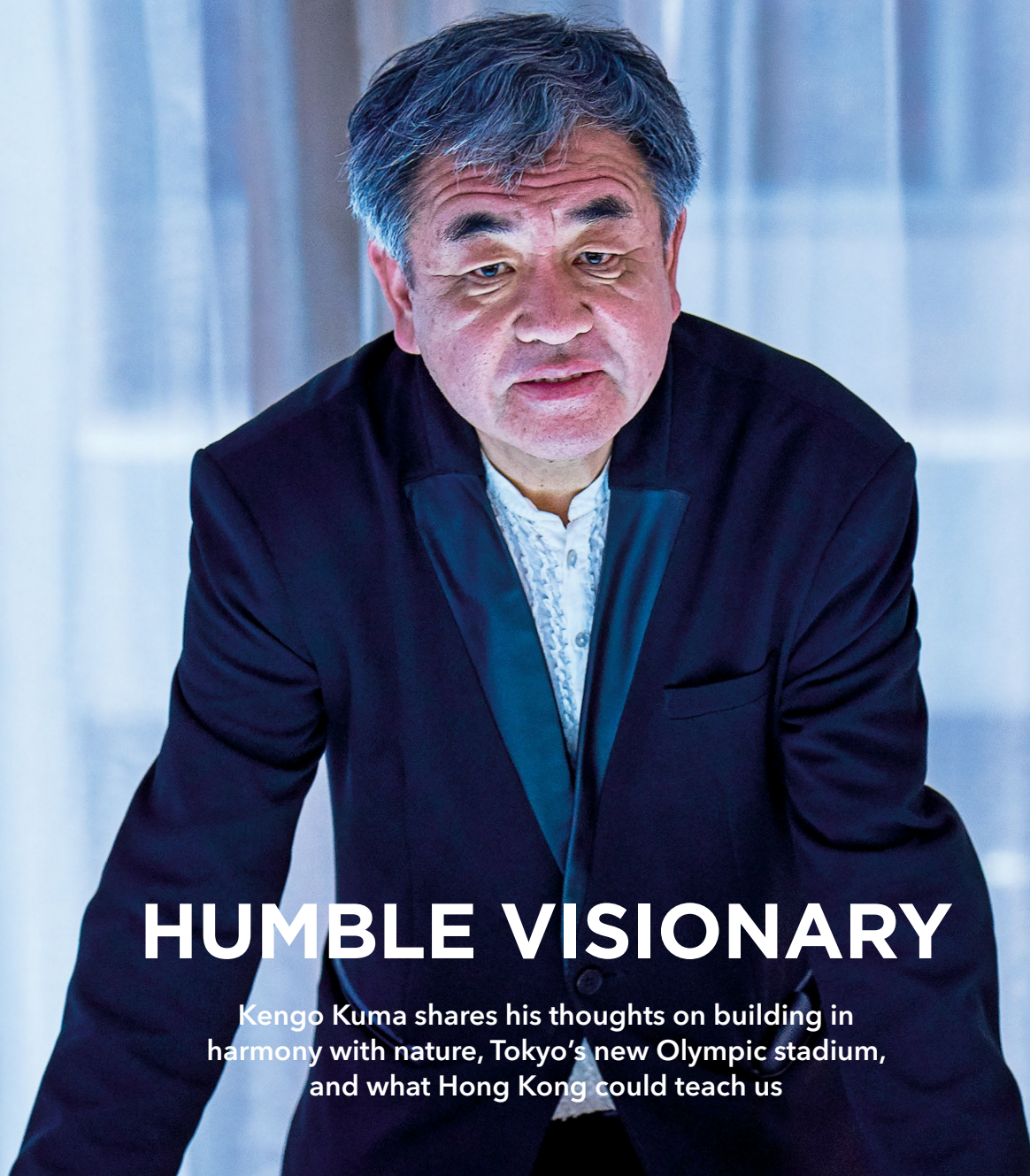


perspective

June 2017

INSPIRING ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

www.perspectiveglobal.com



HUMBLE VISIONARY

Kengo Kuma shares his thoughts on building in harmony with nature, Tokyo's new Olympic stadium, and what Hong Kong could teach us

+ FOCUS: FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It's not all about what's on the plate: restaurant designers are becoming increasingly daring with interiors that draw on some surprising inspirations

A Smile for Amsterdam's students
—p.20

Four Seasons Residences, Bangkok
—p.24

Amphithéâtre Cogeco, Quebec
—p.26

Lincoln Square and Riverwalk, London
—p.36

Castle One by V, Hong Kong
—p.40

JW Marriott's new Vietnam resort
—p.47

A relaxing time at Lazy Cats, Bali
—p.74

Steakhouse chic for STK Toronto
—p.82

By the numbers: At Six hotel, Stockholm
—p.106



HK\$48
US\$18
€15



The designers used strong geometric motifs inspired by the Art Deco period, with ink-brush graffiti wall fabrics and glass tops, stripes in the upholstery, laser-cut veneer on the ceiling and white step frames for shadows

AT HOME IN THE ROARING TWENTIES

If F Scott Fitzgerald's Jay Gatsby were living in Hong Kong, he would feel right at home amid the Art Deco styling of the new Castle One by V

TEXT:

Michele Koh Morollo

PHOTOGRAPHY:

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Real-estate developer and management firm V Group found its niche in Hong Kong with upscale service apartments and hotels. Creating and operating boutique serviced apartments and luxury hotels since 2006, the group has won numerous awards from the industry.

