HONG KONG DESGN CENTRE



We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to everyone who had, in one way or another, been involved with this project - there are indeed many of you! From its very beginnings, the Creation 9707 project started out as an idea hatched by three people devoted to design and the city of Hong Kong. Through the efforts of key members from the Design Centre and its friends, key brands and designers were able to join together, an act that launched the project on its momentous path. Throughout this journey many worthwhile bonds were created and strengthened, while new precedents for Hong Kong and its design were attained. Our participation at Milan Design Week represented Hong Kong's first-ever involvement at the event. And much like experiences in China, Toronto and London, visitors became enthralled by the vision and motivations of the ten unique products. We are especially proud of each participant designer, and their brand partners, for they all displayed tremendous resolve to complete tasks within a strained time schedule. Our acknowledgement goes out to the following people, institutions and organisations:

Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, Hong Kong SAR Government Hong Kong Trade and Development Council

Innovation and Technology Commission, Hong Kong SAR Government

Victor Lo

Alessi

Georg Jensen

Herman Miller

KEF

LeSportsac

Life of Circle

o.d.m. Salvatore Ferragamo

Shanghai Tang Royal Copenhagen

Alan Chan

Eric Chan

Gary Chang

Barney Cheng

Kan Tai Keung Freeman Lau

Lo Chi Wing

Kai Yin Lo

Vivienne Tam

Michael Young





CARY CHANG







CHINA CHIC













PRARCH RORALESS FOR







TAIL ORIFIED





MANTERDRETTANES POR



Introduction

Design conferences can often serve a variety of purposes. For the public, they represent a rare opportunity to experience first-hand the perspectives of individuals involved with reconfiguring the world as we know it. Indeed many others could be listed as well; however, underlying all these in terms of significance, is the idea that design conferences help congregate like-minded people, to engage in a collective discourse.

As one can presume, this enables a provocation that may foster a number of resultant outcomes. For those of us curious about the potential utility of this, the following may perhaps serve as a revelatory case in point. In the winter of 2006, chaperoned by typically mild temperatures, Business of Design Week returned to appease the tremendous excitement for design that besieges the occasion. That year's lineup of speakers included such heavyweights as Jimmy Choo, Bill Moggridge, Karim Rashid, Ron Arad, Sir Christopher Frayling, Yung Ho Chang and Katsumi Asaba. Their participation assured that discussions would transpire with great verve and expansiveness, tackling business and design issues that mattered most. No one can deny the remarkable appeal of established names, especially when concerning those with vested interests in design. From an astounding mixture of professional backgrounds, the audience arrived in droves and listened with great intent. Thoroughly absorbed and much inspired, they departed pondering the possibilities of what could be. Not far removed from the echoes of euphoric applause, Victor Lo, Chairman of the Hong Kong Design Centre, fashion designer Vivienne Tam and ECCO Design founder Eric Chan, engaged in a casual conversation, were amongst those buoyant from the proceedings.

As with most exchanges carried out during the event, the topic invariably became anchored in design. Lodged between thoughts on the latest design trends and impressions of the day's speakers, the subject of the impending New Year emerged. For Hong Kong, 2007 buzzes - much like 2008 for Beijing - with immediate significance as it denotes ten years of reunification with China. At this point, they started mulling over potential tactics to celebrate the historic ten-year milestone. What had previously been a straightforward conversation immediately morphed into a serious meeting of minds. Still caught up in the rapture of Business of Design Week, they eventually agreed to pursue an idea that would bring Hong Kong design to the world. The lofty proposal was this: engage world-renowned brands to manufacture products conceived by Hong Kong designers. The three 'progenitors' were well aware of the implications of this plan – months later dubbed 'Creation 9707' – as was reflected in their obvious enthusiasm. It was evident that such a proposal would effectively give the world a telling glimpse into the design style of Hong Kong something that had never before been attempted, particularly on a collective level. They were ecstatic. Relative to the conference that was happening, the Creation 9707 initiative would reverse the rules of engagement: instead of bringing the world's design to Hong Kong, Hong Kong's designs would be delivered to the world.

If there's something to be deduced about Hong Kong's abilities, it is that things have a tendency to ensue with phenomenal tempo and efficiency. A self-explanatory deadline of less than one year was imposed - ten distinctive products were to be designed and manufactured. By most standards, Creation 9707 was observed to be extremely ambitious. Product creation typically obliges much more than a year to develop from design to production. Given the pertinence of the 2007 deadline, tolerating delay would defeat any symbolic meaning for the Creation 9707 initiative. Consequently, prudent project management would play critical. A team was quickly mobilised by the Hong Kong Design Centre, whose function would see to fruition the ten envisaged products. Contacts were made, courting both designers and coveted brands, in an effort to seek participation. There appeared to be a consensus amongst those approached. Recognising the significance, and perhaps the project's uniqueness, response was jubilant and encouragingly positive. It was understood that Creation 9707, insofar as the Hong Kong Design Centre maintained involvement, would serve to emphasise and market the stylistic tendencies of Hong Kong design. Subsequently, ten internationally renowned brands eagerly agreed to participate on the project. The brands, which included Shanghai Tang, Royal Copenhagen, Salvatore Ferragamo, Herman Miller and KEF, would work closely with ten established Hong Kong designers.

Why create products based on a particular region of design? Against the globalisation argument, whereby products and brands adopt homogeneity to maximise profits – a model of one product fits all – there is also legitimacy in selling products with unique, tailored designs. This is especially relevant in the design of luxury goods and services. Through working with Hong Kong designers, the brands acknowledged the distinctive value in fusing their brand philosophy with another dynamic, that of Hong Kong design.

With Hong Kong playing a central role, the lingering question remains: What is Hong Kong design? It is a loaded question indeed, but one that is certainly worth exploring. Setting out to identify and discern a particular set of characteristics with a particular place is often laden with difficulties. Even the most immediately recognisable styles can prove tricky to describe with proper adequacy. Colourful signs inscribed with Chinese characters dominate the city of Hong Kong. While complex bamboo scaffolding, crisp, golden Peking ducks, double-decker buses and trams, Chinese calligraphy, summit-reaching apartment blocks, and so on, help illustrate the immediate visual constants existing throughout the territory. It should be noted that most of these items are rather generic, falling under general characterisations of Chinese culture. So is there a difference between the designs of Hong Kong and China? There is, of course. To comprehend the answer, one must understand the differences in history between the two. From 1842 to 1997, Hong Kong's modern history was developed under British rule. This status was largely reflected in the co-existence of British culture, as manifest in areas including the rule of law, education and a range of British customs. British influence - operating on various levels with different inflections - created a confrontation between indigenous practise and that of western approach. Encompassing over 150 years, this enabled a development in Hong Kong's style that absorbs, with much sophistication, tendencies from both the West and China. Hong Kong is as adept with the typographic manipulation of Latin typeface as it is Chinese characters. In this sense, Hong Kong design is about multiplicity. Perhaps the best way to describe the city is with the following: Hong Kong is one of the most Westernised of all Eastern cities. However, the statement repeated inversely garners a parallel truth as well: Hong Kong is one of the most Eastern of all Westernised Cities. The confusing nature of these seemingly diametrical statements underscores the mentality of Hong Kong's people prior to handover in 1997.

Until 1997, a sense of uncertainty loomed, and a lack of confidence about their own identity dominated many people in the city. For the majority of Hong Kongers, the handover of sovereignty has been a great step of significance in affirming their Chinese identity. This change brought with it destruction of old concerns – the need to doubt one's own identity largely vanished.

This idea of reconciling identity has provided new developmental impetus to Hong Kong's designers. Projects carried out during the last decade reveal a noticeable trend where rediscovery and reassertion of Chinese values have been espoused with greater insistence. As China's economic boom continued on its breakneck pace, its people, most prominently those from the burgeoning urban areas of Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou, began demanding design not as a utilitarian device, but more so as a means of personal expression. This newly created substantial market has been pivotal in providing greater design opportunities to the world in general (OMA's monumental CCTV project in Beijing is perhaps an exemplary indicator of the financial and creative opportunities existing in China today). And Hong Kong has largely benefited from such changes. A vast amount of design work by Hong Kong designers is today occurring in Mainland cities. Representing a wide range of projects, covering interiors, architecture, product, corporate identity, and so forth, Hong Kong's designers have earned a pronounced influence in shaping the future of China's multilateral developments. There is a growing realisation that just as China itself has many regional variations and characteristics, so too does Hong Kong, and there is an awakening to the many nuances of what this design identity might be.

A constant of all design work, regardless of culture, period or scope, is that designers staunchly believe in the potential impact of their methodology. It is about individuals creating something that they believe others will like and perhaps wish to buy. This book is, above all, published to convey the unique ideas and approaches that are both latent and explicitly contained within each Creation 9707 product. The confidence expressed from each of these products represents a culmination of personal ideas, usually developed from years of practise. The pages within this text seek to bridge the correlations of each designer's legacy with that of their respective Creation 9707 product, and tellingly divulge the relation of these preoccupations within the framework of Hong Kong. In this sense, this book is also an examination of how various elements of Hong Kong society, which invariably includes Chinese culture, have influenced and inspired design to occur with distinction

CARA CHANG



Born in 1962 and a graduate of the University of Hong Kong, Gary Chang was among the first architects from Hong Kong to be presented at the Venice Biennale 2000. His "Strangled Vision" installation enthralled audiences with its unique appearance, whose tiny, single bed, cage modules, illustrate the living conditions of the society's least fortunate members.

Major works include: the Suitcase House in Beijing's Commune by the Great Wall; Alessi's Kung Fu Tea Set; numerous commercial commissions; and his own renowned 316 square foot apartment. A constant prerogative of Chang's work is the unrelenting quest for extreme complexity and minute detail – a detail that avoids reference to the formulaic.

To the delight of the architectural world, he is recognised for upholding a singular, yet uniquely captivating approach that permits the possibility of many astounding variants. In 2000, Taschen published Chang as part of its definitive look into 40 Architects Under 40. The architect has also published two books of his own, The Suitcase House and Hotel as Home.















Prior to July 6, 1998, the act of landing at Hong Kong's Kai Tak International Airport had been notoriously judged to be a difficult task. Formerly situated in Kowloon, the single-runway landing field was surrounded by rugged mountains reaching heights of 2000 feet, numerous skyscrapers and residential apartment blocks, and Victoria Harbour to its south. The unique topographic circumstance presented, by conventional standards, pilots with a substantial challenge, demanding their utmost control and caution. The final approach was so spectacular that passengers have, on occasion, claimed to observe television images flickering through windows as their plane passed by at low altitudes.

Although the airport has been long been replaced by Foster and Partners' Hong Kong International Airport albeit via one of human civilisation's biggest feats in infrastructure engineering (the Airport Core Project included the construction of roads, rail links, bridges, tunnels and major land reclamation efforts) - the question of space lingers as a daily phenomenon, affecting practically everyone living in the Territory. Hong Kong consistently ranks amongst the world's most densely populated places. However, given the fact that much of its 1104 square kilometre area is undeveloped terrain (less than 25% has been developed), the city's population density is overwhelmingly heightened inside the core urban areas. With relatively little choice, the axis of development has occurred upon vertical inclinations. Like no other city, Hong Kong's cityscape is uniquely subjugated by a boggling mass of skyscrapers and high-rise buildings.



Most people from Hong Kong predominantly live in high-rising apartment flats. Perhaps surprisingly, building upwards has factored little to relieve problems of space. By contrast to similarly developed cities, a significant gulf exists relating to available household space. A family of four living within 400-500 square feet is indeed a common occurrence. Although regrettable, such limitations have effectively coerced locals to mull over spatial management by balancing efficiency with ingenuity and creativity. To the untrained eye, a typical household can conceivably be an unsightly place of disorder, where personal items are often resourcefully and quite systematically - stacked to maximise function. This phenomenon is but one of many facets demonstrative of how the cramped environment - and the lack of cellar or attic space - has had a profound effect on life in Hong Kong. An intriguing offshoot has been the prominence of a modular approach to furnishing. Bunk beds, for obvious reasons, are likely a popular fixture within the family environment. Although standards of living have helped shift applications beyond basic utilitarian views, two highly popular pieces of furniture – which hold near-iconic association to the local milieu - are the folding table and stool. Decidedly minimal, in both design and material, these two items are light in weight, enabling convenient usage and easy storage. Under analogous connotations, the idea of versatility and multi-functionality is especially pronounced and desired. Citing again the folding table, its usage has been known to serve a variety of functions, including that of a dining table, a worktable and others. Mahjong tables, designed with highly specific intent, are also widely expanded under a context of versatility.

















Gary's apartment 1997 (Top) Gary's apartment 2007 (Bottom)

Ford Motor Company chief designer Chelsia Lau, once commented that designing cars for the North American market has largely been based on a response to the environment, with the key being size. In general, North American's have a larger body mass, live in large homes, and drive on wide roads. This has naturally led to the design and production of cars equipped with longer wheelbases and larger interior room, and – despite recent concerns over fuel consumption – the popular SUV.

If the work of designers is to provide solutions to existing problems, then architect/designer Gary Chang, who has made a career out of re-imagining the quality and essence of space, has been exceedingly successful. Although inescapably urban, Chang's portfolio has largely avoided the commercial lure of summit-reaching office towers, and instead reveal motivations that challenge existing boundaries and preconceptions. Part of the appeal of this highly experimental work is its capacity to produce creatively intriguing results, often done through sampling Hong Kong's extreme conditions. Thought provoking consequences of surprise and awe come directly from a willingness to scrutinise problems from unique perspectives.

The best approach to understanding Chang's preoccupations is to pay a visit to his own studio apartment. Strikingly minimal and stark, Gary's Apartment is a transitory environment that has been incessantly tweaked and refined – throughout the past decade – to reflect his own perpetually developing tenet. Measuring just over 300 square feet, the tiny bachelor apartment was once the childhood home to Chang's family of six. It is today highlighted by a flexible use of space, and crucially, the obsessive pursuit to maximise spatial efficiency. A fundamental element inherent to Chang's work is the malleability of space. Modular furniture such as the folding sofa/bed – one of many custom designed items – help illustrate the means for allowing the environment to function as bedroom, dining room, office, lounge and cinema. The idea and process of concealment (a recurrent feature in his work), frequently involving moving objects and elements of a design, is used to suppress the kitchen, bathroom, and the clutter of Chang's many possessions – including his 8000-odd CD collection that nestles above the bathtub.

