

METRO

VOL. 11 NO. 1

home

**GLOBAL
STYLE+
FILIPINO
DESIGN**

& Entertaining

100+

**OF THE MOST
COVETED HOME
ACCESSORIES**

MANILA FAME
THE DESIGN AND
LIFESTYLE EVENT

MANILA'S GO-TO
PLACES FOR THE
FINEST EUROPEAN
FURNITURE

TIPS ON HOW
TO UPDATE
YOUR ROOMS
IN ANY STYLE
+WHERE TO SHOP
FOR KEY LOOKS

THE IT LIST:
IN CONVERSATION
WITH **36** FURNITURE
DESIGN STARS

ANN PAMINTUAN, BENJI REYES,
BUDJI LAYUG, EPOCH, ERIC PARAS,
ITO KISH, KENNETH COBONPUE,
MILO NAVAL, VITO SELMA AND MORE

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Sitting area in a home that showcases the Philippines' finest home accessories from Manila FAME, Design for Life, p. 54

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MILO SOGUECO

Metro Home and Entertaining is available online at zinio.com.

Source it at Manila FAME

Manila FAME is Asia's only design and lifestyle event that caters to a wide variety of exceptionally handcrafted products from furniture and furnishings to holiday décor and fashion. It is the only event in the Philippines approved by the UFI (Union des Foires Internationales), the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry.

Find endless Inspirations and innovations of products with unparalleled design style crafted by Filipino artisans' skilled hands.

DESIGN Philippines is a branding initiative that positions the Philippines as a sourcing destination for finely crafted products for the world market. It is a design movement that nurtures and celebrates the creativity and originality of a globally competitive and passionate community of Filipino designers and craftsmen.

As a movement, **DESIGN PHILIPPINES** has taken shape and now speaks with recognized authority in the world of design.



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MANILA FAME

THE DESIGN
& LIFESTYLE
EVENT

2014

14 - 17 MARCH

16 - 19 OCTOBER

SMX Convention Center
Metro Manila, Philippines

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Championing Filipino

EVERYBODY LOVES A LIST. Whether it's an enumeration of the best and worst dressed at an awards show or the biggest newsmakers or ways to improve our luck, a list is a shorthand way of digesting the loads and loads of information that bombard us all.

For this issue, we have put together our Best Furnishings list, a best hits compilation of the designers and manufacturers who we feel truly represent the energy and creativity of the local furniture industry. And the crux of the matter is that beautiful furniture makes a beautiful home. Essentially, our goal was to give our dear readers a simple manual on how to find the best possible local pieces for their homes.

We have gathered a mix of young and old names, and we have chosen their current pieces in a photographic portfolio that was so much fun to work on. Again, we were bowled over by the range of talent that we have in this country, and we will never tire of championing Filipino design stars. After all, if we study our national heroes and our famous writers to strengthen our feelings of identity, isn't it also just as important to know the creative people who visually represent our hopes and aspirations as a modern nation?

And in a similar vein, in the past few decades, there has been no bigger champion of Filipino talent than CITEM, the Center for International Trade and Expositions and Missions, which has been putting up Manila FAME and positioning the Philippines as the region's design hub.

We are happy to announce that we are partnering with CITEM for the 58th edition of Manila FAME. This collaboration is a true meeting of minds.

All of us here in **Metro Home** are so deeply grateful and appreciative that CITEM has included us in this important showcase. We feel that by putting a spotlight on the incredible artistry and ingenuity of our local artisans and design geniuses, we can play a small part in putting the Philippines on the radar of the architecture and interiors worlds. Join us on this exciting, game-changing journey.



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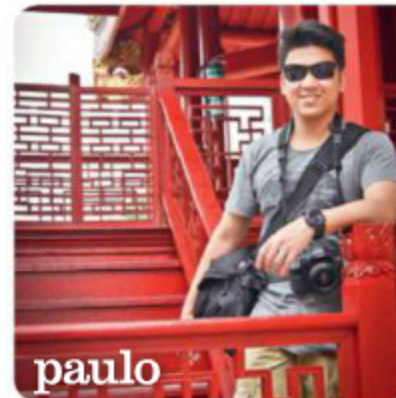


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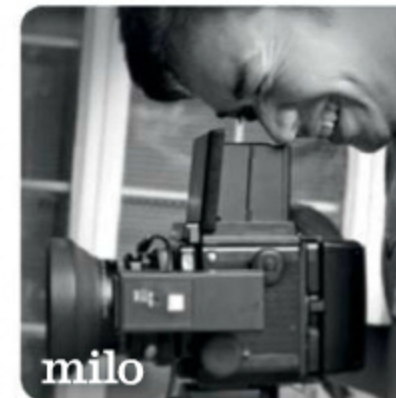


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paulo



milo



cal



nana n.

Paulo Antonio Valenzuela has always had an eye for composition, lighting and capturing angles one may think isn't there. Always willing to learn new techniques and keep up with the trends in contemporary photography, his enthusiasm for his craft is clearly evident in his works. Aside from shooting for editorial features, he has also done commercial photography for restaurants, resorts, airlines, and insurance companies among others. In this issue, his photographs are featured on the "Styled to Inspire" story on p.116.

Milo Sogueco made his first full-length feature film *Sanglaan* (The Pawnshop), a finalist in the 5th Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival held in 2009. After garnering the Best Actress (Ina Feleo) and Best Supporting Actress (Tessie Tomas) awards at Cinemalaya, *Sanglaan* went on to compete in international film festivals in France, China, Spain, Singapore and Germany. In 2010, he was included in the first batch of Filipino filmmakers honored with a Pioneering Award of Distinction by the Philippine Daily. Milo actively supports independent cinema through his position as MTRCB board member and Quezon City Film



nana c.



dodo



tess

Commission commissioner. This year, he will be directing another full feature for Cinemalaya 2014, *Mariquina*. This issue's cover and corresponding story features Milo's stunning photographs (p. 46).

When **Cal Tavera** is not designing for her Interior Design company, C+C, she's a design consultant for her tile business, Floor Center Outlet on Visayas Ave. or blogging on whimsykal.com on her latest furniture finds and projects. Her favorite projects are collaborations with clients who are a tad quirky and are open to experimenting with patterns and textures. For this issue, Cal wrote about Abitare, an emporium of luxurious furniture brands, and the sister act behind its success (p. 22).

Nana Nadal is a freelance PR and events consultant. Her byline can be seen in various

publications. She likes writing about people, food, homes, and cars—not necessarily in that order. She recently developed a fascination for mental health, and advocates awareness for depression and suicide prevention. For this issue, Nana talked to home accessories designer Lilianna Manahan about what got her started in the field, what her design process is like, and what people can expect from her own Studio Magee this year (p. 14).

Nana Caragay is the former editor-in-chief of *Chalk* magazine under ABS-CBN Publishing. She is currently working as a freelance writer and a voice-over talent. This issue's cover story, which puts the spotlight on how Manila FAME brings promising Filipino designers together to make a global impact, was written by Nana (p. 46).

Dodo Dayao—who is into writing and painting—wrote about the recent Maison et Objet experience in Paris, and how this biannual exhibit has now become the reference point for the entire universe of design over its 18-year history (p. 44). For this issue, Dodo also wrote a feature on leather artist Rene Cruz's remarkable works of art (p. 42).

No one loves dogs more than **Tess Villareal**. But when she isn't caring for her 28 (yes, that isn't a typo) pet dogs, she is Manila's top dog groomer since 1998 and is the owner of Pampered Pooch pet salon. Once a travel and lifestyle editor for another publication, it took some convincing to get Tess to flex her writing chops yet again. With her article on furniture design company Roche Bobois for this issue, you'll notice she hasn't lost her flair (p. 28).

The Wooden Horse and the Radiant Orchid

USE BOTH TO ADD INTEREST AND GOOD LUCK TO ANY SPACE

BY BARBIE PARDO-TIANGCO / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



TOP: Wall art, P5,90, Heima. Peggy desk, P28,300, Heima. ON DESK: (from left) Wooden horse, P5,495, Sifra. White skull by 13 Little Monkeys, P1,500, MY APT by Heima. Horse bookends, P3,800, Sifra. Perfectly Imperfect Home and Paper Cutting books, P1,800 each, both from Heima. Andy Warhol book, P1,000, Heima. Put Your Stamp On It book, P1,300, Heima. BOTTOM: Oak stool, P68,800, Dimensione. Black globe, P5,495, Sifra. Garden stories box set, P495, Heima.

AS EARLY AS THE LAST QUARTER of the year, the world of design eagerly awaits the announcement of Pantone's color for the succeeding year. For 2014, the year of the Wooden Horse, the color is Radiant Orchid. It is best described as purple to purplish pink. The color of the year, much like the wooden horse, is bright, warm and beautiful. Use both in your home to add interest and a lot of good luck to any space.

How to use Radiant Orchid in your home

- 1. Don't be afraid to use color on walls. If the idea of using a non-neutral color scares you, then use it only on an accent wall or on a classic piece of furniture to give it a modern touch.
- 2. Pair Radiant Orchid with white, gray or yellow.
- 3. Don't be afraid to use variations of the color. The range is endless, as the color's hues and shades are equally as beautiful.
- 4. Use it on accessories—on a lamp shade, an area rug or on pillow cases. It totally works!



1. White horse head décor, P5,900, Sifra. 2. FROM LEFT: Tom Dixon copper door stopper, P10,589, Dimensione. mt Casa masking tape, P1,700 (200mmx10m), P860 (100mmx10m), P450 (50mmx10m). Colored glasses, P3,000 per set of six, Dimensione. Picture frame, P199, Dimensione. Stockholm St. brooch by Ava Paguyo, P100, Heima. Silver hooks, price upon request, My Apartment by Heima. Artists note cards, P500 (set of six), Heima. 3. Round tray, P2,595, Dimensione. 4. Le Fleur console, P38,000, Heima. 5. Pillows, P2,200, My APT by Heima.



1

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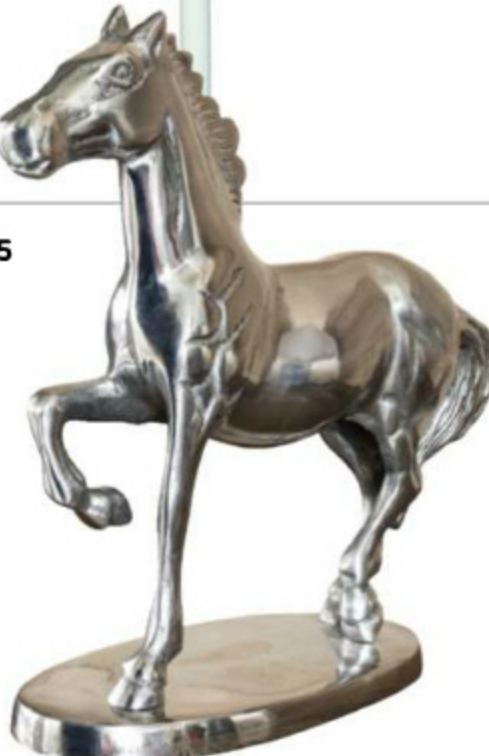


3

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5



6



1. Vintage clock, P39,500, Dimensione. 2. Copper high end table, P125,800, Dimensione. 3. Bernadette wing chair, P59,200, Heima. 4. Galaxy table, P6,895, Dimensione. 5. Silver horse décor, P8,500, Sifra. 6. Coffee table, P18,000, Heima.

Functionality & longevity



WALL-HUNG WATERCLOSETS

Villeroy & Boch is a German brand considered to be the pioneer in wall-hung waterclosets, with designs ranging from classic to contemporary. These waterclosets combine esthetics and functionality.

A wall-hung watercloset does not incorporate a floor-mounted vertical pedestal. The unit is directly attached to the wall with the use of a specially-built frame. The tank or cistern is usually concealed inside the wall.

Correctly installed and using a reliable installation system, a wall-hung watercloset can carry up to 400 kilograms. Installation is not complex, and the plumbing system is not different from a conventional toilet.

The wall-hung watercloset is prevalent in Europe because it has a sleek and stylish design, occupies a minimum amount of space, and is easy to clean.

Check out the Villeroy & Boch bathroom sanitaryware at the Focus Global showroom at Pioneer, corner Reliance Streets, Mandaluyong City. For more inquiries, call (02) 6348587, or visit www.villeroy-boch.com



SEASON 2: 'INTERIOR MOTIVES'

Beauty queen, architect and design buff Shamcey Supsup steps in as new host of "Interior Motives." A 30-minute design program, "Interior Motives" features a world of luxury, artistic endeavors, functional spaces, quirky DIYs, breathtaking furniture and design ideas.

This TV program is the go-to source for design inspirations, principles and elements of beautiful spaces as well tips and tricks from big names in design and furniture. Season 2 also features a reality segment called "Project: Makeover," where the leisure industry design sisters Cynthia and Ivy Almario transform bare rooms and make over drab spaces.

"Interior Motives: Season 2" airs Thursdays, 9:30 p.m. only on the Lifestyle Network. For more details, visit and like the Lifestyle Network on Facebook.





LEGENDARY QUALITY AND LONGEVITY

Miele is a German manufacturer of premium and innovative domestic appliances and machines for commercial applications. Its philosophy of “Immer Besser” or “Forever Better” is reflected in the legendary quality and longevity of its products, which includes multifunctional ovens, steam ovens, hobs and cooker hoods, dishwashers, coffee makers, washing machines, tumble dryers, rotary irons and vacuum cleaners. Now on its 114th year, Miele has earned a legendary reputation for its premium home and kitchen appliances. Visit Focus Global at Pioneer St. cor. Reliance St. Mandaluyong.



PORTABLE FIRST AID/MEDICINE BOX

It's never too early to prepare for emergencies—and that means having a handy first aid kit/medicine box. This medicine box has adjustable shelves to accommodate various sizes of items. It's portable so you can store it in the car or mount it on the walls of your house, condo or office. It comes with lock and key so your curious kids won't be able to open it and play around with or ingest what can be harmful to them. This medicine box is a practical gift for family and friends. It comes in two colors: blue (345mm x 165mm x 315mm), and pink (230mm x 165mm x 392mm); SRP P2,000.00. For orders please text 09178912583 or 09228080711.



THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The Philippine International Furniture Show (PIFS) 2014 will take place on March 14-17, 2014 at the SMX Center, Manila. The country's premier names in furniture, lighting, home accessories, and design will be showcasing their best and latest offerings at the event. The PIFS is organized by the nation's three major trade associations for the furniture sector; the Cebu Furniture Industries Foundation, Inc. (CFIF), and the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP), and the Pampanga Furniture Industries Foundation, Inc. (PFIF). The organizers have named prominent architect and interior designer J. Antonio Mendoza as Creative Director of the exhibit. PIFS has also partnered with the Design Center of the Philippines. Don't miss the best in Asian design and manufacturing. Find out more about the Philippines International Furniture Show 2014 at www.nextonenow.com/pifs.



UNPARALLELED LIVING EXPERIENCE

An internationally-recognized environmentally-sustainable development, Anvaya Cove is more than a mere host of residential living spaces built within verdant, tranquil surroundings. Amid the gently rolling terrains of Morong, Bataan lies the property's master-planned amenities that offer exceptional leisure choices geared towards recreation and relaxation. “The expansive 470-hectare land area is an advantage that gives Anvaya Cove the opportunity to present its best to its community,” says Jose Juan Z. Jugo, head of Ayala Land Premier. “Thus, it was a priority to maximize the property's best features—from its cobalt waters and fine sand shore to the extensive greens of Bataan—to provide residents with an unparalleled living experience.” Contact Anvaya Cove at 793 - 9000 or visit their website www.anvayacove.com.



NEW INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAMS AT SOFA

The country's premier design school SoFA Design Institute now offers the CHED-accredited Bachelor's degree program in Interior Design. SoFA's 8-semester program for Interior Design aims to prepare students to achieve a solid foundation in the theoretical, analytical, and technical aspects of the profession, in order to equip them for licensing and certification. In addition, SoFA also offers its Interior Design Lecture Series, an introductory program for enthusiasts that spans one semester and tackles Introduction to Interior Design, Visual Techniques, and Interior Design Trends. For more information, course inquiries, and class schedules, visit www.sofadesigninstitute.edu.ph or call 478-4611 loc. 115.



WHY BUY WATER WHEN YOU CAN MAKE IT?

Green Focus Inc.'s Water Boy Machine makes the cleanest and safest (alkaline) potable water. The WaterBoy machine can produce an unlimited supply of water, making as much as 30 liters of the purest water on earth each day, from the air. It provides clean drinking water everyday, and saves the environment from unnecessary plastic waste as well. GreenFocus, Inc. is the first company to bring the atmospheric water generation technology of the WaterBoy to the Philippines, and the Philippines is the first country in the world to have it. For more information, call 551-0860 or visit their website www.greenfocusinc.com

Drawn to Design

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO WANTED TO LIVE IN A TREEHOUSE OF HER OWN DESIGN IS NOW GROWN UP AND A PROFESSIONAL DESIGNER

BY NANA NADAL / PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



ABOVE: Studio Magee's designer, Lilianna Manahan, in the studio that she shares with her mom. BELOW: Playful drawer finials are rendered in two kinds of brass finish.

LILIANNA MANAHAN recalls drawing a pineapple treehouse when she was 8 years old and designing a hospital (hospital/hotel) at 12.

"I wanted to live in a treehouse shaped like a pineapple, and I wanted to have hospitals with 5-star hotel services because there weren't any at that time. I thought of that when my sister was in the hospital for appendicitis," she explains.

This affinity for drawing and making models led her to take up Industrial Design at the University of the Philippines. She also credits Dutch designer

Marcel Wanders for piquing her interest in the field.

Prior to being the creative director and principal designer of her very own Studio Magee, the 28-year-old held a couple of jobs including a post in Cebu with world-renowned Kenneth Cobonpue. Lilianna had her first solo exhibit in 2009 ("Om-elette"). Three years later, she debuted her furniture and accessories line with "Funktion."

This year, she is gearing up for another solo exhibit at Finale Art File. "It will be more on the art side where I get to play around with the large space al-



LEFT: Inspiration is everywhere for Lilianna Manahan, such as these books, objects and sketchbooks. RIGHT: Prototypes of her home line include glazed bowls, plates and tumblers, lamps and tabletop statues in brass, and "Merchicken" in brass and resin.



Manahan's line includes a fantastical array of stationary accessories adorned with dinosaur heads and reptilian claws.

How to use whimsical pieces in your home

1. Create vignettes.
2. Use them as accent pieces.
3. Pairs and multiples usually look better (for small pieces).
4. Buy from Studio Magee.

Visit www.studiomagee.com or email info@studiomagee.com.

lotted to me," she enthuses. Also expect her presence at Manila FAME and at Maison et Objet Asia in Singapore in March.

"Everywhere!" she gushes when asked where she gets inspiration for her designs. "Most of the time, it's from my family. It may come from a play session with my niece and nephew, conversations, or objects in the house. I also have all sorts of books that I go back to."

She revisits her old sketches once in awhile. "I have a shelf that is filling up with sketchbooks because I consume one every six months. I haven't thrown any since I started drawing in second grade," she chuckles.

While she does not have a formula for her design process, more often than not, she begins by drawing her concept, then making a scale model before taking it to the supplier to check for feasibility. "Most of the time, I just choose a mate-

rial that I want to work with and see what new thing can be done with it, but now I want to concentrate on what I've started on—brass, ceramic, wood, and metal," she enumerates.

Her family is the first to get a glimpse of whatever she's creating. "They usually point out different aspects of the item that need improvement or are good. Then I ask my peers and mentors, who are in design, to get more opinions," she relates.

Just like any artist, Lilianna has her share of bad days. "I do something else or sleep or jog or eat," she says, when she hits a block. Reading helps get her going again. "I also pray a lot when I don't feel like doing work, and it usually gets me back to wanting to work," she discloses.

Despite the demands of her business, she has no complaints. "It doesn't feel like a job because it's fun! Also, I get to learn from so many people who have been in the industry for years and get to share ideas with them," she says with a gracious smile. ☺

The Joy of Design

ARCHITECT AND INTERIOR DESIGNER JOY DOMINGUEZ REVIVES OLD SPACES WITH FLAIR

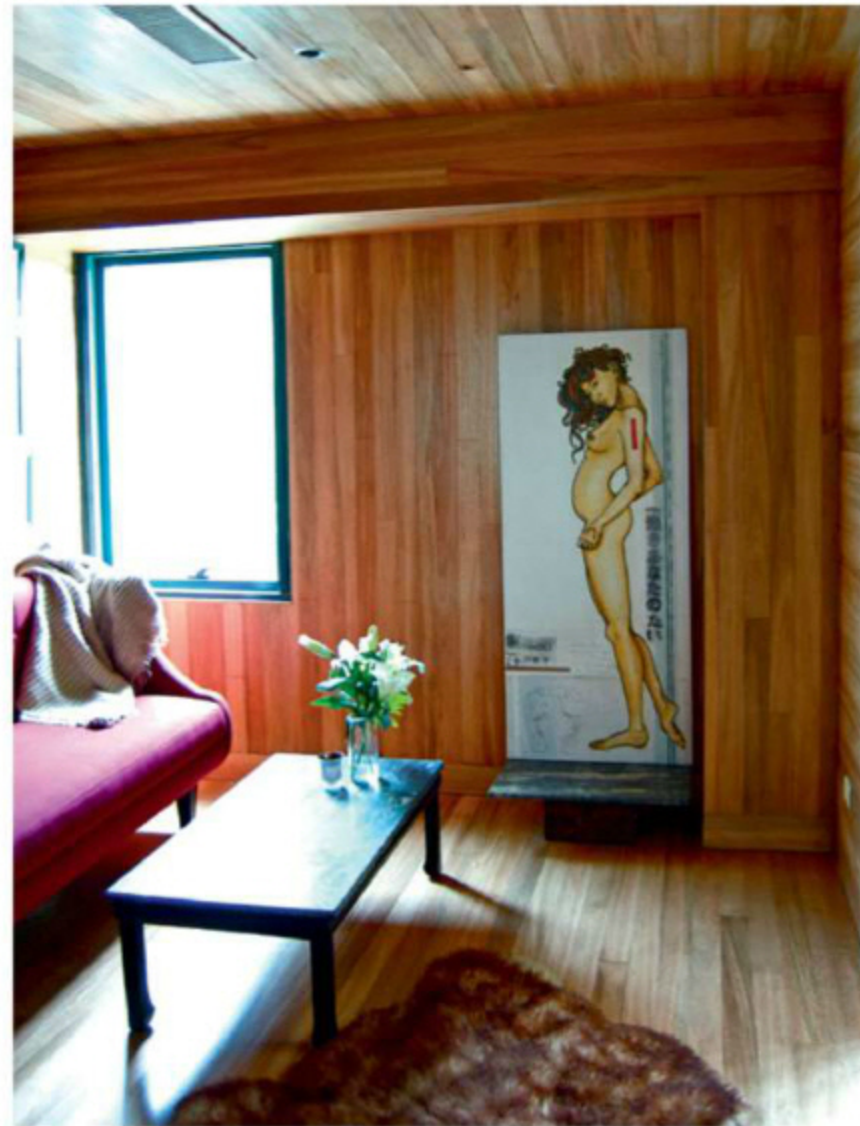
BY DAHL BENNETT



ABOVE LEFT: Architect-interior designer Joy Dominguez. ABOVE RIGHT: For a client, the maid's room is transformed into a cool den lined with wood planks in all directions. The neutrals are offset by a blood red sofa at the center. On the wall is an oil and acrylic painting by Michael Fua, a Filipino architect based in Singapore. In the foreground in a sheepskin rug from the '70s.

