing models were repeated regardless of the environmental context and the needs of families.

JAC: In the case of rural communities, housing construction has been an act of colonization that imposes itself on traditional ways of living. It eliminates people's participation in the management and production of their habitat and denies the use of local materials and traditional construction

systems. Federal subsidies for construction and self-construction only allow the production of houses with industrialized materials.

Yet, your work revolves around regional conservation . . .

MOG: We work together with the communities to defend their right to self-determination and to preserve the elements that constitute their cultural identity and habitat. We recognize housing as a right and as a cultural asset that derives from the symbiotic relationship that communities have with their territory. We always start by listening in order to understand all dimensions of the local ways of living – from cultural to territorial and everything in between. Once we do, it is our turn to contribute to the dialogue with proposals for structural improvements to traditional housing, and to demonstrate that it is feasible to build with traditional materials today. The way in which we carry out these improvements is always based on local construction wisdom, recognizing that the communities safeguard ancestral knowledge of their

territory and are the only ones who know the construction techniques they have generated over the years.

JAC: After the earthquakes in 2017, the federal government's strategy for reconstruction was to provide electronic cards conditioned to purchase industrial materials at urban suppliers. Local producers of traditional materials suffered severe damage. As a response, in collaboration with Unitierra and Comité Ixtepecano, we decided to work together with native communities in Oaxaca in southern Mexico. Through participatory processes, we could reinforce the autonomy of the Ixtepecan families and make improvements to the damaged traditional houses made of Adobe and Bajareque, construction systems based on mud and straw. These modifications do not seek to reinterpret their form, function or spatial relationship, but to increase their resistance. We collaborate to keep the construction diversity alive in Mexico. ●

comunaltaller.com

moodmint

armchairs, cushions & more

WWW.MOODMINTDESIGN.COM

We produce handmade pieces, ensuring an amazing quality and a stunning end result!
« Everyday we work for your home and everything we offer has a person or story behind it » .



Cofinanciado por:



UNIÃO EUROPEIA
Fundo Europeu
de Desenvolvimento Regional

British set
designer **Gary
Card** talks about
compromising
on craziness,
channelling his
inner brat and
pushing the
envelope of
exhibition design.

Words Floor Kuitert
Portrait Andrew
Meredith

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal,
providing you various content:
brand new books, trending movies,
fresh magazines, hot games,
recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price

Cheap constant access to piping hot media

Protect your downloadings from Big brother

Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages

Brand new content

One site



AVXLIVE ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open <https://avxlive.icu>





The Breakfast Boys, a series of toys designed by Gary Card in collaboration with Unbox Industries, includes mascot Smudge, a recurring character in Card's collages and paintings.

Katie Bagley

With a client list that includes the likes of Hermès, Comme Des Garçons, Balenciaga, Kenzo and Moschino, set designer Gary Card would be expected to head a team of at least 20. But lose the zero and you're closer to the truth. And that's exactly how the Bournemouth-born and London-bred creative likes it. 'As much as I enjoy working on big productions, I still love making that crazy headpiece for FKA Twigs once in a while.' Over the last 12 years, Card has brought his vivid, psychedelic and explosive style to everything from editorial productions and advertising campaigns to window displays, catwalk shows and exhibition scenography. He even designed a collection of toys, a.k.a. the Breakfast Boys.

Card developed a series of Happy Breakfast chandeliers for the LA location of Dover Street Market, which opened in 2018.



Your style is quite recognizable and outspoken. How do you balance that with the aesthetic language of your clients?

GARY CARD: Our job as set designers is to constantly compromise. At the end of the day you're making something for somebody else. But I don't take on everything. I can be quite fussy. Once a potential commission comes in I judge whether it's something for me, if I can bring my own personality into the project, and if I think I can give the client what he or she wants. When I accept a job, I do my best to give a client a very broad range of concepts – from really pared down to absolutely bonkers and full-on. I hope that I give them enough width to find something in between.

Concepts get watered down for reasons of taste – some people still think the calmest thing we've suggested is outrageous – and because of budget constraints. Sometimes that means you end up with a very minimal design that celebrates functionality, which can be wonderful. I worked with Serbian fashion designer Roksanda Ilinčić an awful lot, creating crazy concepts for her catwalk shows. They would strip down every season to something quite architectural. I look back now and think some of the catwalk sets that felt highly compromised at the time are actually some of the most beautiful we achieved.

A big part of your portfolio consists of short-lived installations such as catwalk and photography sets. Do you consider the lifespan when selecting materials or by thinking about the project's afterlife?

Sustainability and set design aren't things that naturally go hand in hand, nor do fashion and sustainability – despite what some brands say that they are doing to help. A lot of what I do is temporary and making something that has an afterlife is often entirely impossible. Sadly, sometimes all you can do is dispose of it in a 'good' way. We do our best to repurpose what

we build. We've donated our stuff to schools, for example. That's harder when working with clients, who often keep the things that we build. Brands like Gucci and Hermès have huge warehouses where they store all of their amazing set designs and window displays. I have no idea what they do with them. I bet those spaces are really magical. It would be incredible to think that they would actually turn them into some insane immersive installation one day.

How does the fact that you studied theatre design feed into your work today?

When I was at Central Saint Martins I always knew I wasn't going into theatre design and I will never forget our first day. Our lecturer said 97 per cent of us wouldn't become a theatre designer. Whereas the majority of the class was absolutely horrified by that prospect, I felt liberated. All he meant was that they would give us the platform to experiment with spatial design in the broadest sense. Not only did I know I wasn't going to do theatre design, but I swore to myself I was not going to be a set designer when I graduated. I find it funny that that is exactly what I became.

What I took from my college experience all relates to storytelling – the ability to bring in a narrative. I learned to think about who the audience is, why it is there and how to captivate it. That approach hasn't changed. I still ask those questions all the time. Theatre is in my designer's DNA and I bring a sense of wonder into everything I do. My work is about building little vivid worlds that people inhabit.

Every brand that I work with already has their narrative in place by the time I step in, so I try to flesh out that narrative, give it more depth. Even though most of the fashion brands deal with luxury goods, they all have very different philosophies. What I love about my job is having to adapt constantly, how I have to change hats from a Hermès customer to a Balenciaga client.

Your interior for London-based concept store The Late Night Chameleon Café (LN-CC) was one of the first projects we featured by you. The article talked about how retail was becoming quite formulaic and this store brought something new. How do you believe the retail landscape has changed since then?

At the time we were talking about how technology and augmented reality were going to completely transform the way people shop. We would look at a product and the price would flash up in some kind of Google specs that we would be wearing. That hasn't transpired, has it? I mean I'm seeing a lot more LED screens but that's probably it.

I do think LN-CC has been hugely influential when it comes to retail. It's housed in a former boxing gym in Dalston, features a distinct curated mix of young and established brands, and incorporates an event space and photography studio. There have been a lot of spaces – I'm not naming names – that have done similar stuff since then. LN-CC showed retailers what was possible and how you could reinterpret the way people consume stuff.

In hindsight, what has the project meant for your career?

At the time I was quite frustrated with just doing editorial and advertising work. And I was really sad about how temporary everything was, how we made these incredible things only to dismantle them an hour after we put them up. LN-CC gave me the opportunity to make something more permanent. The project also helped me get out of the box I felt I was placed in. I was the multicoloured kid – not much has changed in that sense – who brought all the crazy props to the set and chucked loads of colourful balls at the models. I was very keen to crack out of that way people viewed me. »

‘Some people still think the calmest thing we’ve suggested is outrageous’

‘I wanted to create a visceral and manic scenography that unified the works on show,’ says Card about *Hysterical*, a self-initiated exhibition on cartoonography in contemporary art held at the Berkley Square Gallery of auction house Phillips.





When tasked to design an installation for the Covent Garden London flagship of footwear brand Melissa, Card produced a giant Medusa sculpture whose tentacles extended all the way from the basement to the entrance.



I haven't seen any catwalk designs from your hand lately. Why is that?

It became harder and harder to make a good show in London. For a long while I would chuck myself into London Fashion Week and work with young designers who were really willing to take on fun sets and create a world around their stuff. But there just isn't the budget to give them everything that they want without me personally funding the shows. As much as I love supporting young designers, it got to a point that it wasn't fulfilling anymore. If I'm going to invest, whether that's time or money, I should start investing in things that I want to build myself.

Such as the Hysterical exhibition?

Yes. It was a bit of a dream of mine to create an exhibition on cartoonography in contemporary art, featuring works of my favourite artists such as Cindy Sherman, Paul McCarthy, Peter Saul and Yayoi Kusama. And I wanted to create a visceral and manic scenography – or rather wonderland – that unified the works on show, and became a work of art in itself.

This was a self-initiated project. Where do you start when working without a client brief?

I'm surprised to say that it's hard to work without a brief. There's limitless potential and you can get lost in your own imagination.

But it's also a great adventure to be your own boss in a job that big. I didn't have to fight to get my own personality into the project. I wanted the exhibition to be the total opposite of what I do for clients. I wanted the space to be so saturated that it would make your eyes water – a clash of colours and structures, super engaging but also giving a sense of *whoa . . . I'm not sure how long I can be in this space*.

The result is the total opposite of a white box gallery. Weren't you worried about the set overshadowing the works on show?

I absolutely was, especially because I was working with some of my favourite artists. It was nail-biting to think that somebody might actually pull their work from the show because it was so crazy. But I also felt that fear was an important factor. We were trying to do something that had never been attempted before so it had to push the envelope. I had never seen a contemporary show before that had tried to build an installation around contemporary work – for that very reason of potential overshadowing. Working with auction house Phillips meant we weren't dealing with the artists themselves. We had complete control over how the work was presented, which gave us the opportunity to make something that, if we are honest, a lot of those artists probably wouldn't have been too happy about. So there was an exciting danger and my inner brat quite enjoyed that. I knew that it would probably piss off some people

and that was actually quite an important thing to pursue. The audience was really receptive, but art institutions were a bit more sceptical. For good reason. It was definitely a very worthwhile experiment. I can't believe we got away with it to be honest.

What's next?

The purpose of the exhibition was to start thinking of myself as an artist and make work beyond the fashion industry. I've been working on a series of paintings for a new show called Acid Reflux and I'm busy with a sculpture project. My dream is to become established as an artist now. There is an awful lot of stigma attached to somebody coming from the fashion world trying to get established in the art world, but I think things are changing. Kim Jones putting on his Dior show in Miami just two days before the start of Design Miami is a significant move. People are beginning to see that these things *can* work together.●

[instagram.com/garycard](https://www.instagram.com/garycard)

We spoke with Gary Card following his talk at Antwerp's design and creativity festival Us By Night.

[usbynight.be](https://www.usbynight.be)



At the start of this year, Card created a gradational backdrop for the windows of a Gucci store.



LEED v4.1 is here.

Reduce carbon with LEED. LEED v4.1 includes measures that do more than just consider carbon. An updated energy performance benchmark features energy metrics that now account for greenhouse gas emissions.

For materials, greater emphasis placed on embodied carbon reductions through building reuse, salvage, whole building LCA and EPDs. In transportation, strategies around how people travel to and from buildings help projects further tell their carbon reduction story.

Photo credit: Jasper Sanidad Photography

DELIVER ON: MATERIALS • PERFORMANCE • ENERGY • HEALTH & HUMAN EXPERIENCE • INTERIORS • SIMPLICITY • **CARBON**

LEED v4.1 is here to help you meet your goals. Try it on a new project or apply your choice of credits to a project already in progress.

usgbc.org/LEEDv41

Natural Resources Defense Council, San Francisco office | LEED Gold



Wonderwall's
**Masamichi
Katayama** shares
how a childhood
spent in a furniture
store led to an
adulthood spent
revolutionizing
retail – and how
he's transmitting
that knowledge
to the next
generation.

As told to Kanae
Hasegawa
Photos Tada
(Yukai)

MASAMICHI KATAYAMA: I grew up in the west of Japan, in the Okayama area – approximately three hours’ ride by Shinkansen [bullet train] from Tokyo. As a boy, I didn’t have much interest in furniture or spatial design; like everybody else, I was keen on becoming a baseball player. My father ran a furniture retail store, which we lived above. We were always surrounded by customers. I remember my father constantly rearranging furniture to make the place pleasant and fresh, and I was excited to see how vibrant a shop can become when filled with customers. That experience probably subconsciously shaped my definition of a good store.

As I grew older and entered high school, I got into rock music and fashion, so naturally musicians and fashion designers were my idols. When I was a senior in high school, my father encouraged me to study interior design in preparation for taking over the family business in the future. In reality, there was no connection between interior design and the furniture retail business, but I jumped on the idea because I could leave my hometown and live in Osaka, a city with good record stores and fashion boutiques. While studying in Osaka, I worked on many different assignments and suddenly realized that interior design is about creating the types of spaces I would love to go to: fashion stores, restaurants and so on.

After graduating, I worked in Osaka for a short while before moving to Tokyo, the hub of the creative industries. That period of time was special – Osaka and Tokyo were playgrounds for designers and architects. There were so many experimental ideas. Philippe Starck designed the Asahi Beer Hall and Shiro Kuramata was creating poetic restaurants. Takashi Sugimoto was more brutalist in his approach to design, whereas Shigeru Uchida was bringing 1980s Italian postmodernism into a Japanese context. In those days, designers were more like artists. This philosophy touched me deeply, and I was mesmerized by the outcomes.

I worked at several interior design firms in Tokyo when Japan’s economy was in full bloom, a so-called economic bubble. I was young and naive; I didn’t know that bubble would eventually burst. When you’re young, you tend to overestimate your abilities. I had this strange confidence that I had great ideas – better than anyone else’s. In 1992, I decided to cofound H. Design Associates at the age of 26. The economic bubble had already burst, and commercial development was brought to a standstill. Retailers abhorred designers who

consumed too many costs, so architects and designers suddenly went from being stars to being villains.

Those early years of H. Design Associates were difficult times. I spent hours in the office every day yet produced almost nothing for our portfolio, nothing we could call ‘our work’. One of the lessons I learned during those years is that it’s critical to gain trust, because people were reluctant to work with designers. That hard period of the early 1990s helped me to see spatial design from the client’s perspective. *If I were in the client’s shoes*, I thought, *would I be willing to pay for this idea?* The success of your design – whether it’s a store or a restaurant – can be measured only by its performance. But you need to make your client believe in you *before* the result is realized. Trust should therefore be the starting point for any interior design project.

When you’re fledgling designers, you can’t just wait for people to approach you – no one knows who you are. Without experience to fall back on, you need a little aggression to get noticed. While we had hardly any projects, we designed furniture – taking one step was important. And then Ryutaro Yoshida of Time & Style introduced our furniture during the Salone del Mobile. In addition to being excited and inspired to see famous designers there, I learned the importance of showing what we do to a larger audience. That audience can be international or local, but Salone del Mobile visitors have critical acumen. I received really good feedback from them.

By the late 1990s, although the economy was in a stalemate, things slowly started to shift. People began to seek out young designers. I was lucky to work with Nigo. He became one of my earliest clients, commissioning me to design a store known as Nowhere, which was completed in 1998 for his brand, A Bathing Ape. Nigo trusted me and gave me the freedom to express my ideas, but being given carte blanche creates a huge amount of pressure – you have no excuse. In the end I designed a spaceship-like space that broke quite a few stereotypical retail store design rules.

Another career milestone was a project with Uniqlo in 2006, which involved designing its 3,000-m² first global flagship in SoHo New York as a part of a bigger worldwide strategy. Back then, the company was not thought of as it is today. It was unknown in the international market – and definitely not considered ‘fashion’. But Tadashi Yanai, Uniqlo’s CEO at the time, is a shrewd businessman who wanted to position the company as it’s ►►

‘Without experience to fall back on, you need a little aggression to get noticed’



After initially renting an office space in Sendagaya, Tokyo, Katayama purchased the building and completely redesigned it.



‘Physical and online retail can coexist – you just have to find the right way to entertain people’

now perceived. At our first meeting he told me: ‘I want your design to be invisible’, meaning ‘please erase your ego’. Mr Yanai believes design should serve business performance – his goal is to make products look appealing and lead to sales. I’d never received this kind of comment before, but it made so much sense. My concept was to therefore create a store that used the products as a material, stacking them from floor to ceiling to show the colour and size variations that only Uniqlo can offer. Supported by the company’s smart strategy and a huge ad campaign, this project was a huge success, making its substantial debut to an international audience.

I was lucky to work on Uniqlo’s numerous global flagships and watched the brand’s sales output triple in the decade following 2006. My experience with Uniqlo reminded me once again how important stores are for building brand identity. Uniqlo is not a luxury brand, but this shop also had a huge impact on high-end retailers. Sarah Andelman, owner of former concept store Colette, loved my approach and asked me to redesign the Rue Saint-Honoré space in Paris.

I’m lucky to have had the opportunity to work across a wide range of fields beyond fashion retail: restaurants, confectionary shops and so on. We’ve recently been involved with concept buildings with the likes of Lexus, and government projects such as Japan House London, part of the Japanese foreign ministry’s international branding platform. Each client has a different target audience and different goals they wish to achieve, so my approach to spatial design or branding will naturally differ, too, to suit the situation.

With each project, clients ask me for a unique space that is unlike any other, but at the same time, most clients come to me because they’ve seen my previous work. People may think that over the last 20 years I’ve built up a design language that can be adapted to other projects. Yes and no. Yes, because I learn from past experiences. I love working on projects in Japan because the details are realized impeccably. But now that I have many international projects, I have come to learn how to realize spaces without compromise, in any country. If we have a strong design concept, slight adjustments to materials and finishes don’t affect the result – you just have to be flexible. But on the other hand, my language can’t simply be adapted to other pro-

jects because I approach each one as an amateur-minded professional. You can never beat the passion of someone who creates their own store with their own hands, and I always design spaces as if they’re my own. The outcome will be great if that passion is supported with professional skills. I need to have two sets of eyes – from the consumer’s and client’s points of view. I think my consumer side edges out my client side, but since I’m creating new business platforms for my clients that are enjoyed by consumers, I definitely need to think in both ways.

Even though I’m still willing to work on new projects myself, I’m also keen on teaching design students, future designers. I’ve been a professor at Musashino Art University in Tokyo since 2011, where I now teach once a week. It’s a time- and energy-consuming task when you have many projects under your belt, but I want to encourage students to uncover the excitement of creating space. I don’t teach which design tools to use; my class is more about concept building and case studies. I want to pass on my knowledge to students and young interior designers who may not see retail design as such an exciting field, especially in an era when people are content with online shopping. But physical and online retail can coexist – you just have to find the right way to entertain people.

I established Wonderwall in 2000 – 20 years ago now. I figured I would retire once my clients no longer needed me or I lost confidence in what I was doing. But whenever I see a new store, I can’t stop thinking about how I would design it if it was assigned to me. This is what has motivated me over the years. Design is my life’s work: I can’t live without it. ●

wonder-wall.com

Masamichi Katayama received the Frame Lifetime Achievement Award during the Frame Awards 2020 ceremony in Amsterdam on 20 February.



BIOGRAPHY

1966 Born into a family running a home furniture retail store in Okayama, Japan **1987** Moves to Tokyo
1992 Cofounds H. Design Associates during Japan's bubble-economy collapse **1998** Gains international attention with a boutique for Nigo's fashion brand, A Bathing Ape **2000** Founds Wonderwall **2003** Publishes *Wonderwall: Masamichi Katayama Projects* with Frame and Birkhäuser **2006** Designs Uniqlo SoHo, the brand's first global flagship store that leads to others around the world, and establishes a design manual for the next decade **2009** Designs the Wonderwall office in Sendagaya, Tokyo **2011** Appointed as professor in Musashino Art University's Department of Scenography, Space and Fashion Design **2018** Designs Japan House London, a project led by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs **2020** Receives the Frame Lifetime Achievement Award

The CEO of **Harmay** – the Chinese retailer of international cosmetics brands – shares his vision for turning stores into sensuous experiences, what makes him want to leave customers alone, and why he thinks offline shopping is here to stay.

As told to
Amandas Ong



In Hong Kong, suspended mirror-backed shelving represents one of AIM Architecture's 'little acts of rebellion against conventional design' that Harmay's CEO appreciates.

Dirk Weiblen



Cosmetics with the allure of candy

DAMIEN ZHONG: When I first considered entering the cosmetics industry, I was certain that I didn't want to give my brand a name that was too predictable or had anything to do with makeup. I love eating prune-flavoured gumdrops, a traditional snack that's really popular in China. We call them *hua mei tang* – they're tangy, sour and sweet all at the same time. I thought it would be a fitting name for my brand because makeup products are slightly reminiscent of candy, both in the way they're packaged as well as in the way we savour them – a little bit at a time. Harmay is just a loose English phoneticization of *hua mei*. I hope that when customers visit one of our stores, they feel like they're picking out candy to take home and going on a sensuous journey that they chart themselves.