One of Chang's very first architectural projects was an invitation to design a unique hotel situated in an area adjacent to Beijing's Great Wall. The design is a well-documented case that defied conventions with its concealed flexibility. Looking back, the project itself may have provided impetus into studies of mobility, and Chang's famed passion for hotels. By definition, the idea of mobility intrinsically concentrates all of which he is obsessed with. And by Chang's own admission, mobility and hotels associate well to the life of a Hong Kong citizen, which explains his constant plea to design with mobility as a prerogative – an idea that resonates with today's shrinking globe.



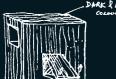






CREATION

TREASURE BOX HOBJAT KITCHE BOX HOBJAT KITCHE HOBJAT KITCHE





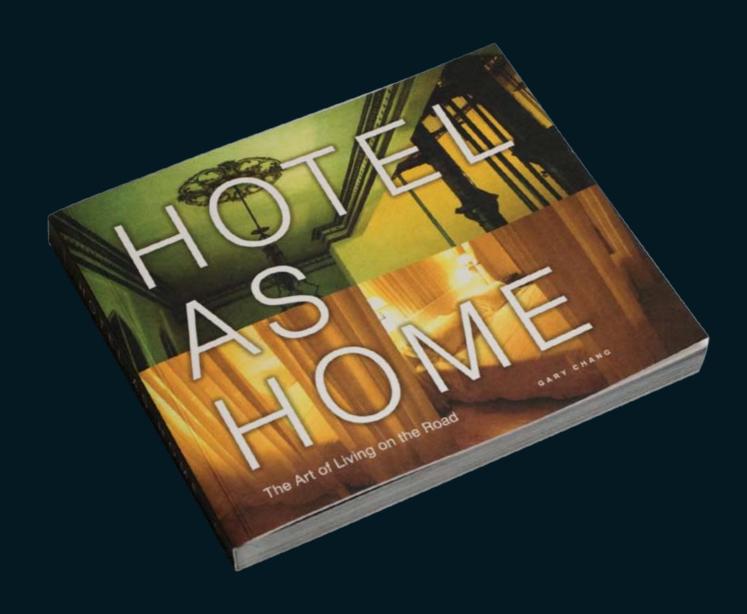




Measuring 14.8 x 21 x 5 cm, the Treasure Box follows a trend by Gary Chang's that explores the creative interactions between travel, living, boundaries and compatibility. Made for those accustomed to traveling and living away from home, the Treasure Box for Alessi is a true marvel of exquisite design. The Treasure Box, like Chang and Alessi's previous offering, the Kung Fu Tea Set, shares the wondrous pleasure of transformative form, function and space. Purposed as an ultra-compact "hand carry space for all beloved travel essentials," Treasure Box is jam-packed with an astounding number of functional surprises. Intricately detailed, the design features an astonishing number of sliding compartments, folding and removable components, and is proof of Chang's inventive imagination and Alessi's commitment to excellence and experimentation.

Fashioned entirely from copper, the modular box opens up teasingly to reveal various themed rooms. A dining room offers space and gear to enjoy tea and snacks, while a bedroom provides ambience via candles. Other rooms include a game room, a bathroom and a study room. Hidden within are teacups, mini-furniture, vanity mirrors, a Connect Four game set, and a slew of other surprises. As a creation, the Treasure Box is justifiably described as an artistic and technical achievement resulting from endless months of development, and a resolve to push creative envelops.





HOTEL AS HOME

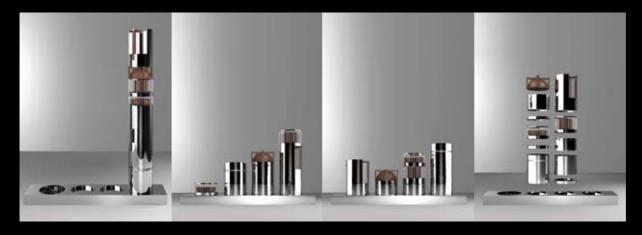
Hotel as Home is a book published by Chang that shares his obsessions with the idea of mobile living and hotels. The book offers an insightful look into the mind of an architect and his response to the work of his peers and contemporaries. The following text is a except sifted from the book's introduction, written by Chang.



"Considering our increasingly cosmopolitan lifestyles, Hotel as Home might just as well be called Home as Hotel. After all, the boundaries between the categories of home, service apartments and hotels have become fuzzier these days – perhaps another testimony to our age's insistence on adaptability. As my addiction to hotels continues to be fed by my constant business trips, a rather strange metamorphosis has taken place in my own home: it has come to increasingly resemble a standard hotel room. Come to think of it, many people treat their homes as if they were transient way stations. Quite a few Hongkongers buy their homes with a view to eventually resell them. As a result, they furnish their homes with saleability rather than their own needs in mind. Neither the plan nor the décor should be too personal or individualistic, which of course coincides with the philosophy of hotel chains. Like the transitory hotel guest, these people have become urban nomads in their own apartments, which have lost all the traditional characteristics of homes.

My motivation for publishing this book then is to provide a first-person perspective of the subject matter based on my personal experiences as a hotel guest and as an architect. The selection of these thirty-seven favourites of mine was a rather dynamic process, as I was constantly tempted to revise my list when I discovered new surprises. The hotels in this book are ordered according to the date of my stay at them in the last seven years. As such, Hotel as Home is also a kind of personal journal, including my photographs and descriptions of the layout and furnishings of each room I stayed in. Also noted are the room number, the date of my first night of stay, and the room rate. Some of the rates might seem amazingly low, but keep in mind that I stayed at some hotels during their pre-opening trial period. Finally, the book is also a reflection and exploration of what hotel design is about, which of course leads back to the fundamental question: what is design? My hope is that the book will confirm my long-held tenet that there are no clear-cut boundaries in our world; I believe that we can find meaningful connections between seemingly unrelated things by looking at them from different angles." Gary Chang

KUNG FU TEA SET

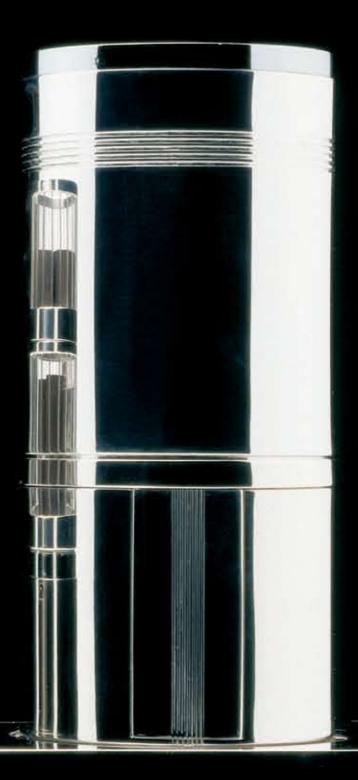


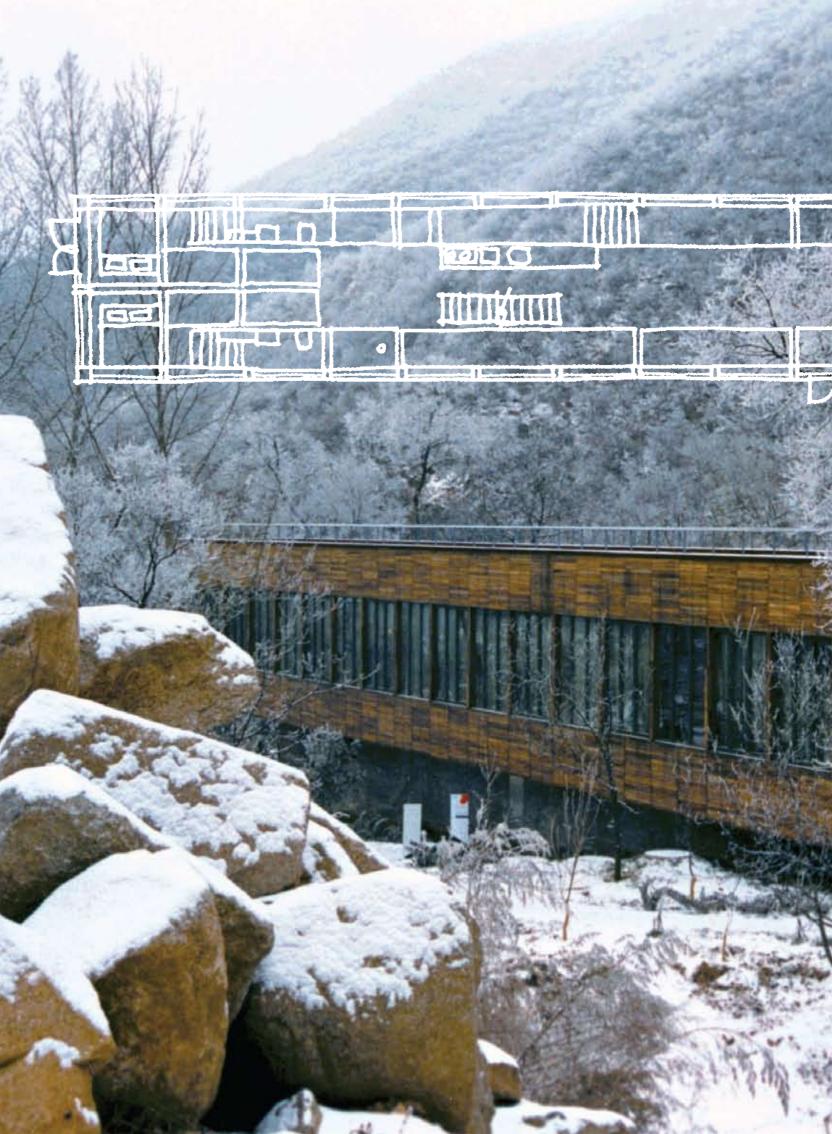
In 2000, renowned Italian homeware brand Alessi invited 22 professional architects to participate in an experimental project that brought together the disciplines of product design and architecture. Amongst these distinguished architects was Gary Chang. Made primarily from sterling silver and red Yixing clay (whose production was made through Chang's many trips to China), Kung Fu Tea Set noticeably resembles cylindrical skyscrapers, adhering to Alessi's theme of 'coffee and tea towers'.

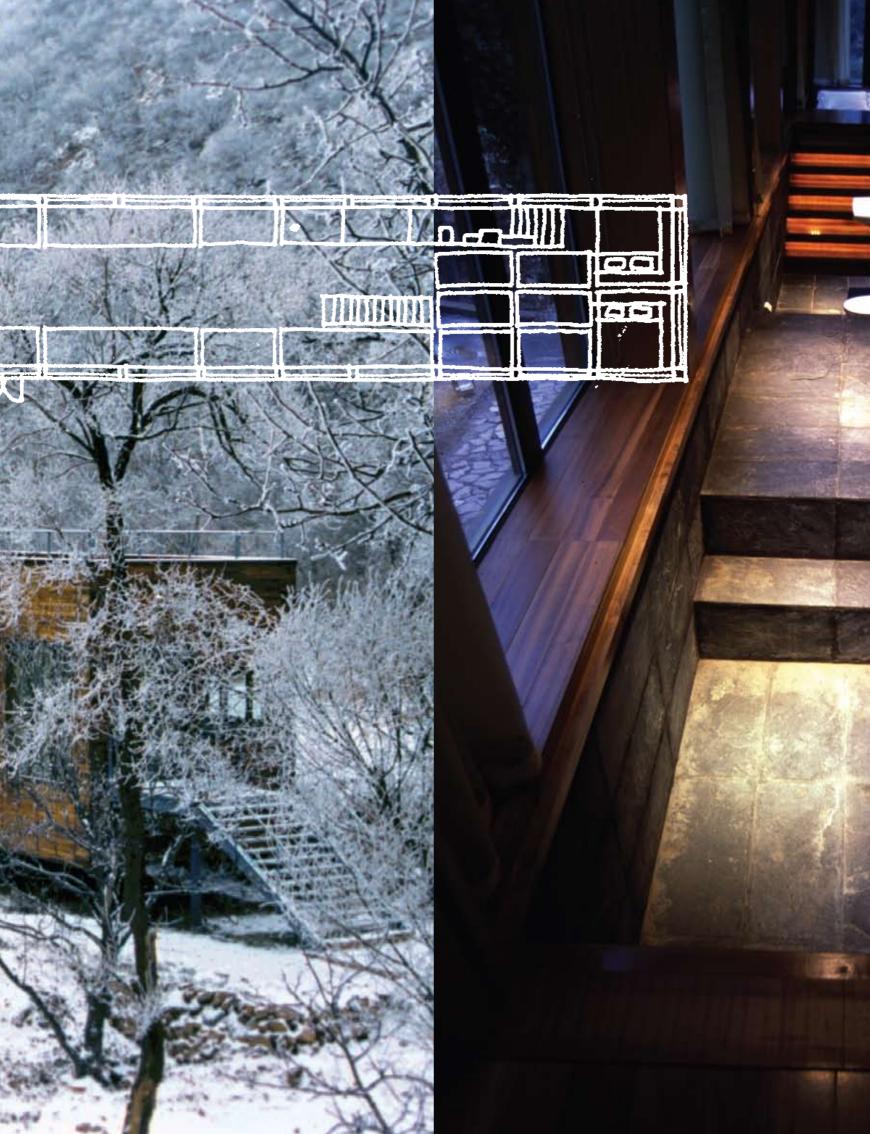


The elaborately decked Kung Fu Tea Set includes utensils such as a red teapot, three small tubular teacups to sample the concoction, three sets of cups and saucers, a hot water thermos, a tea caddy, napkins and a tray. The designer has combined the age-old tea-drinking tradition of Chiu Chow with the 'vertical development' strategy of the stackable bamboo steamers used in dim sum restaurants. The concept is a further testament of a customary use of space with efficiency and modularity in mind. The twelve pieces that comprise the complicated tea set can be neatly packed and stacked as a singular tower. This provides the design a fun, entertaining appeal when taking apart, reassembling and combining the components as befits one's mood.











SUITCASE HOUSE

In 2000, twelve architects from various Asian countries were each invited to create a house for a project dubbed Commune by the Great Wall located in the Nangou valley near the Badaling section of China's Great Wall. The Suitcase House situated at the entrance to the Commune was Chang's first ever house. Likened by some to a cargo container, by others a shoebox, the rectangular building measuring 2505 square feet might at first glance appear devoid of any furnishing or partitions but is, in fact, a fully equipped space. Apart from a pull-down metal ladder, which connects the upper level living area with the roof, all other rooms including the lounge, dining room, study, kitchen, four bedrooms and bathrooms, storage space and sauna, are all hidden away beneath fifty hinged floor panels. These pneumatically assisted Yunnan teak floorboards can be opened up and closed at will with just a tug on a pull-ring, giving endless permutations for living. When placed upright, they function as room-dividers. When opened, a few steps downstairs leads to a completely different space. The playful design turns the usual concept of the home with fixed partitioning on its head and expands its functions well beyond the purely residential to offer a wider application for hotel or convention purposes through little effort, it can offer accommodation for up to 14 guests with all the requisite amenities.