ARCHITECT AND INTERIOR DESIGNER Joy Dominguez sees the progression of her life and career as a "journey," greatly influenced by the rhythm of creativity. "It is the creativity that drives me, and I live it in all aspects—my work, home and inner life," she says.

Joy took up Architecture at the University of Sto. Tomas and has been practicing the profession since 1992. She took up Interior Design at the Philippine School of Interior Design. In 1996 she was hired as an interior designer in Singapore. When she got married in 1999, she decided to settle in the Philippines, and



has since started private practice in both architecture and interior design.

Breathing new life into old pieces

Between commercial and residential projects, Joy finds designing for the latter more rewarding "because real people are living their real lives in it," she says. She refers to these projects as "expressions" of her client's creativity, which she articulates through her skill and discipline.

Joy has found the biggest satisfaction in breathing a new 'chic' life into old pieces of furniture for clients. "I love French

opera chairs, French *bergère* and ottoman, vintage Shanghai ladies' furniture, mid-century furniture and Filipino *mesa* altar. My favorite projects would be for clients who have these pieces in their bodegas, which we would excitedly revive and use for their new homes."

Her style is ever evolving and greatly influenced by art and travel. She cites the colorful Suzani embroideries she saw in Istanbul, the vibe of bistros and old brownstones of New York City, and the works of designer Kelly Wearstler as her current inspirations.

These influences seep

through her skillful and inspired strokes in design. She goes for depth and texture, combining oriental with western furniture and flanking these with varied design details and colors that all translate to a warm, polished and balanced scheme.

Advocate of sustainability

Joy is a strong believer of sustainability; diminishing the negative impact of new structures on the environment is a value that she applies in her work. "Since I am in the design industry, if I must build anew, let it be sustainable." Some questions that are Joy's measure of what is sustainable: Does it minimize consumption of non-renewable energy? Does it optimize site potential? Does it minimize waste?

Integrity and functionality are also values she holds strongly. She will not use plastics that look like wood as materials nor will she design a space where form overshadows function. She cites an example: "A living room arrangement, commonly seen in modern furniture company advertisements, places a coffee table three feet away from the sofa where a person should be sitting. How can I put my coffee cup down on the table when I can't reach it?"

Processing the journey

Ten years ago, Joy found herself in her clients' shoes when she had to build her own dream house—a clean, crisp, tropical-inspired home, with wide spaces and openings that let nature in. "This was where I turned a corner and realized what it means to be a designer and a client who pay for the construction bills, and a homemaker who has to maintain and sustain all the good decisions and live with the bad ones I made as a designer," she recalls.

The entire process was journey for her, and it still continues to be so. Just last year, she reworked the fabrics in her living room, experimenting on *ikat* weave, graphic prints, and working the space with navy and red



ABOVE: Central to the look of the space is the use of Machuca tiles for the base of the bar complemented by the warmth of the wooden walls and stools from Dimensions. The blue green, four-panel antique Chinese lacquered screen in the background, sourced from Old Asia, was repurposed into sliding doors that lead to the den. BELOW: Conversation pieces take the limelight in Joy's own bedroom such as Cobonpue's Fandango lamps as well as an antique pair of Chinese wood lacquered cabinets with soapstone appliques. Interestingly, one piece of the cabinet was owned by Joy's mother-in-law who gave it to Joy's husband in the '80s.



set against the warmth of wood.

Despite her many years in the industry, Joy continues to redefine her style, trying out new approaches, treading unexplored territory, and applying fresh inspirations where and when she can.

"I am evolving as much as design is. I do not know if [a look that I'm doing now] is a trademark of my work. It is what I enjoy doing. Let's see how it goes as the journey unfolds." ☛

Contact Joy through email joydominguez2013@gmail.com

Joy's top tips on revitalizing tired looking spaces

1. A new upholstery can transform an old sofa or chair into something brand new, adding a new feel and look to a room.
2. Spruce up a space by changing your throw pillow cases, bed covers or rugs. Go nautical, floral, pastel or mix and match.
3. Rearrange your furniture.
4. Set the mood with the right lighting fixtures.
5. Bring nature in with potted indoor plants, the bigger, the better.

Emporium of Design

MOS DESIGN EXPANDS THE LIST OF GLOBAL BRANDS FOR TODAY'S DISCERNING LOCAL MARKET

BY CAL TAVERA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY MM YU



TOP LEFT: The Tom Dixon Etch shade light made of stainless steel. TOP RIGHT: MOs Design owner Mawen Ong. BOTTOM: Inga Sempé's Ruche bed for Ligne Roset is dressed with a headboard with boutis stitch padding.



IN THE MIDDLE OF TRENDY Bonifacio High Street is a haven for those requiring luxury home pieces compatible with the contemporary lifestyle today. The three floors under MOs Design is home, for over a decade, to global brands such as BoConcept, Natuzzi, Vitra, Ligne Roset and Tom Dixon.

Owner Mawen Ong first brought BoConcept to Manila in 1998 and, after a few years, some brands followed in 2004. In 2011, Ligne Roset and Tom Dixon became the newest tenants to move in. In 2013, the showroom introduced Gan rugs.

Taking note of these brands, she seems to have made the right choices as they were received warmly by the stylish Manila market that places aesthetics on top of their list.

Each brand presents a good diversity of lifestyles. BoConcept from Denmark is more functional and provides a wide range of minimalist pieces. Ita-



TOP: Mezzo corner sofa with lounging and resting unit available at BoConcept. RIGHT: The Rewrite desk by Copenhagen designers GamFratesi for the French brand Ligne Roset. LEFT: Hamilton chair by designer Henrik Pedersen for BoConcept.



ly's Natuzzi is tops for its leather sofas. Ligne Roset from France inputs playful elements into its timeless designs, and Tom Dixon from the United Kingdom is known for its urban creativity through the use of metals and mix-and-match of materials. Vitra from Germany provides eye candy to furniture collectors

with its pieces by iconic designers such as Frank Gehry, Charles and Ray Eames, Isamu Noguchi and George Nelson. Each year, consumers can expect something new from each brand, as each style evolves to becoming more current, functional and relevant. ■

Visit MOs Design at B2 Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Fort Taguig or call 856-2748, or email mosdesign@yahoo.com.



High-end revolution

LIVING INNOVATIONS OFFERS EUROPEAN LUXURY BRANDS

BY MAAN D'ASIS PAMARAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



TOP LEFT: Promemoria Aziza armchair and Edo small table with Louis Poulsen OJ floor lamp. TOP RIGHT: Living Innovations general manager Ferdie Ong. BOTTOM: Promemoria Oolong cabinet and Ambra table lamp.



WHEN FERDIE ONG first toyed with the idea of bringing European luxury brands to the country, people thought he was crazy. With a rueful grin, he recalls, "I was 23 at the time. Even Minotti thought I was too young for people to believe in me. And even my mom said, 'Nasiraan ka na ng bait? Walang bibili niyan sa iyo!'"

"Fortunately, my clients trusted me. I was also lucky that when I approached Minotti, it was then an up-and-coming brand. I tried to approach other brands but they rejected me, and now that I am handling Minotti, they ask if I can handle them as well."

Spencer bed and Denny ottoman by Italian brand Minotti



Those brands are definitely missing out because Ferdie's Living Innovations has built a strong customer base through the years, with satisfied clients from among the country's movers and shakers. "Our usual clients like quality and know what they want."

These clients, Ferdie adds, are willing to wait months for a customized piece to arrive. "We tell our clients that it is like waiting for a customized suit. If you can wait a little bit, you can get the color or fabric that you want. As any interior designer knows, being off by as little as two tones doesn't look as nice anymore. So, we encourage our clients to wait a little bit."

There is a quiet clamor for the pieces that he offers from brands such as Minotti, Bulthaup, Meridiani, and now, Promemoria, items that spell pure luxury. One of the most expensive items he has on hand is a Promemoria solid wood



FROM LEFT: Cesartable Mod A from Minotti. Promemoria Bilou Bilou chair. The Butterfly armchair and Ambra floor lamp from Promemoria.

table inlaid with real gold leaf. His bestsellers are still the reconfigurable Minotti living room sets, and the Minotti bed, with a P1.1 million price tag, is "also moving."

Living Innovations showroom is at Unit 207 2/F Makati Shangri-la Hotel Retail Arcade, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, or call tel. 830-2230 and 812-2649, or email info@livinginnovations.ph.



Purveyors of luxe

THIS SISTER TANDEM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST PROMINENT BRANDS TO MANILA

BY CAL TAVERA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY UY



TOP: The Omnia Sofa sits in a vignette crowned by the Heracleum chandelier by Bertjan Pot. RIGHT: Maxalto's collections designed by Antonio Citterio features the Xilos dining table paired with Acanto chairs. Clients have the option to dress up these solid wood chairs in fabric or leather.

THE SHOWROOM of Abitare Internazionale did not take up a premium space in the heart of Makati or put down roots in a shopping mall. Yet this emporium of luxurious furniture brands remains sought after by Manila's most discerning crowd for 17 years now.

Owners and sisters Filaine Tan and Jeanne Wee share their formula for success. Filaine says, "For our furniture store, we did not need a prime location. Instead, we prioritized a huge area to showcase the big pieces. The space we have now is perfect."

With two generations in their family doing furniture,

working with these pieces must have been programmed into their DNA, and even after a stint in interior design, the sisters could not help but go back to this business. Officially, they started their work in 1997. Unofficially, they have been immersed in it since their high school days. This led to the birth of their company, Abitare Internazionale.



TOP: Charles bed set paired with décor by Arcade and rug by Marcel Wanders for Moooi. BOTTOM LEFT: Items by Antonio Citterio for Maxalto are displayed in a living room set-up. The Lithos coffee table is paired with the Hypnos side table. On top of the side table is the Leukon table lamp. BOTTOM RIGHT: Filaine Tan and Jeanne Wee with their latest acquisition, Moooi. Moooi is a cutting edge Dutch design collective, which will be launched this year. The New Antiques bar stool by Marcel Wanders is a preview of the quirky and fun vibe that the brand will bring to the table.

The years saw their empire expand to more brands and space. Jeanne shares, "The market has evolved. The way people spend money here is elevated to a different level so we have to offer different brands for the demand."

Filaine adds, "Their taste is also catching up with the international market due to more travel and exposure. The colors black, grey and beige no longer dominate our bespoke pieces. The young interior designers today are more fearless, plus, their clients are ready to go to the next level after their monochromatic phase so expect more colors from us in the future."

One thing that will stay relevant is the contemporary style of the brands and the brand's investment in technology and innovation. **1**

Visit their showroom at GF Crown Tower, 107 HV dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City, contact them at tel. 892-1887 and fax 892-1890.



Contemporary Cosmopolitan

FASHIONABLE FURNITURE FOR THE BUDDING SOPHISTICATE

BY ELGA D. REYES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



ABOVE: Easy on the eyes, monochromatic furniture are hallmarks of Urban Italia. RIGHT: Owner Chester Lim has been in the furniture business since childhood.



ACCORDING TO CHESTER LIM, co-owner and general manager of one-year-old Urban Italia, his shop with its line of modern European-inspired furniture is the antithesis to their family's original business—more than 20 years of producing Victorian-inspired reproduction pieces.

Urban Italia is also an offshoot of the sleek gadgets that abound today. The widespread adoption of technology has inculcated in most Filipinos a more refined and global design sensibility. "This is the inspiration for the trend, a shift to a more minimalist lifestyle, no clutter, no unnecessary stuff," says Lim.

The store, from the moment you enter, truly beckons with its streamlined, non-fuss furniture of muted tones. A white

glossy Semjase arching lamp by Lucente punctuates the opening space, and underscores the gadget reference. Huge sofas, ideal for a family den, dominate the showroom, indicating that these are the pride of Urban Italia. Beds are another specialty, defined also by clean lines and chic appeal.

Lim explains that they are very product-centric. All items (with the exception of home décor) are developed in-house, designed with an Italian partner. Unlike other furniture shops that bring in brands, they are more knowledgeable about the products and know how it came to life. This is an advantage that they pass on to clients, especially with the segment of the market that has become more curious about design.

Hush-hush Glam

Beside the Urban Italia store is another boutique that Chester Lim and his sister Charmaine manage. But there is no signage or indication of its existence from the outside. Called Casa Cosmopolitan, it is open only by appointment. The boutique is a glamorous Italian affair, full of pieces from Malerba, an Italian artisanal home brand. The furniture is extremely luxurious, with console tables and cabinets lined with faux crocodile leather. Some even boast of hardware with semi-precious stones. The sofas and beds, on the other hand, are designed with tufted leather.



ABOVE: Pieces from Malerba, an Italian artisanal furniture brand in Casa Cosmopolitan, adjacent to Urban Italia. BELOW: Generous seating marked by quality workmanship in Urban Italia.



Customized Modular

POLIFORM COMBINES
FUNCTION WITH FLUIDITY
OF STYLE

BY MAAN D'ASIS PAMARAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY UY



Designed with rational technology, Poliform's modular systems can accommodate any client's requirements.

IN THE PHILIPPINES, interior design increasingly responds to rapid urban development. Its philosophy has turned towards maximizing living areas in the house, especially in tighter spaces dictated by the urban sprawl, to achieve a lighter, less cluttered look.

One of the furniture brands that fit into this home theme is Poliform, an Italian import brought into the country by Anna Go-Chia and husband, Gek Chia. It was happenstance that made them decide to bring the brand to Manila, she says. "The Italian principals decided to enter our market because the Philippine market is mature—Poliform Italy has been receiving inquiries from the Philippines since 2005. They said they were just waiting for the right partner, and the right time."

She adds that the market is ready for high-end products such as Poliform's living room furniture, Varenna modular kitchens, and walk-in closets.

Today's homeowners are past the cut-and-dry look, opting for a more personal touch, and Anna says that their products

can meet these needs easily. "The designs and range of Poliform and Varenna are flexible. Poliform's storage systems that need to be hung on the walls and ceiling have been calculated, the modular systems of Poliform are designed with rational technological systems to make them a reality."

Asked about her own preferences, Anna unequivocally states that she loves the brand's kitchens and wardrobes. "A Varenna kitchen looks and feels like a beautiful piece of furniture. In this day and age, a kitchen is a showpiece, and a beautiful kitchen speaks a lot about the design of the house. Our wardrobes are appreciated greatly by our clientele as well, because this is an integral part of every home. The wardrobe is where we start our day—and it's so important to feel good first thing in the morning, to start your day right." ■

Visit their showroom at 219 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air 2, Makati City or contact them at tel. 804-2776 or 804-2778, or email design@poliform.ph.



LEFT: Poliform's living room furniture, Varenna modular kitchens and walk-in closets bring a distinctively personalized touch to urban spaces. RIGHT: Poliform managing director and husband of Anna Go-Chia, Gek Chia.

Streamlined Sophistication

MDF ITALIA REDEFINES CONTEMPORARY
ITALIAN LUXURY WITH BOLD
AND UNPREDICTABLE DESIGNS

BY ANZENNE ROBLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



TOP: Elegant in neutrals, the Hara sofa and their Random shelves and bookcase welcome visitors in MDF Italia's showroom. BOTTOM LEFT: The Yale chairs and sofa set. BOTTOM RIGHT: Bryan Lim, vice-president for business development of Suyen Corporation, the local dealer of MDF Italia.



MDF ITALIA FROM MILAN has found another home in Manila with Forte Showroom Corporation, the furniture and lifestyle arm of Ben Chan's Suyen Corporation. Living up to its Modern Design Furniture name, this line of world-class Italian furniture and furnishings has become a favorite among local and international architects, interior designers or anyone who's into design.

Known for its collaborations with many outstanding designers like Piergiorgio and Michele Cazzaniga, James Irvine, Francesco Bettoni, Jean-Marie Massaud and Jehs+Laub, MDF Italia has produced functional and innovative works of art that received international praises.

What makes MDF Italia's style stand out from other high-end furniture lines? Aside from their technology, it is their originality and "slim production system." The difficulty and architectural ideology behind creating without overdoing and sacrificing aesthetic value is what they strongly believe in, and this is evident in their significant collections of bookcases, wall systems and furniture, tables, chairs and small armchairs, sofas and accessories.

"MDF Italia is currently revamping its collection by adding colors to it. It's very important to keep the brand young and alive but without losing its identity," explains Jessica Perote, brand assistant of Forte Showroom. Their exciting new collection uses primary and earthy colors, and new fabrics will be introduced, keeping the unity and harmony between the old and the new lines. ■

Visit their showroom at G/F, One Parkade, 28th St., Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, or call 736-3728, or visit mdfitalia.it.

French Flair

THE ART OF LIVING,
ACCORDING TO
ROCHE BOBOIS

BY TESS VILLAREAL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY UY



Exhibiting the French's zeal for flair, Roche Bobois marries the old and the new, the linear and the curvaceous in their designs. RIGHT: Eugene Lorenzana, Roche Bobois' Manila purveyor.



THE FRENCH ARE vanguards in the realm of design and style, and synonymous to exquisitely crafted luxury products. It isn't any wonder that furniture design company Roche Bobois evokes these qualities, heralded as one of the leading purveyors

of luxury home furnishings in the market today.

Aligned to the French *l'art de vivre* or the art of living, Roche Bobois has two primary collections: Les Contemporains and Les Nouveaux Classiques, each offering a wide array of de-

signs ranging from cutting edge contemporary to traditional French classics. Ever evolving, it revamps its lines semiannually, just like fashion's haute couture. New models for both lines are introduced every season in collaboration with established and up-and-coming designers, architects and artists.

Moreover, Roche Bobois engages in partnerships with big names in the fashion industry for its select fabrics. The roster includes Emanuel Ungaro, Kenzo, Jean Paul Gaultier, Missoni, Sonia Rykiel and Paul Smith.

To date, it is the largest luxury brand furniture company that has not only made its impression in its native France, but also in foreign shores with a network of more than 250 stores in over 40 countries. Eugene Lorenzana is the man responsible for bringing Roche Bobois into the country, the showroom in Makati being the first to open its doors in Southeast Asia.

Lorenzana relates that the Filipinos have become more

discerning in selecting high quality and exquisitely crafted designer furnishings to adorn their dwellings, prompting him to introduce the brand to the Filipino market. He adds that gone are the days of purely relying on interior decorators in refurbishing the home space as the Filipinos have become confident in expressing their style preference.

Marrying the old and the new, the spartan and the elaborate, the linear and the curvaceous is a very refreshing design trend. As each of its two collections echoes a different style and era, Roche Bobois rises to the occasion. Whether the collection stands on its own or combined in a balanced mix, any individualized interior will surely lend a particular flair of *je ne sais quoi*, setting it apart from the others. 📌

The Roche Bobois showroom is at Don Chino Roces Extension, Makati City, or contact them at tel. 519-8240 or email manila@roche-bobois.com

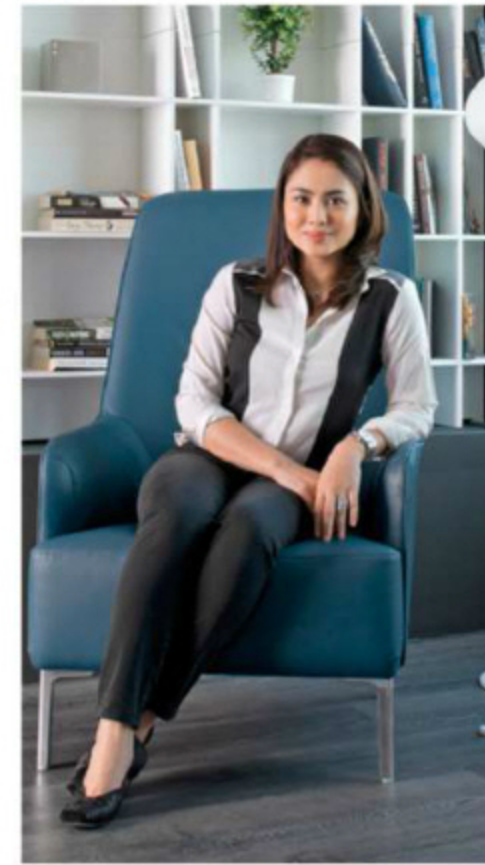


Cutting edge contemporary furniture from Roche Bobois' Les Contemporains collection.

Contemporary Luxury

LEADING GERMAN BRANDS
HÜLSTA AND ROLF BENZ
COMBINE FUNCTIONALITY
AND MODERN DESIGN

BY ANZENNE ROBLE / PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



TOP LEFT: Hülsta and Rolf Benz purveyor, Chris Yam Daez. TOP RIGHT: Urban living room set-up dressed with the Rolf Benz Onda sofa, 590 lounge chair, 8240 side table and Hülsta Mega Design bookshelf and wall installation. BOTTOM: Rolf Benz 8810 solid American walnut table and Rolf Benz 7800 dining chairs with Hülsta Mega Design shelf at the background.

IT STARTED WITH flooring materials, a few pieces of furniture from Hülsta, and a small space back in January 2011, when Chris Yam Daez, together with her husband and Hülsta managing director, Jaime Daez, decided to move to a bigger place and establish Hülsta and Rolf Benz Philippines.