Offering solitude while shopping

After conducting some consumer research, I found that a pet peeve for Chinese customers is having sales assistants hovering over them as they shop. I can empathize: having a pushy salesperson trying to sell me something when I'm just browsing puts me off the idea of going shopping. I want to ensure that Harmay's customers can always enjoy a comfortable, serene experience while in one of our stores, especially given that picking out cosmetics is very much an intimate and personal act. You don't want someone intruding on your thoughts while you're looking for the perfect face cream. All of Harmay's stores are designed with these intentions firmly in mind – we encourage our customers to explore every nook and cranny and discover new products at their own pace. They're completely in control. In the meantime, shop assistants can focus their efforts on taking stock and finishing other logistical tasks, while being on hand to answer any questions if necessary.

The enduring appeal of brick-and-mortar locations

Prior to 2015, Harmay products were available only online, via Taobao, and there was a lot of pessimism about the future of brick-and-mortar retail. Despite all this, we created our first store, in Shanghai. Instead of thinking of online shopping as a threat to offline stores, we considered how one could complement the other – and vice versa. When someone walks into a shop, it's no longer to simply buy something. It's about them taking the initiative to inspire themselves and pique their curiosity with products they weren't expecting. That's also why I'm adamant that our stores should have inconspicuous entrances. From the minute customers step through the door they're in for a surprise, and that's the sort of feeling you can't replicate online.

The concept behind Harmay's flagship in Hong Kong evolved from it being merely a warehouse to store our products, which we then sold to the Chinese market. But I wondered if there was perhaps a more innovative way of fully utilizing a space we already had to engage with our customers. I've always been fascinated by the look of traditional apothecaries in the city, which peddle all sorts of Chinese medicine. In particular, I love the little drawers that you can pull out to see what lies within. At the same time, I wanted to be able to preserve the feeling of the original space, with its sleek industrial decor. That's how the design of the Hong Kong shop came about, with its numerous drawers that encourage tactility. I was also very keen on having the display shelves suspended in the air rather than resting on the ground, as they do in most typical stores. It's these little acts of rebellion against conventional design that I enjoy. >>



Reinterpreting the traditional Chinese medicine-peddling apothecary, Harmay's Hong Kong flagship engages with customers by encouraging tactility.





ABOVE The ground floor of the Beijing store mimics an airport, complete with 'baggage belts' upon which staff package products in full view of the customers.

OPPOSITE Upstairs, five thematic rooms are designed to enhance offline sales engagement.

Respecting the integrity of a space

The Shanghai store is a repurposed hotel kitchen. The first design proposal was aesthetically pleasing in much the same way as the interiors of most cosmetics stores are. I was on board with the concept at first but as time passed, I felt like something was missing – that it wouldn't capture the essence of the Harmay brand.

After getting in touch with the architects at AIM and giving them a better idea of what the space was like, they suggested we work *with* the concept of the kitchen. At long kitchen islands, both employees and customers can interact with the products, almost as if they're preparing food on their kitchen counter at home. I appreciated that AIM understood my request for a design that was simultaneously memorable and practical, and that they really took it in a completely unique direction.

For our upcoming shop in Chengdu, I'm intrigued by the idea of being situated somewhere that looks as if it's been overtaken by nature. I'm inspired by a line from a poem by famous Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai, who writes that 'it is easier to climb to Heaven than to take the path to Sichuan'. Perhaps we could have washbasins

that look like they have algae growing on them. I think it's very important to honour the original feel of not just the space, but also its environs and its history.

Making transgressive interiors

The inside of Harmay's Beijing store is redolent of an airport. Upon winding assembly lines that look like conveyor belts where you pick up your luggage, our staff can package products in full view of the customers. You'd never associate airports with cosmetics, and they couldn't be more dissimilar conceptually, but that's the sort of playful subversion I request of AIM every time they design a new store for us. The second floor of the store boasts five rooms that are thematically designed to enhance the customer experience. For instance, if you're trying on perfume in the room for scents, you can enjoy the soft floral patterns on the wall. Then there's a large room complete with curtains – a fun and relaxed setting for customers to test out products. Harmay and AIM inspire each other constantly, and it's important that we don't have fixed ideas of what to do at the beginning of the design process.●

harmay.com



ride with me

How would it feel to sit behind the wheel of a car that conveys your state of mind? With an extensive list of customization options, the updated MINI Clubman is not just a vehicle to drive, but one for self-expression.

Words Shonquis Moreno



The new MINI Clubman offers a motherlode of choices ranging from innovative equipment to cutting-edge digital services and connectivity.

‘It’s a big challenge to develop the appearance of a MINI – which is so defining and familiar around the world – in such a way that you retain the iconic element but always take a step into the future,’ said Oliver Heilmer, head of MINI Design, back in *Frame* 124 (2018). ‘It’s a fine balancing act.’ A balancing act that requires a lot of foresight, since the car you see on the shop floor most likely took a few years of development to get there. Each unique design evolves, step by step, from the first idea and sketch through to clay and CAD modelling – and then, of course, the end result. For the updated MINI Clubman series, which launched last summer, Heilmer and team paid loving attention to details, both visually and functionally.

The Clubman, with the brand’s signature comfortable ride and creative use of space, is a modern interpretation of the classic shooting brake style car body. In the 1890s, shooting brakes were horse-drawn wagons that transported shooting parties. A decade later, the first automotive shooting brakes appeared in the UK and trended during the 1920s and ’30s.

Today’s version features four side doors, five seats and a versatile luggage compartment stowed behind a pair of split doors. The car’s different look offers clues to its evolved functionality. Drivers can choose from a spectrum of functions in a generous package of custom options.

Skim down a list of the car’s latest features and it becomes clear why its makers describe the MINI Clubman as ‘a stylish individualist’. The car offers a motherlode of choices ranging from innovative equipment to cutting-edge digital services and connectivity (clever and ever-online, the car has its own SIM card), as well as operational tech. The MINI Yours programme is dedicated to

facilitating customization from Union Jack perforations on the headrests and illuminated cockpit bezel to seat upholstery and piping on floor mats.

First, the new front design features a graphical, hexagonally contoured radiator grill that extends across the entire bumper with the air inlet divided into six black, horizontal struts (that can be upgraded to chrome). It has a robustly domed bonnet and sculpted proportions – sporty, à la MINI – with an elongated roof line and a precipitously pitched rear. The split doors offer two laterally opening wings, making the Clubman the only compact model on the market to offer six doors. But the six doors aren’t skin-deep: they add versatility in the form of a luggage compartment that can be extended from 360 litres to as much as 1,250 litres.

There are new goodies like light alloy wheels (with options for larger wheels in a variety of proprietary designs), a broad selection of audio and navigational systems, a high-end sports suspension (with the option of adaptive suspension) that can lower the car by 10 mm – intensifying the sporty feel of the ride – and an extended range of accessories. Sure, the Clubman offers three new colour variants, and even a few alternatives to body colour, as well as a fresh batch of leather trims and interior surfaces. But customization extends to items like the engines: three petrol and three diesel engines, with output ranging from 75 kW/102 hp to 141 kW/192 hp that customers can pair with an all-wheel drive system, ALL4.

Lighting also offers more aesthetic and functional choices. Designers integrated the daytime driving light into the parking lights in the circular headlamps. Optional LED fog lamps take the place of standard parking lights

and LED rear lights-cum-brake lights are available in an abstracted Union Jack composition. The optional LED headlamps for low and high beam generate enhanced brightness via a white ring of light surrounding the headlamps that serves as daytime driving light and turn indicator. New adaptive LED headlamps with high beam Matrix function offer an inlaid turning light and automatically adapt their brightness to road conditions. In city traffic, when weather limits visibility, or at high speeds, drivers can illuminate the sides of the road more intensely by switching on the dimmed turning light. Additionally, they can increase the range of the high beam – without blinding passers-by – via a high beam divided into four segments that the driver can activate and deactivate independently of each other. And when the car’s front camera senses a vehicle ahead or oncoming, it can illuminate the area around that vehicle with low beams only.

It’s understandable if customers just like the MINI look. But for those who additionally want to drill down the athleticism and style-consciousness through a myriad of mechanical and technical options, it’s possible to actually make a MINI Clubman almost completely, uniquely yours.●

mini.com

It’s possible to actually make a MINI Clubman almost completely, uniquely yours



Oliver Heilmer (above), head of MINI Design, and team focused on the details for the new Clubman: LED rear lights-cum-brake lights are available in an abstracted Union Jack composition, for example, and wheels are made from light alloy.



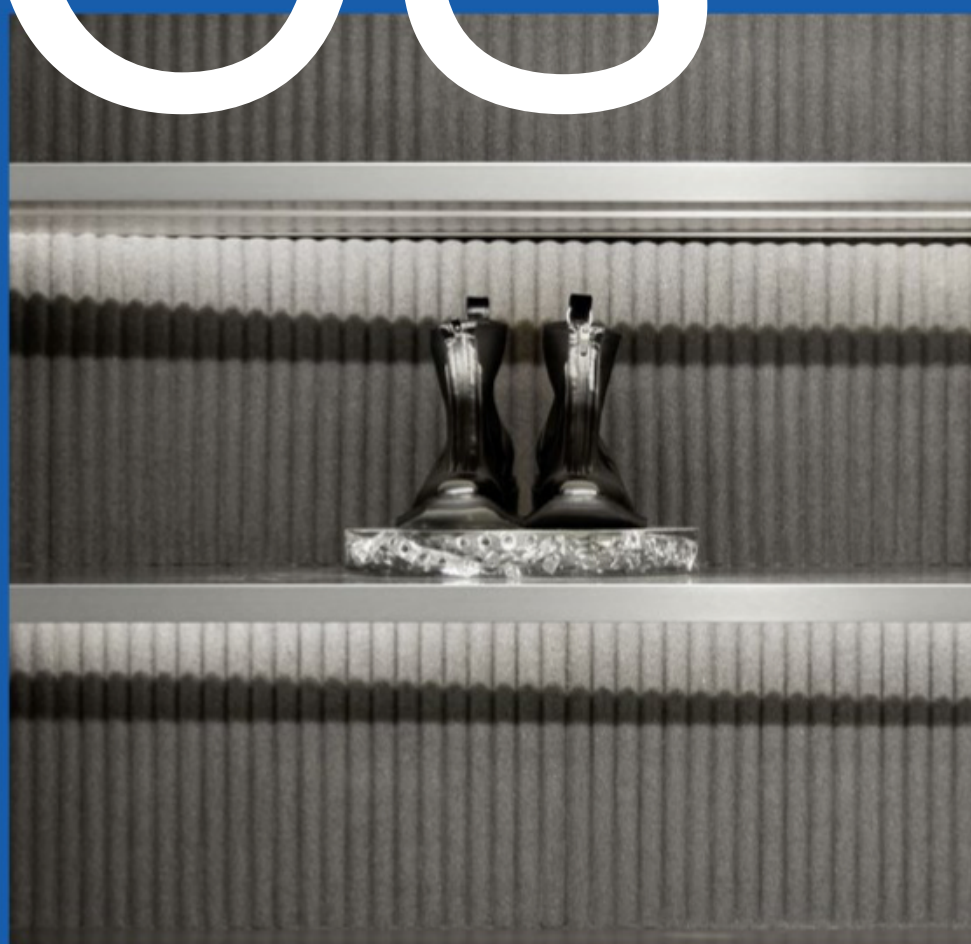


JSPR

LUNAR

WWW.JSPR.EU

spa ces



Courtesy of Leaping Creative

084 Revealing the look
of 2020 retail **098** Banks
open their vaults to all
122 The emergence of
urban living rooms



educate, incubate



W Workspace

Education is no longer just about transferring knowledge. It's about equipping students with the skills – such as creativity and the ability to collaborate – that prepare them for a job market that's in constant flux. As a result, school programmes have become more inquiry-based. And academic environments are following suit. Today's learning spaces are increasingly adopting the culture of invention that has emerged from places like Silicon Valley. Reflecting this approach, the library of an architecture school in Bangkok is transformed into a 'creative incubator' where scholars don't only *consume*, but also *create* content.

BANGKOK The majority of today's students are digital natives, but that doesn't mean they source their information solely in the virtual sphere from the comfort of their couch. As our research into the renaissance of the library for *Frame* 127 brought forward, younger generations actually make up a significant part of library visitors today. So, the fear that the emergence of e-books and other digital media would render the typology obsolete proved unfounded. Today's physical libraries are, however, adapting to the present. They do so by becoming more community-oriented *and* by strengthening their role in modern education. Desktops are thus complemented with 3D printers, and literacy lessons supplemented with Google-sponsored coding courses.

The university library, too, is safeguarding its role on campus through the expansion of its functions. And that's more than necessary if you ask Jim Favaro, the cofounder of Johnson Favaro, an American architecture practice with a library-rich portfolio. He points out that 'thanks to digitization and electronic storage opportunities, the lion's share of research may no longer require the ubiquitous presence of books where study and research take place, but study and research still *do* take place on university campuses and they *do* require a location.'

How this location is taking shape today is reflected by the Architecture Library of Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University, the work of design firm Department of Architecture. The local studio turned the massive 1,260-m² space into a student destination that goes beyond books. 'We came to think of the library – a place of learning – in a wider definition,' says principal Twitee Vajrabhaya.

'We're facing a fast-changing future and people need to be adaptive, creative and always ready to learn new things. The success of education doesn't lie in letting students soak in knowledge that already exists, but in giving them the tools and test grounds to actively create new knowledge. So, our design focused on conceiving a creative space for architecture students to experiment, exhibit and exchange.'

To accommodate the activities specific to the life of architecture students, Vajrabhaya's team turned the library into a 'creative incubator', featuring a co-working space, exhibition area, 'casual' lecture room and a range of different seating spots. Carrels arranged in a labyrinth configuration offer students a quiet space for more concentrated tasks. The setup of these desk areas, which is revealed by a reflective ceiling, 'minimizes disturbance from the circulation around'. And when students have to pull an all-nighter, a mattress area on the mezzanine gives them a chance to take a quick power nap.

Physical books and magazines *do* still play an important role in the library, too. In fact, they are accentuated through the spatial design. Dedicated showcase spaces allow for the frontal presentation of book covers, rather than the usual compressed stacks and rows. This gallery-inspired approach continues throughout the space. A three-dimensional grid system doubles as a presentation area. 'It becomes an experimental ground for architecture students to act on the space,' says Vajrabhaya. 'Thus the students are not just the users of the library's content, but the creators.' **FK**

departmentofarchitecture.co.th

PAGES 66-67 **Inside the Architecture Library of Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University, a three-dimensional grid system – which students can use as a presentation surface – encapsulates the stairways and first-floor co-working space.**

OPPOSITE **Carrels arranged in a labyrinth configuration, which is revealed by a reflective ceiling, offer students a quiet space for more concentrated tasks.**

REFORMATION To future-proof their academic offerings, universities are redefining the role of their libraries as creative incubators. This requires a shift in focus: from collecting and conserving knowledge to fostering its creation and cultivation. To become such a breeding ground, the typology should traverse disciplinary boundaries and adopt features of connective, nurturing and reflective environments such as co-working spaces and exhibition halls.







Department of Architecture turned the library into a place that encourages the exchange of ideas. Contributing to this goal is the lecture room, which is fitted out with casual seating.

As window shopping is increasingly done via the consumers' handheld devices, retailers are questioning the value of traditional storefronts in acquiring passers-by. As a result, in the age of click-and-collect, shops are starting to face inwards to heighten intrigue. But while *outside* kerbside presence is traded for concealment, *inside* the roles are reversed. The fitting room, previously tucked away in a hidden corner, now takes centre stage, becoming a backdrop for livestream shopping and retail theatre.

fit and share

SHENZHEN Windowless retail is on the rise as storefronts are losing their role as a key merchandising tool. Traditionally used to communicate brand identity, enable product discovery and draw in passing customers, window displays now have to compete with a myriad of handheld and wearable devices. That doesn't mean retailers are surrendering to the screen. They are well aware of the fact that social media drives sales, and to benefit from that, their stores should facilitate online sharing.

With retailers adopting inward-facing strategies, the battle for customer attention is moving from the street side to the inside. Here, shopkeepers are creating engaging environments that not only offer visitors an exciting offline experience, but also fill the role of Instagram bait. In these retail theatres, the fitting room, to an increasing extent, plays a leading role. Why? Because stores in general are literally becoming destinations to try things on, and are no longer per definition places of transaction. In *Frame* 129, Docee Dong, cofounder of Daylab, pointed out that

their retail clients are often more concerned with creating a memorable experience for customers than with earning money in-store. 'If clients enjoy their visit, they'll order online later,' he said. As a result, on-site inventory can be minimized in favour of large – and highly prominent – try-on zones. So in designing the physical space of e-commerce platform Heyshop, that's exactly what the Shanghai-based studio did.

Architecture practice Studio 10 took a similar approach when tasked to design a store for Chinese womenswear brand Geijoeng in Shenzhen, China. The shop's entrance corridor and window displays are paved with semi-transparent glass brick, producing the mysterious atmosphere inherent to the abovementioned windowless storefronts. Once curious shoppers enter the 120-m² shop floor, they are welcomed by 'ghostly' layers of reflective and translucent materials. Central to the design concept is – you guessed it – the fitting room. Quite literally that is. The acrylic tube, which is lined with a theatrical green velour curtain from Raf Simons' collection

for Kvadrat, is carefully placed in the middle of the space. 'The fitting room has become a more important aspect of retail in the age of social media. Changing room selfies and approvals on social media affect the retail experience, so we imagined the space as a small floating stage, a statement piece,' says Studio 10's principal Shi Zhou. 'It acts as a backdrop for performance-like purposes. The use of the fitting room is becoming a social experience rather than a purely functional act.' Hence Zhou believes the fitting room is an added opportunity for designers to create a space of engagement for people to share and interact – both offline *and* online. **FK**

studio10.co

Taking a central position in Studio 10's interior for Geijoeng's Shenzhen store, an acrylic tube lined with a theatrical green velour curtain functions as a try-on area.







Semi-transparent glass bricks, used in the window displays to entice passers-by, are a recurring element in the shop's interior. The floors are covered in custom-made terrazzo.

THEATRICALITY E-commerce may be dubbed the main competitor to in-store shopping, but physical outlets can also cash in on the convenience offered by digital merchandise options. Cleared of excess stock, shop floors can be dedicated to the act of fitting. So, rather than the last element to be incorporated in the retail scheme, try-on areas could become the designer's main focus. Changing room selfies will do the rest.



LEFT Heimtextil's Trend Space hosted an array of talks inside an inflatable, mouth-shaped lecture room.

OPPOSITE The 2,000-m² trend area was divided into five 'theme worlds'. In Heritage Lux, Bart Hess referenced historical architecture to evoke a sense of surreal luxury with his Grotto installation.

Jeroen van der Wielen and Oscar Vinck

strike a balance

The sheer magnitude of 400,000-m² venue Messe Frankfurt means that, for the trade fairs it hosts, having a clear centre to tether visitors to the core experience is crucial. Especially so today, when it's a necessity for fairs to not only set the groundwork for commerce, but to establish themselves as players in the engagement economy. That beating heart, in the case of international home and contract textiles fair Heimtextil, is its Trend Space, designed this year by Dutch trend analysis and design agency Stijlinstituut Amsterdam.



FRANKFURT Every year, the human-powered machine behind Messe Frankfurt puts on over 150 industry trade fairs at its namesake exhibition grounds. Founded in 1907, the German event organizer is the biggest in the world, and its grounds reflect that scale. Despite wayfinding at every turn in the venue, it's quite easy to get off path when a space is engulfing in its enormity and you're side by side, at all times, with small armies of people.

Approaching its 50th anniversary in 2021, Heimtextil hosts 58 events in 16 global locations; for this edition of the fair in Frankfurt, the network hosted 2,952 exhibitors from 66 countries. Visitor foot traffic in 2019 broke 600,000, a sharp increase from 520,000 the previous year. The Trend Space – to which Heimtextil dedicates an impressive 2,000 m² – is an essential anchor point. Conceived and implemented by the Amsterdam-based Stijlinstituut with Dutch designers Grietje Schepers and Harm Rensink, this edition's centred on immersive microcosms showcasing five conceptual themes – Maximum Glam, Pure Spiritual, Active Urban,

Heritage Lux and Multi-Local – through the work of collaborating artists and designers. Textile samples from over 1,000 exhibitors were selected to comprise the showcased material palettes of each group.

