



SPECIAL

Hotels – Welcome to Paradise

TRENDS

Designer Chats – Sebastian Cox, Toan Nguyen

FOOD & SPACE

Expo 2015 and Creative Cooking



Studiobesuch bei Toan Nguyen

FORM WAHREN



Im besten Fall bedarf Design keiner Erklärung und sollte für sich selbst stehen. Produktdesigner Toan Nguyen strebt diese Simplizität nicht nur bei Möbelentwürfen an. Für sein jüngstes Produkt ist er auf Promotion-Tour.

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PEOPLE | Toan Nguyen, 1969 in Paris geboren, schloss sein Industrial Design Studium an der ENSCI-Les Ateliers in Paris 1995 ab. Nach Stationen in Paris, Barcelona und Mailand arbeitete er jahrelang als Designchef für Antonio Citterio, bevor er 2008 sein eigenes Studio eröffnete. Zu seinen Kunden gehören Busnelli, Dedon, Fendi Casa, Lema, Moroso, Varaschin, Viccarbe und Walter Knoll.

TOAN NGUYEN |

Vergangene Woche war er in Shanghai. Nächste Woche ist Toan Nguyen in Chicago. Bereits für die Entwicklung von 'Ino' war der französische Designer viel unterwegs und pendelte zwischen seinem Büro in Mailand, dem Standort Laufen und der Produktion in Polen hin und her. Mit einem Augenzwinkern erklärt Nguyen "Meine Badkollektion nenne ich die 'Ino journey'" und erläutert die Herausforderungen des Projekts. "Es passiert nicht alle Tage, dass man die Chance erhält, mit einem neu entwickelten Material zu experimentieren. So nahm ich das Angebot des Schweizer Herstellers Laufen gern an." Zusammen mit Konstantin Grcic, der ebenfalls beauftragt worden war, und dem Entwicklungsteam von Laufen lernte er die Eigenschaften von SaphirKeramik schätzen und lotete sie aus. Die Verarbeitung ist dieselbe, wie bei herkömmlicher Keramik. Der neue Werkstoff ist jedoch härter,

dabei leicht, biegefest und doch widerstandsfähiger. Die Möglichkeit einer extrem dünnwandigen Verarbeitung verschob die bisherigen Dimensionen von Waschtischen – das Fassungsvermögen hatte sich vergrößert. Der Keramikwerkstoff eröffnet so neue Proportionen. "Herausfordernd war sicherlich, dass es keine Referenzprodukte gab – wir würden die ersten auf dem Markt sein", erklärt Nguyen. Hervorragend fand er den sehr offenen Austausch mit Grcic. Jeder arbeitete an seinem Produktdesign, aber nicht hinter verschlossenen Türen, wie er es auch schon erlebt hat, sondern im ständigen Dialog. Nguyen erinnert sich: "Es war ein weißes Blatt, das wir in einer Art Workshop gemeinsam bespielten."

Autorin: Katharina Feuer
Fotos: Laufen, Porträt: Rainer Hosch



Toan Nguyen interpretiert mit 'Ino' die klassische Waschtischform neu: Zart, schwerelos und mit einer schlichten Linienführung. Dennoch ist die Wandung extrem stabil, die Konsole ist nahtlos integriert.

Project management and construction works: Nüssli, Roth near Nuremberg
Ministry responsible for the participation of the Federal Republic of Germany: Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi), department VC4 – fair policy/Expo participations
Implementation company: Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH
Area of pavilion site: 4913 m²
Exhibition area: 2680 m²
Thematic fields: water, soil, climate, biodiversity, foods, Garden of Ideas
Restaurants: 2
Visitor capacity exhibition, total: up to 3 million
Percentage of the total number of Expo visitors: up to 10%
Final show: 12–15 minutes
Overall budget: 48 million euros (gross), of that 31 million euros for design and construction
 Operation, accompaniment and cultural programme: 17 million euros
www.expo2015-germany.de

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Of luminous squids and chrysanthemum charcoal

Space and Material series 23



Cooking and designing are firmly linked in many areas of Japanese tradition. Aesthetic preparation and presentation play a central role. Is it any surprise, then, that Japanese designers have a more modern take on eating?