"We launched Hülsta and Rolf Benz in the Domus shop beside Fully Booked BHS (Bonifacio High Street) in January 2013. We decided to bring it in because we fell in love with the design and functionality of these brands," explains Chris. Though it can be considered young in the Philippine interior and furniture market, Hülsta and Rolf Benz brands are no beginners when it comes to providing quality contemporary pieces.

Both owned by the same company, Hüls Group, they represent the best that Germany

has to offer in furniture. Hülsta is all about living with values. Its modern and contemporary designs manufactured with state-of-the-art technologies are perfect for the urban lifestyle. "It takes pride in being the market leader in today's field of modern living room and bedroom needs," Chris adds.

Rolf Benz's "architecture of seating" offers sofa ranges that use different kinds of foam in its interior structure with different densities, making it one of the five best sofa manufacturers in the world. This year, one of the

new collections to look forward to is the Rolf Benz NOVA, the only sofa to win the "Best Interior Innovation Award" at the IMM Cologne 2014. It easily transforms into a high-back seat, a recliner, a daybed, a bed or somewhere in between.

Commenting on the success

of their furniture line, Chris observes, "The European furniture that we carry melds design and functionality." 📌

Visit their showroom at 3/F of Fully Booked, Building 6, 11th Avenue, Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, or call tel. 738-2430.

Italian Class

FURNITALIA REDEFINES INTERIORS WITH LUXURIOUS PIECES

BY GRACE LIBERO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



TOP: Molteni & C's Gio Ponti collection includes the chest of drawers, armchair, tea table, Montecatini chair, mirror, bookcase, and rug. BELOW: Progetti Blossom armchair by Giorgetti.

A HAPPY ACCIDENT—this is perhaps the best way to describe the events that led to the founding of this upscale furniture store. Without any background in architecture or interior design, owner and managing director Florence Kho and her husband put up FURNitalia, driven by sheer curiosity and guided by their business acumen.

The idea to venture into importing furniture dawned on them when they were building their house and looking for nice fixtures. Being in the hardware shop business, the couple knew a lot of European suppliers, who

they asked for suggestions on where best to go for furniture. They not only purchased some pieces, they began their own emporium.

In 2002, FURNitalia was born (the name is a play on words “furniture” and “Italy,” where the products come from). Though the furniture business was booming at the time, it took hard work and dedication to establish FURNitalia as a premier Italian luxury furniture shop. Eventually, their wide array of classic, high-end Italian masterpieces spoke for themselves.

FURNitalia currently carries five first-class Italian



LEFT: Sol Sofa and Kyr Low Table both by Chi Wing Lo for Giorgetti, Sceicchi table lamp by Leonardo Ranucci for Venini, and Jei Jei medium hanging lamp by Nicola Gallizia for Penta. RIGHT: Bedroom setup with pieces from Cassina, such as the Volage bed with lamp and Volage bench both by Philippe Starck, on-off side table by Piero Lissoni, Auckland armchair by Jean-Marie Massaud, and Nuvola Rossa bookshelf by Vico Magistretti.



LEFT: FURNitalia maven, Florence Kho in a setup with Serralunga pieces, such as the Sirchester armchair by Deepdesign, Paloma bird by Eero Aarnio, Meteor small with lamp by Arik Levi, Bonheur floor lamp by Michele De Lucchi, and Lluna vase with light by Karim Rashid. RIGHT: Living room setup with pieces from Poltrona Frau such as Kennedee angle sofa and Holly floor lamp both by Jean-Marie Massaud and Massimo cushion by Poltrona Frau R & D; Fortuny floor lamp by Mariano Fortuny Y Madrazo for Pallucco; Fiam pieces include twin small table by Stefan Schoning, Angoli side table by CRS Fiam, Ragnetto coffee table by Vittorio Livi; Wiki magazine vase by Paolo Ricchi for Bosa; and black shine carpet by I + I.



furniture brands: Poltrona Frau, Molteni & C, Flexform, Giorgetti, and Cassina. To describe and introduce each of their brands, Florence says, “If you want comfy and homey items, check out Flexform. If you are into iconic pieces, go for Cassina. If you want modern and functional furniture, try Molteni & C. Poltrona Frau is all leather and very masculine, so it’s also office-appropriate. If you prefer rich-looking pieces, Giorgetti is for you.”

FURNitalia is now more than a decade old, and continue catering to consumers’ evolving tastes and preferences. Last year, they came up with the Pelle Leather Ball, which gathered

well-known personalities in the local fashion scene for a night that featured the fascinating connection between furniture and fashion. Designers Rajo Laurel, Rhett Eala, and Randy Ortiz created pieces inspired by FURNitalia’s leather furniture, and modeled by Apples Aberin-Sahdwani, Tweetie de Leon, and Mandy dela Rama-Santos.

It was an innovative initiative that seemed to say, “If you can spend and invest on clothes, jewels, and cars, why not on furniture?”

Visit FURNitalia at 30th Street cor. Rizal Drive, Crescent Park, West Bonifacio, Global City, Taguig. Contact them at 819-1887, email info@furnitalia.com.ph.

Rocks Rule!

ORGANIC SHAPES AND FASCINATING COLORS RANGE FROM ORGANIC TO QUIRKY

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



EACH ROCK AND MINERAL has characteristics and qualities unique to them. This trend actually can work in a variety of spaces.

If you have a dreamy, ethereal space, choose pale rose quartz or pyrite, which have metallic, almost mirrored surface. If you have a monochromatic, minimalist space, green malachite and blue lapis lazuli will add just that perfect pop of color.

CLOCKWISE: Bronze canister, P27,470 per 3pcs., Cura V. Clutch rope dome, P3,950, Cura V. Citrine specimen stone, price upon request, Cura V. Glass mosaic tiles, price upon request per square meter, Bisazza.

Add an edgy twist to your tablescapes with rocks and minerals, with jagged edges and multiple shades and surfaces. They can work as beautiful paper weights or napkin weights for a character-filled table setting. The subtle gradations will give your table a very individual and personalized look. And since rocks and minerals are natural elements, they truly and authentically harmonize with flowers.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A ring of rose quartz surrounded by pink sapphires, tourmaline pendant surrounded by diamonds in rose gold, price upon request, C Jewelry at NEST. Metal box inlaid with assorted rocks from Janice Minor, Cebu. Agate stone with stand, P14,616, Cura V. Green malachite stone bust, stylist's own. Granite stone slabs, price upon request per square meter, Phoenix stone. Hand painted bowl, price upon request, NEST. Five row multicolored tourmaline and diamond bracelet, price upon request, C Jewelry at NEST. Arabescato marble, Giallo Veneziano, Giallo Ornamental tone slabs, price upon request per square meter, Phoenix Stone.





Rocks and minerals vibrate with energy, so match your lifestyle and personality with the respective energy wavelength. A few basics: rose quartz attracts love, moonstone enhances creativity, amethyst encourages emotional healing, and any red stone ignites passion.

FROM LEFT: Imperial yellow jar, P3,900, NEST. Salvaged Moroccan window, P14,000, NEST. Crushed Marble Kuan Ying statue by The House of Pre Cast, price upon request, NEST.

Tray Chic!

IN VARIOUS SHAPES AND SIZES, THE MARKET'S FINEST TRAYS, AT YOUR SERVICE

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES,
TERRY UY AND PAUL DEL ROSARIO



CLOCKWISE:
Scirocco tray,
P7,439, Alessi.
Equestrian leather tray,
P8,750, Cura V. Pulap tray,
price upon request, Ligne
Roset. Loop Medium
tray by Jakob Wagner,
P34,000, B&B
Italia.

TOP: Wood
and metal
handle tray, P8,750,
Cura V. MIDDLE: Flat
wenge tray, P3,900,
Nest. BOTTOM: Rattan
tray, price upon
request, Haute
Design.

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ART / DESIGN / PLACES / INSPIRATION

At Home in India, p.38



At Home in India

IN THE LAND OF HANDMADE CRAFT AND THE TAJ MAHAL, FINDS FOR THE HOME AND OTHER CURIOSITIES ARE PLENTY

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAULO VALENZUELA



LEFT: Intricate details in marble and semi-precious stones at the Musamman Burj in Agra. RIGHT: Large sunburst mirrors from Peru in Khan Market's Apartment 9.

IT IS DIFFICULT NOT TO BE ASTOUNDED BY INDIA. In its streets lives the unfettered clamor of the human soul. With a population of over 1.2 billion people, its energy is boundless, palpable and intense. To attempt to describe and understand it completely takes a larger endeavor than to be unmoved by its dazzling array of colors, scents and sounds. To noted fashion editor, Diana Vreeland, "... pink is the navy blue of India," and indeed, in no other setting do all incarnations of this color (and all other hues) render vividly than in this land which boasts of the world's largest democracy, a host to a dizzying diversity—in religion, tribal heritage, ways by which one dons the proverbial *sari*, art, culture and language.

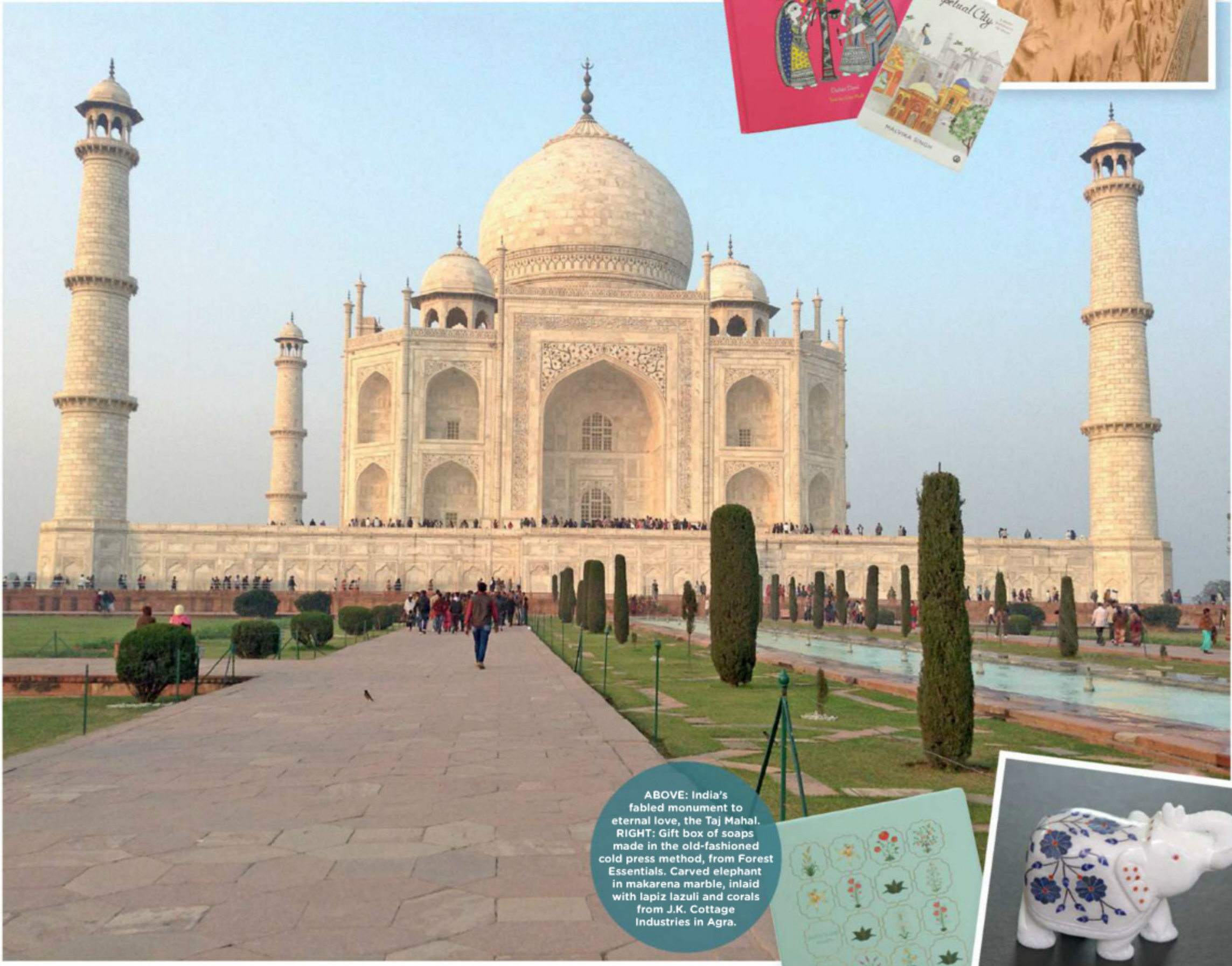
Every visit to India feels abbreviated because of the sheer magnanimity of the land and its host of things to do, places to visit, people to meet, and cultures to discover. To experience India is an incredible feat for the senses. And to the seasoned shopper, the one who delights in the hidden and the exquisite, it is a country whose every alley, city corner, valley, desert, lake and avenue are worth treading in the name of precious jewelry, fashion and finds for the home.

Metro Home and Entertaining has done the traveling, and with it, a quick cheat sheet on shopping for the home in the country that promises numerous rare finds, often made by hand, and marked by centuries-long traditions of art and craft. Take this list as a starter to your Indian shopping journey. The secret places off the beaten path are yours to

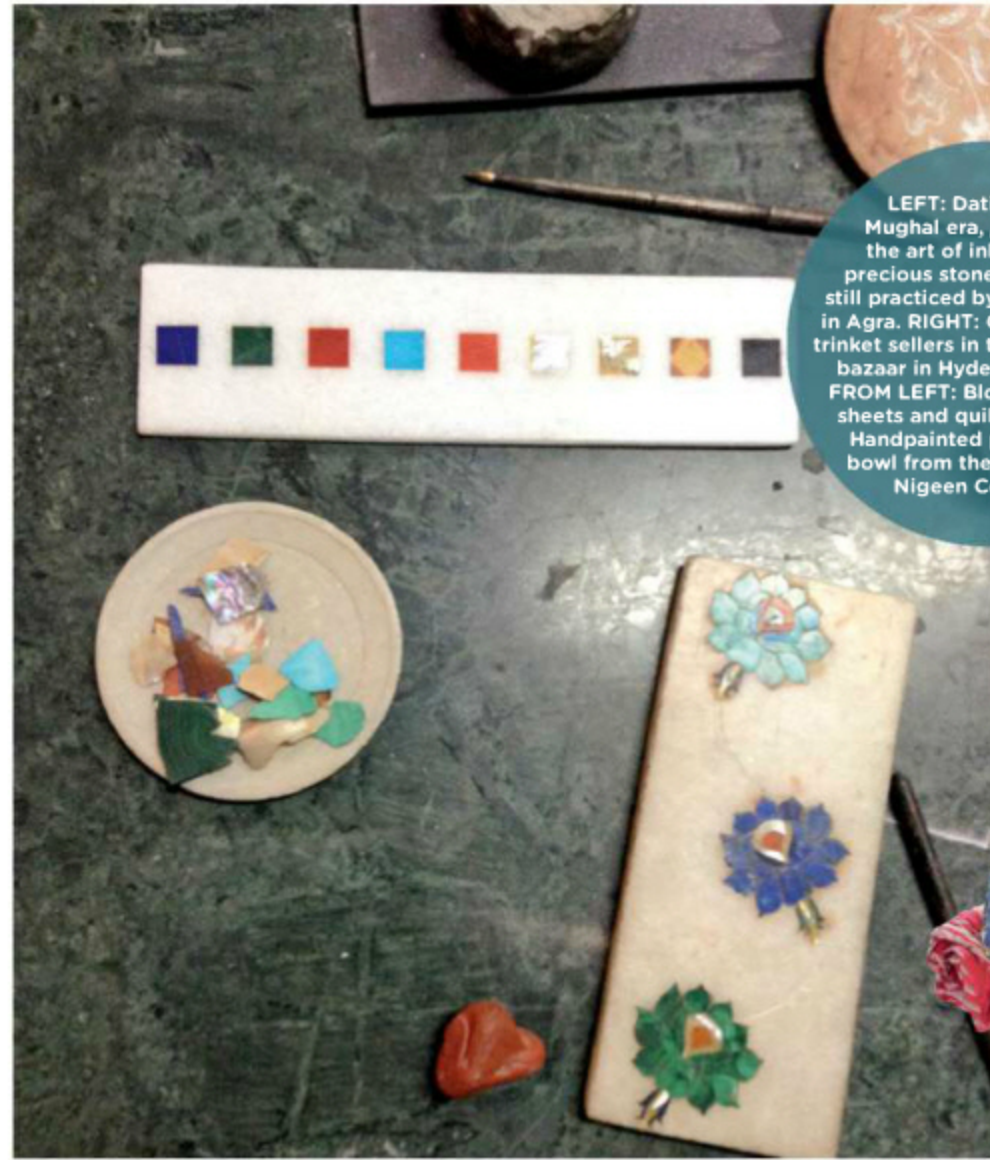
discover, one adventure at a time.

From Ahmedabad to Udaipur, there is an **Anokhi** store (www.anokhi.com), replete with all manner of hand-block printed textiles. The shop shares its ethos with the Anokhi Museum of Block Printing in Jaipur, a *haveli* that houses and documents the evolution of the endangered art of block printing. India's block-printed textiles are the ancestors of the French Provencal Les Indiennes textiles, priced for their intense, sun-drenched colors and prints. Adding a dash of these to your spaces, whether it is in the form of bed sheets or quilts, or as notebooks, will ensure that your home is in keeping with the "jungalow" home trend, where the outlandish, the colorful, and the foreign are prized.

Good Earth (www.goodearth.in) is easily India's leading design house, an emporium of all things for the home, from ceremonial accoutrement, such as dainty tea sets and infectious home scents, to soap dishes, accent cushions, glassware and wall art. Because it is on the pricier side, Good Earth is the perfect source for that showstopper of an accent piece. The colors represented in its range will always remind you of India when that particular find is finally parked in the confines of your home, for the combinations are as delicious as they are sensuous. Think along the lines of cool turquoise next to fiery magenta, and bordered by juicy carnelian yellow. Also make sure to visit their baby section for the softest baby quilts, pillows and toys from their baby label, Gumdrops.



ABOVE: India's fabled monument to eternal love, the Taj Mahal. RIGHT: Gift box of soaps made in the old-fashioned cold press method, from Forest Essentials. Carved elephant in makarena marble, inlaid with lapiz lazuli and corals from J.K. Cottage Industries in Agra.



LEFT: Dating to the Mughal era, *pietra dure*, the art of inlaying semi-precious stones in marble is still practiced by Indian artisans in Agra. RIGHT: One of the many trinket sellers in the Shilpa Raman bazaar in Hyderabad. BELOW FROM LEFT: Block-printed bed sheets and quilt from Anokhi. Handpainted paper mache bowl from the Good Earth's Nigene Collection.



LEFT: A typical Indian marketscape, Charminar, Hyderabad. ABOVE RIGHT: Preservation efforts of inlaying semi-precious stones in marble at the Agra Fort Complex. BELOW RIGHT: Madhubani murals in the National Crafts Museum, New Delhi.



FROM LEFT: The banquet hall at the Taj Falaknuma, Hyderabad. The rosewood table seats 100. Richly embroidered tote from The Craft House, New Delhi. BELOW: Handpainted papier mache jewelry tray from the Good Earth's Nigene Collection.



Anand Booksellers and Prints (25-B, Khan Market New Delhi, DL 110003, India +91 11 2469 8238) is stocked literally to the ceiling with stationery and paper goods. In a country that celebrates all of life's rituals with severe pomp and ceremony, it is but natural that there is a thriving industry for the stationery and invitations that mark these occasions. Anand Booksellers and Prints is always abuzz with business, especially from weddings. For those who think that fine stationery falls under the list of life's essentials, it is difficult not to hoard in this place. Journals come in leather, handmade paper, block printed, gold-leafed. The same can be said of their selection of blank note cards in various formats. Ribbons in innumerable widths and color schemes are also plentiful, ideal for mixing and matching with their handmade, hand-printed wrapping paper. Particularly delightful are their ready-made scrolls made of embroidered paper, and ready for writing. Prices are very affordable, so be prepared to walk out with several bagfuls.

FabIndia (www.fabindia.com)- If you are on the hunt for something quintessentially Indian, but are in no mood to traverse the outdoor bazaars, then FabIndia is the place. A chain that links over 80,000 craft based rural producers with the mass market, the company ensures that local and sustainable practices are being employed in each piece of home accessory and garment that it sells. Fifty years ago, it was founded on the belief that there is a need to market the vast crafts traditions of India to a global audience. Their scarves and shawls make good presents, and are varied, from Mysore silk to embroidered cotton.

Forest Essentials (<http://www.forestessentialsindia.com/>) is for pampering, the Ayurvedic way. You can't take your Indian mas-seuse home with you, but you can certainly take home bottles of

cologne (particularly pleasant is the Saffron and Jasmine fragrance, whose layers of scent leave the skin smelling like honey); travel candles, and bottles of sandalwood spray that promise tranquil sleep. For those who are into seriously ceremonial regimens, their Eternal Youth formula of dates and lychees, derived from a 17th century recipe and made according to the Vedic Shastras from the Himalayas, is mixed while Vedic verses are chanted.

The Taj Khazana is for those who are into major ambiance while shopping. These stores, along with the merchandise in them, are very luxurious, representing the best in Indian craft and art. By the Taj Group Hotels, Taj Khazanas are in select Taj boutique hotels, in Hyderabad, Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi, Calcutta, Goa and Bangalore. Depending on which Taj Khazana you visit, it is sure to reflect the splendor of the city in which it is located. Favorite finds are finely detailed Mughal miniature paintings, black and white folk art paintings on canvas, books, jewelry and jewelry boxes.

It is said that one can truly paint a profile of a country's people by going to its markets and its bookstores. **Khan Market** in New Delhi has plenty of bookshops, teeming to the rafters with volumes. Regulars comfortably browse the aisles, some looking intent on finding that particular tome. **Faqir Chand and Sons** has been a long standing tradition. They tuck a little book mark with each purchase that says, "I've been to the Taj Mahal and Faqir Chand and Sons," illustrating the longevity of their business. For kids, there is also **Bahri Sons Kids** (Bahrisons Booksellers Opp. Main Gate, Khan Market, New Delhi - 110003, India), selling delightful publications by the local **Tara Books** (<http://www.tarabooks.com>), including the collectors' art books by the same publisher. ❶

When in India...