These – in addition to the overarching fair theme, Where I Belong – were developed by the Heimtextil Trend Council, a group consisting of Stijlinstituut Amsterdam and fellow design agencies FranklinTill and Spott Trends and Business. The idea for Where I Belong was born during Heimtextil Trend Council's annual meeting, where the agencies gather to brainstorm and plan. A topic that they magnetized towards consistently was 'identity', referring to the wider range of societal discourse on gender, cultural diversity, tolerance and curiosity. The trend microcosms highlight auxiliary needs: that for increased spirituality and natural connection, cultural diversity, flexibility and multisensory experiences, for example.

'We are very much aware of the massive political, economic and environmental challenges today – these are topics heavy >>

BELOW **Curated by London-based agency FranklinTill, the Future Materials Library showcased a range of innovative and sustainable materials, such as fabrics made from human waste.**

OPPOSITE **A calming, refuge-like space housing Bruce Shapiro's kinetic, meditative sculpture Sisyphus was designed to reflect the Pure Spiritual theme.**









on everyone's minds – but we think it's also important to present opportunities and positivity,' explains Anne Marie Commandeur, owner and director of Stijlinstituut Amsterdam. 'That's why we made the Trend Space an experience that's not only meaningful and informative, but has some light-heartedness and humour to it.'

Big, bold white lines imprinted on the blue flooring of Hall 8 led visitors to the area, though with a huge, inflatable figure waving to them from the corner space, most probably could have inferred where they needed to head. Once in the Trend Space's commodious confines, visitors were exposed to a world seemingly far removed from the commercial bustle. The most common point-of-entry exposed traversers first to the Heimtextil Future Materials Library, curated by FranklinTill. Then, moving along, fairgoers could find themselves in Heritage Lux, where artist Bart Hess's undulating Grotto bed beckoned passers-by to lay down; or in Bastiaan de Nennie's Maximum Glam, where dancers from Project Pole performed 15-minute sets; or in Active Urban, a virtual reality world designed by Roel Deden and Envisions. Multi-Local showed photography by Jan Hoek and Stephen Tayo and *The Totem of Life* – a curated visual experience devised by creative video technologist Peejee Doorduyn. Pure Spiritual, a refuge-like space housed Bruce Shapiro's kinetic, meditative sculpture Sisyphus and photography from Raw Color. The vast majority of the build-out will be reused: only 5 per cent of the total exhibition features will go to waste and included in that tally is the carpet, which will be recycled.

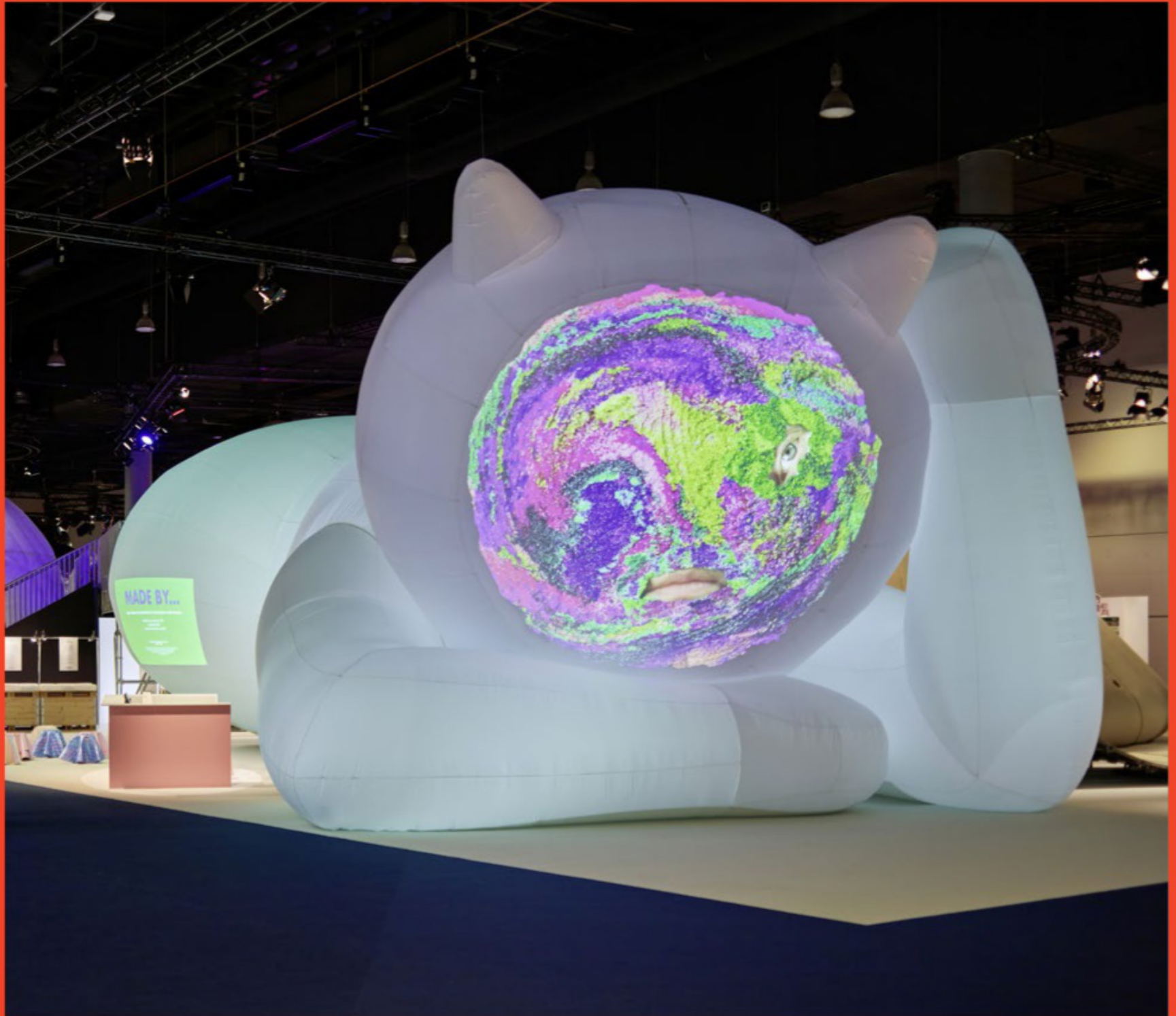
'Fairs like Heimtextil are extensive, and it can be difficult to distil the biggest "messages" from them,' says Commandeur. 'A lot of companies and visitors are explicitly targeted and focused on specific regions or products. But they want to be informed from a wider perspective – to know what's going on generally, which things will go on to have a direct impact on their business. The Trend Space offers a broad opinion that might not be immediately applicable for them and their target, but still gives them an idea of the selection on offer from the fair at large and an idea of the direction the industry is heading.' **LGM**
stijlinstituut.nl

Celebrating the cultural diversity of our globalized world, the Multi-Local area included totems covered in a mix of batik and ikat prints, floral velours and jacquard wovens.



OPPOSITE Featuring a virtual reality experience designed by Roel Deden and Envisions, Active Urban immersed visitors in an environment of performance textiles.

BELOW Stijlinstituut Amsterdam wanted to turn the Trend Space into an experience that's not only meaningful and informative, but has some light-heartedness and humour to it as well.



ENGAGEMENT Trade fairs, being spatially overwhelming, need a grounding area. These spaces are most effective if they're immersive, too: activating imagination with unexpected presentation formats makes for a more balanced experience. By helping to shape a new perspective and understanding of the products and brands on show, engagement-led trend spaces effectively forge a stronger connection between fair and visitor.

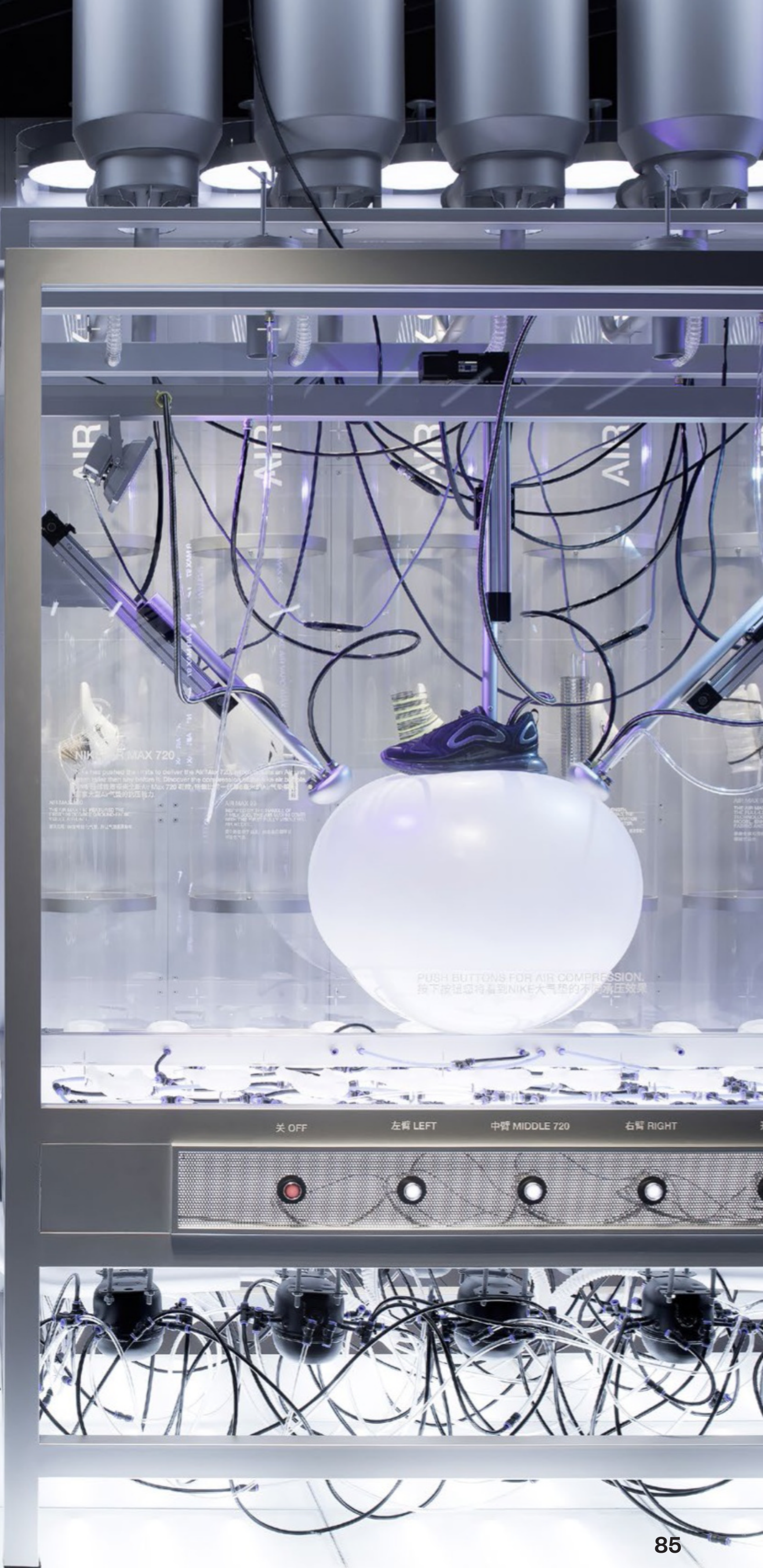
synthe sphere

In each issue we identify a key aesthetic trend evident in our archive of recent projects and challenge semiotics agency Axis Mundi to unpack its design codes. Here, we look at how immersive retail spaces are starting to reference the bleeding edge of advanced scientific research and automation.

Words Rosamund Picton and Kourosh Newman-Zand



Charlie Xia





Courtesy of Gentle Monster

In the early months of a new decade, emerging constellations of signs and signifiers point to the hopes and fears of a new age. The nascent vectors of networked, digital technology in the early part of the 21st century have, at the start of the 2020s, become less of a novelty and more the central starting point for any serious appraisal of our cultural and economic moment. So, too, in spatial design, do we see the prevailing orthodoxy of post-industrialism informed by a reverie for 20th-century mechanized manual labour (cavernous warehouse spaces decorated with exposed pipework and rusting patinas of metal) give way to an aesthetic shaped instead by techno-scientific synthesis and automation.

Increasingly complex and global information flows accelerate and transform the tools and procedures by which we manufacture goods and build infrastructure. Spatial designers seek a new language to reflect these changes. Determined not to look backwards, Synthesphere grounds its references in ultra-contemporary modes of research and production typified by the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Each space features an exaltation to the power of computation and data. Occasionally symbols flicker on screens, giving us a glimpse into the immense complexity and scale of data. Brushed metal scaffolding structured purposefully to support display racks and units shimmer with a delicate, molten liquidity, as if you are moving through the inner workings of a circuit board or server rack. Graded explorations of pastel ombrés and angled, metallic mirroring augment the eye's perception of distance and boundary, illuminating the idea, if not the reality, of an infinitely expanding synthetic or digital territory. Even if we are reminded of the incomprehensibly vast plane of technology, the visitor is never permitted to entirely escape into this

fantasy. Exposed folded tubing shaped like cooling elements, gently sliding pistons and tangled wiring embeds the 'hard' mechanics of the visitor's 'soft', phenomenal experience.

Synthesphere cultivates a hierarchy structured by technical expertise. Clusters of neatly arranged test tubes and conical flasks allude to the high level of technical savoir-faire and innovation. Stark strip lighting, off-white cleanliness and bright yellow hazard signs – as in a top-secret laboratory – imbue the spaces with a forensic intensity that awakens the visitor's attention. Products are often hermetically sealed in observation chambers, sunken in frothy deep blue liquids or suspended in giant test tubes. Inside these vessels, products are worked on by slick pressure pumps and enigmatic, silky gases. These mechanical assemblages allude to the accelerating adoption of automated production, while the retail products they cradle appear as precious and quarantined, classified artefacts. Surveillance cameras, vault doors and PVC strip curtains seem installed to monitor access or even to regulate contamination.

Synthesphere makes sense imagined as an 'auto-sophisticating' data farm. Its products – embryonic source code, caches of information, cryptographic instruments – are wielded as the intangible, immaterial means of production and innovation in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. A generally non-benevolent, even hostile environment is engendered to defend intellectual property and secure the machinic expansion of automated, networked technology. Isolate, re-create, replicate.●

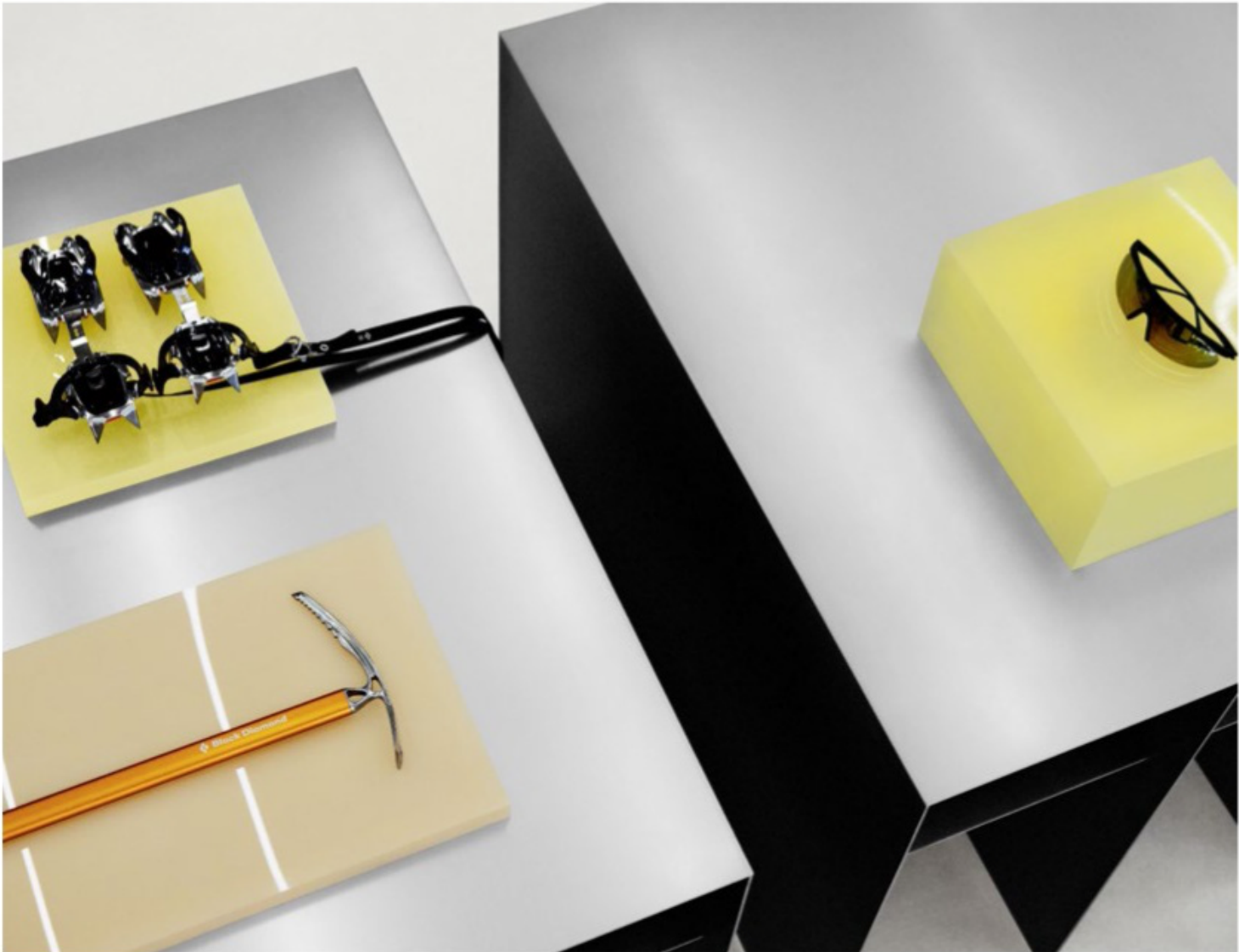
axis-mundi.co

PAGE 85 **Nike House of Innovation by
Coordination Asia in Shanghai, China.**

OPPOSITE **SKP-S by Gentle Monster in
Beijing, China. See more on page 114.**



Thomas Meyer – Ostkreuz



Erik Undén

RIGHT **NK Sport** by Guise and Unestablished in Stockholm, Sweden.

ABOVE **Tem-Plate** by Gonzalez Haase AAS in Lisbon, Portugal.

OPPOSITE AND PAGE 89 **The Mix Land** by Xianxiang Design in Hangzhou, China.





OFFICE









ABOVE **The Mix Land** by **Xianxiang Design** in Hangzhou, China.

OPPOSITE **Tem-Plate** by **Gonzalez Haase AAS** in Lisbon, Portugal.