ALESSI

Founded in 1921, world renowned Alessi is best described as a "research laboratory in the field of applied arts." Experimentation using new materials and technologies such as wood, porcelain and ceramics, plastic, glass and crystal, electricity and electronics, is a vital part of its creative tradition. Over the years, the Italian house has produced objects created by over 200 international designers and architects, representing true benchmarks of contemporary international design.

CHINA CHIC



An early fashion graduate of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Vivienne Tam was exposed to the explosion of ideas and style that was 1970s Hong Kong. A job in Hong Kong presented Tam the chance to visit New York, a city she admired for its acceptance of new designers and ideas. In an audacious judgment, Tam decided to make the big move and left Hong Kong with little money, heaps of talent, and a Beijing vinyl bag containing twenty pieces of her China inspired designs.

A successful meeting with the influential buying team of Henri Bendel, resulted in them being so impressed by her Chinese proletariat workwear collection that they showcased it as part of the store's prestigious window display. This marked the take-off point of Tam's famed career in fashion.

Now internationally recognised, Tam is CEO and chief designer for East Wind Code Limited. Her thoroughly innovative collections have graced runways of some of the most important fashion events ever. Designs from Tam's collections are part of the permanent archives of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Lauded for explorations of Asian motifs, Tam's works have given rise to the fashion phenomenon that is 'China Chic.'





From ultra-modern mega cities to the deserts landscapes of Xinjiang, China is a country of many schisms. Its tremendous antiquity and continuity of civilisation ensures that the country and its culture is beyond simple characterisation – at least this is true within the limits of several pages of text. What is certain, however, is that China is a treasure trove of innumerable surprises, often challenging existing notions of what we may think we know about the land and its people. Within China's many regions, Yunnan Province is unquestionably the most ethnically diverse, and arguably, one of the country's most vibrant and energetic.



found, the naturally well-endowed - with its many snow capped mountain ranges, virgin forests, lakes, hot springs, alpine landscapes, precipitous valleys and floral splendour - Yunnan Province is home to 26 of China's 56 native ethnic groups. Endlessly fascinating, Yunnan region is held to near-mythical esteem, inspiring many from China, Hong Kong and all parts of the world to visit the land to experience its beauty, multiplicity and rich heritage first hand.

The overwhelming majority of Chinese are of Han ethnicity, whose culture and traditions dominate the Chinese ethos. From this view, Yunnan's diversity presents a striking divergence to the customary way of life. This divergence is popularly manifest in a variety of areas, including music, cuisine, art, fashion and architecture. The Old Town of Lijiang, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a popular case in point. Predominantly inhabited by the Naxi people, Lijiang is famed for its copious preservation of historic Naxi architecture - whose hallmark are of "one courtyard with five skylights" and casements and doors

the colourful garb of its people.

Much like the Naxi group, the Miao tribe is also a vibrant component of Yunnan's diverse makeup. Agricultural by nature, the Miao people are widely known for their exceptional ability in crafting silverware and embroidery, and above all, a pompous display of highly colourful fashion and dress. By custom, Miao women practise a near theatrical display of dress that is emphasised by a sophisticated adornment of silver jewellery over the head, the neck, the chest and both arms. Often materialising as links of various patterns, these silver pieces are considered symbols of wealth, prosperity and luck. Their association to status has encouraged Miao women to wear as much silver as is possible - it is indeed normal for young women to carry 8 to 10 kilograms. Such proclivity towards extravagance clearly justifies the existence of a 40 layer linen dress, which is often decorated with colourful and exceptionally embroidered patterns.



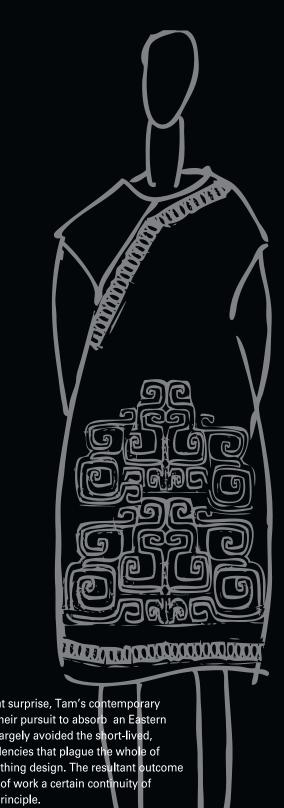


Although Vivienne Tam was born in Canton, China, much of her formative years and memories were developed in Hong Kong. Given its colonial history, the city of Hong Kong provided Tam with a Chinese environment that was modern, open and perpetually engaged with the West. Because Hong Kong and China developed along divergent planes - Hong Kong under British rule, while China functioned as an isolated Communist republic - marked differences existed (and largely still does today) in many facets of life. However it was some of these differences, kindled from her revelatory trip to the Chinese motherland, which would shape her future as a being, both spiritually and creatively. Through this exploration of her native history and culture, Tam became obsessed with the idea of making chic and fashionable the bold, colourful, and the intriguingly kitsch paraphernalia of Red China. Importantly, the event provided her an impulsion to seize the infinite ocean of Chinese material - which has long since become a hallmark of Tam's - within her attitudes towards fashion and design.



In the early 1990s, Tam gained widespread international acclaim through her initial collections. The iconic "Mao" collection, whose portrait images of the late paramount leader were doctored to amusing effect, transformed the fashionista into a household name, and induced the world to contemplate the credence of "China Chic." Mao, along with Tam's subsequent collections in the late 1990s, were lively and awash in color, often mixing religious symbolism with Asian art, while silver, red, and beautiful embroidery became her trademarks. With her spring 2001 collection, aptly titled the Year of the Dragon, came varied images of dragons adorning the clothes, visibly portraying her inspiration and unrelenting passion for Chinese culture – a well- documented fact that forms the thesis of her book, also titled China Chic. A critical aspect of Tam's recognisable success has been her ability to cipher and select, with uncanny precision, the better elements (creatively speaking) from her surroundings.







Much like her timeless Mao and venerable Buddha collections, 8S is yet another example of Vivienne Tam's faith in the artistic and creative wealth of China. 8S is an explorative jewellery creation representing the union between fashion, culture, craftsmanship, beauty and history. Inspired by the Miao tribe of China's colourful and culturally diverse Yunnan province, 8S links custom with exquisite craftsmanship. Aroused by a passion for exceptional silver jewellery, Tam collaborated with Georg Jensen to interpret Miao creativity under a fresh and contemporary context. The substantial 8S design, fashioned from a painstaking attention to detail and craftsmanship, features a mystifying array of silver strands that twist with fascinating charm. Entirely handmade, the 8S piece simultaneously demonstrates the allure of merging strength and flexibility.



Perhaps to great surprise, Tam's contemporary collections, in their pursuit to absorb an Eastern essence, have largely avoided the short-lived, ephemeral tendencies that plague the whole of trend-based clothing design. The resultant outcome lends her body of work a certain continuity of character and principle.



GEORG JENSEN

Founded in Denmark in 1904, Georg Jensen is a global luxury brand leveraging 100 years of experience based on unique design language, craftsmanship and superior quality to become a coveted name in silver hollowware and jewelry creation. Georg Jensen applies its superior craftsmanship to a wide range of materials, including diamond and precious stone, platinum, gold and silver, stainless steel and silver cutlery, hollowware as well as gift articles for the home and office.

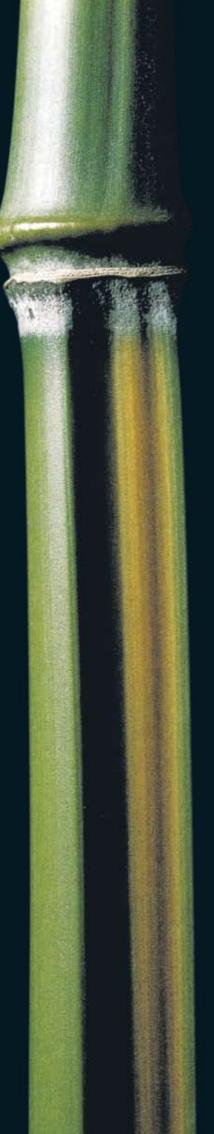
BALANCED CHAN CED



Named by ID Magazine as one of the 40 most influential designers in the US, Eric Chan is the founder and president of New York-based ECCO Design. Contract Magazine conferred similar commendation in 2007 when Chan was listed amongst the ten most influential designers in the United States. ECCO specialises in providing comprehensive consultancy services for product identity and development. At the heart of the company is a modestly sized team of designers, researchers, engineers and strategists, whose unique mix of backgrounds and perspectives functions to provide a near scientific zeal in research, analysis and development of market solutions.

After graduating from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Chan traveled to the US to study at Cranbrook Academy of Art, a school at the forefront of American design. Through the scholastic experience Chan was able to learn from and work with pioneers in the fields of product and ergonomic design, which has significantly influenced his professional practise and methodology. An element of the designer's obsessions seeks to capitalise on his expertise in design and invention to enrich lives with better products and experiences. A practising inventor, he holds numerous patents to his name.





A defining characteristic of Eric Chan's philosophy follows the designer's unique role in mediating balance between people and products, business and community, technology and nature. Most of his work revolves around the industrial design of products. There is a marked difference between the motivations of industrial designers and those from the graphic disciplines. Graphic designers are primarily focused on predicting and anticipating reactions, whereas the role of an industrial designer is to know, with great certainty, how different individuals would use and react to a product. This brings into play a bewildering array of variables that need to be addressed and considered.

Key concerns that may inhabit Chan's mind at any given time can be whether a chair is moulded properly for optimal ergonomic comfort; or whether a button is placed in the ideal position and provides an ideal level of tactile response when depressed. The industrial design field, particularly those holding consultancy roles (as Chan does), is an extremely sophisticated business requiring expert knowledge of humans, behavior, trends, materials, and so forth, as well as unrelenting contemplation – all of which highlight his constant pursuit of balance.



A former alumni of Cranbrook Academy of Art, much of Chan's success is derived from his ability to analyse and decipher existing scenarios under near scientific precision. The school, taught by luminaries such as Charles Eames, has had a profound effect on the methodology of Chan's approach, and perhaps a fleeting influence towards his focus on ergonomics and chair. The perpetual aim of Chan's work is grounded in the pursuit of solutions that are financially and socially rewarding, culturally sensitive and ecologically responsive.

As a practitioner at the pinnacle of America design, Chan maintains a highly satisfying relationship with a number of Fortune 500 clients. Amongst them are Toyota, LG, Virgin, Herman Miller, Panasonic and Lenovo. Throughout Chan's career, he has developed contemporary designs for such diverse products as CD players (for Virgin), washing machines (for LG), office chairs (for Herman Miller), a stapler (for Boston) and an in-vehicle interactive command device (for Lexus). Chan's awareness of culture, particularly those from Asia, has enabled him to offer counsel on the subject to a variety of clients, including Herman Miller.













ECCO 9707





For many millennia, bamboo has been an integral material – revered for its honesty, endurance and resilience – in the culture and heritage of China.

Afforded by the luxuries of technology, the flow of modernity provided Eric Chan an impetus to reinterpret bamboo under a surprising new context. Modern expertise and collaboration with Herman Miller would persuade the designer to transcend conventional thinking and design an ergonomically sound bamboo chair. Manufactured using the latest technologies, alongside a traditional factory in China's Anji region, ECCO 9707 is about the harmony of seemingly opposing elements. Combining strength and flexibility, ECCO 9707 bends and ergonomically conforms to the body for a perfect equilibrium between heritage and modernity, technology and craftsmanship, style and comfort. In terms of design ECCO 9707 perfectly captures Chan's precepts about balance, where function and comfort maintain equilibrium with style and beauty of bamboo.



FORAY CHAIR

The Foray chair displays classic architectural forms cased by fluid, unbroken contours, inspired by the shape of a nurturing hand. Visually, Foray's most prominent feature is the back's sinuous, cradling aluminum oval. Designed by Chan and informed by Geiger's expertise in executive workspaces, Foray continues the Geiger legacy of collaborating with innovative designers to create modern classics for the personal office.

The design delivers an unusually smooth ride, with consistent tension through the full range of recline, which gives total case of control to large and small sitters. The adjustable mechanism mirrors the body's natural movement, with pivot points at the hip joint, knee and ankle. Pivoting at these three places keeps the sitter in contact with the chair through all points of recline, while allowing the sitter to keep feet on the floor and extend the angle between torso and thigh for improved circulation.



PDA PHONE

Evolving from a unique relationship between the Asian manufacturer, cutting edge technology was quickly brought to the market by way of sublime, user-centric design. The major challenge was to create a powerful design that would connect the spirit of mobile computing with today's mobile phones and wireless email for a product fit for the international market.

The design enabled HTC to form partnerships with international service providers such as Siemens, AT&T, and T-Mobile, and to demonstrate the growing strength Asian manufacturers command with their ability to influence design and provide important speed to market for innovative new products.