Sip and nibble... At the Lota Café (National Crafts Museum, Bairon Road, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi), where the fare is cooked by Chef Rahul Dua. It specializes in regional specialty, made fresh and with incredible restraint and effortlessness. Expect no oily curries and heavy rice dishes here. Try a pink meal with the combination of Bengali beet fritters, served with dollops of cream cheese. Wash it down with the creamiest, most indulgent rose milk shake.

Who needs hot chocolate when already in the land of the celebrated *chaiwallahs*? But Chokola (Khan Market, New Delhi), India's finest boutique for chocolates beckons with their spicy hot chocolate, which is laced with chili, providing a bit of a kick, the closer to the bottom of the cup, the stronger.

Marvel... At the Taj Mahal in Agra, India's monument to love. The best and most informative tours are given by Mohammed Rizwan Khan of Elite Solutions (www.elitesolutionsagra.com).

Observe and learn... India's rich handmade traditions at the National Crafts Museum (Bairon Road, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi). Sadly, starchitect Charles Correa's structure was not pristinely kept, but the exhibits in it are worth the visit. Murals in various folk painting traditions, from Madhubani to Gond mesmerize. Along the building's periphery, watch artisans practice their craft, and get a chance to sample your own handiwork, coached by them. The museum shop is also notable for its books on Indian craft and art, as well as its variety of handmade items for sale, from intricately woven straw dolls from the state of Bihar to embroidered poufs from Kashmir.

Queue... at the Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum (9 No. 1, Safderjang Road, New Delhi- 110 011). Walk through exhibits that portray snippets of Indira Gandhi's life, and have an intimate glimpse of her family's legendary history as main movers of the Indian Independence Movement. For a personal history museum, the exhibits are very sensitively curated, creating a very moving experience for its visitors.

The Leatherman

RENE CRUZ TURNS
LEATHER SCRAPS
INTO WORKS OF ART

BY DODO DAYAO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

RENE CRUZ'S ARTISTIC LIFE began innocuously with an extended period of restlessness, wanderlust and adventure. It didn't begin with the leather art he's currently known for, nor did it begin necessarily with art.

"My mother didn't want me to take up Fine Arts," is one recollection. And for a while, it seemed like the artist in him would remain untapped and frustrated. Cruz, being the adventurous sort, didn't go straight to college from high school, but instead joined the US Navy and eventually found himself stationed in Hawaii. "But the military was not for me," he says. A year later, he was back in the Philippines and paying for a Fine Arts course at the PWU.

Normally, the story would have ended here and the rest would have been history. But it wasn't as simple as that. "My feet itched again," Cruz says, with a nonchalance about his urge to travel that took him for more than three years from his Fine Arts course.

The last stop of his wayward itinerary was the mountains of Genova in northern Italy, where he learned the language and the cuisine, and took a job at a small restaurant called the Taverna Dei Fieschi, on whose



RIGHT: Leather artist Rene Cruz. LEFT AND OPPOSITE PAGE: His pieces juxtapose vibrant colors in various leather textures.



walls hang, to this day, some of his earliest paintings. They were pretty conventional paintings in the sense that they involved paint and canvas. Homesickness would soon nag at him, and he would resume his art back home.

Three years ago, he all but stumbled onto the rather novel idea of working with leather. "People ask me, why leather? Well, because of my wife," Cruz says. His wife's love for bags prompted him to make them himself. "I accumulated a lot of leather, all colors and textures," he recalls. "I told my wife not to throw the excess away. I knew I would be using it someday." And did he find uses for it!

"How I wish I could do it again," he remarks wistfully about his carefree days as a globetrotter. For now, though, the only wanderlust he'll be feeding is artistic. It's safe to say that Rene Cruz has found his center. But despite the spontaneity and unpredictability of his early years, even he couldn't have predicted he'd find his calling—art—in scrap leather and the wondrous things you could do with it. *You can contact him at 09088832431 and email rberuz1028@yahoo.com.ph.*



How to clean leather

"Leather goods need to be used, not stored." Rene Cruz, a man who obviously knows a thing or two about leather, is adamant about this.

But if you must store them, he says to make sure it's somewhere warm, because damp and cold tend to produce mold, which will inevitably destroy the leather.

The conventional wisdom is to keep leather away from direct sunlight. Cruz adds oil and water to the list. Patent leather, in particular, tends to smear when exposed to oil and water. You might have to rethink using other conventional means of cleaning that involve water.

So how does Rene Cruz clean his leather? He buys his cleaning tool from a computer store. "I use Wipe Gel, which is used to clean gadgets. It's the safest way," he says.

Maison et Objet and the art of living

"THE CREATIVE VIBE IS EXHILARATING and infectious," interior designer Nina Santamaria wrote of her recent Maison et Objet experience in Paris a few months back. "Being at the bleeding edge of design cuts you in ways you never imagined."

This is, of course, the degree and manner of enthusiasm you get used to when it comes to the long-running biannual design exhibit, unequivocally Europe's largest. The polyglot sweep and scope alone of what Maison et Objet has come to encompass is enough to take your breath away. The Philippines, of course, has recently become an active, and prominent, participant.

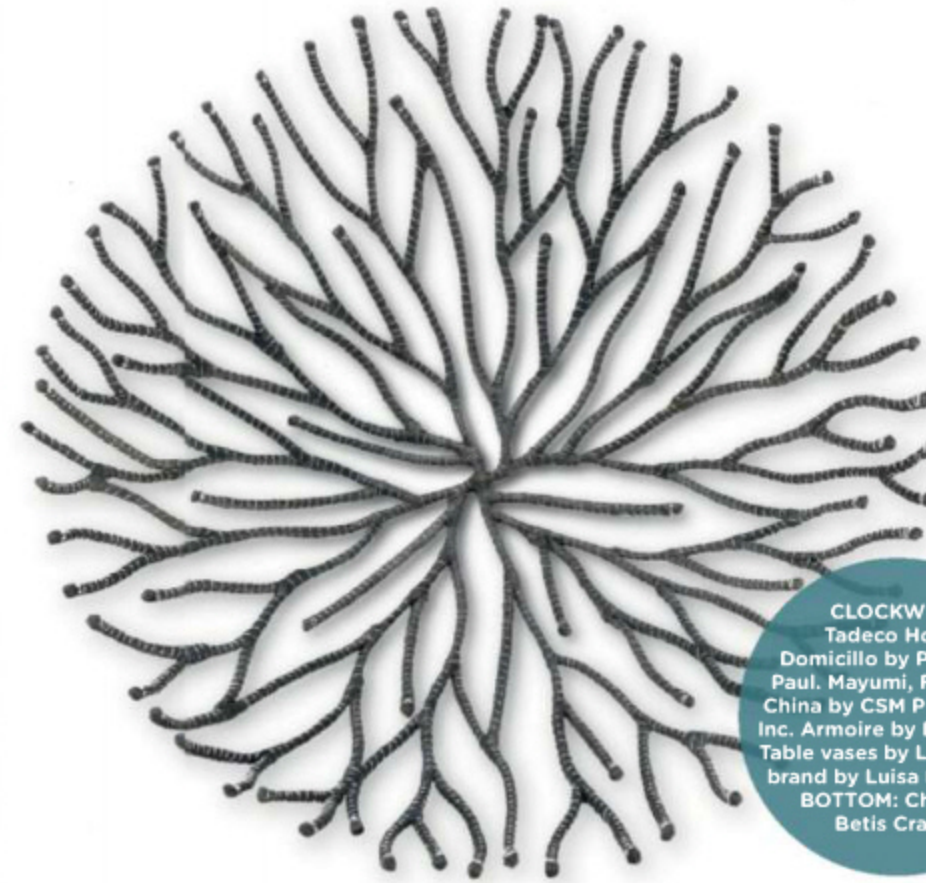
"The Philippine booth was eye-catching in terms of size, variety and wow factor," Santamaria notes. "It was a very strategic position for the Philippines to be in Hall 7, which houses luxury brands." Furniture designer

LEFT: Furniture and home accessories by participants of the Philippine Pavilion in the October 2013 Maison et Objet Paris show, the Vera floor lamp and San Sebastian dining chair from Triboca Bay Living. RIGHT: Forged Swirl Salakot hanging lamp, Forged Swirl Cocoon hanging light, Loopy chair from Industria Home Vico Manufacturing Corp by Jude Tiotuico



THIS BIENNIAL EXHIBIT IS NOW THE REFERENCE POINT FOR THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE OF DESIGN

BY DODO DAYAO



CLOCKWISE: Tadeco Home. Domicillo by Peter and Paul. Mayumi, Fine Bone China by CSM Philippines, Inc. Armoire by Betis Craft. Table vases by Luisa Home brand by Luisa Robinson. BOTTOM: Chest by Betis Crafts.



Vito Selma, who was also part of the most recent exhibit, says, "People who came to the booth recognized our work as luxury brands."

Maison et Objet has gone, in the last 18 years, from a mostly insular trade show, into a reference point for the entire universe of design, or what the Maison website qualifies as the art of living. The exhibit has become a showcase of the progressive continuity of world design and a barometer for its current creative heights. It's a foolproof go-to, really, if you want to pick up what the latest trends are.

"Lately, the focus has been on everything natural, from material to color to form," Selma observes, and this is terribly encouraging and exciting for him, given how his own work has always leaned towards the organic. "Trends I noticed include themes of rebirth and regrowth, the creative use of lighting in organic forms and materials, and the frequent use of (interlocking objects and furniture)."

Santamaria, who seems to corroborate Selma's observations, adds, "The color

forecast for furniture and interiors will have more purples, browns, and yellows."

"It's my favorite design show in the world," Selma says, and he is doubly excited that Maison et Objet's focus on and presence in Asia will become more pronounced. In March 2014, Singapore will host its own Maison et Objet show. For Selma, this only implies one thing: "Maison et Objet clearly recognizes the quality of products and designs in our region."

Needless to say, the Maison et Objet experience, for Santamaria and Selma, has been incredibly cathartic and energizing, boding well for both their perspective and practice. "My projects and new clients benefited from this trip as I designed in an inspired frenzy after getting back from the fair," Santamaria says. "One does not walk away from the exhibit unchanged."

Maison et Objet Asia will be showing in the Marina Bay Sands, Singapore on March 10-13. Visit <http://www.maison-objet.com/en/asia> for details.



DESIGN FOR LIFE

CITEM'S MANILA FAME BRINGS THE BEST OF NEW MODERN FILIPINO DESIGN INTO THE SPOTLIGHT AND ONTO A GLOBAL STAGE

BY NANA CARAGAY / PHOTOGRAPHS BY MILO SOGUECO



WHEN YOU SAY THE WORDS "Philippine Design," do images of barrel man figurines, ambiguously shaped wooden benches, and capiz shell anything come to mind?

Manila FAME takes these ideas and turns them on their head by introducing the country and the rest of the world to the new proponents of Filipino ingenuity and craftsmanship—artists who aim to bring local design to another level by taking indigenous, native materials and reimagining them with an aesthetic that is fresh, modern, and new.

Showcase for Filipino designers

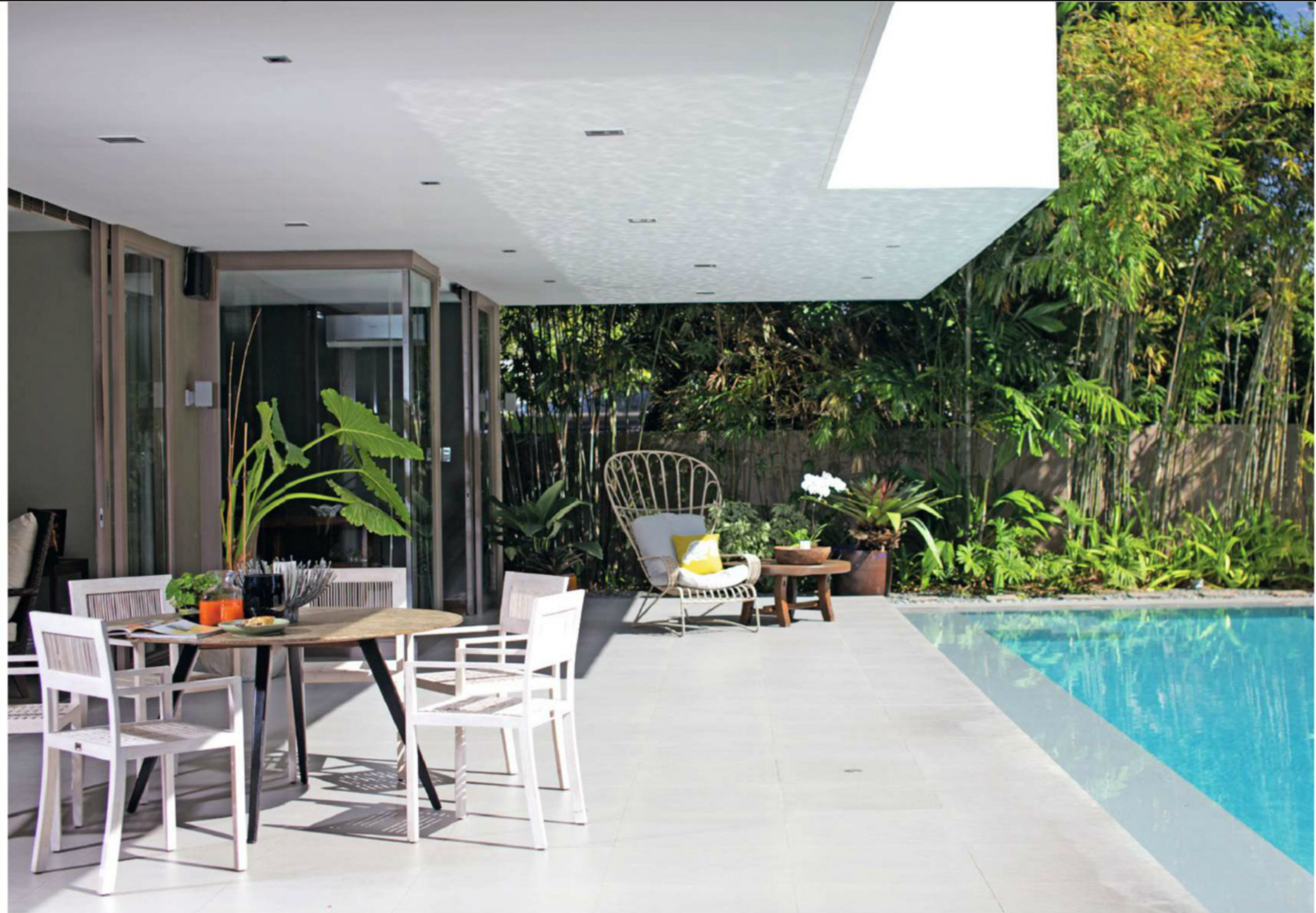
It is worth noting, however, that Manila FAME in itself is not an entirely novel venture. It began in 1983, and the upcoming edition that will be happening from March 14-17, "The Urban Resort Living," at the SMX Convention Center is actually the 59th. It takes place twice a year, with another one set for October, and attracts a following of distributors, importers, and trade buyers from all over the world—people who are eager to see what promising new innovations in furniture design, décor, and fashion the country has to offer.

Organized by the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions, or CITEM, the export promotions arm of the Department of Trade and Industry, Manila FAME has developed into a biannual showcase for Filipino designers, artisans, and craftsmen.

For furniture and interior designer Budji Layug, creative director of Manila FAME and one of the prime movers who has elevated the exhibit from industry trade show to a celebration of what local design has to offer, the evolution of Philippine tastes and sensibilities has been a rewarding thing to witness—and to help shape. His involvement with Manila FAME began in the '80s, after he caught attention with a bamboo collection that he designed and a product development stint at Rustan's. He was then approached to oversee the exhibit as a con-



OPPOSITE PAGE: In a suburban home designed by Budji Layug, pieces that represent the Philippines' best furnishing by designers who exhibit in Manila FAME are employed to define space. A metal console by Industria defines a wall. A variation on the Yoda chair by Kenneth Cobonpue is next to it. **THIS PAGE:** The living room of this home exemplifies the finest example of "Urban Resort Living," Manila FAME's theme for March 2014.



sultant, and since then, he's gone on to mentor countless batches of talents and develop the next wave of Filipino design greats.

"Our designs are very organic, but mixed with modernity to put together the modern Philippine design sensibility," he says, describing the evolution he has seen over the years. "It becomes 'soft modern' because of the organic materials we have. It's not quite industrial."

A gorgeous suburban home

As proof, you only need to take a look around this gorgeous suburban home, a product of Budji+Royal, Layug's design firm where he partners with architect Royal Pineda. Pineda designed the home's airy cantilevered structure that seems to effortlessly merge open spaces

and nature with the home's indoor living space. Layug designed the interiors, and it has become quite the ideal showcase for several furniture designers who are regulars in FAME's roster. It embodies Manila FAME's March 2014 theme, "Modern Resort Living."

The throne-like bamboo couch that takes center stage in the living room is one of Layug's creations while the chairs with lavender cushions on either side of it are unmistakably Kenneth Cobonpue. The textured throw pillow cases on the couch are by Tadeco Home, and the skinny metal table in front of a painting that hangs on the wall (artwork by Layug, no less) is from Industria. The chandelier that seems to descend from the sky down to the center of the room is by MCCA Industrial Corporation; the branches that the fixtures are suspended

from are by Industria. Across the room, a glass tabletop is supported by a base that is Industria-designed while the abaca and banana fiber basket centerpieces were created by Tadeco Home.

If the gorgeous furnishings throughout this house are any indication, you can see that among the characteristics of Philippine-designed pieces is that they are both memorable and distinctive. After a while, the eye becomes trained to recognize some of the trademarks each design house is associated with. There is Industria's skillful manipulation of steel so that this otherwise heavy metal ends up looking both graceful and light. Tadeco Home's intersecting lines painstakingly woven by skilled artisans using traditional techniques evoke the aquatic figures of coral reefs.

OPPOSITE PAGE: In the dining room, a metal table base by Industria bears a glass top. On this page are accessories from Tadeco Home and the OTOP Marketplace. **ABOVE:** Nothing expresses resort living better than a well orchestrated variety of outdoor furniture. Budji Layug's pieces mingle with some Tadeco Home accessories by the pool.



The outdoors are brought indoors, and the distinction between the two blur in modern tropical homes. Furniture that can be used for both areas are key to resort living. The den of this home is outfitted with the sofa, coffee table and lamp by Kenneth Cobonpue, the throw pillows by Tadeco Home and the irregular black vase by Bon Ace.

Whimsical and playful

"It's our materials that make it unique and our craftsmanship. And, of course, our sensibility as Filipinos—we are actually very whimsical, very playful," says Layug, something which can clearly be seen in, for example, the "Kidney" vase by Luisa Home. Handmade in Cebu, it was named such because the round, elongated shape rather resembles the internal organ, proof that Filipino designers have definitely preserved their sense of humor.

Which could be another one of the qualities of Filipino design—because we naturally love to entertain, these items were not made to be displayed, untouched, in a museum. Layug firmly believes that these were meant to be used and enjoyed in the comfort of one's home, to serve as statement pieces as well as surefire conversation starters. "Design is very important, not only for business, but for well-being—for the soul. I think we have it in us as Filipinos to enjoy life, and I think design has to be part of that," he enthuses.

This home, for instance, with its resort-like vibe, takes the concept of tropical modern living and makes it an ideal setting for entertaining. After all, Layug reasons, "The space is there for people to enjoy as well as represent today's lifestyle. The openness, the naturalness, the bringing together of the indoors and outdoors... I think that's very important."

The rest of the world seems to be warming up to this idea as well. Indeed, for the past few seasons, Manila FAME has generated renewed buzz and interest. People like the Cebu-based Cobonpue, who in recent years has earned worldwide recognition for furniture that calls to mind forms found in nature and makes use of materials like bamboo, rattan, and buri, are certainly among those responsible for that.

From a global perspective, there couldn't be a more exciting time than the present to be a designer in the Philippines. And the best part about Manila FAME is that it brings these promising talents who are creating a new Filipino design aesthetic all under one roof, gathering them together for the rest of the world to appreciate, admire, and discover. 📍

Manila FAME will be held from March 14-17 and October 16-19 at the SMX Convention Center, Seashell Lane, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City. For more information, log on to www.manilafame.com and www.citem.com.ph.

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Discover the Philippines' premier furniture designers. Representing a variety of styles and materials, this is your comprehensive guide to finding what suits your style or preference. With this wealth of design resources and talent, dressing up your home will never be the same. It may just take one or two key pieces to liven up your space.



OLIVIA D'ABOVILLE

The saying “big things come in small packages” is truly apt for this petite, pixie-haired French-Filipina artist. Incorporating textile techniques into sculpture, Olivia is all about promoting the Filipino heritage through her one-of-a-kind home accents. Her dual heritage gives her creations an interesting mix of the classic, old-world French sensibility and the raw and earthy vibe of the Filipino aesthetic. As she grew up in Puerto Galera, she developed a love for the Philippine sea; she uses it as the main inspiration for her designs, and hopes that somehow she can be instrumental to their rehabilitation. In September 2012, she got to represent Epoch, a group of young international Filipino designers, in a CITEM-sponsored event (the International Design House Exhibition) in Helsinki, Finland. —Grace Libero

- 1. **What is your most current collection all about?** My recent collections involved handwoven textiles from three regions of the Philippines (South Cotabato, Palawan and Ilocos Norte). I designed the textiles, which were used in the home accessory pieces I designed as well. My latest collections include lamps, cushions, floor pillows, stools and benches.
- 2. **From where do you derive inspiration?** I get inspired by my surroundings, by nature, mostly.
- 3. **Describe your home accessory style.** I am fond of organic shapes, but I appreciate



ABOVE AND BELOW: Olivia d' Aboville's explorations on textiles and weaves for the Neo-Textile Exhibit at the October 2012 Manila FAME. LEFT: The Anemone lamp designed for Hive.