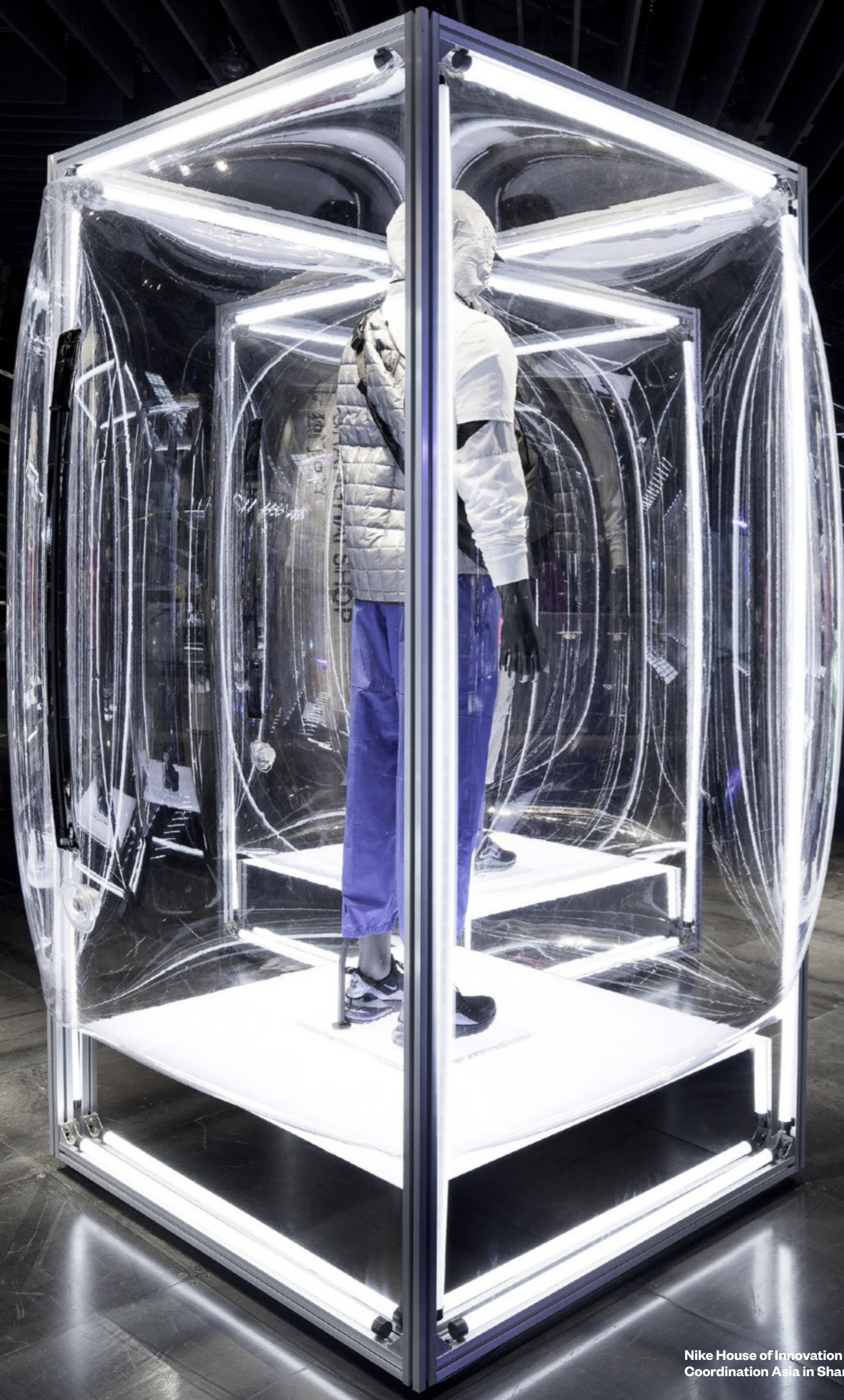


Fengdong E Pang Bookstore
by Gonverge Interior Design
in Xi'an, China.

Weiqi Jin



Junping by XU Studio
in Shanghai, China.

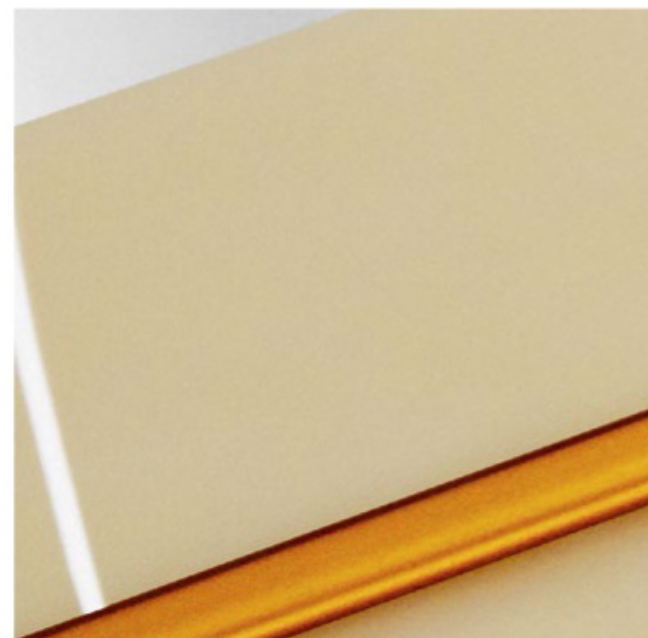
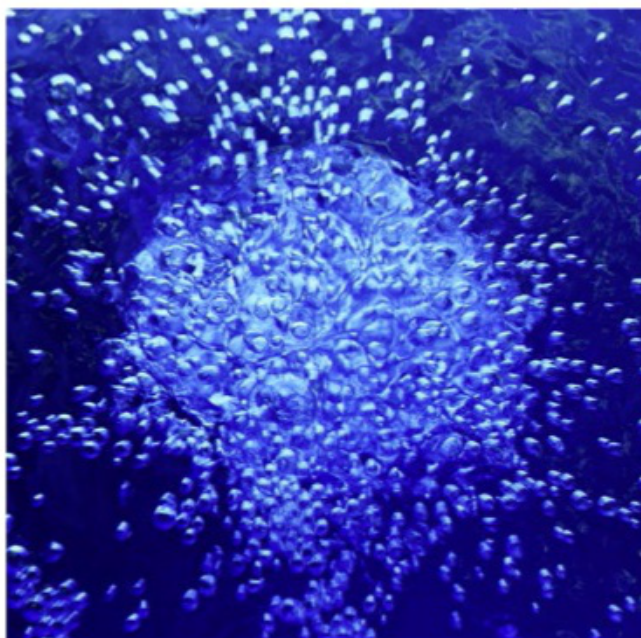


Nike House of Innovation by
Coordination Asia in Shanghai, China.

COLOUR With the help of cool and homogenous illumination, pristine whites and glossy silver surfaces evoke a sense of cleanliness. Vivid blue and purple hues emulate processes of condensation and liquidation, while graded explorations of translucency in tangerines and yellows counterbalance the grey tones of sanded cements.

MATERIAL Silicone objects, PVC curtains and acrylic surfaces make for an overall synthetic and sterile aesthetic. Frosted glass divisions and translucent tools that reference scientific facilities amalgamate with brushed metal and aluminium components. Steel machinery, exposed folded tubing and original concrete floors, brightened with matte protective layers, add a factory feel.

FORM Spatial references to test tubes and conical flasks are combined with seemingly inflated bubbles that function as display cases. Shop fit-out systems are reminiscent of sterilizing cabinets and robot arms add an air of automation.





ING's office in Amsterdam is part of a so-called 'innovation district' initiated by the banking and financial services corporation.

open

vault

‘Flexibility’ and ‘transparency’ are not words traditionally associated with the finance industry. As a typology, the bank is seen as a symbol of strength, power and security. But with 97 per cent of the money in today’s economy represented by digital deposits – leaving only 3 per cent as tangible cash – the taxonomy of space in financial buildings is being overhauled. Less floor area is given to traditional storage methods, leaving much more room for a brand’s values to shine.

Recognizing that banks not only provide a public service but are also a place of work, architects and designers are challenging their impenetrable roots and instead prioritizing openness, community and wellness.

ING, the Netherlands’ largest bank, recently gave 2,800 of its employees a new home in Amsterdam. Known as Cedar, the five-storey building was designed by Benthem Crouwel Architects and Hofman-Dujardin as more than a bank – or even an office. Instead, it is a manifestation of the brand’s purpose to ‘empower people in a building that opens itself up to society’. Cedar’s glazed, curved form connects with its surroundings to become part of the urban space within Cumulus Park, a so-called ‘innovation district’ initiated by ING that has now gained support from the Municipality of Amsterdam and a number of local educational institutes. A large, landscaped green zone in front of the building is open to users *and* visitors, promoting connections between the financial institution and the neighbourhood in which it sits.

The complex is designed as a one-stop shop for staff invigoration and empower-

ment. Including such amenities as a garden café, coffee bars, food court and events hall, the space offers a sense of transparency and connectivity that seem to counteract the emphasis banks once placed on security and privacy. A daylight-filled atrium forms the connective heart of the building, with staircases and platforms creating opportunities for spontaneous meetings and small social gatherings. Given the freedom to choose where and how they work, employees can occupy ING’s various open and collaborative spaces – although mobile, flexible structures can be used to create temporary ‘rooms’ when more privacy is needed. All in all, Barbara Dujardin and Michiel Hofman say they created an interior that focuses on wellbeing. ‘You feel the freedom when you walk in.’

ING is not alone in its objective: the new office for Wells Fargo at Hudson Yards in New York also takes an employee-first approach. While both institutions use on-brand colour highlights and warm, timber finishes to communicate trust to consumers, attracting and retaining talent is equally important. ‘Office space is not a linear

thing with one single experience for every employee,’ says Luc Massaux, design principal at The Switzer Group, whose office for Wells Fargo seeks to create ‘a variety of moments for all moods and all people’. With a reception area that brings visitors and staff directly onto the main trading floor, and a variety of open collaboration spaces and ‘breakout areas’ in the core offices, Wells Fargo benefits from a vibe more commonly associated with co-working brands such as WeWork or Fora.

It’s not that privacy and security aren’t important, of course. Workspaces are divided by glass partitions with acoustical enhancement to offer a sense of seclusion while remaining visually open to the rest of the building. On the topic of privacy, Massaux says that the project was about finding ‘solutions that take those concerns into consideration without sacrificing the new office culture that design encourages’. **LT**

ING, AMSTERDAM Designed by HofmanDujardin and Benthem Crouwel Architects for the Netherlands' largest bank, ING Cedar Cumulus Park is a manifestation of the brand's purpose to 'empower people in a building that opens itself up to society'. A green zone in front of the building is open to users *and* visitors, while a spacious and interconnected atrium creates opportunities for spontaneous meetings and small social gatherings.

benthemcrouwel.com
hofmandujardin.nl







WELLS FARGO, NEW YORK CITY The 30 Hudson Yards office of multinational financial services organization Wells Fargo is the work of The Switzer Group. With a reception area that brings visitors and staff directly onto the main trading floor, and a variety of open collaboration spaces and ‘breakout areas’ in the core offices, it feels more like a co-working space than a corporate banking environment.
theswitzergroup.com



TRANSPARENCY The blurring of lines between the bank and the workplace means that instead of emphasizing security and power, such institutions are creating buildings that focus on communication, wellbeing and transparency. The latter is evident both indoors and out: workspaces are more free and open, and the architecture is more connected to its environs.



space to decelerate

We've heard a lot of talk of late about retailers positioning their stores as 'galleries', but what does that really mean? For some it's a matter of taking a curated approach to their merchandise, while others are displaying their wares as if they were one-off – almost unattainable – items. In India, a home decor store does both, while adding another element to the equation: curved partition walls that help shoppers to slow down.

AMRITSAR The real intention behind the gallery-like store seems to be about inviting consumers to browse at their absolute leisure instead of experiencing the retail equivalent of fast-food takeaways. In short, such spaces are asking their customers to slow down. But where art galleries have the advantage of content that usually leads to contemplation, stores are another kettle of fish. While galleries can be white open rooms, the various works of art indicating the route through the space, some retailers are employing other strategies to decelerate shoppers.

One such strategy is labyrinthine. Rather than being able to take in the entire room from the front door and potentially about-turning without further exploration, visitors are (subconsciously?) nudged down a complex path. In the city of Amritsar in north-west India, Studio Renesa did just that for home decor brand Rustickona. Even though they created what they call a gallery – in that it both literally and figuratively puts products on pedestals – the New Delhi-designers used curved partitions made of brick to build spatial complexity. Their main focus was to 'create an indigenous and deconstructed feel-

ing', something that is 'in a state of constant change and experimentation, much like a gallery would be'. They envisioned visitors meandering along a route that feels organically formed but is also carefully directed by the architects themselves.

Without the caveat of having to provide a neutral backdrop for objects, the designers could inject rich materiality into the 120-m² interior. To preserve a sense of uniformity within the space, they limited the palette to raw concrete and red brick. The benefit of the latter is threefold. Firstly, the use of brick is a nod to its prominence in the vernacular architecture of India. The material's colour and form also set the tone for the brand's identity, turning the space into a giant logo of sorts without feeling overly commercial. Lastly, perforations in the brick afford subtle glimpses of the objects and space beyond the screens, adding to the sense of intrigue. This final aspect seems particularly relevant in the era of information overload, when it's hard to focus on one thing at a time. In that respect, the store may just be a gallery after all. **TI**

studiorenesa.com

Studio Renesa envisioned visitors meandering along a retail route that feels organically formed but is also carefully directed by the architects themselves.







NAVIGATION For retailers, the pros of going brick-and-mortar remain multifarious: to add physical brand presence, to build community ‘IRL’, or to woo with the kind of tactility that escapes a purely digital existence. Most stores don’t want you to only *enter*, but also to *linger*, which is where their layout may either help or hinder. By offering an anfractuous environment for exploration, retailers can increase the level of intrigue – and perhaps their turnover, too.

scraps with substance



Courtesy of Leaping Creative

TFD's futurist scheme juxtaposes recycled materials with polished stainless steel and dark felt.

K11 Musea is envisioned for the 'modern conscious consumer'. A certified green building, the self-proclaimed 'cultural-retail destination' in Hong Kong boasts rich plant life, over 4,500 m² of living walls and an urban farm. But amid the greenery, one of the supermall's occupants takes a more industrial approach to appeal to its creative and eco-aware clientele. The Fashion Door uses storytelling to hint at rising sea levels – and turns scraps into sculpture in the process.







Leaping Creative designed TFD with 'future humans' in mind. The team imagines people discovering the store in 200 years' time to find a giant 'creature' made with remnants of the 'excessive consumerism in 21st-century society'.

HONG KONG Culture and commerce have long been linked. The most obvious example is a museum's gift shop, which can reportedly contribute up to as much as a quarter of its associated institution's revenue. Or think of the many art- and sculpture-rich retail spaces à la Dover Street Market. It's surprising, then, to hear K11 Musea calling itself the 'world's first cultural-retail destination'. If not the first, K11 is still impressive. The brainchild of billionaire developer Adrian Cheng – who assembled 100 (yes, 100) creatives for the collaboration – the supermall is part of Hong Kong's huge new art and design district, Victoria Dockside, on the Tsim Sha Tsui harbour.

Located within the certified green building is the first Hong Kong boutique for Guangzhou-based retailer The Fashion Door (TFD). For the interior, the team at branding design consultancy Leaping Creative fleshed out an idea they'd been toying with for a while, a concept that centres on one of southern China's largest recycling facilities. 'The resources the facility preserves have always interested us,' says Leaping Creative's founder and design director, Zen Zheng, 'and we'd been thinking about doing something with them. Coincidentally, our client knew the facility as well, so after some initial concept

brainstorming, one of our main options for the store was to bring in the recycled materials from the factory. The concept of recycling responds to the circle of fashion trends – of fashion being constantly inspired by elements from the past.'

Although much of its supply comes from Guangzhou, the factory collects materials from various industries in different cities. The salvaged assortment includes parts of old public buses and heavy trucks, as well as leftovers from certain manufacturing processes: injection-moulding cases, steel from pressure casting and so on. 'Everything strongly refers to China's tag as "the world's factory",' says Zheng. 'We found the old and new materials very fascinating, since each is a symbol of industrial civilization and tells the story of our modern lifestyle.'

With this in mind, the Leaping Creative team concocted a notional narrative, gazing a few hundred years ahead through a fictional crystal ball. When Zheng starts relating his story, though, it doesn't feel altogether sci-fi. He talks of future humans discovering the site underwater and sifting through the debris to find a giant 'creature' at the core. This creature would 'give archaeologists a glimpse of the excessive consumerism

in 21st-century society'. For now, though, the sculpture he describes is the first thing visitors see when approaching the store: an other-worldly assembly of old escalators, boat and motorcycle parts and a truck's engine.

Rising tide levels mean waterside locations like this one are resting on precarious ground. It's an issue that will certainly affect the generation to which K11 Musea and TFD are aimed. 'TFD is targeting trendy young people, so we wanted to be cool and attractive when conveying the idea of green and sustainable,' says Zheng. He says the store is designed to tell this sustainability story through the installation, details and ambience, but is the method of communication obvious enough to be understood? If nothing else, the presence of an overbearing alien-esque form should fulfil another of the store's goals: to help initiate a conversation with its customers. **TI**

leapingcreative.com

UPCYCLING There's a lot of confusion surrounding reuse and recycling. One circulating story is that recycling expends more energy than it saves. The likes of Brigham Young University Idaho are hoping to debunk such myths, reporting that 'manufacturing using 1 ton of recycled materials uses less than half of the energy to manufacture the same products using raw, virgin materials'. Reuse, though, is more transparent. And keeping the original objects intact – casting them in resin to create new forms, for example – brings the message out into the open.



Materials from one of southern China's largest recycling facilities are sealed within transparent resin to form product displays.



department (store) departure

Gentle Monster is an eyewear brand, right? Well, now the Seoul-based company can also add ‘set designers for an entire department store’ to its bag of tricks. In a radical retail move, the in-house design team was called upon to deck out the interiors of SKP-S, the forward-facing offshoot of Beijing’s SKP luxury mall.

BEIJING They’ve created a buzz in a way that no other brand has done before – a reason for people to get off the couch and visit a sunglasses store. So said Tim Rupp, design director of retail environments for Nike, during last year’s Frame Awards deliberations. The London outpost was up for Single-Brand Store of the Year, an award it eventually took home. Eventually being the operative word, since there was a crumb of criticism prior to the final decision. Namely, that this store wasn’t quite as extreme or immersive as some of its predecessors. Basically, Gentle Monster’s biggest competition was its existing portfolio.

The brand is no longer just one to watch – it’s a force to be reckoned with. Glasses aside, it’s amassed a string of destination stores that inspire desire. While it’s not exactly surprising that someone else wanted a piece of that pie, it is interesting that Gentle Monster was willing to take its house style out of house. The story goes that as a big fan of Gentle Monster’s stores, the CEO of

luxury mall SKP in Beijing, Mr Ji, called up the eyewear brand’s founder and chief executive, Hankook Kim. Ji was developing a hip new offshoot of SKP called SKP-S (the ‘S’ stands for south), and wanted to discuss a potential collaboration.

The final result of that discussion was a shared alternative vision for the luxury department store. While the conclusion at which they arrived isn’t radical, the sheer scale and scope of the project are. Entitled Digital-Analog Future, the concept foresees a world where ‘advances in technology blur the boundary between human and digital realms, enabling new forms of evolution beyond our imagination’. Theming the collaboration as such provided Gentle Monster the opportunity to run wild with its surreal style, realizing everything from a field of grazing robotic sheep to a rundown of Martian history.

It may seem like it’s all just for show – a series of whacky installations to delight the senses and doubtless fill Instagram feeds – but you *can* actually buy things here.

The aforementioned Martian history lesson is part of the second-floor Select Shop, a fashion retail store. Alongside a model of the spacecraft that apparently transported the first settlers to Mars and other mythical memorabilia from the Red Planet, four zones feature apparel and accessories from top brands. There’s also a concept café on the third floor, which serves ‘edible creations inspired by the story of a strange portal connecting Mars and Earth’ – those present for the press preview sampled Gentle Monster-style desserts shaped like an ear and a mushroom.

Naturally, Gentle Monster has its own store in SKP-S. But no, the shop doesn’t include a new department that takes on external clients: Kim has confirmed that he and his team are not looking to branch out into the design of other new retail spaces. But they *will* be part of SKP-S’s evolution, tracking the customer experience and updating the content in response. **TI**

gentlemonster.com

Gentle Monster's entire concept for SKP-S is based on the theme of Digital-Analog Future. A common area on the third floor features a series of landscapes made by 'future Mars settlers'.





1! THE PAST
1 0 0 1 0 0
50+3 H200W U+E+102#RY EXCITING



In Future Farm – the first episode at the Art Experiment Space, an area that will present a roster of art installations and brand pop-ups – lifelike robotic sheep represent ‘a machine-dominated future in which AI manipulates human memories’.







Visitors step off the third-floor escalator into a spacecraft, where an elderly 'man' sits opposite a humanoid, 'discussing the construction of a new Mars base'.



STORYTELLING In the age of the experience economy – one of the most overused terms in recent years? – retailers are adding layers of richness to their offerings. ‘Attention-grabbing’ is an oft-recurring strategy, which can be achieved through the art of storytelling. Knitting a narrative into a design may encourage visitors to unravel the red thread – potentially spending more time and money in the process – and using one voice to tell the story makes the experience more coherent.



ABOVE **Mars Rediscovery** is the theme of a retail space for shoes on the third floor. Gentle Monster's story tells of 'future Martians' who 'erect a peculiar speaker object in the centre of the store' to commemorate their ancestors.

OPPOSITE On the third floor of SKP-S is Gentle Monster's 21st flagship store, which imagines a 'new humankind travelling through a wormhole between Mars and Earth'.

ASTY SHIN-FUJI, FUJI The refurbishment of Shin-Fuji station is designed to turn the transport hub into more than just a thoroughfare. Fostering interaction was a key part of the brief, which was assigned to Tokyo-based studio CMYK by the local government as part of a plan to counter the effects of an aging and declining population.
cmyk-jp.com



Courtesy of CMYK Interior & Product

urban living rooms

Downsized homes, solo living, rapid urbanization: for various reasons, community centres are experiencing a revival – and offering myriad amenities to boot.