Herman Miller

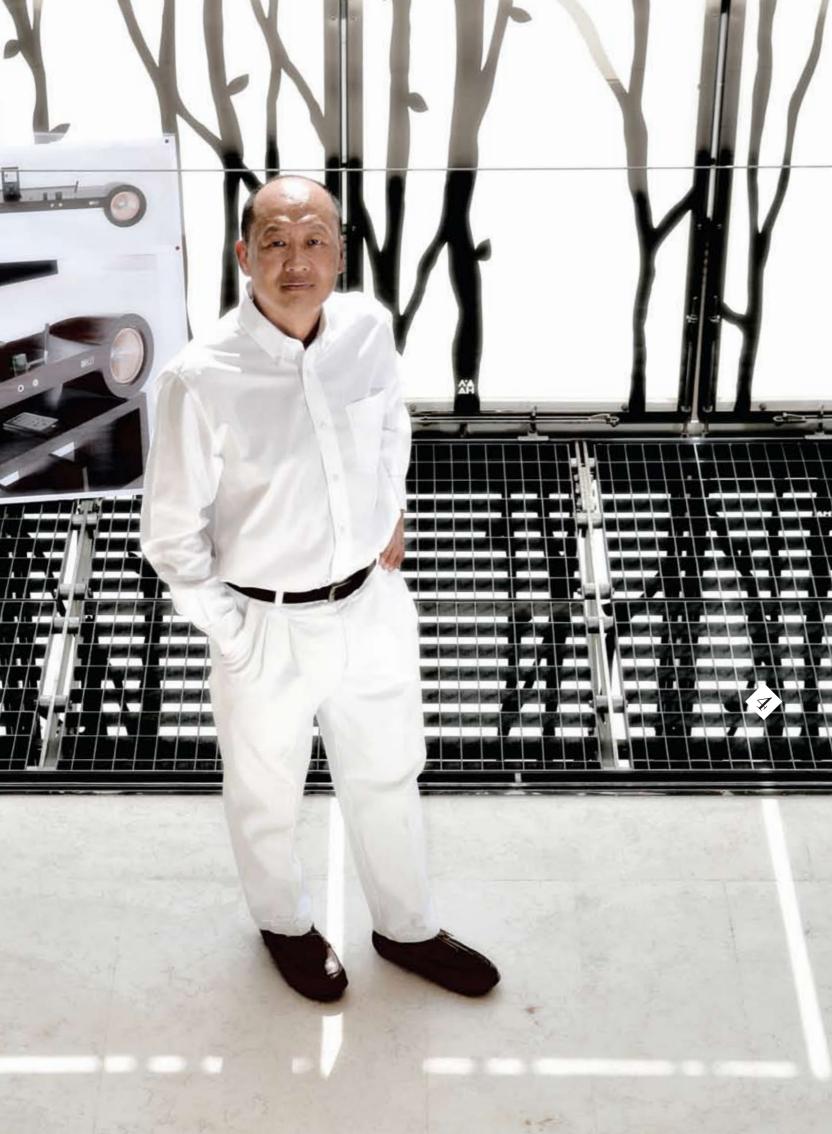
Herman Miller is a leading global provider of office furniture and services that create great places to work. The designs and services of Herman Miller enhance the performance of people and their environments worldwide, making life more productive, rewarding, intelligent and delightful. Through research and design, the company develops innovative solutions to real needs in working and living environments.

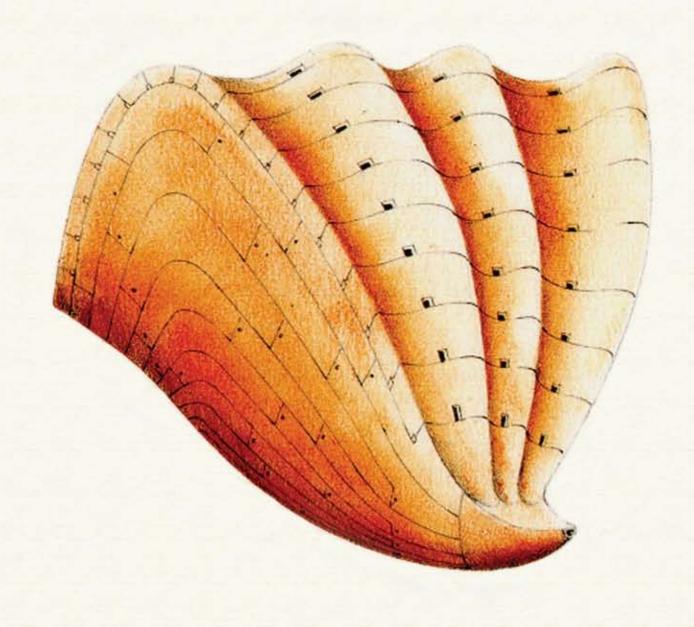
TO CHINAR CHINAR



A versatile talent, Lo Chi Wing constantly searches from the endless repertoire of forms represented in nature, culture and history. By digging up from the past, the designer has created poetic objects to accommodate means towards differing ends. Acute sensibilities have persuaded the erection of an ossuary in Arcadia, a villa by the Bosporus, a tower house in Athens, the Giorgetti Pavilion in Milan, Imaginary Objects from/To Kardizu/, the New Acropolis Museum competition entry and others.

Well known for his fruitful relationship with Italian furniture maker Giorgetti, Lo has served as the company's art director and image consultant. The company, where contemporary machinery is adapted to century-old traditions in woodworking, has provided Lo an atmosphere for intense growth. Relying on profound knowledge of shape, form, material, technique, culture and history, he has helped feed the century-old company's incessant desire to capitalise on Lo's personal interpretation of craftsmanship and innovation. His manipulations towards timelessness have garnered worldwide adulation, provoking his furniture collections to become much sought after.



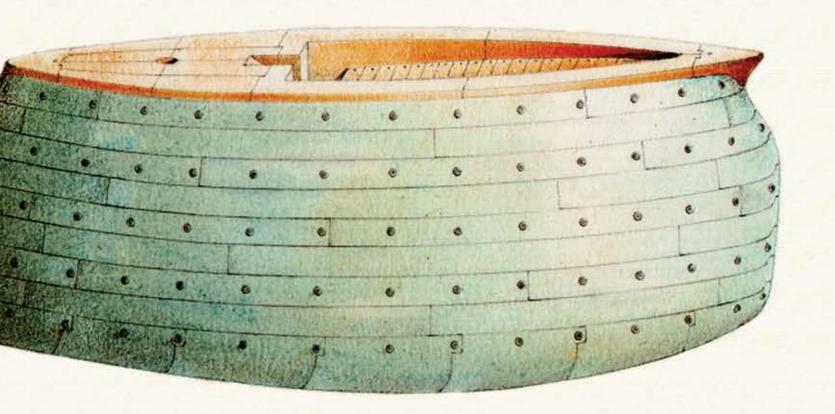


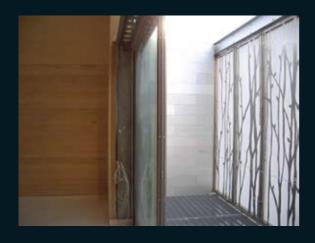
It is hardly surprising that Lo Chi Wing's methods in design show parallels to that of an archaeologist. Throughout his rich body of work, Lo exerts much energy and patience in the search for perfection, constantly digging from the past to forge classical forms of vast poetic beauty.

His many examples of professional exploration, which feature the Acropolis Museum design, an Ossuary and Tower House in Greece, his much sought after furniture creations for Giorgetti, and his highly experimental musings with Drawing to Kardizu, defy simple characterisation, and while vastly divergent, cohesively present him with new sets of challenges. Within these parameters, Lo finds purpose from the search to find timeless forms of beauty. The inclination to follow prejudiced methodology of existing principles is thwarted by a self-imposed restraint. Perhaps it is for this very fact that Lo's body of work, is able to materialise with remarkable integrity and originality. The breadth of style that is clearly demonstrated by them, confirms his ability to not only design along captivating lines, but also, avoid the formulaic, and the pitfalls of monotony as well. The work is held in commonality by what he describes enigmatically as: sensibility.

Sensibility can be defined under a variety of contexts and meanings. A persistent openness to challenges – which can be a possible interpretation – has acted as a determinant of Lo's success and creative development. To craft the ideal creation for KEF's hi-fi system, Lo found himself in a perpetual pursuit of what seemed unattainable. From sifting through the past, he emerged with a new interpretation of the hi-fi system. This interpretation sought to transform the technologically-charged hi-fi into a natural instrument made of zitan wood. Chiefly inspired by the gugin, the design offered further resonance of Lo's belief that design is more about improving the past than pure invention – taking existing forms and altering them with assiduous concentration.

Having decided on a design, Lo began to search for the near mythical material of zitan. The exceptional rareness of zitan – Lo had at one point believed the material to be non-existant – figured well with the designer's comparison of design and archaeology. The hunt encompassed visits, made in vain, to China, East Africa and beyond, and days spent in research looking for clues and tips. Eventually, the material was found by chance in Milan and utilised to the veneration of a great many. The difficulties and lengths that Lo underwent to locate the wood typify and highlight yet another sensibility – his sensibility guiding him toward integrity of design.







TOWER HOUSE, ATHENS

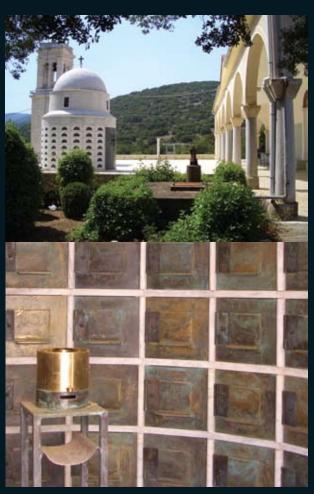
Expected to be completed by the end of 2008, the Tower House has eight floors, each with a distinct function hidden behind a white fabric screen with shadows of artificial foliage. With its unassuming exterior façade, the Tower House is embedded in a dense area of central Athens.





OSSUARY, ARCADIA, PELOPONNESOS

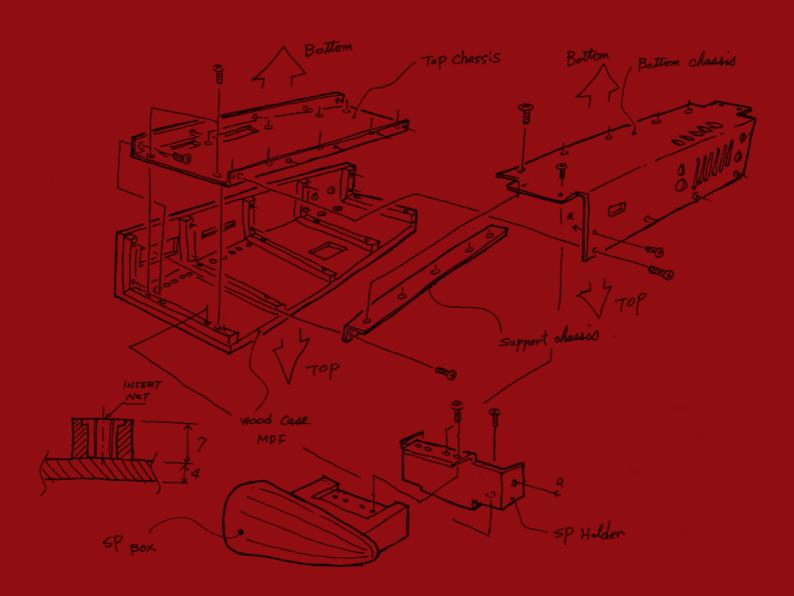
The Ossuary is situated on a small square next to the main Christian Orthodox Church in a small village in Arcadia. It is inspired by small chapels of the Renaissance, particularly the Tempietto by Bramante in Rome. To rework this familiar archetype to meet the stringent requirements of an ossuary for orthodox practise, there is an immediate need to redefine the meaning of its inherent architectural composition. While maintaining the white marble and bronze construction as common materials used for monuments, each compartment inside, where bones of ancestors are deposited, is given a living spirit of an unceasing fire. In line with the local orthodox tradition, death is never considered a sad ending, but a continuous presence in the life of the locals.



VILLA SEDAT OZGUR <u>ISTANBU</u>L

The villa is situated at an elevated terrace overlooking the Bosphorus. The secluded nature of the surroundings sustains the idea of a glass house. The arresting view of the Borphorous is brought in to mingle with the interior. Translucent onyx panels, sliding curtains, reflective and non-reflective surfaces lend the space a constant change of atmospheric light. The protective metal and glass construction outside with the warm materials of the open-plan layout inside manifest the poetic fragility of living amongst the dominant landscape.





zitan,

an exceptionally rare species

ABOUT ZITAN Among tropical hardwoods the most prized of all is zitan, an exceptionally rare species. Zitan is so rare that it is virtually unknown in the West, and until recently was thought to be practically extinct. A tight grain and hardness provide a density that enables it to sink in water. In ancient

China it was said that the dark purple color of zitan resembled the color reserved for the use of Qing dynasty. As a result, only the imperial household was allowed to use zitan in China from the 17th to the 19th century. Due in part to extremely slow growth, zitan wood remains in short

supply. Few pieces of zitan furniture exist, most are found exclusively in museums and private collections.





STRINGLESS PLEASURE

Without question, the idea of Lo Chi Wing's perpetual search for perfection is wonderfully encapsulated in the design of KEF's Stringless Pleasure mini stereo. A profound desire to reference the visibility of form derived from the elegance and integrity of a musical instrument, centralises the design's tenet. This has been achieved with the use of zitan wood, a crisp, hard wood that is exceptionally rare and extensively esteemed. Unrelenting in his desires, Lo rummaged and researched across continents to find the mythical zitan, eventually stumbling onto the material in Cantu, near Milan.







Representing a synthesis of fine craftsmanship and modern innovation, Stringless Pleasure registers some of the harmonic integrations which are the essence of Hong Kong – the interweaving of momentum from traditional value with the currents of contemporary impulse; the infusion of the spiritual calmness of the East with the intellectual vigour of the West. With the inclusion of a substantial storage shelf – which serves also to ensure optimum space exists between the speakers and walls – the dramatic design of Stringless Pleasure adheres to a highly refined sensibility that is both daring and elegant. Jade elements are included as allusions to the designer's reflections about timelessness. Combined with outstanding craftsmanship in sound, acoustics and manufacturing Stringless Pleasure achieves a flawless synchronisation of style for the senses.









Well known for its loudspeaker engineering, design and use of quality materials, British loudspeaker manufacturer KEF is adored by audiophiles the world over. Following the invention of its famous LS3/5a in 1967, KEF has relentlessly pursued desires to enhance audio technology. This has led to the successful introduction of its groundbreaking Uni-Q® audiophile technology in 1988. Since then, KEF has maintained a leading position in the markets of loudspeakers and home-theatre systems.

BARNES CHIENCE



Barney Cheng, couturier to the stars, or as Michael Kors coined him 'the Versace of Asia,' studied Textile Design at The Royal College of Art in London and Fashion Illustration and History of European Costume at the Parson's School of Design in Paris, before graduating from The University of Waterloo, Canada, with a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts.

Known for his penchant for the exquisite, past projects have included collaboration with DeBeers to design a diamond wedding gown; the "Oro D' Autore project dedicated to the Third Millennium" by the Italian Trade Commission to showcase his jewellery designs; an exclusive namesake collection for Marks & Spencer, "The Comfort Zone.' Cheng was also chosen as the only representative designer from China for Swarovski's Wedding fantasy book 'The Unbridaled.'





Primarily known for his haute couture designs, Barney Cheng looks to his clients' individual taste and personality for inspiration. Much of this work revolves around the glitzy lifestyles of Hong Kong's screen divas and social elite, and listening with intent to construct dresses that impart a sense of satisfaction and individuality. Cheng's lasting role remains at service to those who yearn for big statements. Selfdescribed as a "Glorious Tailor," Cheng seldom rejects any request, and enjoys the challenge of matching desires with unabashed opulence. A typical dress can take months to complete, and by standard practise, involves several stages of detailed handiwork.