It is not only since he presented a lamp made out of backlit dried squids at Tokyo Design Week in 2011 that Akitoshi Imafuku has been enacting restaurants of a special kind through his firm supermaniac Inc located in Tokyo and Osaka. He inaugurated his new piece of work in Osaka at the start of 2015, which he implemented together with his partner Nobuaki Suzuki. The task consisted of con-

verting an erstwhile nabemono restaurant once dedicated to traditional stews and soups. The culinary focus was also to change along with the new design, i.e. the previous owner's son conceived a grill restaurant with the name Nen that lends a modern interpretation to Japanese cooking.

Charcoal as an aesthetic medium

In Japan, charcoal is a traditional element that plays an important role when grilling meals or even when preparing tea. They use bincho-tan, a special charcoal that is obtained from ubame wood, a type of holly oak. The wood is burned according to a traditional method and, as charcoal, is divided into small pieces. The material is very hard, does not blacken and has the finest of pores, which is why it is also why it is also used to filter water or to improve the air. In this restaurant, the pieces of charcoal measuring around 25 centimetres in length serve not only to prepare meals, but also as an aesthetic facade design element. As an envelopment that looks like a textile, they are layered around the existing building, which is similar to a pavilion, more than 3,000 single charcoal bricks, which are braced into black metal frames by means of over 2 mm thick steel cables. The pieces of wood were perforated, coated with polyurethane and dried before hanging them up. A thick traditional cord is additionally wrapped around the pieces of wood, thus adding a graphical component. As the charcoal bricks are natural products and therefore all have different shapes, they were fastened locally with great care. From time immemorial, fish, fruit and vegetables have been sun-dried in this way to make them durable and to preserve their aromas. The image of the charcoal bricks that hangs around the building is a reminder of this. At night, LED light boxes illuminate them from below. In darkness, the just less than 4 m high "charcoal curtain" appears even nobler and more minimalist than in daytime.

Nostalgia and a surprise

Kiku-zumi, a further type of charcoal that is manufactured in a traditional manner, is also used as a decorative element in the interior. Its name means "chrysanthemum charcoal". Thanks to its special incisions and the carbonisation process, decorative cracks form on its face sides that are

similar to a blossom. Such "blossom" segments are installed in backlit light boxes, whose rear sides are fully mirrored and whose front sides are mirrored with peephole glass. Although you can look inside the boxes, the view gets caught in their interior. It is as if the mirror were infinite because the characterful charcoal objects are enacted in contrast with the mirrors. In this way, nature, tradition and the modern are united surprisingly and harmoniously at the same time. In the dining room, mirrors in wooden frames alternate with textile-covered wall surfaces. The restaurant's interior on the whole takes a back seat and remains minimalist. 54 seats are spread over long benches with single tables and a separate room with a private atmosphere. The architects formulated their goal as reinterpreting traditional techniques while surprising visitors and filling them with nostalgia. They have succeeded in doing so with this refined place where you can eat in style. Author: Christiane Sauer



Our author **Christiane Sauer** is an architect and materials specialist, working on the topics of material and space both

in practice and teaching. She founded the 'formade' studio for architecture and materials, is a partner of Lülingsauer Architekten and professor for textile and surface design at the Berlin Weissensee School of Art. Since 2006, she has been the author of md's 'New Materials' and 'Space and Material' series. Her most recent book entitled "Made O – Neue Materialien für Architektur und Design" was published by Gestalten Verlag, Berlin, in 2010. www.formade.com, www.luelingsauer.com

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Respecting form

A visit to the studio of Toan Nguyen



At best design needs no explanation and should stand on its own. Product designer Toan Nguyen aspires such simplicity not only when it comes to furniture design. He is promoting his latest product on a special tour.