This year, it revealed Castle One by V, Hong Kong's first long-term rental luxury residence. Comprising a 30-storey residential tower set atop a three-level commercial podium just steps away from the Mid-Levels Escalator, Castle One includes 112 stylish residences that range from 401sq-ft one-bedroom apartments to 1,050sq-ft duplexes and triplexes. Rich in Art Deco motifs, it brings the glamour of the Roaring Twenties to the Mid-Levels.

In line with what's expected of full-service luxury condominiums in Hong Kong, the property is equipped with a 23m outdoor swimming pool with a Jacuzzi and sun deck, fitness centre, VIP function rooms with kitchen facilities, a garden lounge, private dining facilities, and an open-air terrace.

"This is the first custom-built bespoke V building, and we hope it will set a new benchmark for the brand," says V Group founder Vivien Chan, who hired Hong Kong architecture studio Philip Liao & Partners to work on the building.

Chan's brief was "Art Deco-inspired metropolitan living", and Philip Liao & Partners met this theme with a curving Art Deco-inspired high-rise with a warm facade of limestone and bronze cladding. For the finishings within the building, the designers used plenty of stone, bronze and scalloped-wood details. "The whole building is a synergy of Art Deco elements," says Chan.

Two signature vintage pieces were incorporated to ground the project in Chan's chosen theme – a 1920s parcel-gilt antique wrought-iron gate acquired at Sotheby's used in the lobby, and *Car Window* by San Francisco artist Jhina Alvarado, displayed at the entrance of the terrace garden.



A neutral earth palette sets the tone in the bedrooms

For the interior design, Chan hired Hong Kong studio PLY Union, which wove the 'Art Deco metropolitan-living' theme beautifully into the clubhouse and lobby.

"The design for the reception and clubhouse takes its inspiration from the 1920s Sotheby's antique gate in the lobby. We reimagined what a stately Art Deco home might look like if it were applied to the context of a residential clubhouse," says PLY Union co-founder Raymond Chan, who combined modern and vintage elements in the interiors to create an atmosphere that is classy yet relaxing, highly functional yet indulgent.

The reception desk gives way to the library, and letterboxes are carefully integrated into a secret chamber in front of the lifts that lead up to the apartment units, for a sleek, streamlined appearance.

"The thematic elements came together harmoniously when we started to reconfigure the space," says Chan. "Residents transitioning from one area of the building to another will experience completely different spatial qualities. In the clubhouse, we used the iconic gate relief art in the seating area to create den-like seating areas."

The lounge on the club floor, which is located close to the swimming pool, serves both as a pre-function area for private parties and a place for residents to lounge with a book. For the VIP function rooms, Chan integrated a communal kitchen, a living room and two terraces.

V Group founder Vivien Chan describes Castle One as akin to walking through the set of a Hollywood Golden Age film noir





"We created a residential feel for the multifunctional VIP function venue, so a big group of family and friends can gather comfortably together in one place. The rock garden and the courtyard add a soothing, introspective landscape to this section of the project," says Chan who describes being inside Castle One as akin to walking through the set of a Hollywood Golden Age film noir.

"Enormous efforts were made to create different monochromatic shades through the use of patterns and textures. We paid homage to the strong geometrical motifs of the Art Deco period by using herringbone mosaic in mother-of-pearl and white marble, stone parquet, graphical wall panels in ebony-toned fluted wood, handcrafted resin sunburst artwork, ink brush graffiti wall fabrics and glass tops, stripes in the upholstery, laser-cut veneer on the ceiling and white step frames for shadows," says Chan, who is happy with the overall feel of serenity and drama that the clean lines and textural contrasts evoke.

All the 112 apartment units are fitted with full-height windows, bespoke joinery, Varenna kitchens with Miele appliances, and Kohler and Claybrook bathware. The apartments are luxuriously appointed with Molteni & C built-in and loose furniture items, while the bathrooms have in-wall televisions.