As a child, Cheng quaintly recalls being endlessly fascinated by his mother's exquisite dresses. Memories are fond of a Shanghainese tailor, whose regular appointments to the family home, made an impression upon the young Cheng. A boldness to make sense out of the world persuaded him to disassemble his mother's dress with enlightening effect. Such episodes would leave him awestruck; piquing his interests towards the fine workmanship involved in dressmaking, and would set him on a fated course towards fashion.

Despite a reputation for extreme displays of luxury, Cheng remains insistent about his passion for beautiful, sensual form. Perhaps resulting from a need for sophistication, his dresses often feature a variety of touches that require him to cut, bead, sew and drape. Certainly, this "pompous display of master craftsmanship" reveals the ethos surrounding couture design. A signature emphasis features arduous usage of ornamental embroidery, sequins and a seemingly endless plethora of lavish materials, including peacock feather, keshi pearls, rough and polished diamonds and python. Recent revisions to Cheng's own designs have garnered a less boisterous inclination, exercising greater refinement towards the shape and flow of his dress. The rigorous attention to detail remains a source of significance, as it forms the foundations of Cheng's enterprising endeavour into jewellery design.

BRILLIANT BEAUTY

Designed by Barney Cheng, Le Sportsac's Brilliant Beauty is defined by the painterly rendition of a full bloom floral motif. Adhering to a desire of bringing couture to wider audiences, the chosen print was developed from a pattern previously used by Cheng for couture purposes. Through the dynamic verve of ink and brush, and completed with a faux beaded exterior, the Brilliant Beauty bag was designed with versatility and a user-oriented eye - alluding to the designer's habits as a couturier. Exterior pockets of the bag have been transformed to truly contemporary needs allowing for convenient storage of an ipod, mobile phones and water bottles. Additional tailored effects include credit card holders, a key link chain, a pen loop and others. Not failing to relinquish on thoughtfulness, and keeping the spirit of LeSportsac's focus on style, youthfulness and versatility, Cheng also designed two detachable 'baby' bags that function as makeup and evening bags.









LeSportsac was founded in 1974. The first product was a simply designed duffel bag manufactured in a small factory in New York. Since then, LeSportsac has been successful in incorporating trends and establishing tastes to match each period. Over the last 32 years, LeSportsac has maintained commitments to the usage of high performance fabrics, rich assortment of colour and print, and working with designers worldwide to create versatility in style that has not changed.



For well over 20 years, Freeman Lau has been an ardent believer in the multiplicity of design, working with voracity to perfect skills in a number of disciplines. He is a celebrated poster, packaging, communications and visual identity designer for a diverse range of clients.

Throughout the years, he has maintained a protracted campaign that bridges the division between art and design, asserting the two as analogous mediums for expression. Much of this has been manifest in Lau's signature art and design work, spanning the last decade, involving chairs. Since 1997, Lau has obsessively incorporated chairs into much of his installation art, poster and product design. The ubiquitous four-legged form exists as basis of a diverse and evolving narrative exploring thoughts about people, relations and politics. Substituting the chair for language, Lau uses the form as a cryptic device that, like a picture speaking a thousand words, communicates sophisticated concepts. Ancient traditions like the practise of mortise and tenon, fascinates the designer, and has found recurring use in this work. Mortise and tenon is a construction method based on sophisticated tongues and groves that are used to join pieces of wood without the necessity for nails or binders. Lau's use of mortise and tenon, symbolically infers the relation between elements, usually suggestive of yin and yang, and accordingly, man and woman.





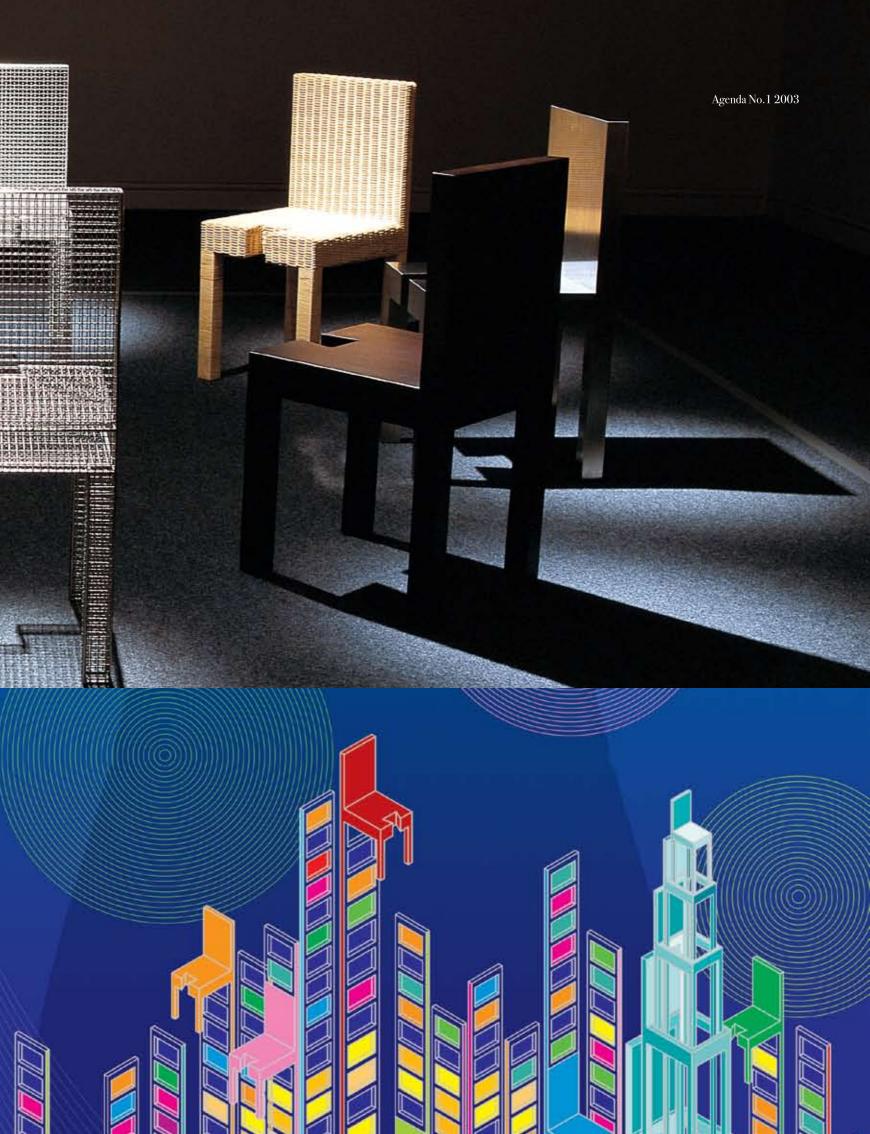






Freeman Lau is a man of many interests. Known primarily as a graphic designer, Lau is – to his many corporate clients – a practitioner of profound abilities, who uses his talents to effortlessly communicate a myriad of concepts and ideas. Despite renown in graphic design, Lau is also prominent for his persistent creative vision as conveyed through chairs.



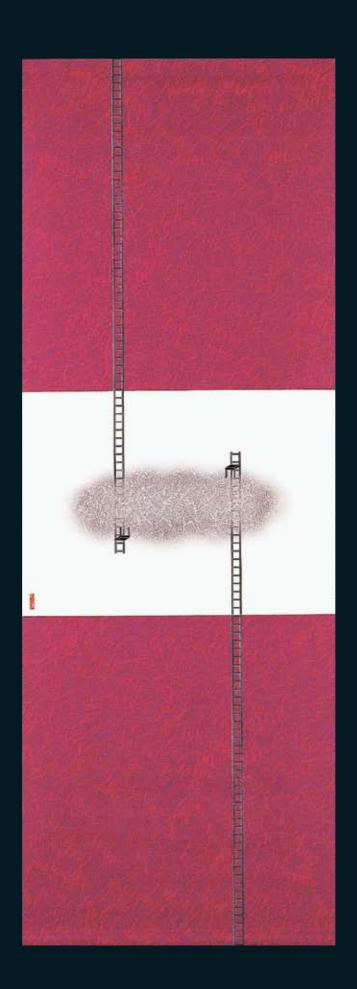




Certainly, chairs as design prerogatives are anything but new-fangled. Like the still life from the painted cosmos, chairs have constantly been interpreted and re-imagined without end. Unlike his many design peers, Lau is heedless about experimentation with fresh material or challenging existing form. Instead, his chairs exist on the most fundamental of forms, habitually consisting of basic material and shape – or to put it crudely: just four legs and a rest. This fact alone demonstrates how his concerns are aimed toward the chair as a device for expression. Like letters of an alphabet, they exist purely to produce expression in a language of implied meaning.

Chairs function to offer support for rest and relaxation. Reflecting our habits, posture and scents, chairs can be essentially defined as spiritual containers of our personality. This close relationship to people has been the impetus behind Lau's creative preoccupations towards its metaphoric utilisation. Much of Lau's creative efforts can be reduced to the concept of expression; however, its form is of personal intent. Lau is principally led by a desire that bridges the division between art and design, asserting the two as analogous mediums for expression.

Like an artist in the traditional sense, his expressions are founded on reactionary intention, constantly feeding off dynamics created from the immediate environment. Like many a citizen of Hong Kong, Lau has been affected by the issues and concerns that have plagued the people. One of his very first works involving the chair within his expressionistic efforts was a poster for a theatrical performance based on the question of identity. The principal element of the poster featured a chair that was diametrical in appearance, where one half was of a Chinese chair and the other a chair of Western origins. Much like the play itself, Lau's poster reacted to questions of Hong Kong's identity. Relying greatly on his own multi-disciplinary background, Lau would use a concoction of media and methods to narrate his increasingly complex and evolving views. This would entail poster, installation work - often involving carefully stacked chairs or a confused mass of folding chairs - and simple chairs, employed to delineate his intimate reaction to changing political climates, critiques on relationships, and struggles of the individual. Clearly, Lau's work with his invented language was boundless and limited only by the imagination. By 2000, the arguments explored expanded even further, as giant sculptural pieces went on public display in Hong Kong and China to communicate the artist's own imagination and persistent vision on a wider scale.







An interesting element of Lau's varied explorations has been the emergence of his own signature chair design. By attempting to highlight man's various bonds and relationship, Lau introduced chairs that were fashioned with protrusions and depressions. This curious design choice allows the chairs to interconnect, much like the venerated Chinese practise of mortise and tenon joinery, as symbolism of man's relationships, and furthermore, the union between man and women. The rich originality of these chairs, proffered a look that became a trademark synonymous to Freeman Lau.

Recently, Lau has shifted his fascinations to one that explores the interplay between creativity and industry. The current evolvement of Lau's preoccupations paves way for the rational and objective to usurp the wholly emotional and intimate. Today, Lau maintains active involvement in transforming his chairs into practical, everyday products.





CHAIRPLAY CONTINUES OF THE CONTINUES OF

Fitted with jewels, diamonds and silver, Freeman Lau's collaboration with Life of Circle reinvigorates his obsessions with his signature chair form, and yet again reaffirms his abilities to transcend medium. Facing each other, two chairs joined by the traditions of tenon and mortise, symbolises the wonderful union between man and woman. Transformed into a series of jewelry pieces – which include rings and pendants – the dynamic 'chair' alternates to illustrate mankind's bond of love. As exquisite Life of Circle jewelry pieces the designs convey the substance of bonds and promises, and follows Lau's recent motivations to turn artistic form into mass-market expression.

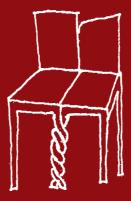
WATSON'S WATER BOTTLE

In giving the century-old brand of Watson's Distilled Water a facelift, which had been extensively overdue, Lau's primary concern was to shed the overly industrial image of the old bottle and turn it into something more fashionable, more current. Life, after all, is not only about satisfying basic needs but the eternal quest for that which is beautiful. Thus, Lau gives the bottle sensuous new curves that narrow at the 'waist' to afford a better grip, its indented grooves resulting in a dazzling play of refracted light. But the cleverest part of the bottle is its cap. The unusually large cap conforms to the contours of the bottle and functions as a handy cup, reminiscent of the trusty old thermos flask. To create a cool, icy feeling, the surface of the bottle is frosted imitating the effect of condensation. Top it all off with a vivid grass green and you have a cheerful, easy-going bottle which attracts both the young and young at heart.

Evidence of the bottle's triumph became apparent when, almost bestowed, including Bottlewater Design Award in Paris.









Life of Circle is a unique jewelry brand whose preoccupations are to evoke the essence of Chinese natural philosophy. Through an exceptional amalgamation of Chinese motifs and the opulence of silver and precious gems, Life of Circle has invented a style all its own. In 2005, the Life of Circle was selected as one of the top 25 shops in the world.

MICHARIA SOUNCE



Since the outset of his career, Sunderland born Michael Young has been reputed as one of his generations most influential designers. In 1992, institutions such as Centre Pompidou and the Louvre Museum immediately acquired his early Woven steel works. His E & Y Tokyo collection of furnishings was purchased by Die Neue Sammlung Museum Germany and London's Design Museum. This collection was said to have created a new formal language in design.

In 1995 he created MY- 022 Ltd design office in London where he focused on a series of projects for Cappellini, Sawaya & Moroni and Magis and was given his own monthly page in Japanese publication Casa Brutus. His clients have since included Galley Kreo, Danese, Artemide, Rosenthal and Swedese and Astro Bar, a nightclub design in Iceland. These works embodied classic items such as the Eurolounge Sticklight and the Magis Dog House. Sir Terence Conran selected Young in 1997 as his most inspiring British designer.



For anyone with a fleeting interest in the affairs of the world, an unmistakable trend had occurred during the 1980s. Much of the products that we had become familiar with no longer came packaged with their designated "Made in USA" or "Made in Japan" markings, and were replaced by the tag "Made in China". On a steadily escalating rate, greater numbers of products from a broad range of categories were being made in China.

From household products, toys and stationary, to electronics, furniture and batteries, the array of "Made in China" products being manufactured today seems an infinitely endless list – China's manufacturing capacity is simply unrivalled – and whose growth has guided one of the most comprehensive economic expansions in human history.



In 1978, Chinese Paramount Leader Deng Xiaoping unveiled plans for economic reforms that would create free market conditions in special designated areas of China. Emerging from this was Guangdong Province's Pearl River Delta (PRD) region, a manufacturing zone comprising hundreds of thousands of factories, mostly producing cheap goods for export. Much of its development has been the result of efforts from the private sector, strongly linked to Hong Kong, Taiwan, foreign and indigenous firms.