Words George Kafka

In December 2019, *The New York Times* published an extraordinary story about the mountain village of Nagoro in southern Japan. Population decline had struck Nagoro so hard that its residents – fewer than 30 adults – began making life-size dolls to make Nagoro feel livelier. Fake school children, construction workers, a teacher in front of a class and a father with his kids could all be found out and about in the village during an annual festival; the article reported the dolls outnumber the town's living residents by more than ten to one.

This particular story is unique, but the population changes affecting Nagoro are not. In Japan and across the developed world is a whole collage of stories and reports on the emotional impacts of how we live today as a result of varying and interconnected demographic shifts, such as declining populations in certain rural areas and a rise

in the number of people living alone in cities. A report by Our World in Data, based at the University of Oxford, highlights Stockholm, where 60 per cent of households consisted of one person in 2012, concluding that globally, 'the current prevalence of one-person households is unprecedented historically'.

In addition, there has also been a significant focus on loneliness in recent years, most notably with the 2018 launch of a 'loneliness strategy' by the UK government, which aimed to treat the phenomenon as a health issue in order to reduce demand on the NHS. The strategy also promised £1.8 million to spend on new community spaces – although, in the face of simultaneous funding cuts of over £250 million to library services in the UK over the past decade, this seems like a paltry offering.

In recent years, new community centres have instead emerged in unlikely places outside of the traditional state provision of social »



G-LAB, BRUGES A project by Tom Callebaut's studio TC Plus, G-Lab combines the architect's family home with communal spaces for the neighbourhood. Design cues let members of the public know when they're welcome to enter the garden – and even parts of the interior. Designed with varying colour schemes and integrated furniture, rooms can be booked for different uses such as film screenings, meetings or social gatherings – all free of charge.
tc-plus.be



services. G-Lab in Bruges, for example, is a project by Tom Callebaut's studio TC Plus that combines the architect's family home with communal spaces for the neighbourhood. Completed as part of his PhD research by design, G-Lab draws on years of experiments in architectural 'generosity' (the 'g' in G-Lab) and the dismantling of typical designed boundaries: inside/outside, public/private. Thus instead of a front gate, a silvery curtain creates a fluid barrier between the house's front courtyard and the street. When the curtain is open, members of the public are welcome to enter the garden and even parts of the interior. Designed with varying colour schemes and integrated furniture, rooms can be booked for different uses such as film screenings, meetings or social gatherings – all free of charge. 'I saw that people have a lot of fear and our houses are built starting from fear: "I don't trust my neighbours; I'm afraid; I want to disconnect from the world",' says Callebaut. 'I understand that in a way – it's not a problem to have some disconnection. But I wanted to add another level and say that we can also use our house to *connect*.' Since its completion in mid-2018, roughly 1,500 people have visited G-Lab and, according to Callebaut, nothing has been broken nor stolen.

In its blurring of domestic and communal space, G-Lab contributes to a global trend of urban 'living rooms': informal spaces that can be adapted for multiple and non-specific uses, and that can provide a place for the communal gatherings lacking in people's lives. In Chengdu, central China, for example, property developer Vanke commissioned Shanghai-based architects Wutopia Lab to design Blue Heart, a living room with books, seating areas and basic cooking facilities located inside a shopping mall (*Frame* 131, p. 94). With an interior characterized by slick white shelves and a blue spiral staircase, the project aims to provide space for local residents whose apartment blocks are not suitable for communal gatherings.

Back in Japan, we see a similar approach to adapting pre-existing infrastructure to meet new social requirements at the Shin-Fuji train station. Here, an interior by CMYK aims to turn the station into a place to spend time, rather than to just pass through. A staircase incorporating bench seating and reading lamps, for example, makes for a more pleasant waiting environment. Located in the

centre of Fuji, the station forms an integral part of the 'compact city' development model being explored in Japan to counter the effects of an aging and declining population. Through its refurbishment with natural tones and soft touches, the station aims to act as a community resource that provides more than just transport.

Similarly, The Granville in Kilburn, north London, is a civic centre with a 'living room' as its spatial centrepiece. The project – a renovation of a formerly cluttered church hall by RCKa architects in collaboration with a local business trust – features workspaces for start-ups and small businesses as well as a community kitchen and facilities used by a children's charity. As announced by its brightly painted exterior staircase, the living room is open to all. This was poignantly illustrated in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire, when The Granville became a centre for gathering donations and providing free meals for those affected by the blaze.

As Anthony Staples, associate at RCKa, points out, the role of the architect in these community-oriented projects can often be as much about negotiating between different stakeholders as it is about designing handsome hall refurbishments. 'It's really satisfying to be invited in by a community group to help them negotiate a complex system of property ownership and funding, and local and regional government, and then doing a sufficiently successful job so that they're able to stay there in the long term after we've moved on,' he explains. 'That's more gratifying than anything to do with the design.' ●

THE GRANVILLE, LONDON A renovation of a London church hall by RCKa architects in collaboration with a local business trust, The Granville features workspaces for start-ups and small businesses as well as a community kitchen and facilities used by a children's charity. As announced by its brightly painted exterior staircase, the living room is open to all.

rcka.co.uk





The Granville in London became a centre for gathering donations and providing free meals for those affected by the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire.

URBAN LIVING ROOMS market overview

- 01** Since the 1960s, the proportion of one-person households has more than doubled in many European countries and in Australia, Canada, China, Japan, South Korea and the US. As reported by independent consulting demographer Joseph Chamie for Inter Press Service, such households ‘generally face more difficulties when dealing with . . . social isolation and loneliness’.
- 02** While different cultures interpret the idea of spaciousness differently, square metres in desirable cities are at an even bigger premium as residents flock to urban centres. In a 2013 article entitled ‘Sustainable Communities? A Comparative Perspective on Urban Housing in the European Union’, Nessa Winston reported that one-third of households were dissatisfied with the amount of space in their home.
- 03** A rise in urban living means a drop in rural populations. In a 2017 article for *Metropolitica*, for example, Sophie Buhnik writes that although ‘it is expected that Tokyo’s city region might maintain slight growth until 2030 at least through positive net migration rates – both domestic and international – the rest of Japan is set to shrink, especially peripheral regions, where the number of inhabitants could fall by half’. Perhaps rural areas will adopt their own form of community living rooms in response.
- 04** According to 2019 Pew Research Center analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data, Americans aged 60 and over are alone for more than half of their waking hours. At the time of data collection, the demographic accounted for 22 per cent of the US population, a figure predicted to rise to 26 per cent by 2030.
- 05** As published on Statista, the number of adults using sharing economy services in the US in 2016 (44.8 million) is expected to almost double by 2021. Urban living rooms are able to tap into this market by offering bookable spaces for activities outside of a resident’s daily routine, such as birthday parties or other social gatherings.

Subscribe NOW

Be at the forefront of **SPATIAL DESIGN**.
Enjoy *Frame* delivered bimonthly to your door
and save on the listed retail price.

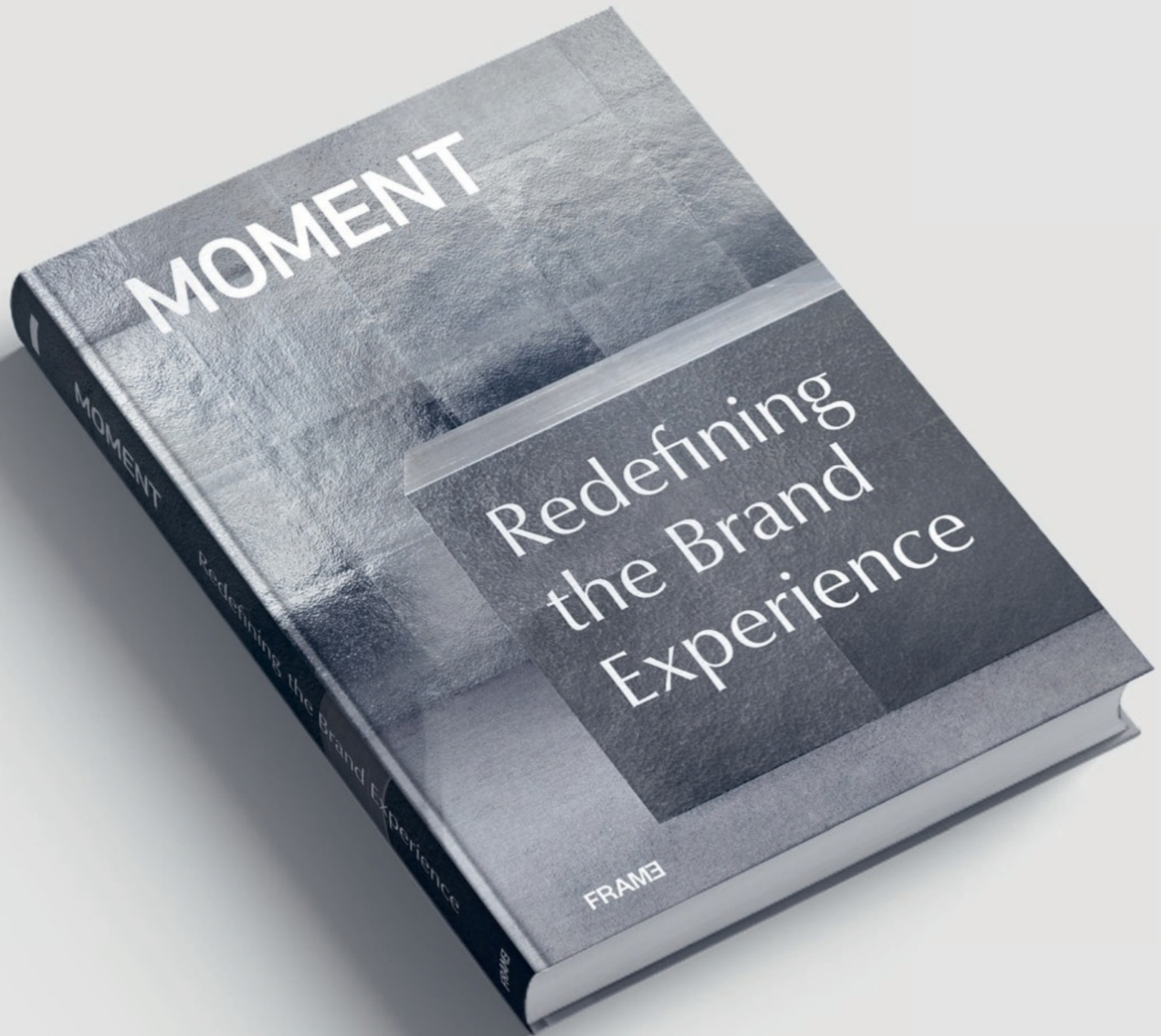
2 YEARS €199*
1 YEAR €119 (Students €99)



*For locations outside the EU, a shipping surcharge applies.

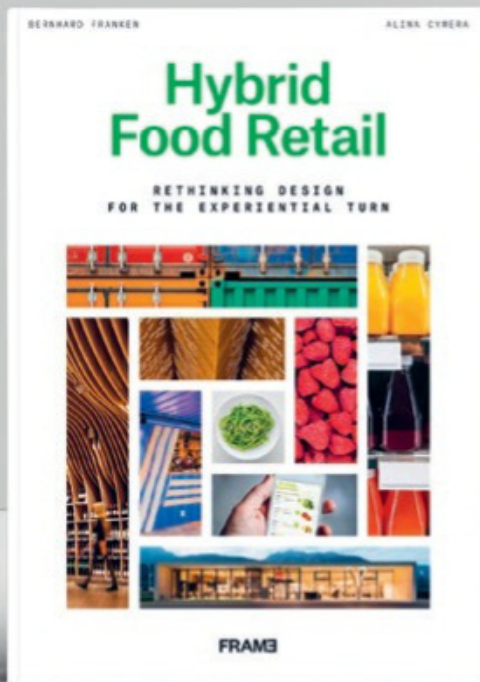
store.frameweb.com

OUT NOW



MOMENT
Redefining the Brand Experience

Tokyo-based design firm MOMENT's book of the same name highlights a versatile and skillful visual approach, focusing on detail-oriented spatial branding and lighting design for interior solutions that are both functionally and emotionally driven. **€39**



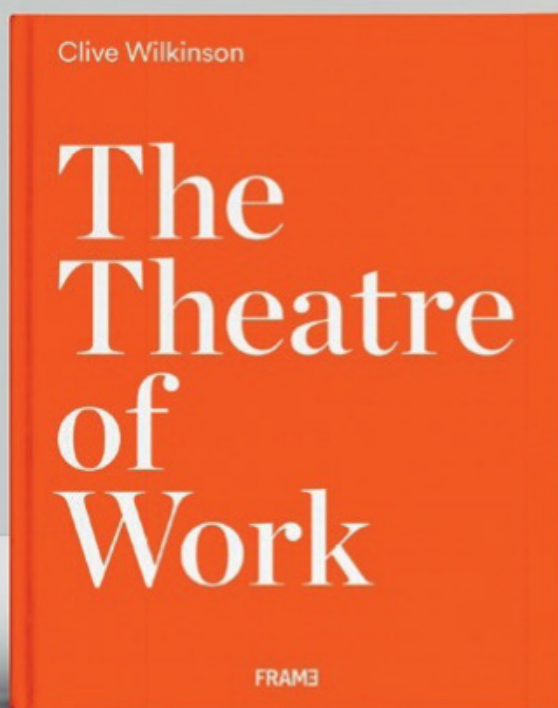
HYBRID FOOD RETAIL
Rethinking Design for the Experiential Turn

This handbook prescribes hybridization – a fusion of gastronomy, co-working, hospitality and performative formats – as a powerful remedy against digital disruption. **€29**



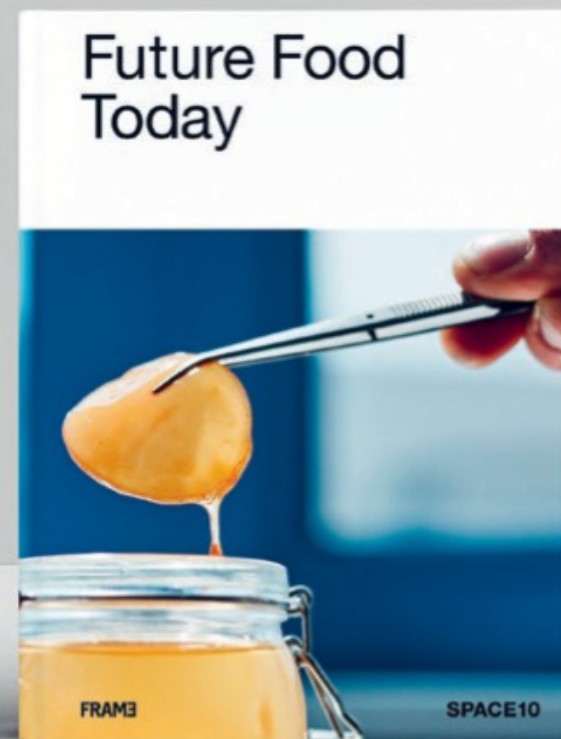
WE BUILD DRAWINGS
Mikkel Frost | CEBRA architecture

In an age of computer-generated images, this collection of sketches and watercolours by architect Mikkel Frost puts a spotlight on the power of hand drawing as a lucid communication tool. **€29**



THE THEATRE OF WORK
Clive Wilkinson

This book proposes six humanistic principles that will inform a holistic and collaborative workplace design – each demonstrated by the award-winning work of Clive Wilkinson Architects. **€39**



FUTURE FOOD TODAY
A Cookbook by SPACE10

Straight from the test kitchen of IKEA's research and design lab SPACE10 comes a collection of future-proof and delicious recipes. **€39**

master bathroom

Roca ups the ante of its One Day Design Challenge – a competition to create original and innovative products related to the bathroom space – by letting the series winners go head-to-head.

Words Tracey Ingram



Conceptualized in just eight hours, Ahmad Alkattan's ExSinka – the winner of Roca's Master Design Challenge – wheels the washbasin beyond the bathroom.



Representatives from 12 countries gathered in Barcelona for a programme full of inspiration and education.

According to the results of a survey by MaP Testing, the average person spends around three-and-a-half hours in the bathroom per week. But despite the important role it plays in daily life, the bathroom hasn't exactly gained a reputation as a hub of innovation and imagination. That's why, in 2012, Roca launched the One Day Design Challenge. The competition – which takes place in numerous cities around the globe – sees designers under the age of 30 race against the clock to create original and innovative products related to the bathroom space. Once eight hours are up, competitors are judged by a panel of renowned professionals from the design and architecture sectors. 'We decided to organize an event for young professionals and students that's linked to the Roca brand,' says Xavier Torras, Roca's brand communication director, 'giving them the opportunity to explore an area of the house that has not traditionally been very open to creativity and out-of-the-box design solutions.'

The competition began in Roca's home country, Spain, and has been expanding ever since. In 2019, for instance, 13 editions of the One Day Design Challenge took place across 12 countries, resulting in 22 winners. Each edition has a different brief, with topics linked to current affairs and adapted to the country's context. Aspects such as overpopu-

lation, hygiene and the use of public spaces are all taken into account. 'The contest has been growing very quickly,' says Torras. 'Now that it's held in so many countries, we thought it would be interesting to add more value to it.'

But how, exactly? Roca's answer was to bring together the best of the best for the Master Design Challenge, the world final for One Day Design Challenge 2019 winners. The event, says Torras, offers more visibility and experience to the participants and winners. Representatives from the 12 countries in question – Poland, Portugal, Argentina, Russia, Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, UAE, Oman, Bulgaria, Spain and China – gathered at the Barcelona Design Centre (Barcelona Centre de Disseny) from 20 to 22 January, culminating in the crowning of Ahmad Alkattan as the ultimate winner. The UAE representative achieved the accolade with ExSinka, a mobile, app-operated washbasin designed with the elderly and disabled in mind.

Prior to the competition's official kick-off on 21 January, the group gathered for a day of inspiration and education, including trips to the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia – where they worked with experts in the Fab Lab – and to Materfad, Barcelona's materials research centre, to learn about sustainable polymers. And because the continued training of young designers

is important to Roca, the top prize was not only monetary, but included a spot at one of Domaine de Boisbuchet's coveted workshops.

Sustainability has become a topic of increasing importance, which is why the Master Design Challenge is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This attention to eco-consciousness has not just been on Roca's mind, but on those of the participants, too. It's one of the biggest shifts Torras has noticed since the competition's inception. 'Young creatives simply can't conceive of designs that don't contemplate the responsible use of water,' he says. Another development? 'We're starting to see a lot of technology incorporated in the projects, either related to the internet of things or apps linked to the bathroom space.'

To date, more than 9,000 creatives have participated in the One Day Design Challenge to realize at least 3,000 projects. And the event shows no signs of slowing down. Further expansion is underway this year, with 17 cities adding the challenge to their agendas. Which means there are many more 'masters' to come. ●

roca.com
onedaydesignchallenge.net

MATERIAL DISTRICT. 17-19 MARCH 2020

ROTTERDAM
AHOY

INSPIRATION FOR DESIGNING

THE NEXT SPACE

PHOTO: STUDIO JEROEN WAND

GET YOUR FREE TICKET AT
[ROTTERDAM.MATERIALDISTRICT.COM](https://rotterdam.materialdistrict.com)

ARCHITECTURE
INTERIOR
GARDEN & LANDSCAPE
FURNITURE
LEISURE
EXHIBITION & STAGE



**MATERIAL
DISTRICT.
ROTTERDAM**

MEDIAPARTNERS

FRAME

pi.

Archi
tec
tuur
NL

MAKE IT MATTER

lab

Wu Qingshan, courtesy of UCCA Dune Art Museum



MUSEUMS Instead of quietly mouldering away in the 21st century, museums are innovating to become critical voices in the wider societal conversation. How? By engaging with the major issues of today through platforms that are borderless, revitalizing and inclusive.

how the museum is moving from conservation to activation

Words Jonathan Openshaw

Museums have gone through a renaissance in the past few decades. With the dawn of the digital age, many expected these once august institutions to lose their relevance, but what we've in fact seen is record attendance across age groups and demographics. The modern museum is far more than a mausoleum to the past: it's a conversation about the present and a crucible for the future, too.

Many of the world's most famous cultural institutions have roots in the great European nation-building endeavours of the 18th century, such as the British Museum (1759) and the Louvre (1793), designed as marble edifices to the hard power of the state, enshrining the spoils of colonialism and war. The modern museum wields a much softer but no less potent form of power, rebranding cities, regenerating neighbourhoods, brokering diplomacy, fostering civil society . . . the list of political, social and cultural functions goes on.