- the symmetry in geometrical lines as well.
- 4. **How did you get into home accessory design?** I started my career as a “textile sculptor.” I am actually a textile designer, that is what I studied in Paris. From there, I ventured in the arts weaving my own sculptures. Lighting was always part of my works so the step moving forward was to design lighting accessories.
 - 5. **What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** I will be expanding my textile collection for the October 2014 edition of Manila Fame. Neo Textiles Philippines was introduced October 2013, where I designed and curated the special setting dedicated to contemporary Philippine textiles and its various applications. I'm looking forward to working on new pieces.
 - 6. **Dream material to explore:** I'd love to work with fiber optics. I wove a few sculptures with it, but I hope to make it a commercial product.
 - 7. **What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** I actually don't really follow trends, maybe that is because I am also an artist.
 - 8. **A piece from childhood memory**



that informs your design decisions is _____. **Why?** My parents' hammock that they had received for their wedding. I had it hung in our house in Puerto Galera for years, and we have all had the best naps in it. It was beautiful, all- white handknotted cotton with intricate macrame patterns and elegant long fringes on both sides. The handmade element made it look so precious and priceless. I will always remember it. I try to incorporate some of its qualities in my designs: the simplicity in look, the elegance, the handmade factor, the resort feel, its accessibility and reference to textile. For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



TISHA DE BORJA

The talented designer behind furniture workshop E. Murio—which designs and manufactures fine furniture and home interiors and accessories using traditional techniques and natural materials such as tropical woods, rattan, and bamboo—Tisha graduated with a degree in architecture from the Southern California Institute of Architecture. While E. Murio has a signature old-world aesthetic, it also tries to defy tradition with more contemporary designs, all while staying true to its brand's unmistakable edge in woodwork. Tisha is also one of the principal founders of Archipelago (a company which provides integrated design solutions including architecture, interiors, graphics, and illumination), along with her business partner, Chut Cuerva. —Grace Libero

- 1. **What is your most current collection all about?** Exploring architectural forms.
- 2. **From where do you derive inspiration?** I like to think of my work as intimate architecture for the body and for our lives that inhabit them—where a medicine cabinet can hold pills, or a series of mundane things, or a collection of items that connect to our dreams. As objects, furniture suggests their function, but we hope they also evoke a sense of delight, an appreciation of texture, and a formal fascination.
- 3. **Describe your furniture style.** E. Murio is a furniture workshop that designs and manufactures fine furniture, built-in cabinetry, specialty floor and wall coverings, and home accessories. The products range from customized pieces to large contract furniture for resorts and hotels. Our company exports pieces to Europe, Asia, and the United States. We also furnish local homes and commercial establishments. E. Murio



- specializes in natural materials such as tropical woods, fiber and grass weaves, rattan, and bamboo. We also work with iron, veneers, metals, leather, bone, and plastic weaves.
- 4. **How did you get into furniture design?** My parents are part owners of E. Murio, and after architecture school, my interest in furniture increased. E. Murio became a place where I could experiment with different ideas.
 - 5. **What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** We're working on new finishes that I'm very excited about.
 - 6. **Dream material to explore:** Rope.
 - 7. **What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** Sustainability is still a design trend for 2014. I think that the materials we work with, bamboo in particular, are in sync with that.
 - 8. **A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why?** We had a playhouse in our garden. While not exactly a piece of furniture, it was small enough so that a kid could wrap her mind around it, but big enough to inhabit. For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



TOP: Triangle Rocker chair. BOTTOM LEFT: Bird cage. BOTTOM RIGHT: Torque table.





PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MATTHEW BRILL

MATTHEW BRILL

Old world craftsmanship meets Pampanga’s zeal for handmade perfection in every Prizmic and Brill piece. Their work has earned a stellar reputation in the international hospitality and resorts scene, having experienced collaborations between interior design maven, Anoushka Hempel, for the Blakes Hotel in London. For this brand, hand-woven fibers, hand-forged brass, recycled wood and embossed vegetable tanned hides create a design vocabulary that is singularly Prizmic and Brill’s. Designer Matthew Sven Brill offers his insights... - **AMR**

- 1. What is your most current collection all about?** Modern safari, a fresh and classic collection of campaign items that have been simplified in style, but enhanced with a combination of exotic materials and finish treatments. These occasional pieces for a safari, lodge (camp), or as an addition to residential furnishings, “bring the adventure home.”
- 2. From where do you derive inspiration?** Our ongoing projects for resorts in Asia and Africa emulating the lifestyle of sportsmen, the outdoors and exploring God’s creations.
- 3. Describe your furniture style.** Classic luxury specialty craft.
- 4. How did you get into furniture design?** I entered the furniture business because I’m from a family of interior designers.
- 5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** The future



FROM TOP: Kipling desk in black with green suede. Palette coffee table. Director's chair in natural orange lizard.

- will bring an evolution of existing products and going forward with aspects of modern utility while maintaining a classic look. We are planning to reintroduce the materials we work with (brass, steel, mahogany, leather, woven fibers) using new finishes, applications, fabrications and combinations.
- 6. Dream material to explore:** I would like to continue exploring possibilities with casting and shaping aluminum.
- 7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** I think resin composites are incredibly interesting. However, they do not relate to our products.
- 8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____.** Why? A carved elephant head, occasional table in black ebony and with ivory tusk from East Africa. My mother threw it at my stepfather in a heated argument! **For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.**



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JINGGOY BUENSUCESO

JINGGOY BUENSUCESO

Jinggoy Buensuceso graduated from the University of the Philippines with a degree in Visual Communications in 2003. Since then, he has emerged as a leading designer in the Philippine scene, from various stints abroad, from Singapore to Dubai. He is instrumental in forming the group, Epoch, with Daniel Latorre Cruz, Stanley Ruiz, Olivia d’Aboville and Wataru Sakuma. Most recently, he was engaged as design consultant for Manila FAME and the Design Center of the Philippines. - **AMR**

- 1. What is your most current collection all about?** My most recent collection is all about stories and memories when I was a kid. It’s the bridge between my past and present.
- 2. From where do you derive inspiration?** From anything and anywhere. I’m always inspired by the beauty and deeper form of nature.
- 3. Describe your furniture style.** Linear in different forms and intensity.
- 4. How did you get into furniture design?** I’m a sculptor and visual artist by profession. I got the chance to create my first functional art when we formed our group Epoch to collaborate with Cebu-based furniture companies three years ago.
- 5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** We are launching my new brand, and we are going to



ABOVE: The Moth Chairback. LEFT: The Crayola Doodle Chair.



- impart a different twist to functional art with every product from our studio.
- 6. Dream material to explore:** Smoke, charcoal and bubbles.
- 7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** Organic and eco-friendly design.
- 8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____.** Why? A 1950s to 1970s teacher chair made of narra and steel. I like its simplicity and beauty. **For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.**



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

KENNETH COBONPUE

Philippine design is synonymous with Kenneth Cobonpue's name. With a trove of design awards, editorials, and celebrity clientele to attest to his design prowess, Cebu's most loved furniture designer has earned for the Philippines a solid place in the design map. Hailed by *Time Magazine* as "Rattan's First Virtuoso," he was also most recently named "Designer of the Year" by Maison et Objet Asia. —AMR

1. What is your most current collection all about? My travels in the last few years from Kathmandu to Marrakech have led me to appreciate exotic and primitive cultures other than our own. I find a common thread of beauty, warmth and timelessness in things made by hand. My new collections derive inspiration from techniques, colors and patterns of a proud past when the craftsman was free to experiment and create without hurry. I think most of the things designed today are devoid of drama. I want to bring the romance back into design.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? To search for answers, I went through the notes I made a decade ago, and the pages reminded me how I used to tell my students to look at the world through the eyes of a child. The simplest forms ultimately lead to the best designs. The pieces people love are



ABOVE:
The Calyx
Collection.
BELOW: The
Trame designed
in collaboration
with Federica
Capitani.



always the ones with shapes a kid can draw, or those that turn you into a kid again.

3. Describe your furniture style. I try my best not to have one. A style is a box that tells me it's time to pack myself in and ship out.

4. How did you get into furniture design? I was born into the world of furniture through my mother, who was a designer and manufacturer. She taught me the value of being unique, original and true to my calling. In simple terms, she taught me how to reach out and inspire others through design.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? I love challenges and this year, we are working on everything from a real-world electric tricycle, space installations, public interiors, collaborations with local and foreign designers on dozens of projects from schoolhouses to office environments and, of course, more furniture.

6. Dream material to explore: The search is on for more natural materials that can withstand the outdoors. This is the Holy

Grail for designers now that the effects of climate change hang like a noose over our heads. I would like to combine technical and natural fibers to create new structures, skins and surfaces.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? I feel that the distinction between the indoors and outdoors of a home will gradually blur, as people entertain outside as much as inside. This is important in designing spaces and furniture for people who want to bring the outside in.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? My mother's Lotus Sidechair. It was an original work of art made of sculpted rattan vines and wood. Thirty years have passed, and the design still stands as graceful and timeless as ever. This chair is my model and inspiration to strive for perfection in my own work. I wish every design of mine can stand the test of time. For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

CARLO CORDARO

Cebu-based furniture designer and manufacturer Carlo Cordaro may have had a doctorate degree in Economics, but he has proven that his innate creativity and design sense is enough to produce world-class furniture. And then he founded Atelier-A, where he produced the first of his many designs like the Tropea Collection that used the functionality and beauty of bamboo. His works can be seen in hotels and homes around Asia Pacific, Raffles Dubai in the Middle East, Europe and the US. His fleur round dining table can be found at the lobby of the Metropolitan Hansa Hotel in Berlin while some of his pieces found homes at International Hotel in Kuwait, Ferrari Hotel in Rome and Flooka Restaurant in Dubai, promoting the quality of Filipino workmanship to the world. —Anzenne Roble

1. What is your most current collection all about? Two collections are the most in demand: The Fifty's and Palm Fiber dining set.

The Fifty is based on my birthday... (I will not disclose how long ago I celebrated that birthday. Let's just say recently.) I gave the Fifty's collection "values" of real materials, and upgraded shapes that are rational and people-friendly. The basic material of the Palm Fiber dining set is coconut fiber elaborated in a very elegant way.



CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP:
Sideboard in solid
wood and forged iron
legs from Carlo's '50s
collection and the
mirror in palm fiber. Mini
desk in ebony Makassar
from the '50s collection.
Cabriolet chair using
bamboo slats.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? My rationale is functionality, comfort and style—the three essential parts of an item.

3. Describe your furniture style. I use unique materials and give them a sophistication, which is our forte in a world where raw materials are a rarity!

4. How did you get into furniture design? My background is not related to furniture or design; I have a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Rome. Twenty years ago, I came to the Philippines as a financial consultant for Cebu Fil Veneer Corporation. The first time I entered the factory, the operator was slicing a beautiful piece of wood, and I discovered it was possible to be the "wood tailor." So I became a furniture maker. Being a designer came after I was selected to be part of Movement 8, the Citem Project that first highlighted the Philippine furniture industry worldwide.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? I will launch an item suited for small apartments, large houses, even boutique hotels... Something compact but extremely "cool" like an Audi

TT or R8! Plus, I will launch a very innovative outdoor collection.

6. Dream material to explore: Black carbon fiber.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? This year, the trend has to be less flamboyant, sharp, straight, and the "design messages" are easy to catch; no words are necessary to explain it.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? I recently discovered that my grandfather was a furniture maker. As a wedding gift for my parents, he made a dining set—chairs and two sideboards—in addition to a bar cabinet. All these items are made of wood and designed so that each corner was like a quarter of a sphere. For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CHRISTINA GASTON

CHRISTINA BORRROMEO GASTON

The creative director and designer of Hacienda Crafts, an envirosocial design company, Christina has contributed in pushing high-quality, locally-made handcrafted furniture and home accessories to the global arena. Hacienda Crafts helps bring back the tradition of using old weaving methods, and makes use of raw materials that are sustainable, to come up with unique and eco-chic designs. In 2004, people the world over took more notice of the brand when Christina dabbled in exquisite lighting fixtures fashioned with organic materials. As the name suggests, each and every furniture piece and home accessory they make has that relaxing “hacienda” feel that will not feel out of place even in a contemporary setting; they look great as statement pieces as much as they would, complementing others in a decorated space. —Grace Libero

1. What is your most current collection all about? My current collection is a collaboration with a community in La Libertad, Negros Oriental. The community derives its livelihood from making rope. They make both *abaca* rope and rope from recycled rice sacks. I design using their capability because it is the most relevant for them. The community makes bags and mats so I have added small furniture and storage to their list of products.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? Inspiration comes in many forms. I am inspired by nature, people, art, music, and experience. I am also inspired by wanting to contribute to preserving our heritage and culture through design.

3. Describe your furniture style. My furniture is modern and traditional at the same time. Actually, I have designed a lot more lighting than furniture. I use age-old traditions like weaving and carving in a contemporary way.

4. How did you get into furniture design? It was a natural evolution into furniture design. I studied Architecture and eventually did product design.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? I am always very excited to present all the collaborative work I have done with different designers.

6. Dream material to explore: Cement or clay.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? Multi-functional design.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? A *buri* peacock chair that belonged to my father when he was a child. It impressed on me that natural materials can last as long as any material for furniture. ● For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



TOP:
Obi Squash
hanging lamp.
BOTTOM:
Maranao
stacking stool



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF NICCOLO JOSE

NICCOLO JOSE

This 26-year-old Filipino visual artist and sculptor—who studied Studio Art and Environmental Studies at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon USA—is well known for his functional wooden accent art pieces. Niccolo’s creations are made of reclaimed wood, sourced from old houses and train tracks, making each piece singular, marked both by his handiwork and by each piece of wood’s history. Last year, he had an exhibit called “Remnants” at the Altro Mondo Gallery in Greenbelt 5, Makati, which showcased the evolution of his work—from stuff he calls “figurative sculptures” to functional furniture pieces. Young and full of potential, it’d be exciting to see Niccolo’s evolution as an artist and designer. —Grace Libero

1. What is your most current collection all about? The Bend Collection focuses on the idea of “bending.” These are furniture and interior installations inspired by the bending properties of wood. These lively and playful pieces are perfect for interiors with a lot of straight lines, contemporary houses, earthy themes and minimalist rooms. I was fortunate to create a whole line of these pieces for an eco-tourist resort in Northern Luzon.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? First, the inspiration and fascination I have with the human anatomy. I look at the contour lines of how the muscle groups in our bodies are woven and interconnected, and then apply these concepts to my designs. Second, I love to study the grain of each piece of wood to highlight what makes each piece unique with minimum spoilage. Working with this material is always a constant inspiration.

3. Describe your furniture style. I like



to think my furniture are friendly and playful. I want to always have the best use of the main materials (various reclaimed and recycled wood) to be exhibited in a positive way.

4. How did you get into furniture design? While studying Environmental Studies and Studio Art in Portland, Oregon, I worked as stage carpenter for the theatre department in my college. It was my first exposure to making furniture and functional items as props (usually made from recycled materials). When I came back to the Philippines, I found a niche in creating furniture from reclaimed old wood and crafting them into unique artworks.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? I’m constantly applying new things. Now I’m pushing for cleaner lines, more elegant and lighter



ABOVE
RIGHT: Twisted
Kite table. BELOW
LEFT: Limited
edition 2013 Flex
Chair. BOTTOM:
Mave console
table.

pieces while still maintaining function, durability, comfort, and beauty.

6. Dream material to explore: Wood. It is so versatile and there is still so much to explore about the material and understanding how to best utilize it. I continue to work with wood, and I’ve explored incorporating it with other materials like metal and glass.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? My works should always be contemporary and timeless. I would not want to be caught too much in current trends in design.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? We kept moving homes when I was young, so I never really had memories of furniture. But that is why, even today, I can constantly keep dreaming of beautiful and ideal furniture pieces. My design decisions are based from personal experiences, positive emotions and exposure from traveling in various locations. ● For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.





PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAULO VALENZUELA

JESSICA KIENTLE

Before Jessica became a designer for her family’s business, leading furniture manufacturer and retailer, Philux, she found herself in different parts of the world, studying and earning experience in places like Paris, San Francisco, and New York. Equipped with design know-how, she returned to the Philippines in hopes of re-inventing Philux, and pursuing her passion for designing interiors and furniture. As an established provider of furniture pieces that have a transitional to modern feel, Philux is bound to be a more exciting industry player with Jessica around. *—Grace Libero*

- 1. **What is your most current collection all about?** This new collection is about combining the “traditional” look with an edgy, industrial feel. It is about comfort and “lush living,” juxtaposed with the “rough” and “raw.” I believe the two ideas complement each other very well, as you cannot have too much of one or the other. It is all about balance.
- 2. **From where do you derive inspiration?** I derive inspiration from everywhere, usually from my travels. I also get inspiration from other forms of art, be it fashion, photography or fine arts. There is no rule on where you can get inspiration.
- 3. **Describe your furniture style.** My style is constantly evolving. I really do not have a particular style. I could be into a look one year, and years later, I could absolutely dislike it. That is the beauty of design. The

- style of a designer changes as the designer themselves change.
- 4. **How did you get into furniture design?** My parents founded Philux over 30 years ago, so I literally grew up in the furniture industry. I learned how to appreciate furniture and design at a young age. The older I got, the more interested I became. I knew I wanted to pursue a career in furniture and interior design since I was a child.
 - 5. **What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** Well, this year is a very exciting and important year for Philux. We are exploring styles and materials that are very different from the ones we have done in the past. We plan to come out with yearly collections. This year, expect to see a lot more upholstery and metal work.
 - 6. **Dream material to explore:** I would like to work with rattan someday, and bring back some original rattan Philux pieces from the ‘80s, with a modern twist, of course.
 - 7. **What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** Bold patterns. They have been popular in the last years, but it seems that patterns are getting bolder, blown-up to a bigger scale! In furniture, they are used in accent pieces and on accessories like throw pillows. It’s fun and adds character to a space, so I am all for it!
 - 8. **A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____.** Why? A bed called the Sunrise, made of solid narra, which was designed by my father in the early ‘80s. It has a beautiful curved headboard with sharp edges that remind me of a cubist painting. It is a low, floating bed that looks as though it could have been made today. It is timeless, and that is what I intend to achieve in my own pieces. *For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.*



FROM TOP:
Adriana armchair,
designed by Jessica
with her father. Sutter
Chest coffee table.
Chanterelle side table.
Furniture in the Philux
showroom in LRI.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF COSTA DEL SUL

VERONIQUE KERVEILLANT

- Old houses, weathered boats and train tracks are the sources of choice for Costa del Sul designer Veronique Kerveillant (in photo with husband, Didier). Her furniture revels in the timeworn, layered with colors and textures. Priding themselves in being eco-friendly, owing to their penchant for re-use, Costa del Sul’s pieces imbue spaces with casual comfort, charm and warmth. *—AMR*
- 1. **What is your most current collection all about?** It is an invitation to traveling. If you look at each of my furniture, some have clear French style (of course), but others seem to come from the Sahara or India, look English or Japanese, even Chinese...It depends on the drawings I add to my furniture.
 - 2. **From where do you derive inspiration?** Essentially from nature, what I find in or near the sea, in the mountain and the countryside, and during my travels.
 - 3. **Describe your furniture style.** Our furniture is made from recycled wood, so the style is neither modern nor old, just with a warm and intimate note of countryside furniture, mountain or seaside. It can be integrated into any interior—classic or contemporary, private apartments or townhouses, country home or beach house, even for offices, hotels or restaurants. I personalize each of my furniture by adding a touch of color or pattern, sometimes I make only one, just because it will fit well as a unique piece in the client’s home.
 - 4. **How did you get into furniture design?** I was born into a family of engineers, but my mother was very talented in interior decoration. My parents built for themselves and their family many houses (townhouses,



TOP:
Safari-
inspired drawer.
MIDDLE: Fish
7-Drawer Cabinet.
BOTTOM: Drawer
and cabinet from
the Butterflies
collection

- mountain chalets and beach houses). When I lived in France, I studied in the École des Beaux-Arts and later I had an interior decoration and furniture store that was called “Un Jardin en Plus” (A Garden and More) in Saint Germain-en-Laye, a residential area near Paris. I married Didier, who has lived in Asia for 30 years. He makes furniture for export. We decided to settle in Manila with our children and opened a furniture/decoration boutique and a furniture workshop.
- 5. **What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** I’m doing more customized furniture, and encourage my clients to consider interior design concepts close to nature.
 - 6. **Dream material to explore:** I like natural materials, but I do want to use materials that have already ‘lived’ for other uses.