A salient feature of the PRD region has been its intrinsic link with Hong Kong. Throughout the 60s and 70s, Hong Kong was seen as a beacon of success offering a cheap alternative towards the manufacturing of many low-tech products. However, the opening of China's economic borders posed fierce competition by offering substantial discounts towards the cost of labour and business. What occurred throughout the 80s was a seismic shift that fundamentally stripped Hong Kong of its factories, leaving a blue-collar labour force in limbo. Many of the factory owners from Hong Kong simply

packed and moved into the PRD. The truth remains that the Chinese leadership chose the PRD simply due to its proximity to Hong Kong. The idea was to use Hong Kong's links to the rest of the world to foster a process based on gradual reform. Hong Kong was to learn from the world. South China would learn from Hong Kong, and consequently, the rest of China would learn from the South. Predictably, Hong Kong has played and continues to play a vital role in the PRD's development - figures have shown that Hong Kong has been the source of over 70% of cumulative foreign direct investment since 1979. While the factories remain responsible for assembly and production, many of the manufacturing companies (both foreign and domestic) have maintained pre and post-production activities, including design, development, marketing, sales, and logistics management in Hong Kong.

An innate inquisitiveness about the process of creation has helped to direct designer Michael Young on what could be deemed a remarkable journey spanning several continents and countless product launches. English by birth, Young holds a distinction as being active in a dizzying number of areas. Throughout his illustrious career Young has created designs that include a dog kennel, bicycles, an array of furniture and lighting pieces, barware, wristwatches and the interiors of cosmetic surgery clinics. Vividly colourful and perpetually daring, the work by Young's versatile hand is typically denoted by a blend of the audacious with noticeable traces of humour. Odd, provocative shapes, usually paired with novel materials, highlight the designer's desire to "create" his own world of imagined forms and metaphysics. Such motivations rationalises his fascination underlined by constant experimentation – with material, technique and processes. Designs for 100% Design Tokyo



In an effort to better understand the act of production, Young's early career began as a studious employee to Tom Dixon. Subsequent to this, Young established his own studio in 1995, which enabled him to concentrate on designs for a series of stimulating projects for Cappellini, Sawaya & Moroni, and Magis. Since then he has won the patronage of numerous prestigious clients including Gallery Kreo, Danese, Artemide, Rosenthal and Swedese and Astro Bar.



DESIGNERS MUST ALWAYS MAINTAIN CLOSE INTERACTION WITH INDUSTRY

Eager to pursue opportunities towards creative development and personal growth, Young has never been timid with change. In the late 90s, Young astounded many in the design world by relocating his thriving studio to Reykjavik, a remote city in Iceland. Drawn by developments where much of the world's manufacturing capacity is now concentrated in China, particularly the Greater Pearl River Delta region, Young completed yet another relocation to Hong Kong in 2005. Young is convinced that to remain relevant as creative individuals, "designers must always maintain close interaction with industry." In the city where East-meets-West, the British-born designer engages manufacturers through a constructive discourse that elevates an awareness of design throughout the process of creation. Evangelical in stance, Young sees most of China's manufacturers as producers of cheap goods who hold very little understanding of design value. Young's role, as he sees it is to convince some of these enterprises, encouraging the use of design to create a premium for business.



EUCLIDE











Named after the ancient Greek mathematician responsible for early theories of space and time, Euclide is a stylish and innovative timepiece. This design by Michael Young was the result of experimental musings at watchmaker o.d.m.'s manufacturing facilities. Euclide substitutes dial face scores with twelve holes on its outer edge for a simultaneously austere and elegant appearance. The inclusion of drilled holes, which by Young's assessments rendered the design 'exceedingly complex', offers a stimulating new direction to o.d.m.'s usually colourful and molded product line. A red colored "10" at the 10-o'clock position emphasises the special occasion of Hong Kong's tenth anniversary of reunification.

CITYstorm Bicycle

It has been said ad infinitum: it is all in the details. When Young was approached by Giant to come up with a bicycle for the lifestyle-conscious crowd, few would have envisaged the outcome that was CITYstorm. Known for his bold and daring statements, Young surprisingly did not leap into the project with a mindset to reinvent the wheel. He explains there was no need to create an outrageous product. The goal, instead, was to achieve with the design something functional that not only looked wonderful, but would also gain the respect of traditional bicycle designers.

The design process began with Young studying the classic bicycle, carefully scrutinising every aspect and detail. The designer made a note of certain areas that were, to his surprise, long neglected. Consequently, a digital clock was installed where the handlebar and frame meet, a detail much appreciated by the time-conscious urbanite cyclist. Likewise, a halogen-enabled head and tail light comes equipped as standard, as is an attentively embedded security lock. Both clock and lamps are powered by a gyroscopic apparatus housed in the wheels, relieving users from the irritation of replacing batteries.

Veering near a scientific zeal, the frame's geometry was conscientiously shaped to ensure a smooth ride. Equally worth citing are the quality of make and materials used, including the saddle, the handle grips (made of dual-density rubber), and the thicker tires, all designed to deliver comfort.















Plastic Polo for Lacoste

"I visited the LACOSTE factory, in a city called Troyes, a couple of hours beyond Paris, to better understand how a polo is made and how we could replicate the gardening glove plastic technique on the piqué cotton of a polo. Plastic

has always been a favorite material of mine, and for LACOSTE I wanted to experiment with combining plastics and fabrics to create a fresh, futuristic polo that reflects the heritage of the brand. It was also a great challenge as a product and interior designer used to working with hard surfaces to be faced with soft, flexible fabrics. After many, many tests, we finally got it right with heat-activated ink. Instead of a standard silk-screen printing process, the ink is applied directly to the piqué cotton and then is 'baked' causing it to blister and become the thick, plastic fake croc skin itself. Since the crocodile logo is an icon, I thought that it would be fun to deconstruct it, so I did, creating what looks almost like a fossilised crocodile. It literally swims up the front and around the shoulders and back of the polo." Michael Young













o.d.m. is a dynamic designer watch brand established in Hong Kong. Its mission is to convey a philosophy that is abbreviated within its name: original, dynamic and minimalism. Coveted by youths around the world, o.d.m. owes its prominence to a strategic focus on innovative timepieces purposed as fashion statements – echoed through the combination of colourful design, superb styling and intriguing technology.

BRUSH OCATING



Kan Tai Keung first studied art and design in 1964, and began creating ink brush works in 1970. As a multi-talented visual designer, Kan is internationally renowned for a majestic body of work that includes ink and brush painting, communication, poster, packaging and identity design. His works have been archived in museum collections spanning across Germany and Paris to Japan and the United States.

Additionally, he has featured regularly in many of the world's top art and design magazines, including the coveted Communication Arts. His design firm, Kan & Lau Design Consultants maintains acute contributions to commercial endeavour in Hong Kong, China and other regions. Many of Hong Kong's most successful businesses have invoked the firm's assistance, including amongst countless many, the Bank of China's longstanding corporate identity and logo.

Kan takes an active role in educating and promoting art and design as a profession. As a Guest Professor, he lectures regularly at universities in Hong Kong, China and various other countries. In 2003, Kan was appointed as the Dean of the Cheung Kong School of Art and Design, Shantou University. Kan also holds an honorary doctorate from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.



Lakes 70cm X 36cm 1977

Within the Chinese ethos, most revered of all artistic disciplines are those of ink and brush painting and calligraphy. Both are considered sister arts as they employ the same tool, the Chinese brush – whose scope is truly unlimited. Chinese painting can be traced back to prehistory, where evidence of their appearance have been found on pottery and in thatched huts from the Neolithic Period. What makes Chinese painting such a revered, and compelling art form is the way the arts of the brush – painting, calligraphy, and poetry – interact together to produce countless masterful works. For this reason, it is difficult, and indeed, imprudent to consider painting and calligraphy under separate categories.



Clouds In Valley 89cm X 135cm 1981

A complex yet important distinction of Chinese brush work is that imagery is not presented with the same forcefulness and immediacy as those inherent to Western painting styles. Read primarily as configurations of intricately controlled brushstrokes – where realism is rarely aspired – the intention is to capture the spirit of an idea and create implied meaning. The special qualities of the Chinese artist's tools and materials have a lot to do with painting characteristics. The reservoir in the brush can hold enough ink to allow the impression of long, continuous lines, which since the brush tip is held perpendicular to the surface, can move in any direction without altering in breadth. Various techniques, once mastered, can allow lines to fluctuate in form, flow and energy, and together form striking images of limitless material.

There is no doubt about the level of influence that is exerted by Chinese painting and calligraphy. Virtually everyone from Hong Kong and China is taught to command the brush during childhood, particularly towards the creation of calligraphic work. Most people of Chinese origin, not to mention the Japanese, and to a certain extent, Koreans as well, share an appreciation and mature understanding of the brush arts. This has had a profound impact on the continuation of such arts, not just as a medium in works of art, but also as material for design. Admittedly, the inclusion of Chinese brush work within a design context almost invariably bears connotations – owing to its patently humanistic properties – of the traditional. Nonetheless, its quality is exceptionally powerful, and allows for greater multiplicity of expression and communication.



Moving Image 91cm X 91cm

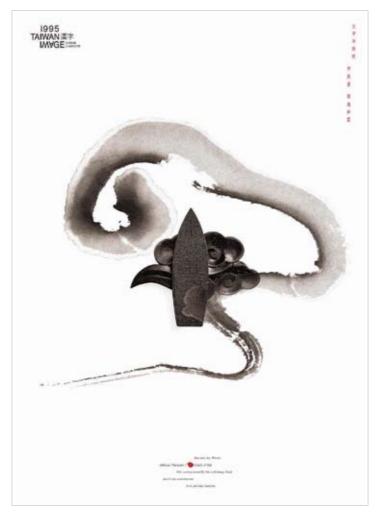
Unquestionably, Kan Tai Keung's design work is best known for his unrelenting integration of the Chinese brush. Since 1967, this elder statesmen of Hong Kong design, has been perfecting ideas and theories of design, along with a refinement of Chinese ink painting and calligraphy. Overtly Chinese works have perhaps misled many to believe the artist-designer started his career from an eastern foundation. An admiration for the Bauhaus school of thought, among other Western design movements, served to anchor his first directions. Early Chinese paintings by Kan reveal strong overtones of western approach, particularly in composition density, pronounced geometric forms and the liberal use of colour. These early works, although relatively premature, point to the designer's willingness to experiment with concurrence of East and West. To Kan, concepts of these seemingly contradictory approaches – or the traditional and contemporary – are not mutually polar, but rather points that exist on a continuum.

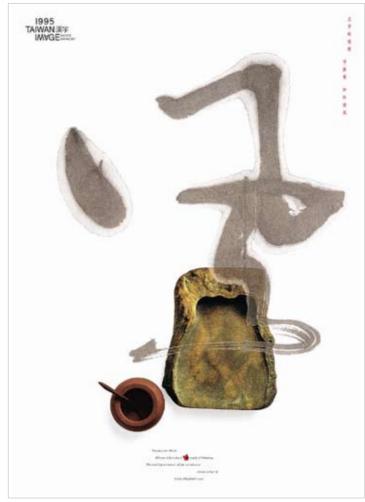


True Man 70cm X 138cm 2005

Kan's first wave of recognition arrived from a reconfiguration of style that would allow his own Chinese heritage to veer forward. The brush works of his early career was highlighted by a proficient ability with the brush, often exhibiting a masterful command of technique and evoking a new sense of simplification and clarity. Forms, while still geometrical, saw their hard edges dissolve further. Later visits to a number of mountainous regions in China and Taiwan would implore Kan, with much zeal, to replace that which was imaginary with the real. Some of Kan's most iconic and traditional Chinese landscapes, glorious dream-like renditions of mountain, clouds and trees, were conjured throughout the 1980s and early 90s.

Having evolved his own methodology from years of dedicated practise, Kan's graphic and Chinese brush creations would eventually feature, typically speaking, a restrained white background, derived from concepts in Chinese painting of the interplay between that which is substantial and that which is void. This valuation of space is often combined with simple and uninhibited monochromatic brushstrokes, reminiscent of calligraphic treatment. Various elements such as photographic imagery – which usually entail the Chinese decorative arts – printed typeface and others, are infused to provoke a "designed" awareness that evokes communication of ideas.



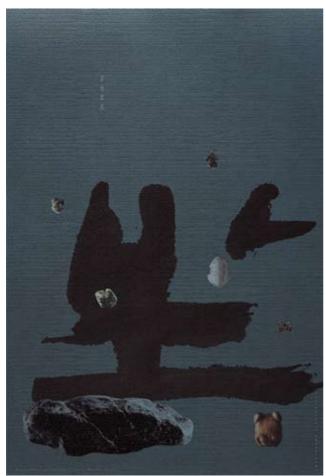


Poster, Taiwan Image Series -Chinese Character 1995

In its most current form, Kan's brush work emerges to masterfully fuse the energies of design methodology with calligraphy and ink painting forming a singular entity that defies existing definitions, and becomes something entirely new and original. While utterly minimal, the style is a sophisticated treatment of illusory image that is at once a landscape and an expression of calligraphy. Interestingly, this innovative approach conjures references to the ancient origins of calligraphy and painting, as both are believed to have derived from pictographs.

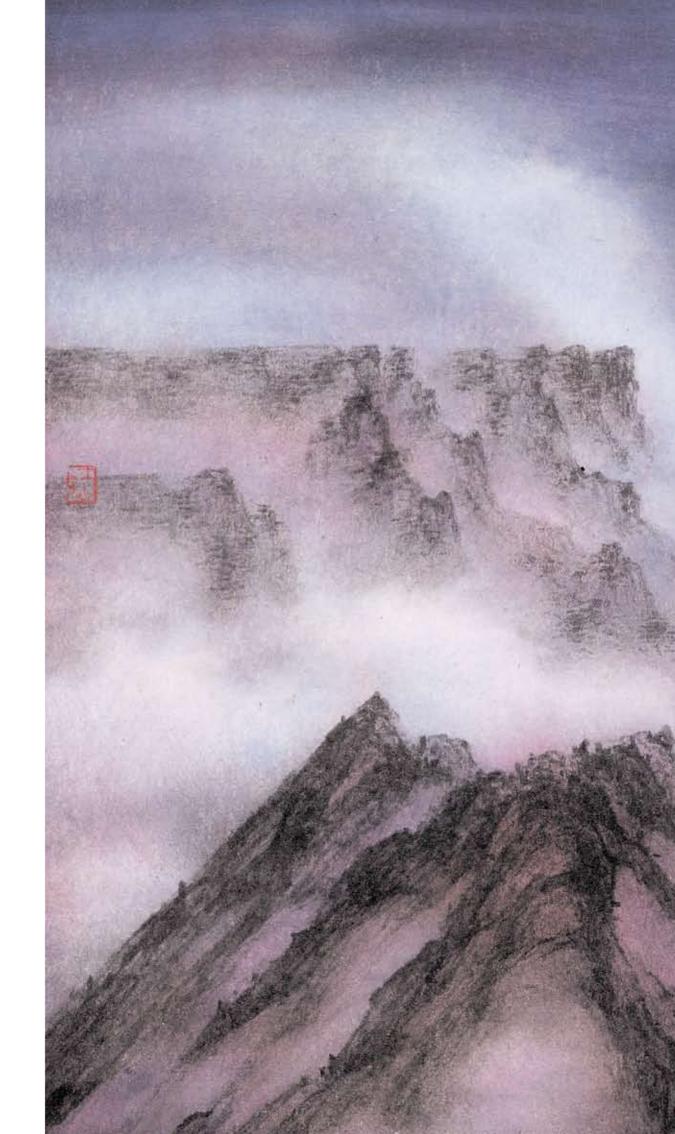








"Bornfree" Paper Series Poster 1996



















HAND IN HAND

Circa 1997, the atmosphere surrounding the buildup en route to Hong Kong's handover could appropriately be summed up as riddled by confusion. At one end of the spectrum, some looked upon the looming historical event with suspicion and uncertainty. Occupants at the other regarded Hong Kong's reunion to its motherland with enthusiasm and a genuine sense of hope. Kan Tai Keung and Christofle were amongst those who perceived the event in a favourable light.