The ability of museums to transform the global reputation of cities is so well documented that it even has its own moniker: the Bilbao Effect. Named for the impact Frank Gehry's design for the Guggenheim Bilbao appeared to have on the fortunes of the city – where visitor numbers increased by 500 per cent soon after opening and 4 million came in the first three years – it drove a spate of copycat commissions and fuelled the era of the so-called Starchitect. Yet there has been long-standing criticism of this model of development (Gehry himself famously described the Bilbao Effect as 'bullshit' in a national newspaper) and today, major new commissions have to straddle the headline-grabbing with the locally sensitive: just one of many balancing acts the modern institution has to pull off.

POLITICAL POWER- HOUSES

When the Pompidou opened its David Chipperfield-designed Shanghai outpost in November 2019, it had all the hallmarks of a major political event, with President Emmanuel Macron in attendance and *The New York Times* running an extensive editorial on the rise of so-called museum diplomacy. The idea of ‘soft power’ has gained momentum in the 21st century, looking at the ways in which countries can forge bonds or compete through cultural projects. Museums have become key players in this shadowy world, with each new project encoding complex geopolitical relations.

‘It’s increasingly important to be showing what the UK is good at overseas,’ said the V&A’s deputy director Tim Reeve at the opening of the museum’s Shenzhen outpost back in 2017, while the museum’s director Tristram Hunt explicitly equated cultural projects with Britain’s survival outside the EU, describing it as ‘the mix of ingenuity, vision and spirit of collaboration which post-Brexit Britain will need to display on the world stage’. The V&A has been credited with forging better cultural ties within the UK, too, opening a Dundee outpost in Scotland in 2018 and with a major new project in V&A East set to open in 2023. Both projects are bringing major infrastructural investments into traditionally marginalized areas.

Mirroring their nation-building colonial past, museums, it seems, have found a new role as conduits of modern soft power. Shanghai’s Centre Pompidou × West Bund Museum Project and the V&A Shenzhen are just two examples of this trend in action, with Jean Nouvel’s Louvre Abu Dhabi and Frank Gehry’s long-delayed Guggenheim UAE being other high-profile cultural outposts.

China has been particularly assiduous in exploring the potential of soft power in recent years, with work underway on a 440-hectare, €2.5 billion cultural city 100 km from Beijing called Valley XL. But with so much interest in the political, economic and social power of institutions, is there a risk that they are becoming compromised? Many European museums have been forced to adapt their curation for Middle Eastern and Chinese governments, bringing accusations of censorship from the cultural community. It was a criticism that the French magazine *Le Point* put to Pompidou president Serge Lasvignes last year, to which he replied: ‘For me the question is: are the rules that are being applied really changing the nature of a project? If not, we go on. If yes, we will stop.’ But can that intention always hold up under political and economic pressure?

Over the next five years, the Centre Pompidou will show a number of exhibitions in Shanghai’s West Bund Museum (pictured) as part of a contractual cultural partnership between France and China.



INTO THE WILD

The trend for museums in remote locations that require a pilgrimage of sorts is well established – from the Naoshima Art Islands of Japan to Zaha Hadid’s Messner Mountain Museum, culture and nature make happy bedfellows. This firmly fits into the so-called experience economy: the consumer trend that posits that younger generations are putting a premium on experience over acquisition and access over ownership. According to the World Economic Forum, 78 per cent of millennials choose to spend money on a desirable experience over something material, making destination museums perfectly placed to appeal (and it doesn’t hurt that they’re Instagram-friendly, either).

Sustainability is also a core concern for the next generation of museum-goers and institutions that are in synergy with nature are a powerful draw. The Harvard Public Opinion project recently found that 70 per cent of Gen Z feel climate change is a problem, while 66 per cent agreed that it is a ‘crisis that demands urgent action’. With cultural flashpoints from Greta Thunberg to the Australian wildfires keeping the environment high on the agenda, it’s something that institutions need to start taking seriously.

The recently opened UCCA Dune Art Museum in Qinhuangdao, China does just that. Located in a region of rapid urbanization, the ancient sand dune in which the museum is now housed was due to be flattened to make way for development. Beijing-based Open Architecture stepped in with a design that integrated the natural feature, creating an interlocking warren of ten galleries beneath the sand. ‘If we hadn’t built a museum inside the dune, the dune would be gone today. Wiped out like everywhere else, because why have a dune if it’s blocking the view? If there is an integrated museum, then the dune is saved,’ says studio cofounder Li Hu. Inspired by the undulating natural shapes of caves, with a subtle nod to the cave art of early human ancestors, the building also relies on the sand to help regulate its temperature throughout the year alongside a ground-source heat system.

Looking to the future, an ambitious Daniel Libeskind project is currently being funded to create a major destination museum in the wilds of Kenya’s Rift Valley. Called Ngaren Museum of Mankind, it boasts an angular shape inspired by the earliest tools created by *hominins*, and the location will be on the site where Turkana Boy was discovered – the most complete skeleton of our bipedal ancestors. If funded, this museum will break ground in 2022 and perhaps become one of the most ambitious remote museum sites in the world.

The UCCA Dune Art Museum in Qinhuangdao, China, integrates a once-threatened ancient sand dune.



Open Architecture's sensitive design of the UCCA Dune Art Museum features ten subterranean galleries.



Wu Qingshan



GOING PHYGITAL

Although the communal experience of walking through a physical museum is becoming only more alluring in our digitally dominated age, that isn't to say that curators haven't embraced the opportunities opened up by technology. Instead of seeing the digital and physical as competing mediums that somehow exist in opposition to each another, the modern institution can be a powerful example of the phygital melting pot in action, providing cues for designers in other consumer industries such as retail.

The Mori Building Digital Art Museum: teamLab Borderless in Tokyo exemplifies this seamless interplay between the virtual and tactile, filling 10,000 m² with approximately 60 interactive displays, 520 computers and 470 high-tech projectors. The developers worked with renowned international art collective teamLab on the project, which follows five zones housing digital waterfalls, swarming fish and iridescent birds. The project broke attendance records when it opened in 2018 and has already led to another teamLab Borderless museum opening in Shanghai at the end of 2019. What's more, at the time of writing, teamLab SuperNature Macao – what the collective calls



Courtesy of Nick Cave and Apple

a ‘permanent “body immersive” museum’ – was set to open at The Venetian in Macao this month.

This digital augmentation of the physical is even allowing museums to break out of the gallery space altogether, as shown by last year’s collaboration between Apple and New York’s New Museum, where AR was used to make off-site, city-specific experiences called [AR]T Walks. Major international names such as Nick Cave, Carsten Höller and Nathalie Djurberg were commissioned to create digital AR works (almost all for the first time) which could then be unlocked – Pokémon Go style – through a dedicated app.

Apple isn’t the only tech giant getting wise to the power of collaboration with museums – Google Arts & Culture has been making waves in recent years for its ambitious projects with institutions from the V&A to the Met, and most recently with The National Museums of Kenya (NMK), where it helped put the material culture of 28 different communities from across the country online. ‘With the Museums of Kenya having over 10 million specimens, this is the best way for us to showcase our wide range of samples,’ NMK director-general Dr Mzalendo Kibunja says of the power of digital collaboration.

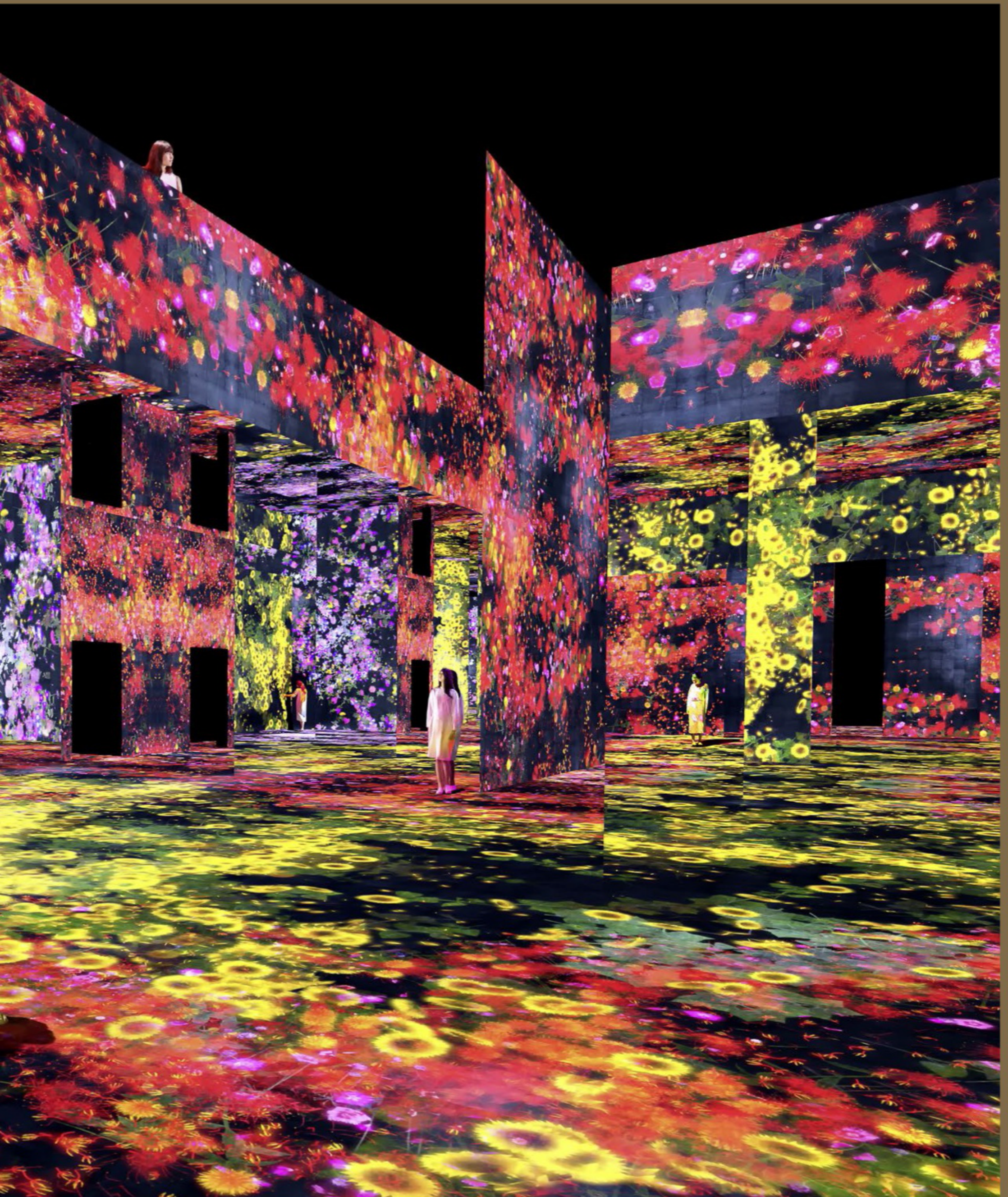
Even the most traditional institutions are getting in on the digital game, with visitors to Tate Britain now able to use their iPhones as portals through which to see iconic paintings in a new light. Working with London-based Spark AR, the Tate has created an augmented reality overlay for eight of the best-loved paintings in the permanent collection: lanterns undulate in John Singer Sargent’s *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose* while Edward Francis Burney’s *Amateurs of Tye-Wig Music* runs amok with rogue parrots. ‘By tapping into a wealth of relevant data alongside AI and computer vision algorithms, we can help people learn and connect to the world around them in meaningful ways,’ says Matthew Roberts of Spark AR.

Digital augmentation
of the physical is
allowing museums
to break out of
the gallery space
altogether



PAGE 144 **[AR]T Walks**, a collaboration between Apple and New York's New Museum, saw major names such as Nick Cave create off-site, city-specific digital AR works.

RIGHT teamLab's interactive digital installation *Mountain of Flowers and People: Lost, Immersed and Reborn* (2020) includes audio by Hideaki Takahashi.





Courtesy of Studio Gang and MJP

Extensions
have become
opportunities to
reinvent a space's
remit by fostering
new connections
and interactions



Courtesy of OMA

MAJOR MAKE- OVERS

Many great institutions were designed to be austere and imposing, which can feel out of step with today's emphasis on egalitarian and engaging design. In recent years, extensions have become opportunities to not just expand the square footage of a space, but to reinvent its remit by fostering new connections and interactions.

A prime example of bridging a hallowed past and an innovative future comes from Studio Gang's planned addition to the American Natural History Museum on New York's Upper West Side. The undulating extension will sit at the heart of the ten-building campus, creating approximately 30 new connections between the existing buildings as well as a vast new series of modern galleries, breathing new life into a sprawling complex. 'Through a network of new connections, people will be able to follow their own curiosity to discover treasures of natural history,' said studio founder Jeanne Gang at the ground-breaking ceremony last summer, explaining how this collection of once distinct buildings will be unified into a singular, fluid experience.

Bridging the past, present and future is also at the heart of the forthcoming Foster + Partners extension to the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum. 'Our design will restore the existing mid-20th-century building and setting to its original glory, create a new publicly accessible atrium space and add major new galleries for contemporary art in a floating pavilion,' explains Sir Norman Foster of the project, which takes the 1940s design as a 'primary protagonist' but explicitly aims to 'write a new chapter in the life of the institution'.

It's not only traditional institutions that are benefiting from a new design philosophy of open access and fluid connections, however. The SANAA-designed New Museum in New York only dates back to 2007, but the extension currently underway by OMA will represent a radical opening up of the design to the neighbourhood. 'We wanted to create a highly public face – starting from the exterior plaza and atrium stair to the terraced multipurpose rooms at the top – that will be a conduit of art and activities providing an openness to engage with Bowery and the city beyond,' says OMA partner Shohei Shigematsu.

TOP LEFT Studio Gang's forthcoming addition to the American Natural History Museum in New York will create approximately 30 new connections between the existing buildings.

LEFT OMA's in-progress extension to the SANAA-designed New Museum in New York will radically open up the institution to its surroundings.

ACCESS FOR ALL

Public cultural spaces play a crucial role in the body-politic of liberal democracies, and yet for decades they have often excluded those with disabilities. Two decades into the 21st century and there is still regular outcry over access, with high-profile exhibitions such as the Tate Modern's Olafur Eliasson retrospective and the Barbican's *AI: More than Human* drawing heavy criticism for poorly thought-out displays in 2019.

There is a growing appetite for change, however, and when the MoMA closed for a major refurbishment last summer, the entire staff was sent on training days hosted by those with diverse impairments. When it reopened, induction hearing loops that amplify the sounds of multimedia works were available for all guests wearing hearing aids. In London, the Wellcome Collection won plaudits for its new permanent gallery *Being Human*, which explores the many diverse identities that make up 21st-century human experience, and showcases numerous works by artists with disabilities such as Yinka Shonibare. The curators also worked with several charities in designing the exhibit, leading to wheelchair-optimized displays and autism-sensitive environments.

There's a delicate balance to strike between facilitating the artistic vision of an exhibition and ensuring that it's accessible to as wide a range of the population as possible. The aforementioned criticism of the Olafur Eliasson show came from the fact that one immersive piece called *Your Spiral View* involved a narrow mirrored walkway accessible only by steps and therefore excluding wheelchair users – a setup that the Tate defended as a 'curatorial decision'.

Where there's an irresolvable conflict between the creativity of a work and access to it, technology can again be a powerful tool. When the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Gardens in Washington, DC hosted one of Yayoi Kusama's ever popular *Infinity Mirror Rooms*, it also developed a virtual reality version for wheelchair users who were excluded by the design. In New York last summer, the New Museum created an immersive video to accompany the psychedelic labyrinth of a Marta Minujín installation, while working with the group Adapt Community Network to create a special accessible tour that used emergency exits instead of the traditional pathfinding. By taking as diverse voices as possible into account while embracing technological innovation, museums are finding new ways to open up.●

The New Museum developed an immersive video to accompany the labyrinth of *Marta Minujín: Menesunda Reloaded* (2019), while working with the group Adapt Community Network to create a special accessible tour.



what will we see in the museum of tomorrow?

In the lead-up to each issue, we challenge emerging designers to respond to the Frame Lab theme with a forward-looking concept. Museums are beginning to make their mark far beyond the bounds of their buildings, but what experiences are still to come? Three creatives consider the prospect.

Words Tracey Ingram

Aram Lee's bespoke trolleys take art on tour



An idea she explored through *Inside Out* (2017) together with Anaïs Borie and Ottonie von Roeder, Lee envisions emancipating a museum's collection from its architecture.

You believe the museum as we know it will cease to exist . . .

AL: I see the future museum not as one massive solid building, but as something that exists minimally and liminally. Imagine if collections were showcased in fragments on mobile trolleys. This decentralized approach would allow the museum to disperse throughout the city.

How would this work in practice?

Objects and archives would walk around the city. Well, actually they'd be pushed around on bespoke trolleys by the public. The trolleys and people would not only physically carry the collection, but also the stories and knowledge contained within the objects – and within the museum itself.

This concept allows a collection to exchange its static nature for something more socially, politically and culturally engaged; unpredictability makes it possible for this reactivation to take place. In this sense, the concept of the visitor is completely transformed as they become learners, participants and unintended (sometimes unwilling) actors that co-interpret its historical reminiscences.

'Bespoke trolleys', you say. What would inform their design?

Each trolley will reference aspects of the

object it carries: its shape, material, colour, stories. It's an idea I've explored already with *Inside Out*, a projected I initiated in 2017 together with Anaïs Borie and Ottonie von Roeder. We designed a trolley for specific objects from the Zuiderzeemuseum in the Netherlands, customizing its structure so it could travel around the country. One such object was a pipe made of porcelain from the Zuiderzee region, which we took on a journey to places that related to it. This performative act – a museum on wheels – meant the object could permeate the city. It was about emancipating the archive while developing a novel and proto-architectural format that unpicks the solidity of an institution. So the trolley becomes an alternative to the usual museum description; it represents the object's story without relying on a single narration.

What sparked the idea?

When you dissect museums, you find a similar pattern regardless of their location. The museum collects objects, bringing them together in a single spot to form a collection. The collections of many design and applied arts museums comprise thousands of things amassed from a myriad of different timelines. My analysis was that when something enters the museum we can say that it's 'dead' in that its life as a functioning object is over. Yet museums are immortal places – within their depots are millions of items, hidden

and frozen in time. By bringing its objects out from these dark depots, the museum will exist transparently and encourage dialogue, revealing new stories and – potentially – new knowledge.

Museums and archives also help to protect precious objects. How does your design deal with safety and security?

The trolleys are of course designed to protect whatever is placed inside of them. But the idea is to break the architecture of the museum and the timeline of the object. The institution's rigid form should give way to a more fluid treatment of the objects it contains. This precariousness of an object's handling and movement are what allow for these new layers of historical meaning to develop. These destabilized conditions resituate the precious object so its immediate environment is safe but its meaning is not. The precarious state of the thing is what challenges the act of archiving in the first place.●

leearam.com

Artist Aram Lee focuses on reinterpreting and repurposing matter found within institutions. Through the likes of performative events and film installations, she attempts to reshape the complex trajectories of objects and images by shifting the structures of power.

Lara Chapman puts art – and emojis – in a new light



A critical design-research project, Through the Emoji Looking Glass sees museum-goers scan items in an institution's collection with their smartphones to reveal themed emojis.

Your proposal for ‘The Challenge’ is a continuation of your graduation project from DAE . . .

LC: Yes. Through the Emoji Looking Glass developed from the realization that although emoji and museum collections seem to exist in different worlds, they're actually very similar in some ways. Think about who gets to decide what is included and excluded, for instance, and how these decisions shape our broader culture. I decided to develop an augmented tour that merges classical art and objects with the contemporary symbolism of emojis – imagine it as an extension of a traditional audio tour, but instead of an audio guide you use your smartphone to obtain an audio-visual reading of the work. Bringing these seemingly disparate things into conversation highlights hidden or unacknowledged narratives, and reveals how visual symbols and collections can define the time we live in. Emojis become a playful way to examine the museum and interpret its collection while, in turn, the museum's collection sheds light on the politics surrounding emojis.

The project examines the collection of Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum. Why did you choose this location?

The Rijksmuseum faces many of the challenges confronting museums today, such as addressing and overcoming colonial and patriarchal roots. That said, the proposal can be applied to any other museum or collection. In each institution, the comparison between its collection and emojis can generate new research and insights.

How does it work?

Users download the Artivive app on their smart device and are given a map of the works within a museum that they can activate. When



the device is held in front of an object, the app plays the object's associated augmented layer with sound. The works of art can also be reprinted and disseminated beyond the museum to be activated in other ways.