- 7. **What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** I love the color combinations in an interior that give the impression of living in the midst of nature, in a garden, in a field of flowers, or on a sandy beach.
- 8. **A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____.** Why? The bed that my parents gave me for my 15th birthday. It was from the time of Louis XVI, which my mother found in an antique shop. It featured eight layers of paint in different colors! It was beautiful! If I still had it, I’d scratch the paint in certain places to make it look like an old fishing boat, because it certainly had to pass from family to family before it docked in my room! *For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.*



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ITO KISH

ITO KISH

ITO KISH IS MANILA'S most eloquent storyteller of narratives told through objects carefully curated in KISH, his eponymous home emporium. He debuted his first furniture collection through Manila FAME in March 2012, where he won for Best Booth Design and Best Product Design for Furniture. Since then, the accolades haven't stopped coming. In April 2013, he was honored with a Silver 'A' Design Award in Como, Italy. —AMR

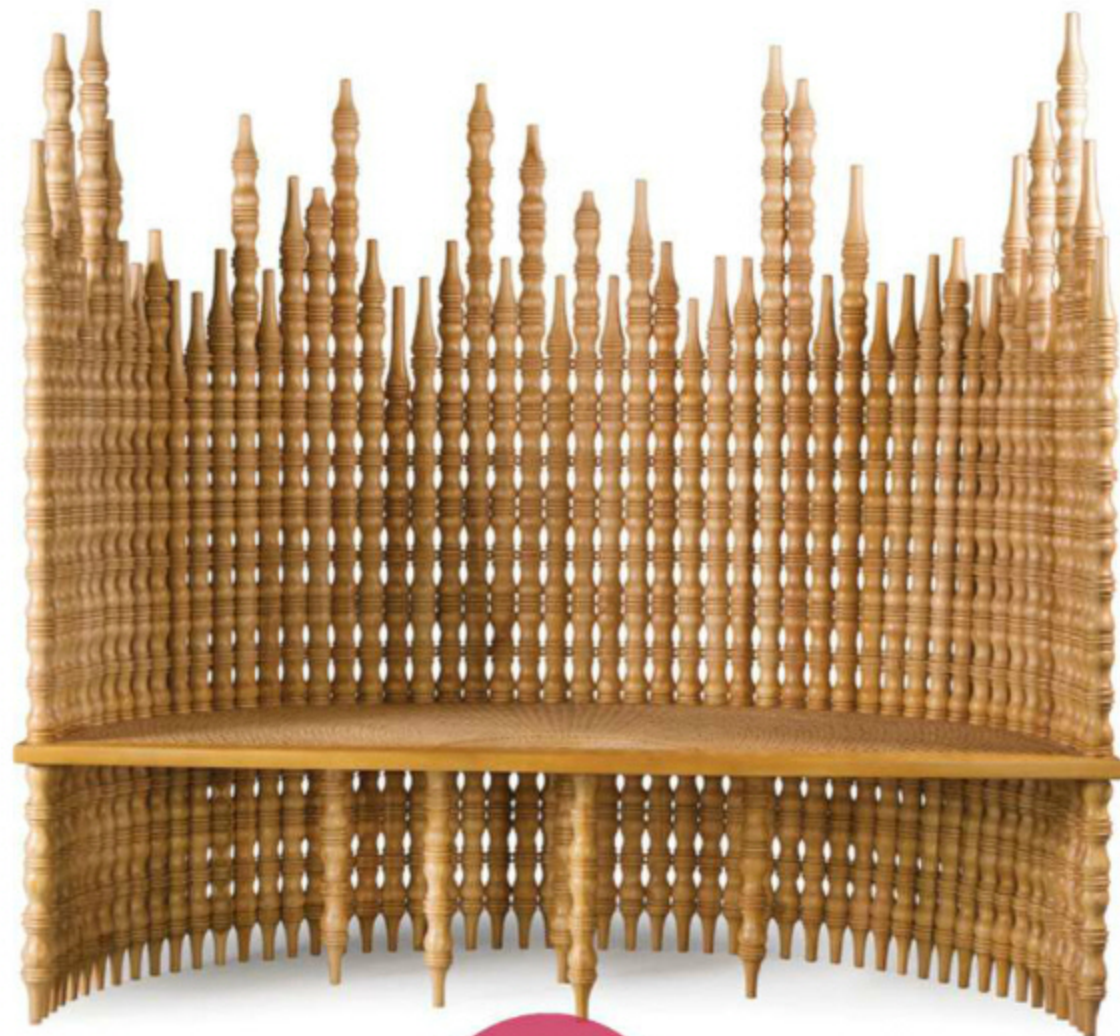
1. What is your most current collection all about? It is all about combinations. Materials, shapes and textures, of course, all Pinoy-inspired.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? From everywhere and anything.

3. Describe your furniture style. Pinoy now.

4. How did you get into furniture design? I have been in retail for 13 years with KISH, and in design/decorating the last seven years. After a while, there was an itch for a new challenge. People really thought I was a furniture designer because of KISH, but I was never really one until the Baluster collection came out in March 2012, and from that collection came Gregoria that catapulted to a near iconic status after less than two years.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? Simple pieces that are Pinoy-inspired for the world to ap-



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: The Gregoria Lounge from Kish's Baluster Collection. The Basilisa Armoire. The Basilisa geometric low table.



preciate. We are launching most pieces this March. We even have outdoor stools, accessories and furniture.

6. Dream material to explore: Stone.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? I do not follow trends. You do what inspires you, what can be yours and original. You design to distinguish yourself from the rest.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? The *batibot*. It is Filipino, it's simple, but it does have a statement. For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JB WOODCRAFT, INC.

PER LARSSON

Exports to the Middle East and Europe have kept business brisk at JB Woodcraft, Inc. Known for their exquisite workmanship and bold classical aesthetic, JB Woodcraft, Inc. owes its legacy of craftsmanship to Betis, Pangasinana. The Philippines takes pride in their pieces, which make it to the rooms of those who love arabesque motifs and gilded finishes. Designer Per Larsson speaks to **Metro Home and Entertaining**. —AMR

1. What is your most current collection all about? Delicate items of high quality, inspired by the classic Empire art styles, and adapted to fit and function in modern as well as classic interiors.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? I am Swedish and educated in Europe. I'm also a third-generation gilder and work at restoring antiques. It fascinates me to be able to produce items with European design in an Asian country. The long and good relation between me and JB Woodcraft is proof that Filipino craftsmen maintain high standards.

3. Describe your furniture style. When Leslie Mendiola and I find a subject that we like, I go through the possibility of refining a specific piece to an entire collection. Certain collections can take many years before they are fully complete.

4. How did you get into furniture design? During my training as a gilder, I got in touch with the design profession and found this very interesting. Twenty years ago, I

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Baroque mirror frame. Louisa Ulrika lounge chair. Gustavian lampett.



came in contact with JB through a project from the Swedish furniture company Ikea, and saw possibilities in this fantastic collaboration, given my experience with antiques and manufacturing.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? We work constantly to develop our collections. I hope we will complete the Georgian Collection, and the Italian Baroque collection with its fantastic dining set.

6. Dream material to explore: Combinations of the most exclusive handicraft techniques such as limförgyllning (a Swedish term) with real gold, intarsia with exclusive wood posts. Combining these materials and techniques would be an honor to the craft.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? The new color trends are wonderful. It is challenging to combine our traditional furniture with trendy finishing or fabrics.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? My father was a gilder so our home had a lot of gilding and frames. I remember an Italian baroque frame in our living room, and a collection of furniture made for Queen Lovisa Ulrika (1751-71) who was King Gustav III's mother. We've actually done some furniture for this "JPL collection Lovisa Ulrika." It was four long chairs made for her arrival at the Royal Palace, which I reproduced with JB a couple of years ago. I also reproduced furniture for her office (writing desks, cabinets, and secretaire) made from veneer and gilded ornamentation (electric-gilding). These would be my dream pieces of furniture to manufacture not only because they are so beautiful but perhaps mostly because it is evidence that we can still create unique furniture when we work together. For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DANIEL LATORRE CRUZ

DANIEL LATORRE CRUZ

FOR DANIEL LATORRE CRUZ, designing furniture in the Philippines is a homecoming. Educated in Burnel University, where he completed a BA Honors degree in Furniture and Product Design, he was introduced to Joey and Nina Gaston of Hacienda Crafts, who invited him to participate in the Cebu International Furniture and Furnishings Exhibition in 2010. “I think it’s important to have a conscience for what we make. Mass production is great. The Chinese are great at that. Let them have that. For instance, the T’bolis, the dreamweavers, you cannot replace that with machine. The continuation of craft and tradition are the legacy,” he says. (Excerpt taken from **Metro Home and Entertaining 9.6**, *The Dawn of an Epoch*, by Anna M. Rosete and Carlo Tadiar).

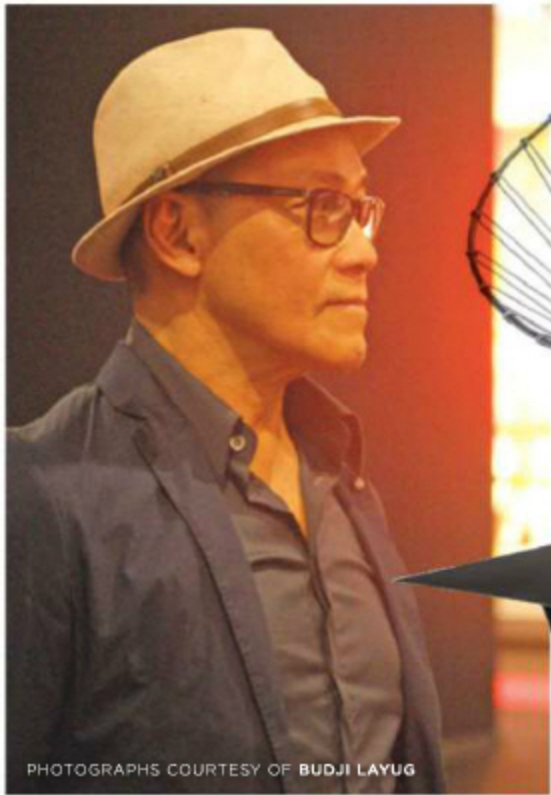
- 1. **What is your most current collection all about?** The recent collections are all about experimental surface narratives of raw materials and the play of light.
- 2. **From where do you derive inspiration?** My inspiration is an extension of both cultures past and present that I have gratefully gained.
- 3. **Describe your furniture style.** The forms are often faceted, decayed and weathered through time but opulent, mostly along contemporary lines.
- 4. **How did you get into furniture design?** I love making things and the process behind it. I studied painting and sculpture at a local art school and then applied the



TOP: Against the Elements. ABOVE: Solaris. LEFT: F.E.A.R. BELOW: 445

skill to functional forms.

- 5. **What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** The advocacy is to always work with natural materials of Filipino heritage with the dichotomy of western design technologies and influences. I shall be applying this into more quirky shapes that can manifest into other improbable entities.
- 6. **Dream material to explore:** The opulence of capiz shells; there are no machines that can work with this material, and I like the challenge behind that.
- 7. **What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** I always stay loyal to the character of the chosen materials, perhaps fulfill its potential and not be overpowered by trends.
- 8. **A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____.** Why? A Robin Day polypro chair. I was a bit naughty at school as we are all full of creative freedom and didn’t stick to conventions. **For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.**



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BUDJI LAYUG

BUDJI LAYUG

With a penchant for the modern and organic, acclaimed designer Budji Layug has created pieces of furniture that have earned international fame. True to his Filipino heritage, Budji’s masterpieces are crafted from local materials, like *pandan*, bamboo, and Philippine hardwoods. In his hands, exquisite craftsmanship, detailing, and functionality are born. Armed with a degree from the New York School of Design, inspiration from design doyenne, Andree Putman, and an eye that finds beauty in almost anything, Budji continuously breaks ground in the arts and design. He became an advocate for positioning Philippine design

in the global stage when he launched Movement 8, in collaboration with Eli Pinto of CITEM. Continuing this endeavor, Design PH debuted worldwide at the 2013 Maison et Objet in Paris. **—Anzenne Roble**

- 1. **What is your most current collection about?** My design sensibility has always been organic and modern. The challenge of presenting something fresh and unexpected every time always excites me.
- 2. **From where do you derive inspiration?** Nature is an endless source of fluid forms, rich materials, textures and patterns as well as simple yet complex systems. There is always something out there that fuels the passion to create.
- 3. **Describe your furniture style.** My personal style is tropical modern, organic and youthful. It should be a reflection of our culture, our soul as a people, and it should constantly evolve, and be timeless.
- 4. **How did you get into furniture design?** I grew up in a creative environment. My mom and uncle ran Cancio Associates, a furniture company. My mom also co-founded the school now known as the Philippine School of Interior Design (PSID). It’s in my DNA.
- 5. **What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** More surprises! There’s a lot of creative col-



TOP: Ciclo sofa designed in collaboration with Industria. MIDDLE: Molave rectangular metal dining table designed in collaboration with Industria. BOTTOM: Meta stool (right) and Meta Arm Chair (left) designed in collaboration with Tribos Bay Living

- laboration going on in BUDJI+ROYAL Design+Architecture. It’s also a time to share knowledge, give back, and mentor our future young designers.
- 6. **Dream material to explore:** Any material is multifaceted and holds many possibilities. I believe there must be a synergy between material and technology to move forward with design, and to discover the full potential of the medium.
- 7. **What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** I don’t follow trends. I have a consistent design philosophy.
- 8. **A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____.** Why? The *papag*, which is constant in my furniture design and space. **For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.**



GABBY LICHAUCO

Principal designer of Openstudio, Gabby Lichauro is one of the emerging young designers that are getting the much-deserved attention by the local design community. He has a master's degree in Industrial Design from Scuola Politecnica di Design in Milan, Italy and actively participated in several projects with Artimede, Microsoft Italy, Piquadro and Irsap. His skill is evident through his furniture pieces, which is a fusion of contemporary designs and intricate craftsmanship by local artisans. His creativity gave birth to one of his popular design collections—the quirky and fun children's furniture line from Emi Handmade that he founded last 2010. —*Anzenne Roble*

1. What is your most current collection all about? It's all about shelves. I'm developing utilitarian design for compact living, like shelving systems. I'm also working on my children's furniture line, Emi.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? From my surroundings, references and materials.

3. Describe your furniture style. You could say it's contemporary though I think the style derives from the design process.

4. How did you get into furniture design? I majored in Industrial Design and I pursued my master's degree in Milan. Eventually, I found myself concentrating more on furniture.



FROM TOP: The GL chair designed for S.C. Vizcarra. Storyteller rocking chair. Spring chair.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? A new direction in product design. We're currently working on a collection for FAME this March.

6. Dream material to explore: It would be nice to explore working with marble and blown glass.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? The reinterpretation of what exists and redefining its design identity.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? A plastic baby pool. I just like the way it looks, maybe it's the shape and functionality. For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



WILMER LOPEZ & THOR BALANON

Their creative vision of "mid-century Scandinavian furniture meets Pop Asian aesthetic meets functionality, wrapped in neon science fiction" lives up to their brainchild, Space Encounters' reputation as Manila's hub for pop eclectic furniture pieces. —*Anzenne Roble*

1. What is your most current collection all about? Space Cowboy, the furniture store's fifth collection, is revisionist western. Sheriff badges, skulls and pistols are transported from dusty wastelands into pillow and poster prints where pretty and menace become inseparable. Check and Aztec patterns contrast but ultimately soften the hard-edged Western icons while pastel colors adds the warmth that would make the creations fit any home. "I have always had an affinity with Western concepts," says Wilmer.

2. From where do you derive inspiration?

WILMER: Mostly by my travels, experiencing firsthand how design is lived by different cultures, whether it's in the streets of a city, cafés, and even flea markets.

THOR: Cinema, music, comic books. Design inspiration is both rooted in history and what-could-be. It's unpredictable.

3. Describe your furniture style.

W: Mid-century Modern, and as specific as possible when it comes to form, point of view, functionality and comfort.

T: We remain consistent with the mid-century form, but combine and experiment to create new ones. We also experiment with



FROM TOP: Fireflies stools. Jetson armchair. Space Barrel chair. John Lemon bench.

finishes and fabric to make the pieces more current when required.

4. How did you get into furniture design?

W: I'm an interior designer and sometimes, sourcing gets impossible and tiring. So I've always had my furniture custom-made.

T: When Wilmer invited me to join Space Encounters, his motives were very clear: to inject my advertising background into furniture design, and to bring in the pop element into the pieces.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year?

W: We always aim for a twist, but all I can say is Space Encounters will focus on workmanship: wood, texture, finish.

6. Dream material to explore:

W: I've always wanted to explore producing wood and metal pieces. I also want to work with fiberglass, vintage pieces (handles, wheels and industrial parts), and mixing them with furniture parts. I also want to pursue a fabric series or collection.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?

T: I don't specifically look at design trends. I am currently liking the urban-vintage vibe of Rain's comeback music videos, and I'm quite sure it will find its way into Space Encounters soon.

W: Now that more and more people are into industrial interiors, we will continue to pursue and explore new ways to execute mid-century industrial loft styles. More naked wood will be seen in furniture. It creates a good contrast to cement walls.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why?

W: Mid-century furniture from my Lola's house and vintage items like radios and phones. But I specifically remember this old corn grinder. I saw it again about a year ago when we were salvaging what we could recycle and made sure to bring it home. It is now in Subspace Coffee. It's a heavy grinder with clamps, and I love the fading metal, the rust, and the heaviness, the purity of it. It's a constant reminder of form and function, and how, if done with honesty, it becomes timeless.

T: True Blue vinyl, Madonna in her Monroe-esque best on the cover. I used to listen to it a lot as a child, and in retrospect, I think it is her most honest expression of pop, minus artistic pretension. Again, it's the honesty of passion and love for design that make a creation beautiful and truly authentic. For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.

MILO NAVAL

With an impressive body of work that has been showcased in Valencia, Spain; Maison & Objet in Paris; ICFF in New York; I Salone in Milan, and at IMM in Cologne, Germany, Milo has undeniably contributed in creating awareness about the world-class potential of Filipino interior design talents. His creations are exported to Europe, USA, Australia, South America, Asia, and the Middle East. From his beginnings as an interior designer for residential houses and commercial establishments, he was able to found Evolve Designs, Inc., a company that manufactures and exports modern furniture and home accessories. Later on, Milo was able to establish a retail store and showroom in Manila called OMO (On My Own). An environmentalist, Milo has become known for bespoke pieces like a sofa made out of fallen narra leaves, a table made out of softdrink bottle crowns or caps, table and chair sets made out of corrugated boards and newsprint. - *Grace Libero*

- 1. **What is your most current collection all about?** My current collection is about Hospitality furniture. It uses natural, eco-friendly materials.
- 2. **From where do you derive inspiration?** Line is modern in form and having tropical island living in mind.



BELOW: A vignette of Milo Naval's pieces. The Windsor floor lamp, Bilbao Sofa, Kobe Chair #4, Tango round coffee table and Zircon side table.



- 3. **Describe your furniture style.** My line of furniture always adheres to very simple forms, simple use of materials, not complex in concept.
- 4. **How did you get into furniture design?** I started designing furniture initially for my interior design projects. I wanted to do more custom furniture for my clients. I saw the need to complement the style of the interior I was doing. I later decided to come up with a line of collection for a bigger audience for export.
- 5. **What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** I would like

- to pursue the same line we are currently doing to serve the niche and explore this market further.
- 6. **Dream material to explore:** Boulder as a furniture material.
- 7. **What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** I don't follow trends.
- 8. **A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____.** Why? I like bamboo beds or *papag*. I find them simple and practical. They sort of influenced me in some ways. To me, they are multifunctional. For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



VALERIANO PADILLA

With his furniture pieces created to become "the future classics," Padua International's furniture design consultant Valeriano Padilla's creative vision gave birth to timeless crafts that made its way to the upper end of the international and local furniture market. His designs are crafted from wood and natural materials, and he is looking forward to exploring more environment-friendly resources, achieving his vision to make a line of durable and ingenious locally made products. - *Anzenne Roble*

- 1. **What is your most current collection all about?** My new collections address the present and future trends for Interior 2014-15.
- 2. **From where do you derive inspiration?** Inspiration is taken from reliable trend and forecast reports, and from actual experiences and data collected from specific target markets.
- 3. **Describe your furniture style.** My furniture style varies but the most predominant feature is that they are designed to be future classics—timeless pieces.
- 4. **How did you get into furniture design?** In 1979 after graduating from college, I worked with Design Center Phils., where I was trained by prominent local and foreign industrial designers to be one of the pioneer furniture designers of our country. We were tasked to help boost the sales of local furniture manufacturers/exporters through design research and development. I became the head of the Furniture Section in 1985, and I would say that my team was instrumental in the growth of the Philippine furniture industry.
- 5. **What can your audience expect from your studio this year?** Relevant and multifunctional designs that cater to their present lifestyle and needs.
- 6. **Dream material to explore:** Eco-wood, an alternative to natural solid timber.
- 7. **What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most?** The use of eco-friendly



ABOVE: Ovo Celia lounge chair. BELOW LEFT: Trion console table. BELOW RIGHT: Ovo Hunchback chairs. BOTTOM: Organico Baso and Cipolla.



materials, back to basics, and value for money.

- 8. **A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____.** Why? A Scandinavian modern style sofa that my mom bought when I was a child. The design is no-nonsense, with good form and function. Scandinavian chairs are well constructed; their most important feature is that these pieces are timeless and collectible. For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DEBBIE PALAO

DEBBIE PALAO

Organic, modern and distinctly Asian, Debbie Palao's sense of design earned her and her furniture pieces local and international recognitions which include Good Design Award from Japan Industrial Design Promotion Organization, KATHA award for Best Product collection for her Water Buffalo in terracotta tiles and metal piece and Best Product Design in the Contemporary Category in the Cebu Fair for her skeletal metal frame chaise with stitched leather design. An artist that enjoys working with steel and wood, each of her unique designs embodies art and functionality. Aside from designing furniture, she's the managing director of Design Ventures Cebu, Inc., working together with her husband Gus, the company's marketing director. - *Anzenne Roble*

1. What is your most current collection all about? "Eunice" was inspired equally by the idea of a digital image composed of so many little colored squares (pixels), and the colorful arrangement of aboriginal art.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? The material is always the source; I only strive to tell its story truthfully. Its inherent qualities inspire me—the texture, features, capacity and limitations. I take inspiration from everyday things—the scuffings in a building near where I live, the drape of a dress, a friend's haircut, images and memories made new by travel.

3. Describe your furniture style. Modern/contemporary. Mostly natural with mixed materials.

4. How did you get into furniture design? Design is a practical application to

something I already enjoyed doing as a child. My husband Gus was the one who chose to enter the furniture industry. Needless to say, I had a lot to learn when we started out! Experience is the best teacher.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? Patterns and more adventurous colors on streamlined "fat-free" designs.

6. Dream material to explore: Very thin bamboo veneer with patterns.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? I actually do not conform to trends, although I do keep myself informed. I believe trends are creative interpretations of certain influences from cultures or historical eras. Although I play with colors, I tend to reach out to the basics, the naturals, whites, grays, black and browns.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? My dad's favorite, the *butaka* chair (in wood with *solihya* weaving), is an heirloom piece that has outlived its owner, and it is still in very good shape. This classic brings back not just memories but also the initial child-like fascination with contrasts (hard wood versus the 'fragile' look of the woven rattan splits). But then, I guess this is because it's part of our family history. *For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.*



TOP: Eunice lounge chair.
MIDDLE: Huki side chair.
BOTTOM: Trekki floor lamp.