In 1997, Christofle again trod a familiar path by inviting Kan to work on a special project commemorating the Handover of Hong Kong.

From the outset, formal restrictions were not defined. Matters such as scope or use of materials were open to interpretation. Ever the consummate designer, Kan knew very well the importance of understanding the client, as was manifestly demonstrated through a strenuous effort to study the background, traditions and philosophies of Christofle.

The 'exercise' afforded Kan an empathy with the processes and restrictions that accompany silver, as well as insights in characterising the aesthetic spirit of the piece. With clarity of mind, Kan began exploring the concept of maternal bond. The idea was to be an expression of hope and joy, not only of the return to the embrace of a mother, but also, the prospects of facing a future in joint harmony. Eventually the piece, dubbed 'Hand in Hand, ' evolved into two dazzling different-sized silver hands held one over the other. Metaphorically, Hand in Hand was closely aligned to Kan's views and sentiments regarding Hong Kong's reunification with China.

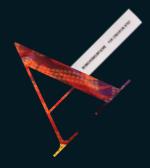






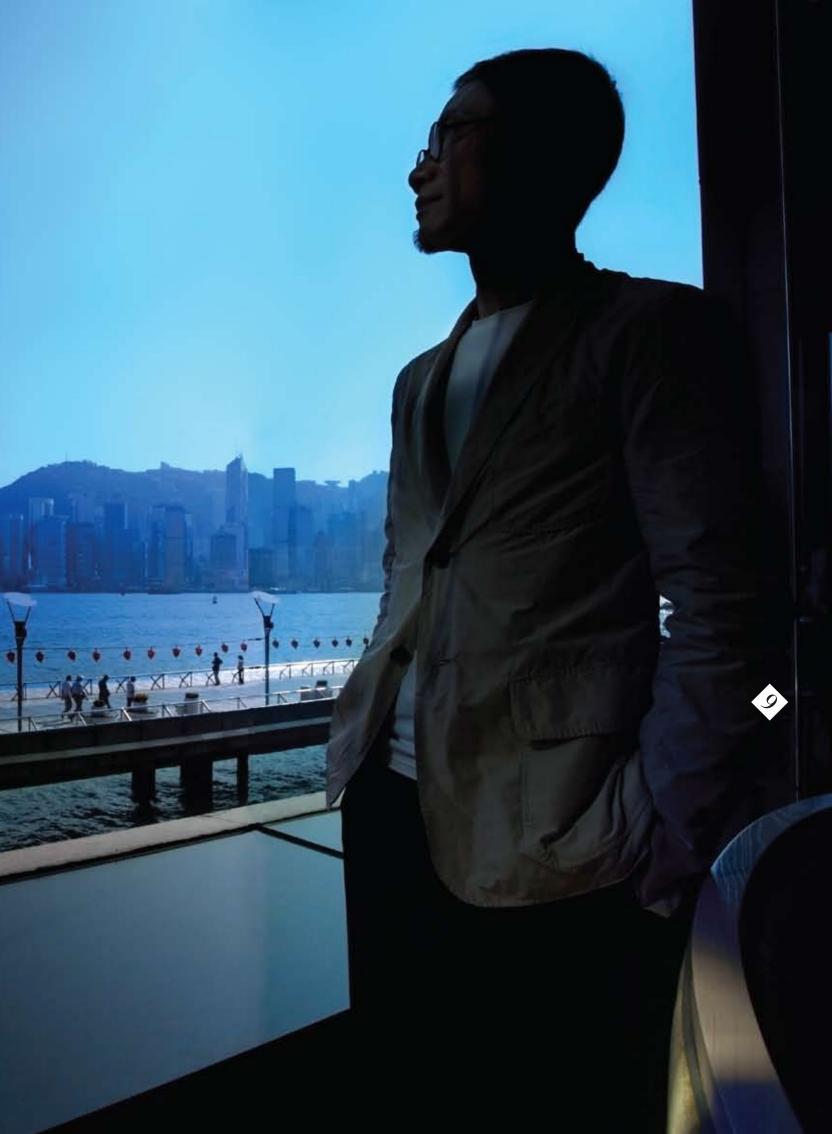
Founded in 1775, Royal Copenhagen is a brand known for its legacy of creating exclusive, high quality products of immaculate design and craftsmanship. Famed for maintaining and nobly renewing the traditions of classic, hand-made, hand-painted porcelain, Royal Copenhagen wares are venerated – and often collected – as cherished additions to the home.

ALAN CHAN HEST



Born in 1950, Alan Chan is one of an elite group of Hong Kong designers who have achieved international recognition. Chan has won more than 500 local and international awards,

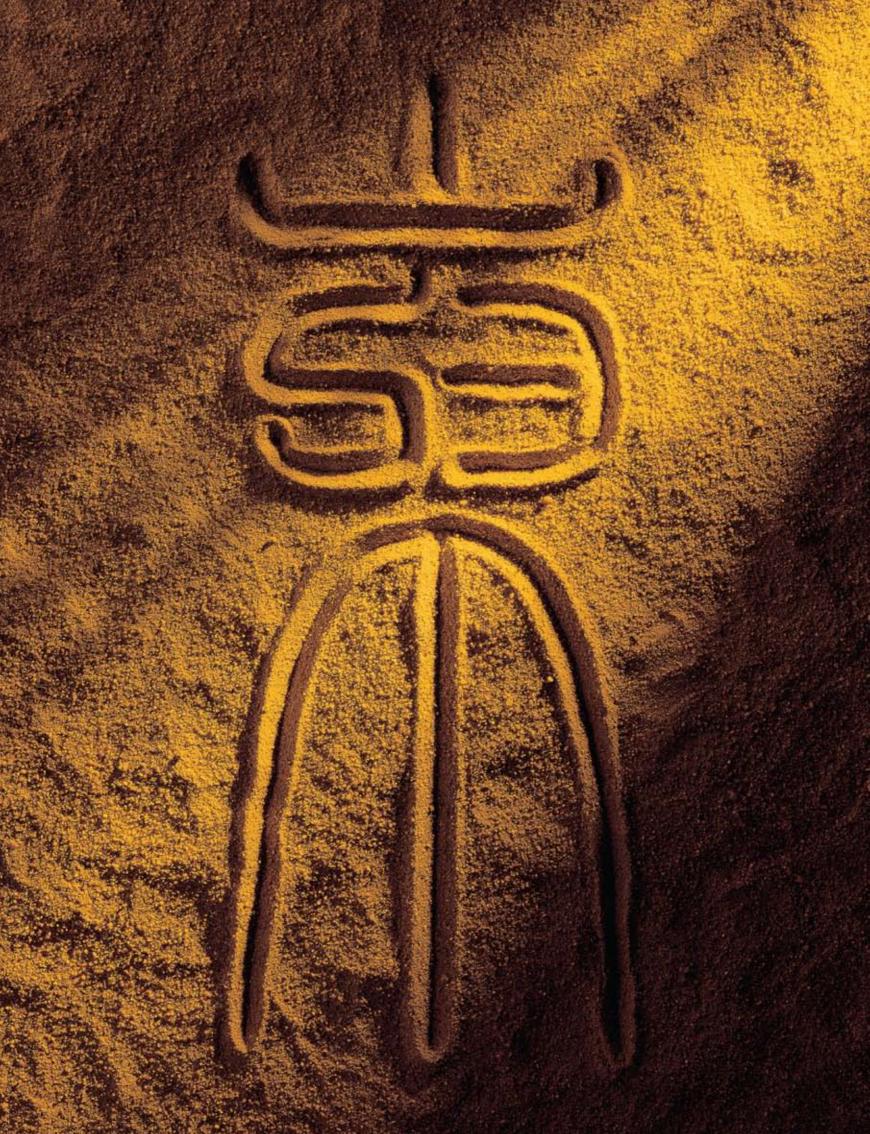
Including awards from Communication Arts, the New York Art Directors Club, D & AD, the Tokyo Type Directors Club, Japan Typography Association, the Hong Kong Designers Association and others. His company, Alan Chan Design Company, selected by New York's Graphis Press as one of the Ten Best design firms in the world, is responsible for a bewildering number of graphic, packaging, branding and interior work. An uncanny ability to deliver favourable commercial returns has helped Alan Chan Design Company become the firm of choice to many of Hong Kong's biggest names in industry. Notable works include: Coca Cola's Chinese logotype, Four Season's Hong Kong, Hong Kong International Airport, Fairwood, Maxim's, Evian Spa and countless others.





Walt Disney Company's "Journey to the East" 1997

In recognition of Hong Kong's 1997 reunification to China, Disney commissioned Chan to create a new visual identity, new characters and merchandisers to help celebrate the momentous occasion. Through referencing one of China's most acclaimed literary masterpieces, "Journey to the West," Chan turned the thematic direction on its head with "Journey to the East" by casting Disney characters such as Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck and Goofy, to play major protagonists from the novel and other Chinese fairy tales. Merchandise apparel, household products, dining ware and accessories were produced to resounding success.





Along the labyrinthine mesh of narrow streets and alleys, Buddhist temples heedlessly coexist with Catholic churches – both of which may have an equal number of devout followers. Its difficult not to avoid sounding cliché, but Hong Kong is epitomised by the idea of East meets West. In this dynamic centre of international trade and finance, the traditions of the past intermingle with the worldly luxuries of modern life. Culture and custom, based primarily under the Chinese routine, is seamlessly embedded with practises unique to Western culture. Eating congee (rice porridge) for breakfast is equally customary as it is to consume toast and eggs instead.

As a former Crown colony, Hong Kong retains much of the established institutional practises of a its former master. The education system, again British in basis, feature the English language as a major component of the syllabus. Officially, bilingualism is a regular part of everyday life. Likewise, school uniforms of British origin are mandatory dress. In other areas, the judicial and political systems owe lineage to British influence.

Within this context of a deeply ingrained duality, the people of Hong Kong have been profoundly influenced on many fronts. To some, questions of identity remain a perplexing proposition – though reunification with China has altered this significantly. To others, this East-West duality offers greater opportunities for choice, and a wider appreciation of the world. In terms of design, this aspect of local culture provides rich material wealth that enables unique and novel creation. The unique nature of this phenomenon grants vast possibility for constant interpretation and experimentation.

The fusion of Eastern and Western cultures is a dominant theme in Alan Chan's creative work. Before starting his design career, Chan spent ten years in the advertising industry. In the field, he learned valuable lessons tailoring messages for commercial success, as well as gain formidable insight into market needs and people psychology. This agency experience, where it was common to work amongst foreigners, also gave Chan a perspective of a different kind. He was afforded a firsthand view of how Westerners view Hong Kong and its Chinese culture. The experience has notably been pivotal in encouraging Chan to reinterpret culture using his own unique style, a style that distinguishes itself in its juxtaposition of the nostalgic with the contemporary, as well as the modern with the classic, offering a rediscovery of traditional Chinese art and culture from an intriguing perspective.

Despite having a style anchored in fusing China's old with today's new, Chan is largely opposed to broad generalisations of his work. Much of Chan's greatest design works – tangibly judged on measurements of commercial return – is much indebted to his approach and faith in the philosophies of marketing. An intuitive ability to feel the pulse of local tastes and reactions has been a pivotal element of Chan's uncanny ability to deliver worthwhile results. This magic touch has helped garner great esteem, rendering Chan and his design firm an unrivaled status.

A proud practitioner of the graphic arts, much of Chan's distinctive design efforts stem from the application of two-dimensional communication as a prime creative force. Towards the design of interior space, Chan has perfected a method that converts intense graphic treatments onto three-dimensional planes, to create rich forms of texture and flair.

Perhaps most demonstrative of Chan's mastery of branding and identity is the articulation of Alan Chan as a marketing device. Chan's own image prominently graced Japan's Kirin packaging as part of its line of tea beverages and cafes. Another of Chan's self-affirming endeavours is Alan Chan Creations, a line of personally designed t-shirts, stationery, teas and novelties grounded on the foundations of his unique East-meets-West style.