Last week he was in Shanghai. Next week Toan Nguyen will be in Chicago. Already when he developed 'Ino', the French designer travelled a lot and commuted between his Milan studio, the Laufén site and the production facilities in Poland. With a twinkle in his eye Nguyen says: "I call my bathroom collection the 'Ino journey'", and goes on to explain the challenges of the project. "It doesn't happen every day that you get an opportunity to experiment with a newly developed material. So I gladly accepted the offer of Swiss manufacturer Laufén." In co-operation with Konstantin Grcic, who had also been commissioned, and the Laufén development team he came to appreciate the characteristics of SaphirKeramik and explored them. The material is processed like traditional ceramics. But the new material is harder and at the same time lightweight; it has a high flexural strength and is nevertheless more resistant. The possibility to produce extremely thin-walled shapes shifted the previous dimensions of wash basins – capacity had been enlarged. Consequently this ceramic material leads to new proportions. Nguyen explains: "It was certainly a challenge that there were no reference products; we were to be the first on the market." He says that the open exchange with Grcic was excellent. Each of them worked on his own product design, but not behind closed doors, as he had experienced in former cases, but in a continuing dialogue. Thinking back he says: "It was like a white sheet of paper on which we jointly played like in a workshop." With 'Ino', Toan Nguyen interprets the traditional wash-basin shape in a new way. It is delicate, weightless and has pure and simple lines. The walls are nevertheless extremely sturdy, and the console is seamlessly integrated.

Author: Katharina Feuer



Toan Nguyen was born in Paris in 1969 and wound up his industrial design studies at ENSCI-Les Ateliers in Paris in 1995.

Following stints in Paris, Barcelona and Milan, he worked as chief designer for Antonio Citterio for several years before opening his own studio in 2008. Among his clients are Busnelli, Dedon, Fendi Casa, Lema, Moroso, Varaschin, Viccarbe and Walter Knoll.

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A devotee to workmanship

A visit to the studio of Sebastian Cox



Sebastian Cox is a sought-after furniture designer committed to the sustainability theme. Together with artist Laura Ellen Bacon he tested a different kind of wood-working – gropingly and tentatively. The result is the 'Invisible Store of Happiness' sculpture.

It was a perfect match: they admire the other's work, and they liked the idea to co-operate, in the scope of Clerkenwell Design Week, once again with AHEC, the trade organization that represents American hardwood companies. Sebastian Cox and Laura Ellen Bacon jointly created a three-metre high installation made of American maple and cherrywood – the 'Invisible Store of Happiness'. The design process took them more than two months. Because, contrary to their idea that co-operation would be simple, seeing that both of them work with wood, their approaches turned out to be very different. Laura weaves art objects with willow twigs, and Sebastian makes hand-made furniture of hardwood. But how do you make seemingly flowing shapes out of hardwood? Under steam. And with patience, bending, groping, swearing and pleasure in experimenting. The 'Invisible Store of Happiness' stands for a rich

corpus of insights and a lot of 'soul'. Designs by Sebastian Cox are mostly simple, but not trivial. They are subtle, thought-through and processed with a high degree of workmanship. It annoys the young designer that rediscovered craftsmanship is traded like a luxury, only available to a solvent clientele. For future projects he can envisage serial production with larger quantities, which does not contradict, however, his perception of sustainability. Already when studying, Cox was concerned about the careful use of resources, and his demand for comprehensive regenerative production consequently led to the founding of his own studio. Now he is one of the most well-known designers of Great Britain, and by far not the only one who is interested in the ecological footprint of his products.

Author: Katharina Feuer



Immediately after graduating in furniture design and craftsmanship at Lincoln University,

Sebastian Cox founded his own studio in London in 2010. Since then, the designer, born in 1986, has made a name of himself in the trade. Cox stands for sustainability and material efficiency. His latest project is the 'Sebastian Cox Kitchen' for deVol.

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A place of longing within reach

Resort & Spa in Venice



Deceleration, sustainability, tranquility and touristic Venice – how does that fit together? Extremely well, seen from the waterfront of offshore Isola di Sacco Sessola. The Matteo Thun + Partners architects' studio found an ingenious solution for the task of transforming the existing listed buildings into a luxury resort.