What has the project taught you to date – and what's next?

Interestingly, although the work functions within the Rijksmuseum, I did not ask for the institution's permission to create it. The project therefore also looks at how much agency the public has to intervene in collections, confronting issues of hierarchy and authority in the interpretation of cultural artefacts.

After also presenting the concept at Dutch Design Week, I observed that the

project invites a younger and more diverse audience to relate to works of art in a way that is relevant to them.

I'm currently collaborating with the V&A in London to activate and interpret its painting collection through emojis.

Why do you think your concept represents the museum of tomorrow?

As worldviews shift over time, collections and their content face cultural dilemmas. The augmented tour raises such questions as: Can a collection transcend its origins in colonialism or other structures of inequality? How should collections deal with violent objects such as weapons or hateful imagery? What

role does appropriation play? These dilemmas traverse the contexts of all collections, from the institutional to the digital, and must be acknowledged and interrogated by a diverse audience.●

lara-chapman.com

Initially trained as a product designer, Lara Chapman holds a Master's degree in Design Curating and Writing from DAE. Her recent work has involved examining the power of collections and guerrilla interventions in museums.

Mélissa Ferrara's virtual visits expand a museum's reach

What were your first thoughts when pondering this challenge?

MF: I'm convinced that humans are essentially driven by their feelings and intuition, which is why it seems obvious to me that the museum of the future should offer spectators intense immersive and emotional experiences. Each visit to an exhibition must provoke deep questioning, doubt and reflection.

Why did you decide to focus on virtual reality?

After using it in one of my projects, I realized the potential of this technology – and I don't think it's been exploited enough. The impression of VR today is connected to coldness and distance, not to emotions. But when immersed in VR, the brain can read surfaces and volumes as if they really existed. VR is therefore a very interesting tool for architectural experimentation, because it allows us to visualize and feel volumes without having to build them. It can also transport us elsewhere and arouse our senses.

Imagine visiting a Picasso from your own sofa, or experiencing a work through the eyes of the narrator. Picture finding yourself projected into the world of cubism, where nothing seems logical but everything feels real. I see my project, Emotional Immateriality, as a series of experiments: works in their

own right created by the likes of scenographers, architects and graphic designers. Users would be able to choose what they want to discover, according to their interests.

You mention visiting a Picasso from your own sofa. Do you envisage Emotional Immateriality operating only from people's homes, or do you see potential in designing specific physical spaces for its users?

I don't see the concept being fixed to one confined location, but the freedom of having unlimited access to museums from home would allow us to approach art, design and architecture in a new light. Discovering art in a more private and privileged setting adds a layer of intimacy between the user and the work. Thanks to the innovation of VR, we can discover these spaces or engage in experiences without having to make long and often expensive journeys. This technology could allow us, for example, to see and feel exhibitions taking place in the US from Europe, or from anywhere else in the world.

How does your concept differ from what museums are currently trying to do with VR?

My aim is to allow *everyone* to have access from their own homes, and to experience

works of art in an immersive rather than contemplative way. The art world is already changing: it's becoming more accessible and far-reaching. Moreover, today's society is moving towards an ever more technological and connected habitat, so museums must also adapt. Being immersed in a museum from your own living room is a clear expression of how such institutions could evolve towards new artistic communication models.

If VR technology is used more and more often, how can we keep museums from becoming VR arcades?

In my opinion, museums are absolutely irreplaceable. The circulation in a specific space, the natural light, the people sharing the same experience around us: it's all a work of art in itself that can never be replicated. VR would instead complement what already exists in traditional museums. It could reach new audiences that might not find traditional museums interesting. ●

After studying visual arts, Mélissa Ferrara turned to interior architecture, which she is currently studying at HEAD Genève. While working towards her Bachelor's degree, she's experimenting with different techniques such as virtual reality.



Through Emotional Immateriality, Ferrara illustrates the potential of museum-goers travelling only as far as their living rooms to don a VR headset.



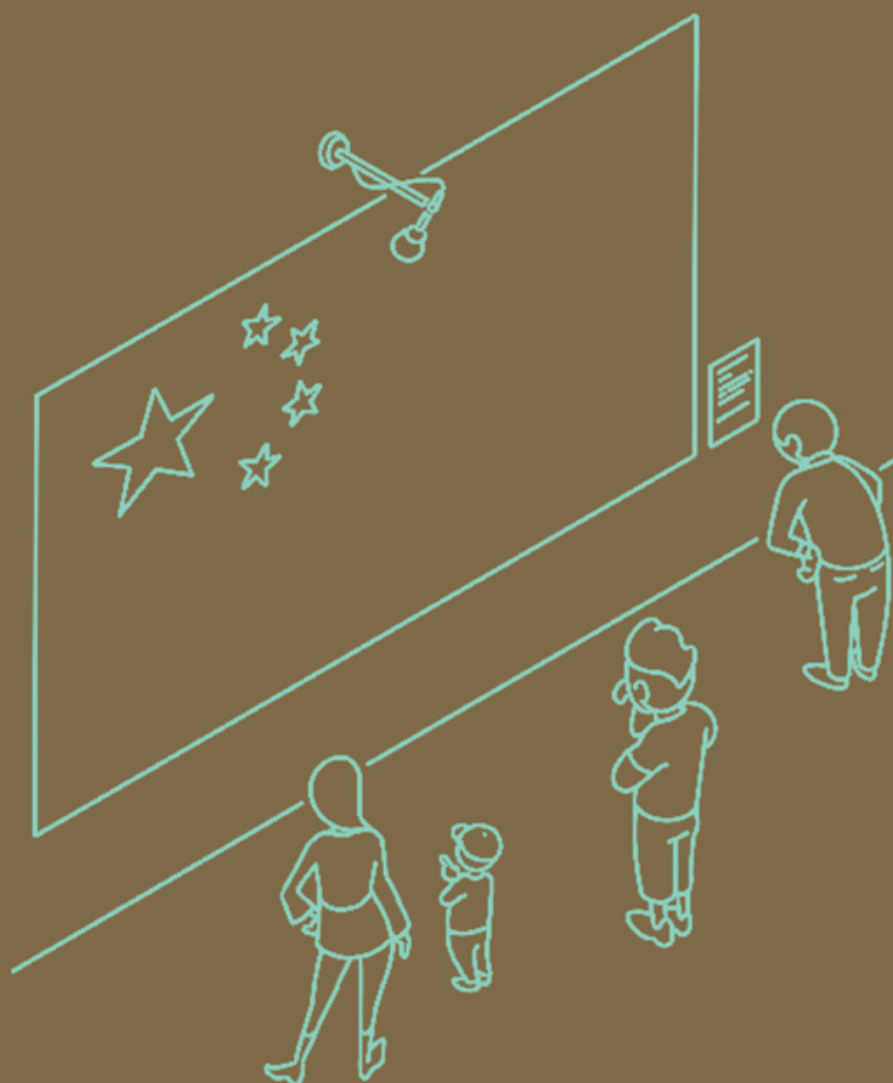
toolkit for the modern museum

Illustrations Simon Flöter

01

CONNECT TO THE ELEMENTS

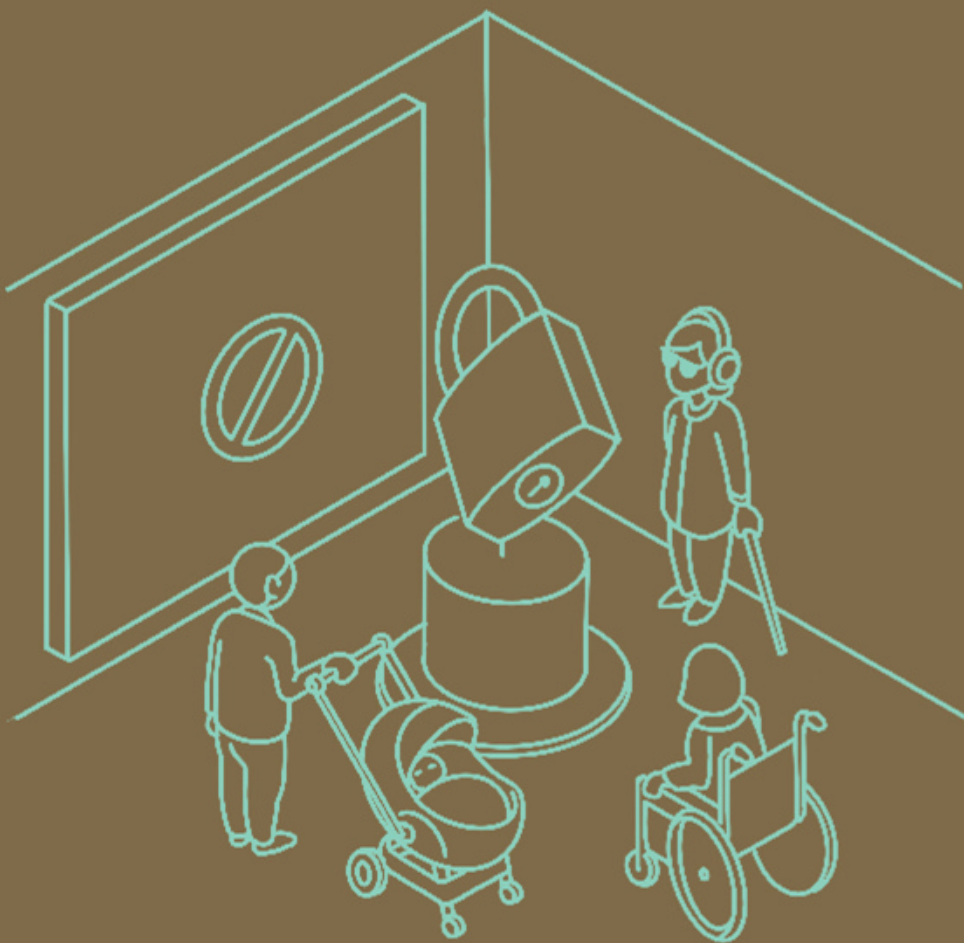
Institutions that are in synergy with nature are a powerful draw. With cultural flashpoints from Greta Thunberg to the Australian wildfires keeping the environment high on the agenda, it's something that institutions need to start taking seriously.



02

THINK CROSS-CULTURALLY

The idea of 'soft power' has gained momentum in the 21st century, looking at the ways in which countries can forge bonds or compete through cultural projects. Museums have become key players in this world, with each new project encoding complex geopolitical relations.

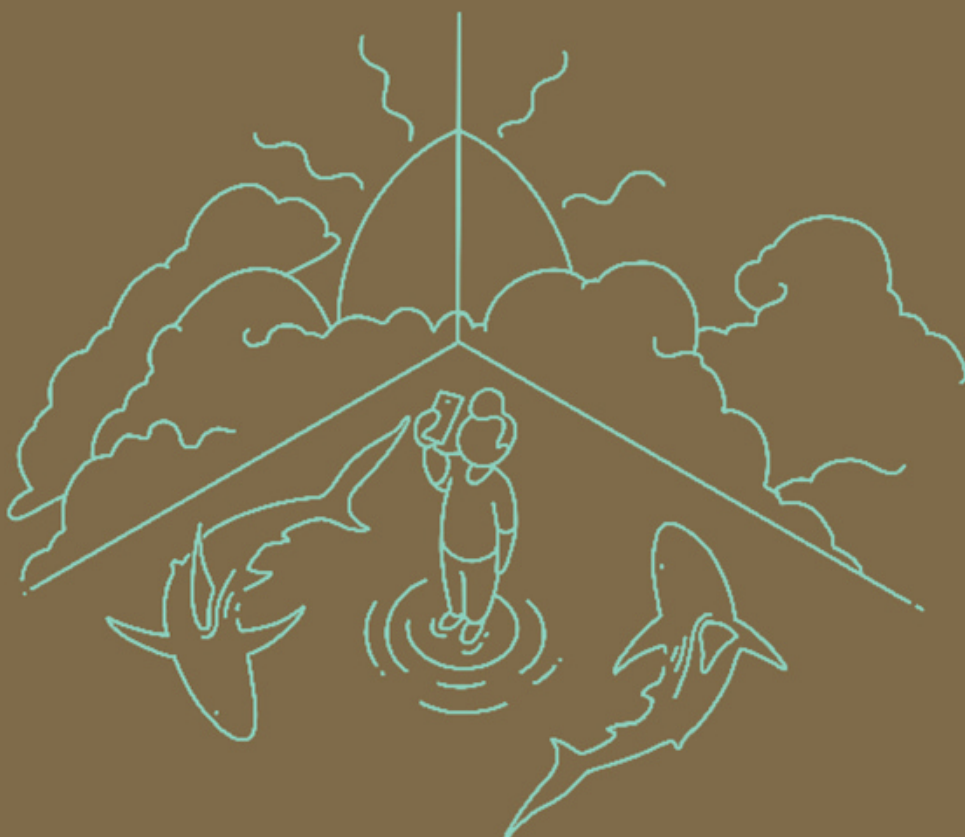
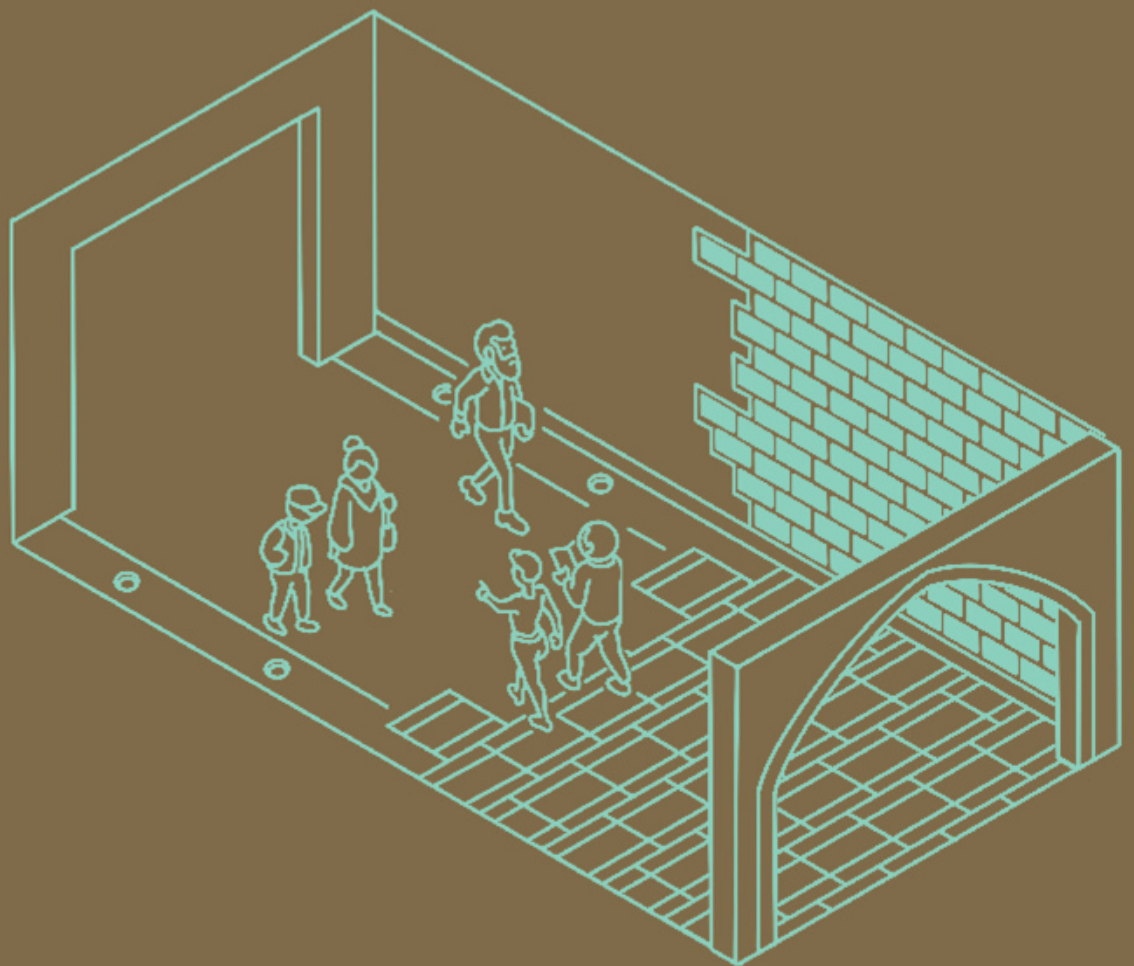


03

PRIORITIZE INCLUSIVITY There's a delicate balance to strike between facilitating the artistic vision of an exhibition and ensuring that it's accessible to as wide a range of the population as possible. Where there's an irresolvable conflict between the creativity of a work and access to it, technology can be a powerful tool.

04

BRIDGE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE Museum extensions have become opportunities to foster new connections and interactions. Think open access and fluid connections – both between the institution's own buildings and with the neighbourhood beyond it.



05

PHYGITIZE THE EXPERIENCE Instead of seeing the digital and physical as competing mediums that somehow exist in opposition to each another, the modern institution can be a powerful example of the phygital melting pot in action.

THE GREEN BUILDING INDUSTRY EVENT OF THE YEAR.

Greenbuild Europe offers a forum for the green building community to unite, change lives, revolutionize business and address pressing issues, such as air quality, human health, energy use and global climate change.

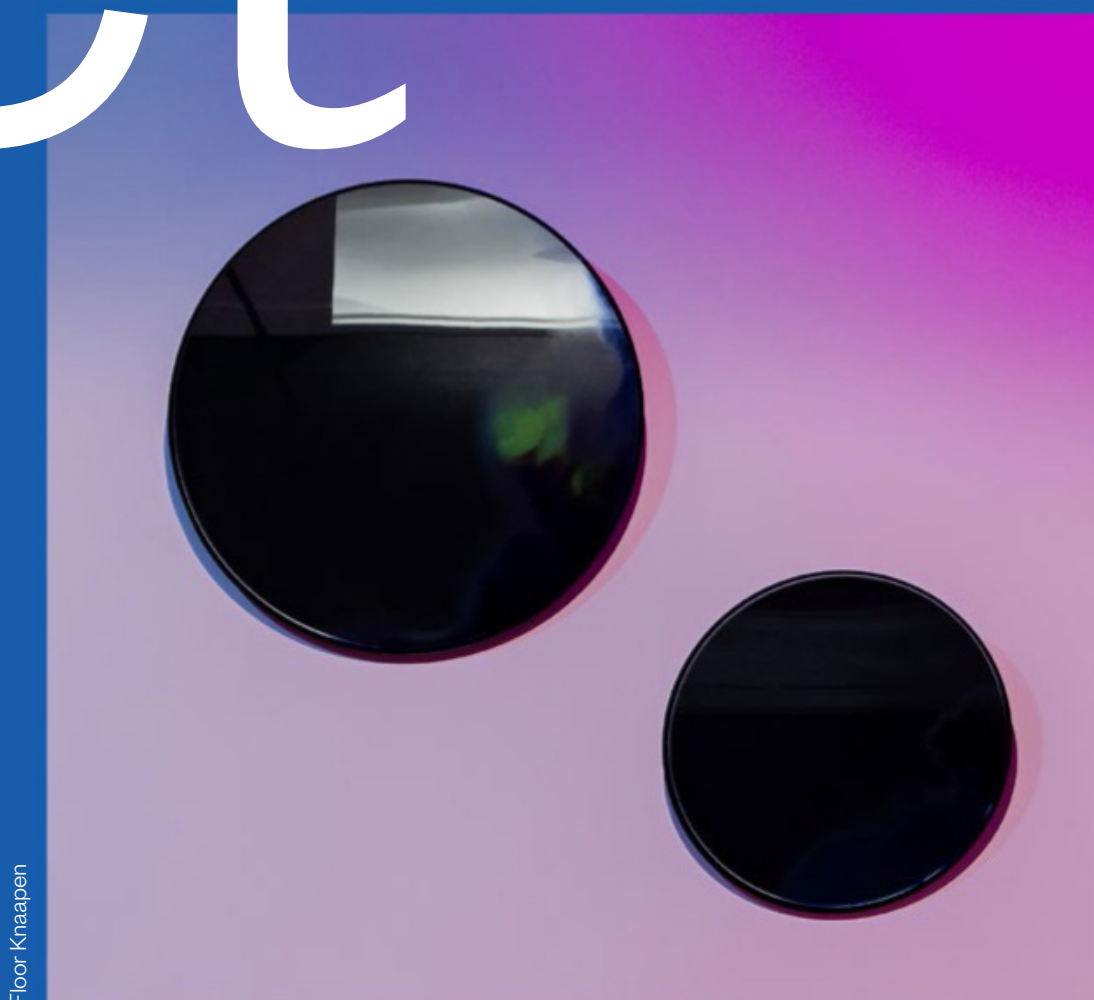
MARCH 24 - 25, 2020 | CROKE PARK | DUBLIN, IRELAND



Presented by the U.S. Green Building Council

greenbuild.usgbc.org/Europe

mar ket



Floor Knaapen

168 Domotex shows how flooring can help us feel better **170** IMM exhibitors blur the line between in- and outdoor furniture **176** Design Miami presents a sofa stuffed with dead Balenciaga stock



PORCELANOSA XTONE

The large dimensions of Porcelanosa's XTONE from Urbatek porcelain tiles lower the limitations of the product when installed in the bath or kitchen. Hundreds of configurations are possible, whether the application be surfacing, furniture or façades. What's more, the tiles are highly technical: their design minimizes the number of joints, ensuring increased hygiene and water absorption, and thus top durability and resistance.

porcelanosa.com

WILKHAHN ON AND IN

What if adjusting your workstation wasn't synonymous with work interruption? Adding an updated elevated sitting position (ESP) feature to its dynamic ON and IN office chairs, the team at manufacturer Wilkhahn aims to make making these ergonomic adjustments more seamless. The seating can be used in the office with full mobility at a normal table height, but additionally support an ESP – both can be raised to a seat height of up to 62 cm.

wilkhahn.com



ESTEL DOLLY CHAT

Designed by Stefano Gallizioli for Italian furniture group Estel, Dolly Chat – consisting of sofas, armchairs and modular benches – is a targeted solution for common areas in open-space offices. Two benches or sofas are connected by a technical panel, forming an enveloping shape that guarantees sound insulation. Its Privé iteration, with 2-4 seats, electrified table and lighting, carves out an area for small meetings.

estel.com



SEDUS SE:FIT

It promotes healthy movements in the office and better posture, it can be carried in one hand and its height can be modified effortlessly – from 52 to 82 cm. Se:fit, a stand-sit stool created by Sedus' in-house designer Judith Daur, can be used from the meeting room to the reception desk. Controls enable users to individualize the flexible, concave-shaped seating for maximum comfort in any situation.

sedus.com



RIMADESIO MIAMI SHOWROOM

New York, Denver and now Miami: Rimadesio has opened its third mono-brand store in the US. Reflecting the Italian company's growing popularity in North America, the Florida showroom is situated in Miami's Design District. It's designed to host functional, high-performing interior solutions, showcasing a wide selection of walk-in closets, day systems, sideboards, doors, sliding doors, tables and coffee tables, all constructed with top-notch materials.