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

ANN PAMINTUAN

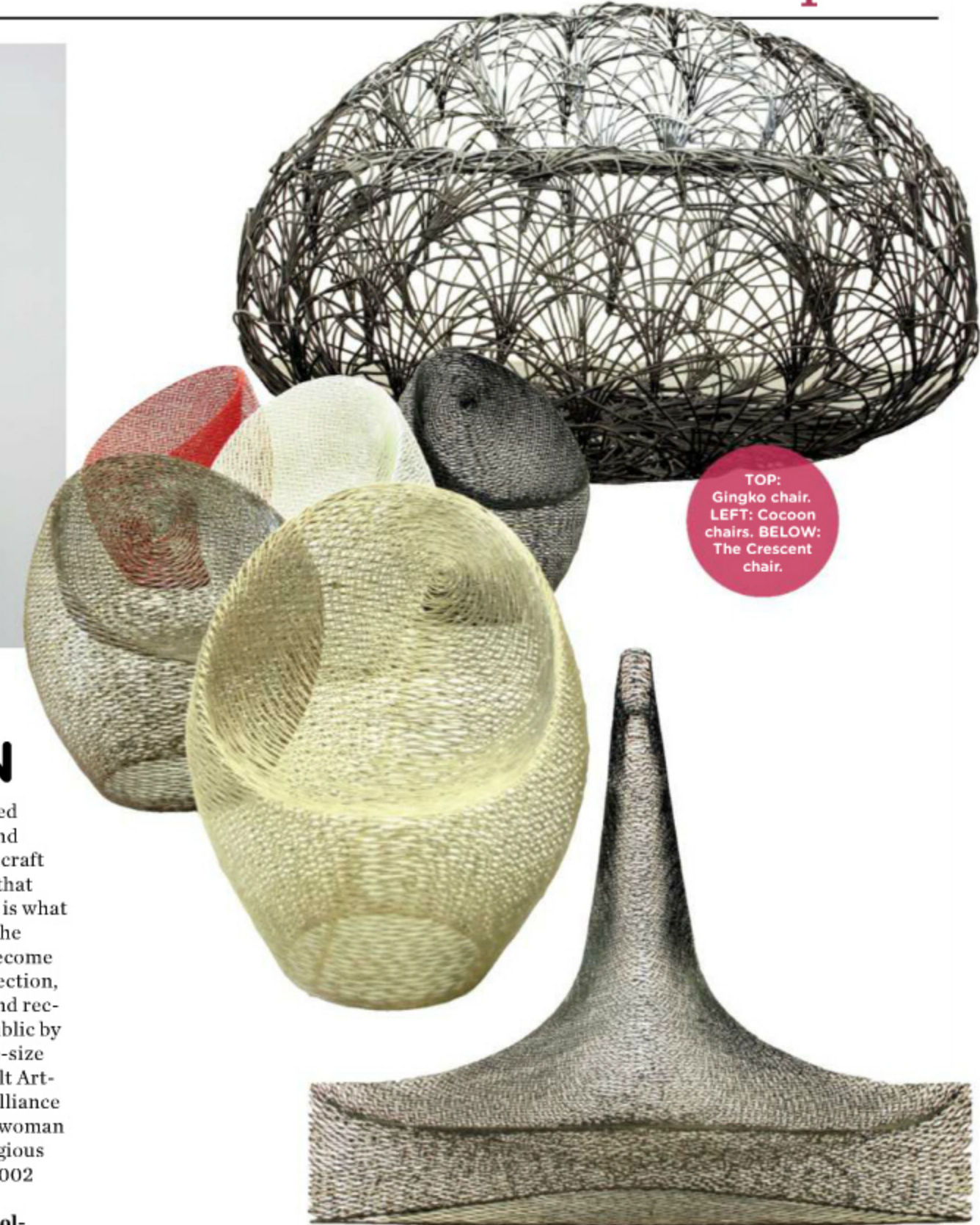
A multi-hyphenate, Ann is an awarded jewelry maker, furniture designer, and metal artist. Her signature ability to craft masterpieces made of wrought iron that appear like they are soft and flowing is what makes Ann a leading personality in the country's design industry. She has become popular for her modern Cocoon collection, which has received several awards and recognitions. Last year, she awed the public by showcasing her masterpieces (13 life-size sculptures of horses) at the Greenbelt Art-Park. As part of the Filipino design alliance "Movement 8," she is the first Asian woman designer to be included in the prestigious International Design Yearbook (in 2002 and 2004). - *Grace Libero*

1. What is your most current collection all about? The Glory Be collection is a series of chairs that is inspired by the Morning Glory flower. It's an exercise on the malleability of metal, fluidity, function and beauty of form.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? My inspiration can just pop from anywhere. I saw the morning glory vine and loved its fragility and color. I tried to capture its beauty in the collection.

3. Describe your furniture style. Simple, uncluttered and devoid of noise.

4. How did you get into furniture design? I got into furniture design when the



TOP: Ginkgo chair.
LEFT: Cocoon chair.
BELOW: The Crescent chair.

Movement 8 exhibited in the 2001 International Furniture Fair in Cologne, Germany. I designed the Cocoon Chair and brought it to Manila Fame in October 2000. It instantly won Best Product Design and qualified to be exhibited in Cologne. It caught attention and was published in the *International Design Yearbook 2004* and in the *Graphis Product Design Series 2005*.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? There will be surprises!

6. Dream material to explore: The

most unassuming.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? I do not follow a particular trend. What resonates is to come up with a better collection than the current one.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? I recall the *batibot* wooden furniture set, which is perfect for the house. My dad would always take home the best variety of wood while my mom loved exclusive wooden accent pieces. *For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.*



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ERIC PARAS

ERIC PARAS

A disciplined and discriminating eye for detail, line and form are assets that work in Eric Paras' favor. An interior designer, he is also credited with furniture designs for Betis Crafts, Las Palmas, and Industria. All, his furnishings gallery, where he orchestrates a symphony of materials, textures and forms for the home, has proven to be Manila's veritable source for décor infused with soul and character. —AMR

1. What is your most current collection all about? My current collection for Betis Crafts is part of my Chimera series. An English buyer termed it as a classical hybrid. It will be a modern interpretation of classical furniture mixed with different classical ornamentations, motifs and applications of different contemporary materials and finishes.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? Aside from my travels and research, for my Chimera series, it was just within the factory of BCI. I was amazed by all the furniture in their showrooms and sample rooms, and also their library of design drawings. It is like a museum of furniture history to me. I was inspired, too, by the ingenuity of their woodworkers, woodcarvers and finishers.

3. Describe your furniture style.

Eclectic. I am a modernist in love with the old world.

4. How did you get into furniture design? I have my interior design practice, and a decade ago, I had a client who was into furniture manufacturing and export. My client asked me to help him do some lifestyle vignettes and styling for his trade shows. So in order to produce a complete look of



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Lantern, leather strip cabinet and bamboo cabinet from Paras' Chimera Series for Betis Crafts.

what I envisioned, I designed the furniture that we needed. On that first trade show, I designed an armoire and credenza, which caught the attention of one buyer from Spain. For five years or more, these pieces were produced and shipped.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? Aside from A-11 Living, I have my collaborations with Industria and Las Palmas. With Industria, I will have a special collection. For Las Palmas, I will have mid-century tropicana style; for BCI, more hybrids will be produced.

6. Dream material to explore: Cast bronze, carved alabasters, copper finishes,

parchment and shagreen leather and Pe-king glass.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? The re-edition of works done by designers during the mid-century, those who were obscure for a time and now rediscovered and appreciated. There will be more demand for well-made works and products done by independent brands, designers with advocacies, and from manufacturers and artisans who only produce in limited volumes.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? A chest of drawers. You would know how good a carpenter is with the kind of drawers he can make. In our family home, we have this old wooden cabinet with a dozen drawers, which came from my mother's pharmacy in our hometown, Tarlac. Each of the siblings in our family was given one or two drawers, where we can put anything we like. Using my two drawers, I began collecting my objects of curiosities, from stones and sea shells to postage stamps and postcards. I brought this cabinet to my Pasay home, had it repaired and restored, and it is now in my library. ¹ For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BENJI REYES

BENJI REYES

In a league of his own, craftsman Benji Reyes' woodwork and technique have turned many reclaimed (and oftentimes overlooked) pieces of wood into works of art, a signature style which made him famous in the international design community. Working with salvaged wood eventually became his advocacy. Benji is at the forefront of uplifting the appreciation for and use of Philippine recycled wood, with his infamous "Tahanan" house as his ultimate masterpiece. His "do it once and do it right" dictum, combined with his cool and unrestricted approach to his craft has produced beautiful furniture pieces that are veritable works of art. —Anzenne Roble

1. What is your most current collection all about? "Kolektor series 2012," three decades of art.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? I draw inspiration from people who understand the finality of my works, and when patrons understand that beauty is not just aesthetics but is also prevalent in its function and execution. It's always exciting to see my concepts come into fruition.

3. Describe your furniture style. I have always described my pieces as "Functional Sculpture" since the late '80s.

4. How did you get into furniture design? As a young kid, I used to take my toys apart trying to understand how things work. Growing up, I felt frustrated at times when things don't work or lack aesthetic values. Having studied units in both Architecture



TOP: Diwata carved cabinet. RIGHT: Juan Tamad chaise lounge-style chair. BOTTOM: Alupihan 7-drawer chest

and Fine Arts gave me enough knowledge to start experimenting on my own design concepts. Learning how to execute my own designs, and working with machines and hand tools amplified my knowledge in designing my furniture.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? A couple of new chairs and more sculptural pieces.

6. Dream material to explore: Nothing but wood for me.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? The word "trend" for me is something temporary. I design and build pieces for future generations to appreciate.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? Can't remember any. Most designs I do evolve from pieces that don't work or work well, but were never integrated into furniture design. ¹ For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF LUISA ROBINSON

LUISA ROBINSON

For Luisa Robinson, materiality is key to the variety of forms she creates. Having designed for international labels such as Armani Casa, Nautica and Ralph Lauren, her pieces are driven by their materials' substance, which, in turn, dictate the fusion of the objects' form and function. —AMR

1. What is your most current collection all about? This year I will continue to develop and expand my Home Accessories under the brand name Luisa Home, including my own furniture line. My furniture will be made of rich materials like skin, stainless steel and black nickel, natural vines, bamboo and shells with laminated acrylics or lucite, and wood and stone.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? My inspiration comes from just about anything—forms, colors and textures in nature, toys my son used to play with, crafts and art I see in my travels, movies with period settings, architecture.

3. Describe your furniture style. My pieces are modern chic, elegant, posh. Nothing native about it, but it displays local craftsmanship and sometimes includes cross-cultural design details with a modern twist. I like using natural materials and combining it with modern techniques and applications.

4. How did you get into furniture design? I worked with Design Center Philippines many years back. My stint there gave



ABOVE: Twist table. RIGHT: Zoe Zac occasional tables. BELOW: Wavescape bureau.

me an opportunity to work with furniture factories in Cebu, and eventually moved to Cebu. I enjoyed seeing my drawing-concepts worked out into a prototype and then into production, after being shown in an exhibit.

5. What can your audience expect your studio this year? A full spectrum of items for the home in my signature brand. Late last year I launched our perfumed candles. I intend to expand this and develop my own furniture into the brand.

6. Dream material to explore: Paper, plastics, seaweed.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates

with you the most? I don't necessarily follow "design trends." I just continue working with materials the best way I can manipulate them in the most eco-conscious way possible.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? I remember the corner detail carving of our dining table, the diamond bone inlays in floral form on our buffet cabinet, and the combination of two different shades of wood on a tabletop. For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

ANA ROCHA

It is her sought-after jewels that made her notable in the accessories industry, but it is her furniture collections that helped her become the well-rounded artist that she is. From jewelry to architecture and furniture, it seems that Ana's creative mind and vision are limitless. She started her artistic venture at a very young age, and from then on, has built a one-woman design empire that truly speaks her style. Her design aesthetic includes architectural forms, be structured or organic, with a whimsical touch and a masterful play of colors. —Anzenne Roble

1. What is your most current collection all about? My collection centers on sustainable creativity.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? I derive inspiration from various art forms, both natural and contrived. I am also inspired by individuals, objects and places that emanate beauty, and have the ability to constantly awe.

3. Describe your furniture style. My design results when illusion and reality merge.

4. How did you get into furniture design? Furniture design was always part of my process as I complete a space, and so, it is a natural progression for me to develop my own line. From the initiation of Arch. J. Anton Mendoza, and the technical support of Nick de Lange, consequently, Ana Rocha for Designs Ligna was born.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? I go through a constant process of sketching, sampling, and



TOP: Fernando accent chair made of custom veneer created from "off-cuts." MIDDLE: Sasha accent table made of vintage nickel plated metal form topped with beveled mirrored surface. BOTTOM: Antorcha Series jewelry case.

reviewing of prototypes, hopefully churning out a viable product.

6. Dream material to explore: Reconstituted rubber and bottle cap fabrics.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? I don't follow trends, I design what I like.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why?

I grew up in a home that was filled with objects and furniture from different parts of the world. My dad, Fernando, brought home chandeliers from Amsterdam, onyx from Pakistan, and the like, while my mom, Yvonne, had the ability to incorporate pieces together seamlessly. But nothing can compare to my dad's butler chair, designed and made in the Philippines. Need I say more? For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF VIKKI AND PAULA RODRIGUEZ

VIKKI AND PAULA RODRIGUEZ

Vikki and Paula Rodriguez are sisters at the helm of the design process at Detalia Aurora and Accessoria, Cebu-based furniture and home accessory companies owned by their family. Armed with degrees in Interior Architecture and Design from the Academy of Art in San Francisco, their distinctive work has earned a KATHA Award for Best Product Design Awards for Houseware in March 2012. —AMR

1. What is your most current collection all about?

VIKKI RODRIGUEZ: I would describe it as modern medieval, rendered in Filipino materials.

PAULA RODRIGUEZ: For 2014, my collections revolve around everything that has inspired me growing up as a Filipino. These collections combine traditional concepts, using natural materials with modern techniques and design.

2. From where do you derive inspiration?

V: I am inspired by anything and anyone I love— movies and music, animals and trees, or material and shape. I can't really pinpoint one thing.

P: Over the years, my inspiration comes from knowing that a designer, especially a Filipino designer, is capable of creating an impact. I think of WHO I can help with this collection, WHAT skills I can improve together with my craftsmen, and HOW I can promote Filipino design to others.

3. Describe your furniture style.

V: Fanciful but not too over the top.

RIGHT: Navi hammock and hanging lights by Paula Rodriguez. BELOW: Heartshell planters designed by Vikki Rodriguez.



P: My furniture style is mostly organic and inspired.

4. How did you get into furniture design?

V: My parents were in the business way before I was born. I was raised in this industry.

P: I became interested in furniture design when I attended a Concept to Prototype Workshop facilitated by some of the industry's best like Kenneth Cobonpue, Debbie Palao, Luisa Robinson, etc.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year?

V: My newest collections are all about being interactive and fun.

P: One of my collections to be launched this year is called ROSA. This collection praises the talent of the wood carvers of Mac-tan, Cebu, who carved the roses.

6. Dream material to explore:

V: Earthen clay is a simple natural material, but you can do so many shapes with it.

P: I would love to get my hands on a stronger kind of natural resin.

7. What 2014 design trend inspires you the most?

V: The palette of whites, browns, and old gold.

P: The use of more warm gold metals instead of stainless steel.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood that informs your design decisions is _____. Why?

V: My dad's old rocking horse. It's an antique but I still got to play with it. It was massive and heavy, made of a dark solid wood, with an abaca mane and tail, and giant spring coils at the bottom.

P: I grew up with having plenty of rattan furniture at home, and these pieces lasted for years! This idea of a beautifully made sustainable product is probably why I would pick designing with natural materials rather than synthetic. **For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.**



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

BONG & ROSSY ROJALES

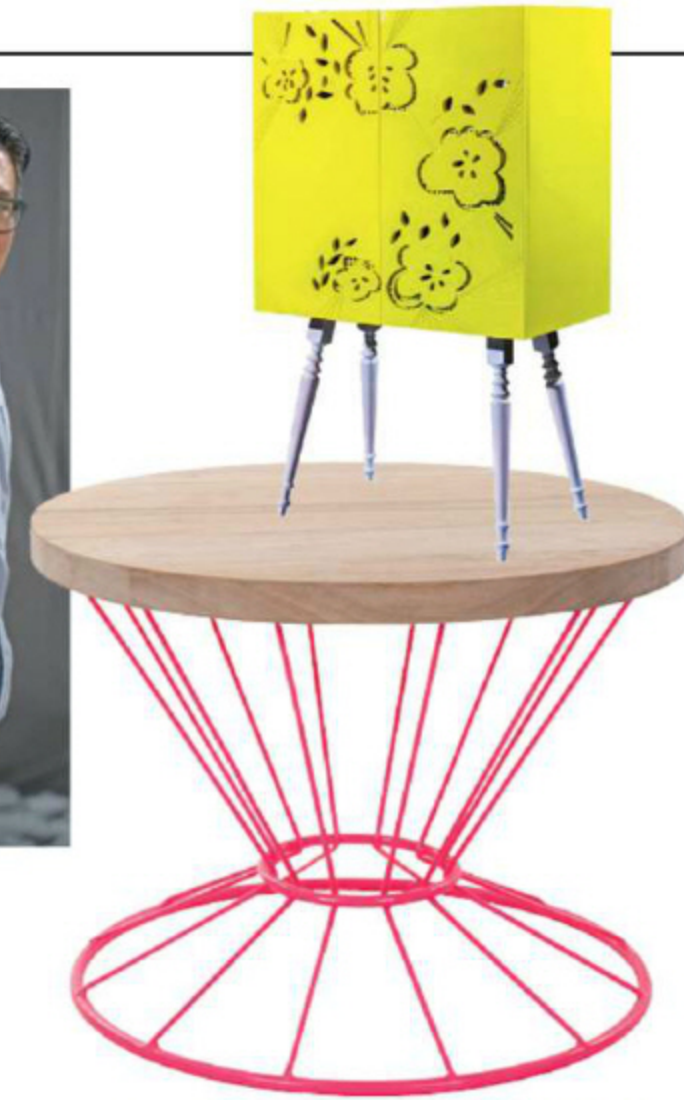
Sugar, spice, and everything nice—Heima Home & Lifestyle store is all these and more. Heima's signature young, quirky, and feel-good designs breathe positivity and vibrance into any space. No wonder it has become the go-to store of the hip and urban clientele ever since it was founded in 2009. The couple who are unstoppable at expanding Heima and making it a part of residences, office spaces, and establishments is Bong and Rossy Rojas. Now with three stores and two sub-brands (Paper Club and My Apartment), Heima is sure to build more happy and whimsical homes. —Grace Libero

1. What is your most current collection all about? We launched MY APT., a more masculine and neutral line. Some of our clients say it's just like Heima for the Gentleman. MY APT. blends darker wood finishes, with leather and raw iron finishes with small pops of chrome and brass. It is about the apartment lifestyle, clearly targeting bachelors and singles, or even young couples.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? From nostalgia with reinvented classic pieces. We read, travel, observe and absorb various inputs from our senses. We also have a team now that gets feedback from our customers.

3. Describe your furniture style.

Quirky and fun. We advocate our "Live Happy, Beyond Ordinary" tagline. We prefer



FROM TOP: Le Fleur armoire in yellow. Metal side table. Blue mesh console. RIGHT: Colette buffet.



a style that gives a positive vibe to a space. Our customers see our style as distinctly happy. We don't disagree.

4. How did you get into furniture design? Furniture design is essentially part of our interior design practice. We launched two companies with Heim Interiors, a full service interior design firm. Rossy is from Pampanga, where a large number of local furniture is made to world standards. I guess that has something to do with our design.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? We are developing a luxury line, which suggests a coming-of-age era for our furniture designs, but we have also dabbled in a line for the kids.

6. Dream material to explore: Ceramics and porcelain, maybe native materials. We'll work with them and apply our design process in the same way.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? We would like to dwell on what we can do on our own and not subscribe to new trends, which may be short-lived.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? We started with accent pieces like armchairs, maybe that's a sign of respect for the elderly or a focus on comfort in style. One early piece was a secretary desk that reminds us of our schooldays. We in Pampanga love to eat and dine, so the dinner table with carvings is something that we always use during festivities and special occasions.

We love seeing shelves and cupboards filled with a look of prosperity. A lot of our design has an element of nostalgia, I think we are all deeply rooted in our childhood and that is also how our audience connects with us. **For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.**



STANLEY RUIZ

Stanley Ruiz likens his design process to that of a musician. “My work is mostly raw, lo-fi, and quite organic. Some of the forms were already determined by the materials that I used... and in the event that I give them form, they are basic and unpolished. I can say that I work intuitively, like an improvising musician would,” he says. With extensive experience in designing for American commercial designers such as Jonathan Adler, Urban Outfitters, West Elm and Real Simple, Ruiz was tapped by Nina Gaston of Hacienda Crafts to participate in their Kagikan project in 2011. His work is consistently shown in Manila FAME. (Excerpts taken from **Metro Home and Entertaining** 9.6, “The Dawn of an Epoch,” by Anna M. Rosete and Carlo Tadiar).

- 1. What is your most current collection all about? My latest collection is called “Whisk,” a series of lamps for the Cebu-based brand Hive. They contain a high-powered LED bulb encased in a molded top, with brass wire shades and lens diffuser to give a subtle lighting effect.
- 2. From where do you derive inspiration? Everywhere.
- 3. Describe your furniture style. Modest, rational, irrational.
- 4. How did you get into furniture design? I studied Industrial Design and really enjoyed design history and furniture design.
- 5. What can your audience expect



- from your studio this year? I have a number of furniture pieces coming out this March, and many new collaborations with local manufacturers. Also, my work is featured in a new book called *Green Design Vol. 2*, published in Germany.
- 6. Dream material to explore: Performance textiles.

- 7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? Nothing.
- 8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? A broken stool, because I learned that many things can be repaired and improvised. For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



WATARU SAKUMA

A Japanese designer based in the Philippines, Wataru has earned worldwide recognition through his intricately woven and crafted handmade paper products that make use of various local agricultural waste materials, designed for Masa Ecological Development Inc. His paper product designs have been awarded by Manila FAME’s Katha Awards in 2005, 2006, 2009, 2010 (for his Kalikasan Crafts’ “Icarus” lamp), and 2013 (Best Eco Product Design). In 2011, he co-founded a group of artists called Epoch with four other Filipino affiliated designers. That same year, Wataru, along with Epoch member Jinggoy Buensuceso, received the Best Booth Design award at the Gift Show in Tokyo, Japan, where they showcased a pavilion design inspired by Filipino traditional spinning wheel. Wataru has also made an impact in the global design industry with the products borne out of his collaboration with furniture companies in Cebu: Finali’s “Tsubo Chair” and Stonesets’ “Rebaroque” which received the Mugna Transitional Design Award and was showcased at Imm in Cologne, Germany. —Grace Libero

- 1. What is your most current collection all about? The collection is paper artwork and some furniture pieces from recycled material from Leyte. They are for a charity art show for rebuilding Leyte.
- 2. Describe your furniture style. I try not to have specific style. My approach to design is through working directly with material, paying close attention to the process of each technique, and pulling out alternative possibilities with the material and



TOP: A basket-like woven chair. BOTTOM LEFT: Details of the Rebaroque chair. BOTTOM RIGHT: Takesu hanging lamp.