"Drawing itself apart from other traditional serviced apartments, Castle One by V will be available for long-term rental, and will appeal to people who, like us, treasure attention to detail and quality," says Anna-Mae Koo, director of V Group. ●

Above
The design for the reception and clubhouse takes its inspiration from the 1920s antique gate in the lobby

Facing page
The penthouse dining room and Varenna kitchen is a symphony of clean lines and a bright white palette, fitted out with Miele appliances

Everything on the table

Australian creative design outfit Biasol works on everything from architecture to product design, but its restaurant projects, which integrate elements from different design fields, are making the biggest impression

TEXT:
Michele Koh Morollo
PHOTOGRAPHY:
© Paul Winch Furness and Ari Hatzis

Last year, Biasol's work for Melbourne cafe Kitty Burns won the design firm the Restaurant & Bar Award in the Best Cafe category, more proof that the studio is becoming a name to reckon with when it comes to hospitality branding and design. *Perspective* speaks to the studio's founder Jean-Pierre Biasol to find out what it takes to get plates flying out of the kitchen.

Below and right
Jean-Pierre Biasol created a continuous pattern of computational geometry inspired by Delaunay triangulation for Melbourne's Little Hugh





The most eye-catching feature in the space is the Soviet Constructivism-style mural with unique symbols and geometrical shapes

Asian restaurants are a dime a dozen in most global cities. From the slick, minimalist style of David Chang’s Momofuku restaurants in New York City and Toronto, to the imperial-looking Royal China in London’s Baker Street, it seems Asian restaurant interiors don’t stray too far from one of two looks: bare bones Zen-inspired with neutral tones, or flashy, old-school banquet style with plenty of gold and lacquer.

But what does an Asian restaurant look like in countries that do not have as long a history with Asian dining as the world’s metropolitan capitals?

Last year, in Kiev, Ukraine, Kitaika – a colourful, quirky, casual Asian diner – opened on Zlatoustovska Street in the city centre, right behind the Ukrainian national circus. Serving light, modern, Asian street-food-influenced dishes, the

65-seater restaurant’s refreshing, youthful and somewhat carnival-like decor offers a surreal and exotic perspective on Asian-themed dining.

The duo responsible for transforming this 150 sq-m restaurant into the vibrant and dynamic ‘place to be’ spot that it has become are Ukrainian architects Artem Vahrin and Katya Zuieva of three-year-old Ukrainian bureau, AKZ Architectura. Specialising in commercial design, the bureau has worked on a variety of projects since its conception, and has since grown into a 19-member strong outfit who are not afraid to break conventions and try out new ideas.

Upon entering the restaurant, one is immediately perked up by the bold, Fauvist colours: fire-engine red, powdery blue, orange and turquoise that come together in a delightful way best described as ordered chaos.

At Kitaika, the designers blended elements from Kiev’s bohemian, nomadic street culture with oriental motifs and the comforts of a modern restaurant



"Kitaika is inspired by the streets of Asia where people enjoy dishes spontaneously made by local vendors," says Vahrin. "On the floor, we see paving stones. Around us is an open kitchen, where diners get the opportunity to observe the cooking process. Wall mounted 'street lamps', garlands of exposed light bulbs and Chinese Revolution-style posters take us to the streets of China."

The most eye-catching feature in the space is the Soviet Constructivism-style mural with unique symbols and geometrical shapes on one of the walls. Graffiti letterings are scribbled over this mural to symbolise the change that street culture helped to bring about, particularly in former socialist republics such as China and the former USSR, of which Ukraine was once a part.

The restroom is housed in a dome-shaped structure with a glass block divider wall separating the structure from the dining area. A shorter version of this glass block wall is repeated as a boundary between the open-concept kitchen and bar and the public dining spaces.

According to Zuieva, the invitation to work on Kitaika made her and Artem recall memories of their childhoods when they spent their days roaming free through the streets of Kiev. The project also made them think about the many exciting stories they heard from globetrotting friends who had lived and travelled in China and Southeast Asia.

"We took our impressions of the food streets of Beijing, Shanghai and other Asian cities, and adapted aspects of these streets into the restaurant. We used elements like an open kitchen, pin bar, graffiti, squama patterned paving stones, bright blue free-standing washstands and other items to bring the liveliness of the streets into the restaurant," says Zuieva.

A hip, thrift store appeal was introduced into the space with items such as wooden stools, industrial-style gun-powder steel pendant lamps, red Chinese paper lanterns and a shelf of succulents. The result is a venue that melds elements from Kiev's bohemian, nomadic street culture with oriental motifs and the comforts of a modern restaurant.



According to the designers, Kitaika was inspired by the streets of Asia, where people enjoy dishes made on the spot by local vendors

"When designing a restaurant, we always think first about the concept and function of the space before we consider the stylistic elements," says Vahrin. "It is most important that we understand for whom we are designing and how the space should serve the people. And after, we think about how to make it beautiful."

With Kitaika, not only has AKZ Architectura met the functional requirements of its client, it has also created an intriguing venue that allows diners to escape to a mythical version of Asia. "The moment guests open the door and enter the restaurant, they feel as if they have left Kiev and travelled to another part of the world," says Zuieva. ●