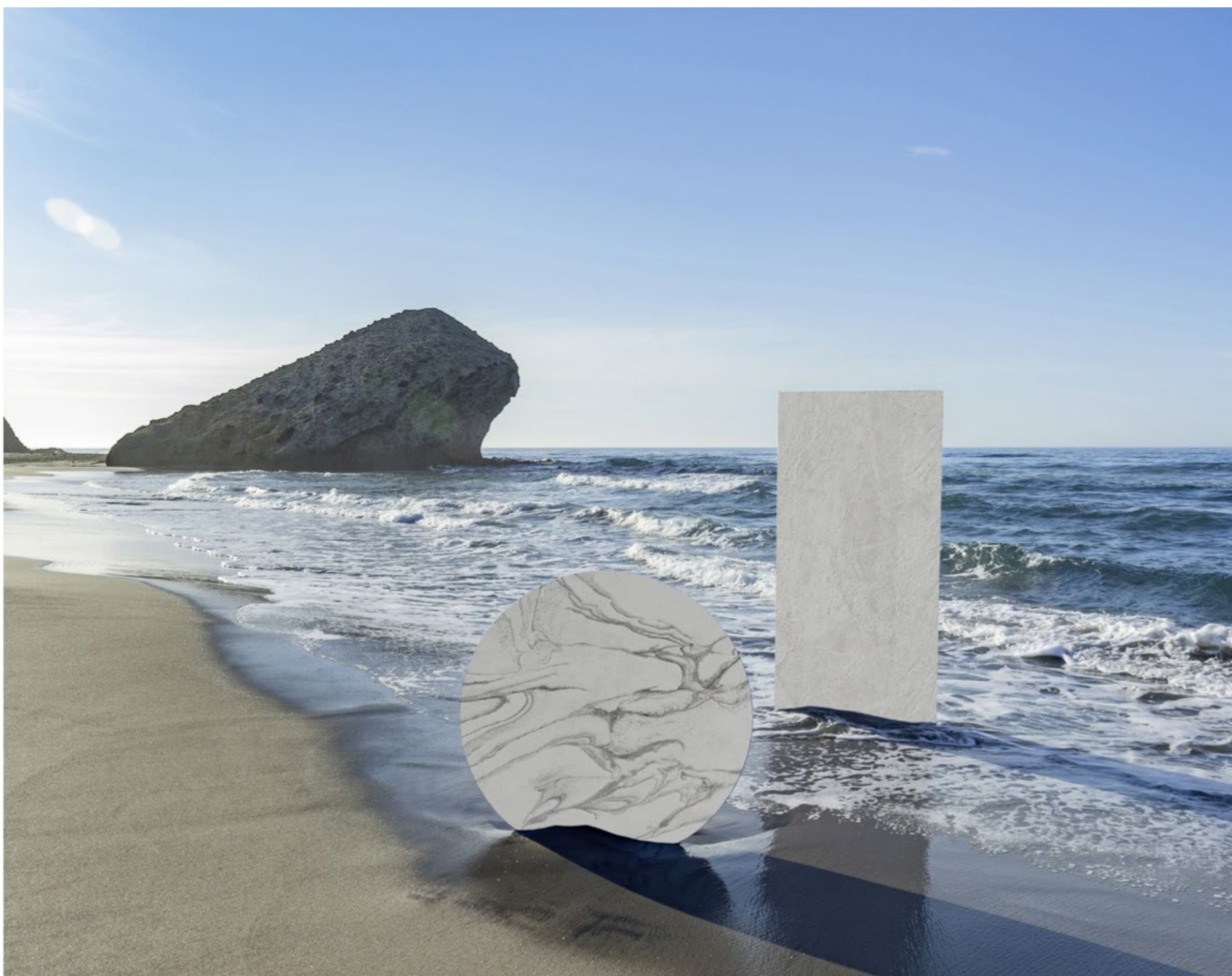
rimadesio.it



ROCA CRATOS

One hundred years and then some. That's how long Roca has spent perfecting its vitreous china, the tough enamel coating that protects washroom ceramics. The Spanish producer of sanitary ware has applied that expertise to the Cratos shower tray, an anti-slip, zero-porosity and highly resistant Senc ceramic surface that, with a depth under 45 mm, is designed to be integrated perfectly into the surrounding flooring.

roca.com



Alberto Rojas

COSENTINO LIQUID COLLECTION

Ultra-compact, strong and versatile, Cosentino's large-format surfacing Dekton is composed of a mixture of raw materials typically used to make porcelain, glass and quartz finishes. A new collection imagines the surface material in three colourways: Liquid Sky, Liquid Shell and Liquid Ember. London-based studio Patternity and Cosentino's design team developed the range to bring fluidity and motion into everyday spaces.

cosentino.com



FLORIM SINGAPORE FLAGSHIP

Italian ceramic manufacturer Florim bolsters its global presence with an inaugural address in Singapore. Joining locations in Milan, New York and Moscow, the flagship is a two-level store with installations that showcase the wide variety of applications offered by the company's bestselling products. The in-house-designed retail concept embodies Florim's key values and sets the precedent for the opening of additional locations.

florim.com

TON LOGS

Beech and oak wood are the construction materials for many furniture pieces produced by Czech manufacturer TON. Designers Hanna Litwin and Romin Heide of Berlin-based studio Büro Famos – intrigued by the idea of making a simple product from a small number of wooden components – imagined a piece that could be created from TON's offcuts: a coat hanger. Logs, a minimalistic fixture, can be hung individually or arranged in multiples.

ton.eu



CERAMICHE PIEMME GLITCH

To highlight the distinctive, textural irregularities of concrete surfaces – their cracks, films, scratches and wear – London design firm Benoy conceptualized Glitch, a collection of porcelain stoneware wall tiles produced by Turin-based company Ceramiche Piemme. Spanning eight colours and various sizes, the assemblage – which favours imperfection as a sign of uniqueness – is ideal for residential and commercial spaces alike.

ceramichepiemme.it

LAMM GENYA

The Evolution Tower, designed by architecture firm RMJM in collaboration with artist Karen Forbes, rises 55 floors above Moscow. Its impressive conference hall has been fitted out with leather Genya armchairs – a design by Dante Bonuccelli for LAMM. The volumes of the minimalist seating contain all of its components; its seat and arms open in a synchronized movement that additionally adjusts the lumbar support offered by the suspended backrest.

lamm.it



ANDREU WORLD NEXT

Distinguished by its characteristic shell, the seat of Andreu World's Next chair – designed by Piergiorgio Cazzaniga – is available in ten colours. But the opportunity for customization doesn't stop there: a central wooden pedestal, four wooden legs, five casters or sled legs can be selected for its base, making it easily introducible to any type of environment – private or professional.

andreuworld.com

VIABIZZUNO MANONDOVEVAMOVEDERCIPÙ

A light fitting suitable for the table, suspension or wall mounting, Viabizzuno's Manondovevamovedercipù is both portable and rechargeable. The fixture, conceived by Mario Nanni, is made of oxidized aluminium, its cylindrical body covered in an option of linen-coloured or black leather. Manondovevamovedercipù is dimmable, with a battery life of 10 hours.

viabizzuno.com





UNIFOR TOUCH DOWN UNIT

Consisting of a rectangular worktop placed atop a small, closed volume, UniFor's Touch Down Unit is a self-contained, mobile touchdown station. Studio Klass conceived the unit for 'people constantly on the go', according to UniFor – it can easily accompany people around the office, adapting to a variety of layouts and spatial configurations and accommodating a range of uses and working styles.

unifor.it

DOMOTEX

HIGHLIGHTS FROM HANNOVER'S FLOORING FAIR



FLOOR STORY GIOVANNI

The work of London-based illustrator, ceramicist and artist John Booth is definitively bold and cartoonish. Floor Story captures that lively style with Giovanni, a floor rug knotted by hand in Nepal from wool and viscose yarns that depicts a colourful man brought to life by Booth. Giovanni was announced as the winner of the Best Studio Artist Design accolade for the Carpet Design Awards at Domotex.

floorstory.co.uk

STEFANIE EICHLER AND JUNI NEYENHUYS HYDROWEAVE

Cellulose yarn is woven into square modules that are joined together to form a spatial membrane to create Hydroweave. Developed by Stefanie Eichler and Juni Neyenhuys, students at the Weißensee School of Art and Design Berlin, the responsive textile utilizes the principle of hygroscopic movement – the swelling and shrinking of natural fibres. When exposed to water, Hydroweave's yarns swell, forcing the individual panels to curl and open.

kh-berlin.de



LILA VALADAN THE 4 SEASONS

Seven times a winner of Domotex's Carpet Design Award, German-Iranian designer Lila Valadan sees past the utility in rugs, regarding them as works of art, too. The 4 Seasons – her sixth exclusive exhibition for the trade fair – took visitors on a journey of 'peace, virtue, harmony and chaos', as Valadan explains. Four different spaces showcased different schools of rug design – minimalist, geometric, floral and transitional – highlighting the harmony among them.

lilavaladan.com



STEFANY BRAND PAVILION Architects, software engineers and developers worked together to devise the immersive exhibition space of Turkish company Stefany at Domotex. The space was one that activated personal discovery: visitors were invited to make their way through a tunnel of interactive installations, to traverse 'the evolution of beauty', says Stefany CEO Hakan Dinc, and 'rediscover the origins of their own concepts of beauty'.

stefany.com.tr

ALEXANDER MARINUS HEY JUTE

Jute – the vegetable fibre used to weave burlap – is the second most-cultivated textile fibre in the world. However, the industrial processing and chemical treatments needed to turn jute into utilitarian cloths destroy its natural properties. To uncover the material's full potential, designer Alexander Marinus experiments with alternative treatments. Felting the jute, for example, retains its strength and length, making it scalable for interior products such as wall hangings and cushions.

alexandermarinus.com



SCHMIDHUBER CONTRACT FRAMES

Atmysphere – the theme driving this year's flooring fair – zeroed in on the myriad ways that the architecture and design industries can better cultivate health and promote sustainability. Munich-based agency Schmidhuber devised four furnished rooms to highlight the practical applications of the theme. The Yoga room included products and finishes from Classen Group, EMP Akustik and Rasch Tapeten.

schmidhuber.de
domotex.de

IMM

TOP PICKS FROM COLOGNE'S FURNITURE AND INTERIORS FAIR

BRÜHL BONGO BAY

Organic – yet powerful – outlines give German manufacturer Brühl's Bongo Bay seating shape, evoking the curvaceous forms of abstract sculpture and painting. Designed by Kati Meyer-Brühl, the inviting system offers two- and three-seater sofas with undulating backrests and armrests, armchairs and matching stools and tables, all available in exclusive upholstery options.

bruehl.com



Michael Danner



Gregor Titz

WITTMANN PARADISE BIRD

Envisioning a family of furniture that could capture the charm of Viennese sophistication and elegance, Luca Nichetto and Austrian company Wittmann developed Paradise Bird. The black metal and brass frames of the lounge and high-back chairs, sofas and stools are a nod to the work of Josef Hoffmann. Rounded upholstery complements the frames, adding an element of cosiness to the seating.

wittmann.at

PETER OTTO VOSDING PIPE-LINE

As part of the 17th Pure Talents contest, 20 innovative products by 23 international designers were chosen to be on show at IMM Cologne 2020. Pipe-Line, by German designer Peter Otto Vosding, was one: the extending table's mechanism – two differently coloured pipes that can be compressed or stretched like a telescopic rod – serves as the central design feature.

vosding.de





FLOOR KNAAPEN AND DICK SPIERENBURG

NEW MOMENTS AND TREND ATMOSPHERES
Dutch stylist Floor Knaapen worked with Dick Spierenburg to design two series of installations for IMM. Trend Atmospheres illustrated eight character archetypes that 'define how people create liveable atmospheres right now', explains Knaapen. The five areas making up New Moments underpinned the character of IMM'S Pure Editions platforms, showcasing 2020 trends.

floorknaapen.com





MENU HASHIRA

Danish design brand Menu's Hashira lighting range is a Scandinavian interpretation of traditional Japanese lanterns. Created by Copenhagen-based practice Norm Architects, the cylindrical lamps diffuse light through their translucent fabric shades, projecting soft beams in multiple directions. The collection encompasses a floor lamp, table lamp, and single and cluster pendants.

menuspace.com



Rune Buch / Yellows

THONET CHAIR NO. 520

Vienna-based designer Marco Dessí's personal favourite from Thonet's product portfolio is the bentwood chair no. 209. Chair no. 520, a new model by Dessí, is inspired by the Café Thonet concept and references that iconic seat with its arc-shaped backrest. The curved element can be used as a handle, which makes the 520 easily transferrable from the dining room to the meeting room – and more.

thonet.de



NEW TENDENCY AND ÉTUDES META

One of contemporary industrial design company New Tendency's signature pieces, the Meta table is crafted from powder-coated steel. The Berlin team once again collaborated with Paris-based menswear studio Études for a new iteration of the piece. The 2020 edition features 12 stars cut out of the top, as on the European flag, and a line of Études merchandise.

newtendency.com
etudes-studio.com

PROSTORIA AFTER

A quintessential example of collective Numen/For Use's aesthetic language, After is the foundation for a soft, highly functional interior landscape. Prostoria's modular sofa is fitting for large spaces; it introduces the comfort and privacy of residential environments to public ones – offices, hotel lobbies and airport lounges, for example. The seating's individual elements – a seater with backrest, two corners and a pouf – can be utilized to accommodate various situations.

prostoria.eu



Domagoj Kunic

PULPO BRUT

Solid marble slabs appear to float within the glass structure of Brut, shelves designed by Ferréol Babin for Pulpo. The product is presented in three different material combinations – Brut's precise exterior can be built from sandblasted, smoked or profilite toughened glass, while the slabs, sourced from Austria, are off-cut with a raw front edge.

pulpoproducts.com



Elias Hassos



CLASSICON PLISSÉE

Reminiscent of pleated textile at first glance, the Plissée floor lamp's balloon-like shade is actually made of hand-blown glass. The illusion is thanks to the imagination of Sebastian Herkner, who challenges material perceptions with the ClassiCon-manufactured piece. A result of both artisanal craftsmanship and industrial technology, the lamp has a dimmable LED light source that can be adjusted to the ideal level of illumination.

classicon.com



MONTANA PANTONOVA OUTDOOR

Almost 50 years ago, Verner Panton introduced his now-classic modular wire seating system Pantanova. Today, Danish furniture company Montana ushers in an outdoor version. Three distinct seating modules – the Linear, Concave and Convex Pantanova – can be used individually as sculptural chairs, or combined into wavy, organic formations. The stainless-steel, all-weather wire construction means the furnishings blend in rather than dominate, allowing the surrounding greenery to thrive.

montanafurniture.com

NARDI FRASCA

A table base inspired by the king of all bases – the tree trunk – Frasca has a painted aluminium, four-footed central leg. A versatile support for laminated table tops, the flexible, easily stackable Nardi product was designed by Raffaello Galiotto. Its clear-cut lines and details are a perfect visual fit with the chairs in Nardi's Net and Trill collections, which have the same thickness and bending radius of Frasca's four feet.

nardioutdoor.com



FLEXFORM ALISON OUTDOOR

A curved structure forged from extruded aluminium, Flexform's Alison Outdoor sofa is lightweight and easily configurable. The Flexform design joins the previously released Alison outdoor armchairs, and is available in a two-seater and three-seater. Its backrest cushions and seat can be upholstered in any fabric from the Italian company's outdoor textile collection, and its frame comes in white, khaki green or wine red, or in a burnished or satin finish.

flexform.it



CASSINA

FENC-E NATURE

Philippe Starck and Cassina are on a mission to revolutionize the way in which the classic sofa is conceived. This continues with Fenc-e Nature – a ‘lifestyle collection’ in Starck’s terms – that is a ‘celebration of harmony and osmosis with nature’. Each of the outdoor pieces in the collection – an armchair, generously cushioned sofas and a coffee table – are made of high-quality, natural materials, such as solid teak and natural willow.

cassina.com

ISIMAR ARENA

Spanish company iSiMAR is a manufacturer of outdoor furniture for domestic and contract spaces alike. The success of its Arena table in 2019 led to the creation of a family of furniture inspired by the Mediterranean landscape. Perforations on the structure of the new Arena two-seater sofa, chair and high table simulate undulating sand on beaches.

isimar.es



FAST ORIZON

Combining the functionality of aluminium with the warm and enveloping nature of wood, Fast’s Orizon collection is both extremely versatile and welcoming. Design studio Lievore Altherr’s aim was to recall traditional wooden garden furniture by specially treating the entirely aluminium design. The designers emulated the textures and finishes of natural materials, but by selecting aluminium they ensured that the dining and coffee tables, benches, sofas and lounge seating would be lightweight, practical, sun resistant and suitable for all seasons.

fastspa.com

CUSHIONED CIRCULARITY

For Design Miami 2019, Balenciaga tapped artist, architect and designer Harry Nuriev of Crosby Studios to create a one-off, environmentally conscious sofa using damaged or otherwise unsellable clothing and offcuts from the collections of past seasons. Nuriev – who also collaborated with Balenciaga for The Office, a Design Miami 2018 installation – was inspired by the form of an over-stuffed recliner.

Words Lauren Grace Morris

5

material elements were used to build the Balenciaga sofa: the branded clothes and textiles, foam, transparent BOPP film, plywood base and metal legs

85 per cent high-density and 15 per cent low-density polyethylene, plus a biodegradable additive make up the BOPP film covering the couch

150

kilograms is the weight of the multicoloured piece

2.8x1.8x1

metres are its dimensions

2019

was the year that Balenciaga's parent company Kering signed the Fashion Pact, a commitment made by a global coalition of companies to actively work towards key environmental goals

16

million tonnes of waste is estimated to be generated each year by the EU's textile industry, according to a 2017 statement by the European Commission



Inna Kablukova

crosby-studios.com
balenciaga.com

Andreu World

Element Sofa
by Gensler Design

Ruta Table
by PearsonLloyd

**INTERIORS
FROM SPAIN**