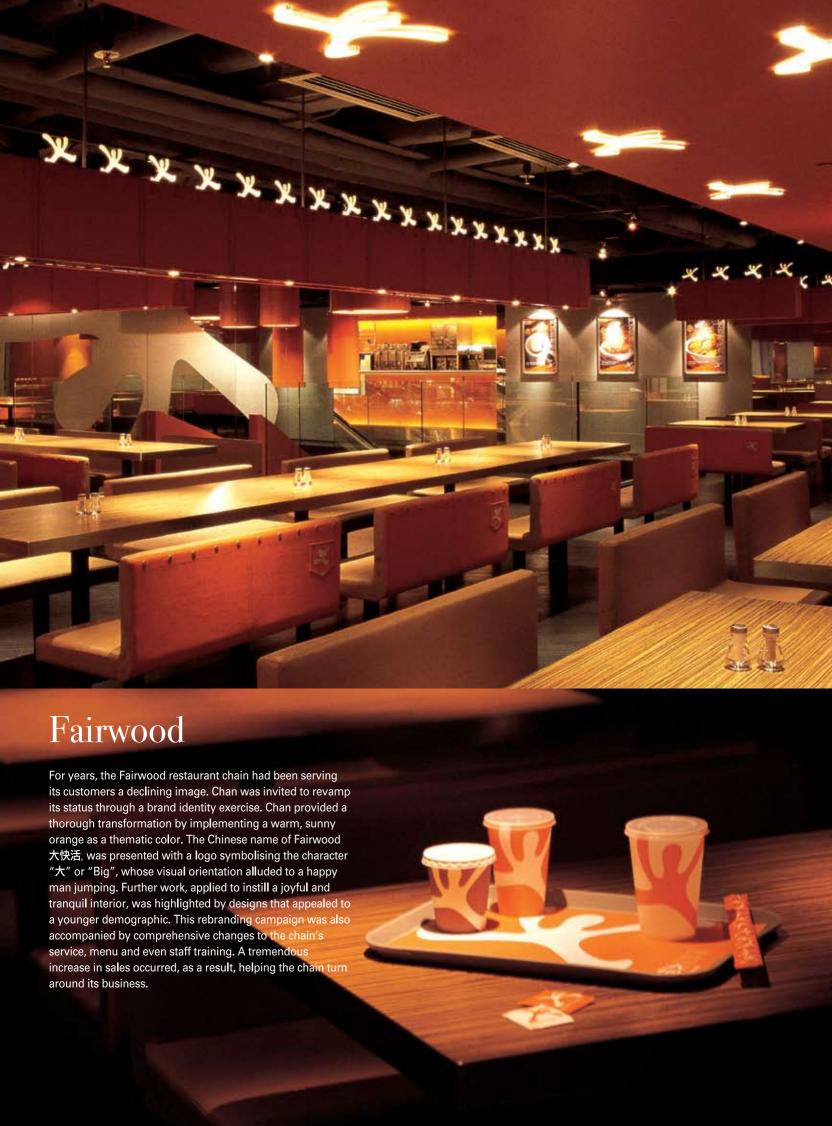
HONGKONG MYLOVE

Alan Chan interprets Salvatore Ferragamo's highly coveted silk scarves through the creation of four unique motifs. Inspired by Salvatore Ferragamo's rich heritage in fashion and craftsmanship, the use of star and bauhinia are representative of China and Hong Kong. Chan's persistent desires to anticipate market reactions are reflected in the monogram-like treatment of each icon. A repeating 'swirl' effect highlights Chan's response to consumer inclinations towards the monogram, whose incorporation assumes unity between the four designs. When combined the four individual pieces of Hong Kong My Love form one complete vision featuring the graphic of "+" (ten), while swirling lines form a pattern expressing the character "\mathbb{\mathbb{T}}" (return), both denoting the 10th anniversary of Hong Kong's reunification.













Visual Identity Design for "Kirin Mr. Chan Tea"

Under fierce competition in the oolong tea market, Kirin strived for distinction by introducing a new flavour of blended Chinese and English tea. As a recognised master of "East meets West" design, Chan was invited to serve as image director, spokesperson and even TV commercial talent to endorse this fusion tea. His designed likeness is boldly emblazoned on the tea's packaging.







Coca-Cola Chinese Logotype

The previous brand identity of Coca-Cola China had been in use for over 20 years. The client requested a rejuvenation as the previous Chinese calligraphy design did not complement the brand's global image. By incorporating the key elements (dynamic ribbon) from Coca-Cola's English logotype, Chan designed a new dynamic and contemporary Chinese logotype that shared similar form to the original design.

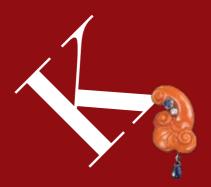




Salvatore Ferragamo

Salvatore Ferragamo is one of the world's foremost and best known of luxury brands carrying the "Made in Italy" moniker. Quality, contemporary elegance and creative innovation are the distinguishing features of every Salvatore Ferragamo product, and together with its craftwork traditions are what supplies the brand its ultimate worth and universally recognised authenticity. Founded in 1927, Salvatore Ferragamo is a world leader in creating and producing luxury shoes, leather goods, perfumes, accessories and apparel for men and women.

SPIRITER PROTECTION OF SPIRITE CHINASSES AND COMMENTS OF SPIRITE CHINASSES



A modern interpretation of Chinese heritage into a new language of trans-cultural appeal appropriately describes Kai Yin Lo's pioneering jewelry designs. A student of history at Cambridge and London Universities, Lo first entered the jewelry field when in 1979, under fortuitous circumstances, famed jeweler Cartier in New York acquired her designs. Since then, her highly distinguished jewelry work – initially consisting of an innovative mix of antique Chinese jade carvings connected by handbraiding – has evolved to incorporate a skillful blending of colourful semi-precious stones, carving a new direction in jewelry design that combines wearability with casual elegance.

Apart from her achievements in the realm of adornment, she is also a well-regarded expert on several fields of Chinese art and culture. Lo has edited four books ranging from Chinese furniture to the vernacular house and living environment. In 2007, the Hong Kong Design Centre awarded her the World's Outstanding Chinese Designer Award.



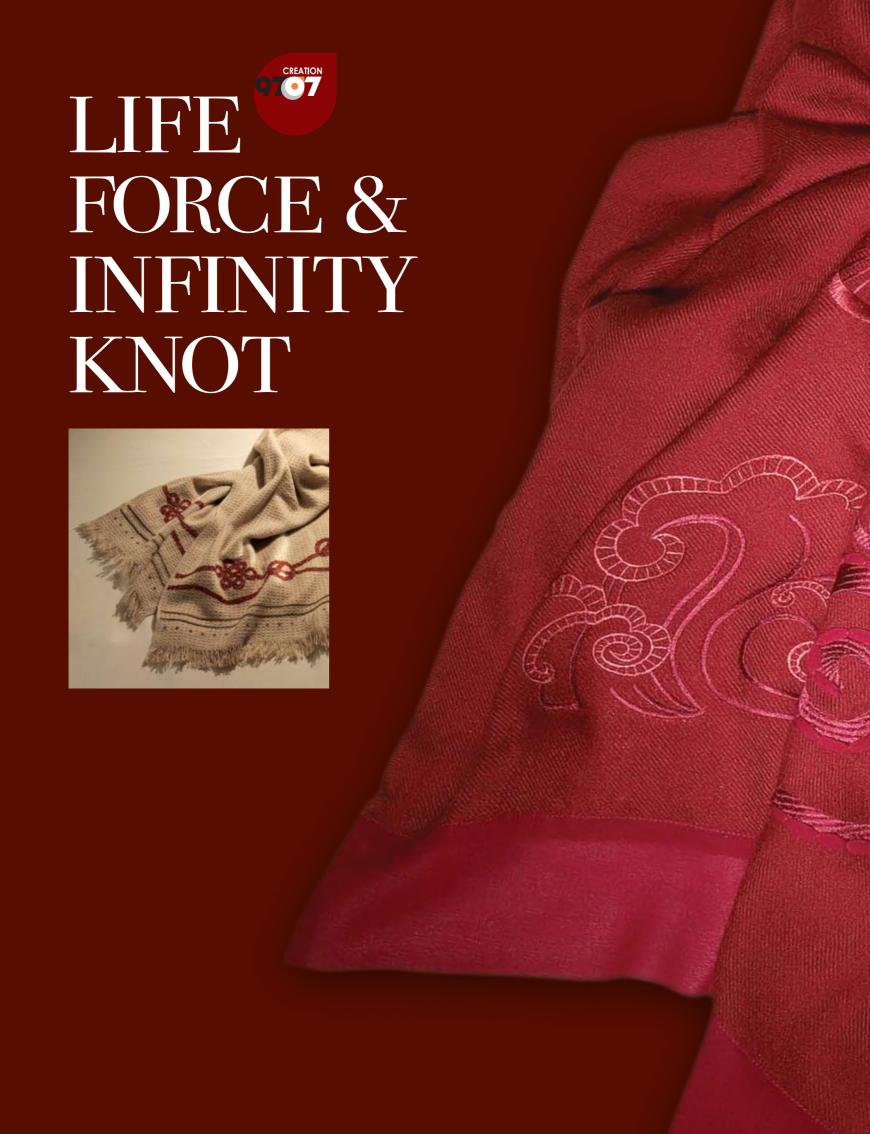
For nearly 30 years Kai Yin Lo has been incessant in her desire to reincarnate the spirit of culture, conveying the splendour of its scope and creative wealth. By interpreting the decorative motifs she absorbs meaning into her visual language. The simple, strong forms of symbols from China's antiquity, together with their attendant cosmic connotations, have often been the wellspring of her compelling inspirational work in jewellery.

As a Cambridge-trained historian and academic, she holds deep reverence for the flair of heritage, constantly searching and digging through China's fertile legacy. In the realm of design, few can relate their work with those of movements dating back thousands of years as readily and accurately as she does. Profound understanding of the past allows Lo to avoid imitation, enabling her to reinterpret past achievements in entirely contemporary terms. Perpetually astute, an appreciation of modern needs has secured her relevancy as a designer.

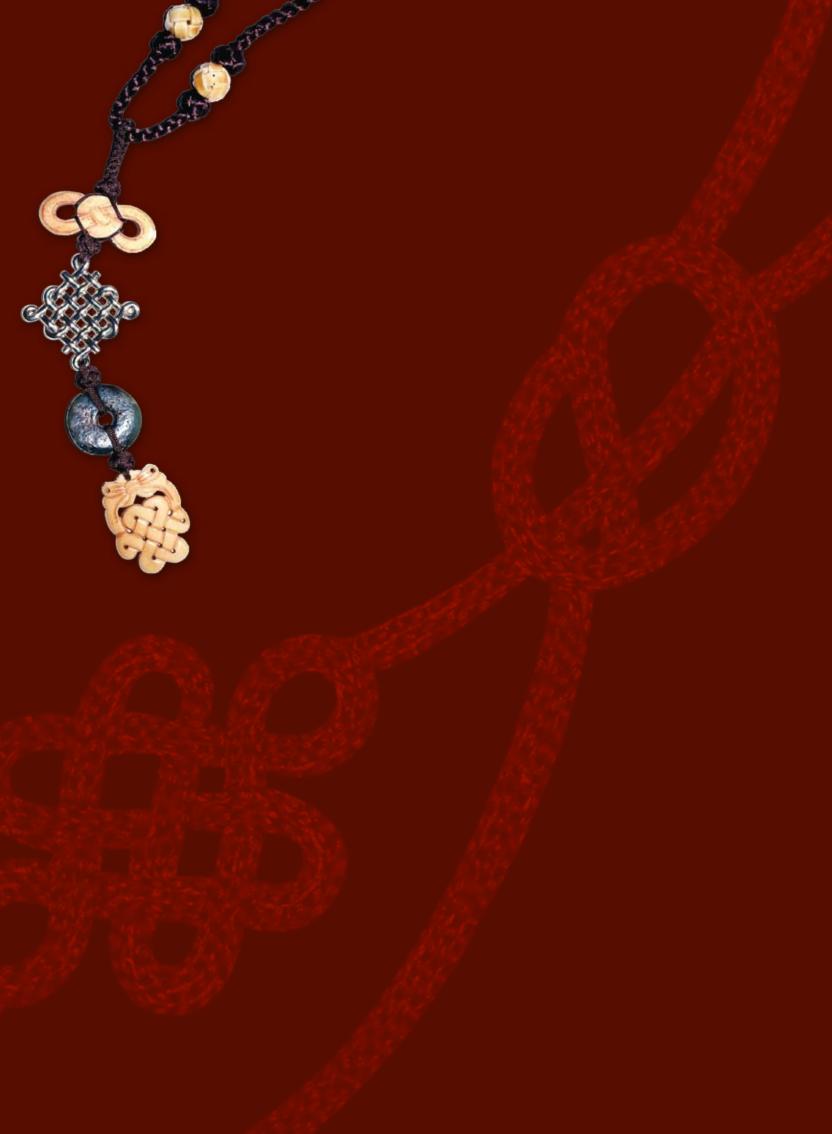
By bridging the gap between precious and fashion jewelry, Lo successfully reshaped the conventional view of the value and role of jewelry, as well as the possible direction of its design. The Taoist principle of "unequal equilibrium," achieving balance not by symmetry but by volume and colour accent, remains a defining element of her compelling body of work. Even with pearl shapes, her preference is for the baroque rather than the geometrically round. It is a tenet that manages to transform dichotomy and divergence into harmonious beauty.

More recently, she has experimented with using the colour palettes of semi-precious stones to establish designs based on tonal gradation, a trademark that has increasingly become vogue.

Experiments with China's rich heritage of iconography are, as expected, customarily employed to capture and flaunt the unique spiritual beauty of Lo's jewellery creations. The lingzhi is a classic symbol denoting good fortune, immortality and qi, the life force that suffuses the universe with energy. Its form, resembling a mushroom, is often treated visually as a well wishing "ruyi" or the auspicious clouds – so ubiquitously seen throughout the Chinese cosmos. Another of Lo's favoured motifs are the "infinity knot" and other knot variations. Fluid in shape and abundant in meaning, knots are a universal sign of bondage and linkage. In different variations some can be traced from its Buddhist origin (it is one of the eight Buddhist emblems) in India via China to Islamic Middle East to Catholic Europe via the Silk Road. This passage of cultural understanding makes them exceptionally meaningful. An unceasing obligation to experimentation and refinement ensures that these preferred motifs, along with others, are used copiously, and in innumerable variation and material.













SHANGHAI TANG

Shanghai Tang's products are renowned for combining traditional Chinese design and motifs with a contemporary sensibility. Shanghai Tang's design tenet is to revitalise Chinese design by interweaving it with the dynamism of the 21st century. The result is a vibrant and witty fusion of "East meets West."

Published by Hong Kong Design Centre 2008

Editor: Ryo Yeung Concept and Design: Amy Chow

Layout and Artwork: David Chan, Alvin Wong, Wong Wing Sze

Photography: © Josiah Leung

© of all other photographs, their respective designers/organisations

Creation 9707 Team: Anita Tsang, Tony Sin, Emily Tung,

Susanne Tong, Rachael Cheung

Printing: Asia One Printing Limited

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

Hong Kong Design Centre 1/F InnoCentre, 72 Tat Chee Avenue Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong E-mail: info@hkdesigncentre.org

Website: www.hkdesigncentre.org

Printed in China, 2008



The Hong Kong Design Centre is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping local designers and businesses realize their full potential. Through a diverse range of year-round programs and events, the Hong Kong Design Centre takes a leadership role that preaches to government, industry, business partners, educational institutions and private organizations about design as a strategic, value-enhancing constituent of business. Towards the wider public audience, the Hong Kong Design Centre tirelessly seeks to inculcate a greater appreciation of the ways design contributes to a better quality of life.