- technique. It is very important for me to visit factories and witness the process firsthand in order to experience and feel the production site. When I have an idea, I may not have an image of how it would exactly turn out to be. I like to see the idea evolve into something totally different. It’s important to keep the idea alive and let it be.
- 3. How did you get into furniture design? I got into designing furniture through the CITEM design program, where I was one of the design consultants.
- 4. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? Throughout the year, I will be involved with a project for upcycling agricultural waste into various

- products. I hope to come up with at least 20 collections with various transformations.
- 5. Dream material to explore: Glass and leather.
- 6. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? Copper
- 7. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? A wooden stand from Dubai. It is hand-carved from one solid wood into woven camels, and it opens up to become a stand for a planter. When not in use, or for transportation, it closes tight. Very intricate with great craftsmanship but very functional. For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF STICKS

ROSEN SAMBILE

Sticks (featured in **Metro Home & Entertaining 9.3**) began when Rosen thought of pursuing his passion in woodwork. Not long after its founding, local interior designers took notice of the impeccable simplicity and understated eccentricity ingrained in the brand, paving the way for Sticks to be their go-to supplier. Transforming an old garage into a crazy-lovely showroom for Asian-inspired modern home interior decors, furniture, lamps, and accessories, Rosen has since made Sticks stand up as a formidable player in the field. Elegant yet unintimidating, their ready-made and customized products have that signature stamp of “clean lines and simple forms.” – *Grace Libero*

1. What is your most current collection all about? Comfort. I have exhausted so much time, labor and materials harmonizing style and comfort together. All my furniture pieces now are molded to the way I comfortably want to sit or lounge. Now I can boast of a collective work that is urbanly stylish and comfortable.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? There is always that “Aha!” moment when a flash of thought enters your mind. It can be from any piece of scrap to a classic chair. Creative moments cannot be restrained. My travels make me current and keep me at the cutting edge.



TOP: The Prickly side table
MIDDLE: Ariston chair, BOTTOM: Carmello chair.



3. Describe your furniture style. Reinvented, architectural in character, timeless, expressive.

4. How did you get into furniture design? I always like building things and putting materials together. It has always been a dream for me to have a weekend studio where I can just create anything I please. I was fortunate to be offered to take over a garage-size workshop that had all the basic small equipment for woodworking. One day, a designer just knocked and asked if I make furniture. Without batting an eyelash, I said yes and that’s when it all started.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? Alternative forms of art. I am in the process of collaborating with artists to make one-of-a-kind accent furniture and accessory pieces. It’s like furniture gone Hollywood or MOMA.

6. Dream material to explore: I believe that every Filipino home should have at least one piece of furniture or accessory that is intrinsically Filipino. With this in mind, indigenous materials come into play. Incorporating homegrown materials into modern design can be a challenge.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? Bolder colors and patterns. You don’t have to reinvent your home to be current. A change in fabric color of an existing chair can make a whole lot of difference.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? The *butaka* for me is the ultimate lounge chair. I could practically do my whole vacation retreat on it. When I think comfort and when I think rest, it is the first thing that comes to mind. For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

LEO SAÑO

Leo Saño’s continuous exploration of materials and innovation in defining the living space are hallmarks of Locsin International’s furniture. A stalwart in the Philippine furniture scene, Locsin International has manufactured and exported their pieces since 1979. In the name of design advancement, they are known to work with young local talent such as Saño, who push the envelop on design. – *AMR*

1. What is your most current collection all about? I’m making an accent furniture collection (daybed, lounge chair, coffee table) using natural rattan poles as the main frame and structure, depicting the aesthetics of how they naturally grow on farms and fields. These grass species tend to form a fence-like structure straight from the ground up. I’m also developing lamps. The concept is free-flowing planes, adding character by layers of texture and patterns.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? Nature mostly, acquiring their structure and appearance. Nothing beats the engineering and design of natural things.

3. Describe your furniture style. Light, natural, simple.

4. How did you get into furniture design? Since childhood, I’ve been obsessed with found objects and using them as raw materials for producing another object. In college, I studied Industrial Design at the University of the Philippines, Diliman. What sealed the deal was my thesis, awarded the



LEFT: Designer Leo Saño with Roberto Locsin, general manager of Locsin International. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: Iraya daybed, Ursula daybed, Adele lamp, Gustav floor lamp.



best in our batch. It inspired me to become what I am today.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? They can expect something lighter in terms of furniture structure. The same natural feel can be expected in terms of materials.

6. Dream material to explore: Anything recycled because it’s challenging.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? It has to be sustainable design leaning towards environmental preservation; utilization of recycled, raw, reused, sustainable materials. Not many production facilities can work with this trend at the most efficient level.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? I grew up exposed to the works of the late sculptor Jerry Araos. His furniture design and sculpture pieces influenced me at a very young age. It’s all about artistic freedom and concept-driven creations with the finest quality. For contact info see *Designer Directory*, p.141.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF VITO SELMA



RIGHT: The Theo table, named The Best Product in the furniture category in the most recent KATHA Awards. BELOW: The Sadako loveseat.

VITO SELMA

Cebu's Island Boy has grown up, and there is no better evidence of his evolution than his furniture pieces. His love affair for the natural started at a very tender age, with his exposure to his parents' furniture business, Stonesets International. His introduction to the world of design, from his academic efforts at San Francisco's Academy of Art, to Milan's Scuola Politecnica di Design is woven with an assortment of design jobs from South African George Haast's atelier and Italian Raffaella Mangiarotti's studio. These have instilled in him a love for the organic. In his work, shapes and textures that recur on earth, in the sky and bodies of water are evident. Accolades he has won are Industrial Design Award in the 2010, DOST National Invention, Contest for the Geo Table and Best Design for Material Innovation at the Cebu Next 2010 show for the Wrinkle Lamp.



In 2013, Selma was named the Young Entrepreneur of the Year by the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry. - *AMR*

1. What is your most current collection all about? My 2014 collections vary. I have a lot of smaller objects, pieces that people can collect and put in different corners of their home (wine stands to clocks). I have another collection of stackable pieces that are multipurpose. They can be used as hanging lamps or tables.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? Mostly from shapes and textures that are often found in the earth, the sky and the sea.

3. Describe your furniture style. The brand is quite adamant on its focus on the natural. Wood and its many variations and reiterations provide avenues for the Vito Selma brand to experiment, create and

explore. The core of my brand lies more on keen attention to detail and excellent craftsmanship. It is through these attributes that the Vito Selma brand identifies itself as distinctly Filipino.

4. How did you get into furniture design? My parents have been in the furniture industry for about 26 years now. I guess it is only natural that I follow and continue the family business. I've grown up with the factory as my playground and that has really grounded me and took me to where I am now.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? I am creating something for everyone. My home collections open up possibilities and designs for every aspect of your home. I really think design should be affordable and accessible.

6. Dream material to explore: Porcelain. There is beauty in its delicateness.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? I am not one to follow trends, but the one "design lifestyle" I continue to push is going green and being conscious about the materials I use and the process of my pieces. I am not a certified green company, but I am really pushing to be one soon.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? A piece from my childhood would be the swing. It is what inspired me to make the Alegria Swing chair that we launched last year. Everyone has a memory with the swing; when you design an object, it's important that it sparks a memory. *For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.*



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JUDE TIOTUICO

JUDE TIOTUICO

Furniture designer and exporter Jude Tiotuico creatively turns solid and heavy materials into pieces that look light, flowing, and pleasing to the eyes. Inspired by the wrought iron designs of Berenguer Topacio when he started out with Industria, he eventually developed his own craft under the guidance of Eric Paras and has created masterpieces that truly stand out since then. - *Anzenne Roble*

1. What is your most current collection all about? The Loopy Chair is a hammock-like lounge chair, which is my interpretation of a laidback lifestyle, and blended with Industria's signature unique manipulation of steel and a raw cowhide seat for a subtle touch of sophistication.

2. From where do you derive inspiration? Unique shapes and forms that capture certain memories of my past experiences.

3. Describe your furniture style. Mid-century Modernism always had a very strong influence on me, but if I had to describe my style, it would be part Art-Deco, part industrial, a touch of classical, trimmed with modernism. Result: an eclectic and harmonious balance of styles.

4. How did you get into furniture design? Besides my fondness for interior design, in 1990, I was also part-owner of a



TOP: Cubico tall light. MIDDLE: Loopy chair. BOTTOM: Sticci side tables and Tango chair.



Pampanga-based wrought iron furniture sub-contracting company. This exposure to furniture created by well known furniture designers and manufacturers, whose works I admired in the FAME shows, sparked my passion to create not just a furniture collection but a whole signature look that my brand will be known for someday.

5. What can your audience expect from your studio this year? Check out Industria products on the Web or the furniture shows every season because we guarantee there's always something there for every taste in furniture.

6. Dream material to explore: I am now working with black iron for its richness and durability, and mix it with a bit of leather or upholstery or wood. But if cost and time is not an issue, I would really want to work with other metals such as copper or aluminum.

7. What 2014 design trend resonates with you the most? Maybe the rich color of bronze mixed with the Art Deco patina of turquoise and aquamarine.

8. A piece of furniture from childhood memory that informs your design decisions is _____. Why? Mid-century wood patterned wall divider installation in our old '50s house. Maybe because I had such a happy childhood in Angeles City, when we constantly went to Clark Air Base. This was a place where the Americans built bungalow houses, hospitals and other buildings with designs that looked like old Palm Springs, where Frank Sinatra and the rest of the Rat Pack used to hang out. *For contact info see Designer Directory, p.141.*

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The Square House, p. 88

THE SQUARE HOUSE

IT ACTUALLY HAS MANY PLEASANT SURPRISES...

BY RAPHA KIEFER / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



"WE WANT A SQUARE HOUSE." That's the first thing the owner said, thus, the whole design concept revolved around it. And true to his word, as you drive up the road of this upscale residential area in Quezon City, you will see a rather unassuming four-corner structure inspired by the Haussman architecture that was made popular in modern Paris. Now, in a country like the Philippines, where most homeowners will put extra effort on impressing their neighbors with curb appeal, this may seem odd. And yet, it is this first impression that will later define the whole experience of this home.

Once through the big wooden door, things get a lot more interesting in what the owner describes as an evolving house that is a mix of European and Asian influence. The main foyer immediately reveals one objective of the overall design—this house has space that allows people to "flow" from one area to another. From the main door, the garden, which is on the opposite end of the house, comes into view through the glass walls of the adjacent kitchen. This means natural light from both sides fill the home during the day. A wooden wall filled with a private art collection goes all the way from the ground floor, through the second floor and on to the ceiling. An open staircase on the opposite side of the foyer gives access to both the upper and lower floors of the house. When all the doors are open, people can "move" around with great freedom and space.

Impressive art collection

The owners of the house are an executive of a local TV network and his partner who has a flourishing publishing business. Being executives in their respective fields, it is no surprise they were involved in the design process and pretty much did the interior work with their own two hands.

"We like seeing different stuff everyday," quips the owner as he explains how they pick up new pieces when they travel or add to their already impressive collection of Filipino art. Aside from all the items



A wall that spans two floors greets visitors with a visual feast of art in the foyer. Collecting art and display pieces is a favored hobby of the homeowners who did most of the interior work by themselves.



LEFT: The private study is a simple and cozy room surrounded by custom built wall cabinets. Staying true to the “flowing” concept of the house, this space connects to the balcony, which also has access to the other rooms on the second floor. While outfitted with a work desk, the room also has a sofa to allow for short breaks. **ABOVE:** For larger meetings, a conference room is readily available. This feature allows the executives to work from home when needed. All the amenities for a meeting are built into the room.

on display, more pieces are stored in the couple’s other home. They admit that they have to stop themselves from displaying too much, an effort which seems to be working so far.

The lower floor contains some interesting rooms that reflect the owners’ lifestyle. A fully functional conference room for snap meetings is ready at all times. Colors from a display of various fishes in a wall aquarium add a nice touch to the room. Right next to the conference area is a gym with enough equipment to parallel that of any leading commercial gym. In the same space is an impressive salon area for comfortable and private home grooming with all the luxury found in upscale barber shops. A steam and sauna room next door completes the healthy lifestyle experience.

In-house ‘cinema experience’

For some lighter entertainment, just walk a few steps across the hallway to the custom built mini theater that will get the approval of the Hi-fi enthusiast. The in-house ‘cinema experience’ is a favorite pastime of the couple before going to sleep or sometimes, to fall asleep in. The rest of the lower floor contains bedrooms for guests.

The ground floor of this six-bedroom house contains the living room, which can hold large groups of friends or family. It is filled with personal items from the owners’ travels as well as art collected over many years. Take a few steps to the lanai, which is outfitted with comfortable daybeds for reading the morning paper over a cup of coffee.



ABOVE: Set against slate-like tiles, the kitchen cabinetry is pristine. The island, outfitted with a white marble countertop, is filled with state-of-the-art kitchen equipment. **RIGHT:** Adjacent to the kitchen is the dining room. A 10-seater glass top dining table allows for large gatherings. Two of the walls are made of glass, which opens to the garden, giving the room an outdoor ambiance.

A small koi pond adds a tranquil Asian touch and also acts as the pseudo border between the veranda and the lawn. The manicured garden is multi-functional as an outdoor dining table sits at one end while a resort-like 'pool lounge area' is on the other, just in case it's a sunny day out.

The dining room is adorned with Italian black marble flooring with one central piece of furniture—a 10-seater glass top table. From the veranda and garden, it is separated only by a glass wall, which also opens to these areas. Cleverly added to the design are wall cabinets to display more of their collection.

Eclectic interiors

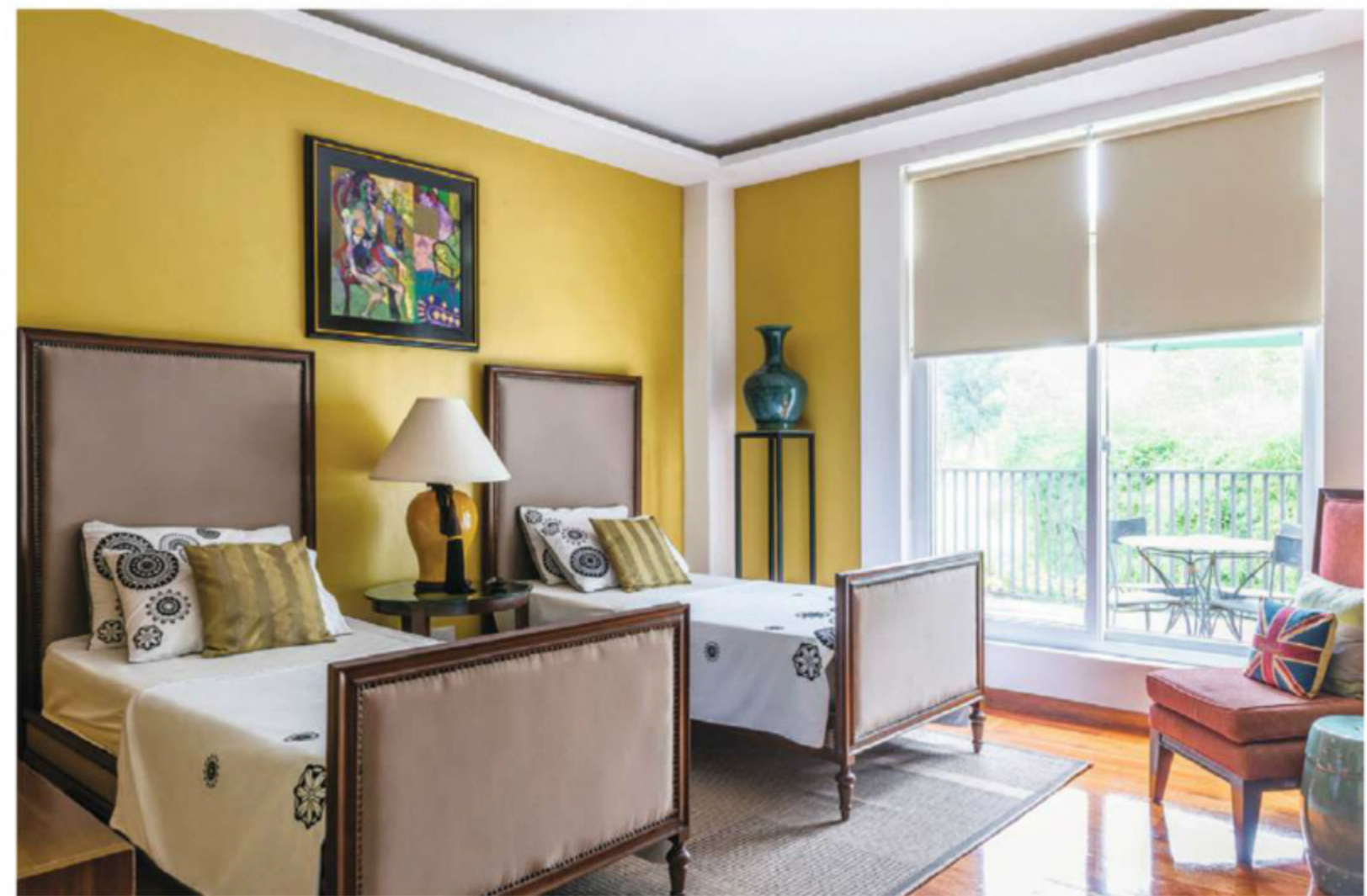
One of the homeowners' favorite rooms is the state-of-the-art kitchen, which has a huge white marble working table and all the kitchen amenities one could wish for. It becomes apparent that each area of the house is patterned after a different inspiration, which the owners explain thus, "We want to be as free as we can to express ourselves. The interiors are eclectic and change often, but we do lean towards the Filipino look. We customize our own furniture in Pampanga to fit the layout of the house. The beauty of this place is that we are in QC but it feels like we're in Sta. Rosa," a reference to the quiet residential area, south of Manila.

On the second floor are two more guestrooms; one has a big bed and white walls while the other has two single beds with yellow walls. This simple touch makes it easier to host different groups, from couples and families to singles, something the proud homeowners happily deal with





ABOVE: Art and antiques collected from the couple's travels fill the living room. Careful interior work has been done to display as many things as possible without overdoing it. The living room also allows for large gatherings. TOP RIGHT: The master bedroom features a custom built four poster bed in black, giving the room a classic look. BOTTOM RIGHT: The guestroom meant for single guests is playful in yellow and white.





during the holiday family reunions. Also on this floor is the library, better known as the workroom, because their busy lifestyle often requires them to work from home. It is outfitted with beautiful floor to ceiling wooden bookshelves, a glass desk and a two-seater sofa for reading. During the day, natural light fills the room from the glass door by the balcony, which is also connected to the other rooms.

The master bedroom befits its title. The spacious room is highlighted by a custom built four-poster bed under a gilded sunray mirror. More of their impressive art collection is displayed on the white walls of this room, which cleverly leads to a large, well-organized walk-in closet. It is surrounded by wooden dressers and a black countertop in the middle of the room. Another special feature and perhaps a clever little secret lies on the rooftop. Accessible by outdoor stairs through the balcony is a small albeit cozy rooftop with a Jacuzzi and a personal spa area complete with a professional massage bed for private pampering under the open sky.

Upon forming your first impression, you cannot help but wonder: why a square house? The conundrum lies in the fact that in this day and age, when innovation and fresh ideas are the goal, this rather basic requirement seems too simple. But that is exactly why it must be simple. Because this home is the setting of the owners' story—their travels, their personalities and their lives. And just like any storybook, this home evolves as you enter each room—it's like turning pages—to reveal more pleasant surprises. It all makes perfect sense. ❶

The lanai is the homeowners favorite place in the house. The daybeds and garden table give it a resort like feel, making it the perfect place to unwind. A door that leads straight to the kitchen also makes it easy to host outdoor lunches or dinners. A small pond with koi separates the lanai from the garden.



LIVING IN A GRAND ITALIAN VILLA

INTERIOR DESIGNER CYNTHIA ALMARIO SHOWS
HOW YOU CAN CREATE SPACES IN AN EXISTING
STRUCTURE TO MAKE IT YOUR VERY OWN

BY RAPHA KIEFER / PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



This seven-bedroom grand villa exudes the old world charm and luxury of an Italian architecture. A courtyard divides the home into sections and creates a private outdoor area. A balcony (left) connects the entertainment rooms to the rest of the house.



OPPOSITE PAGE: Rich colors replete with foliage patterns adorn the walls of the double-height living room. It features an opulent venetian theme with lyrical champagne wallpaper, hand tufted bespoke items and focal accent table accessories bring the old world charm to life. On the sofa, Fortuny-inspired fabrics, tassels and trim on accent pillows are the final touches to this lush ensemble. **RIGHT:** The luxurious Italian motif continues in the dining room which is adorned in fortuny inspired wallpaper and hues of gold and champagne furniture and accessories.



BUILDING A HOME IS A PROCESS that gives homeowners the opportunity to express themselves. It offers a wealth of possibilities and options from the architecture to the interior design.

Ideally, the collaboration between the owner, architect and interior designer defines each other's requirements, desires and personalities. This process can be a walk in the park or an uphill struggle, which stresses the need to work with professionals who understand the way it works.

So what do you do when opting to move into a building which already exists? No problem, says Cynthia Almario of design house Atelier Almarío, as she walks us through one such project and shows us how it's done right.

"As an interior designer you are trained to be flexible," Cynthia shares as she tours the **Metro Home** team through the Michelangelo showroom of the upscale Portofino South in Alabang. First, the designer has to read and tune into the personality of the building.

The house was designed as a grand Italian villa, and is the largest

of the Masters Collection. Michelangelo exudes old world charm and luxury, with seven bedrooms and two spacious living rooms, an inner courtyard and a sprawling garden. The architecture suggests a planned emphasis on entertaining, which in typical Italian fashion is mainly focused on dining. Table set-ups are spread to unique parts of the house for varied scenic options. For a family gathering or a party, the courtyard can be 'extended' into the rooms, just by opening the large glass doors that separate these areas. Two separate entrances and one service entrance allow the owner to divide the house into sections if needed.

Given its location in the south of Manila and classic Venetian/Italian feel, this home is generally built for a mature demographic, a large family, or perhaps a couple with a desire for lots of space.

Atelier Almarío interiors are lauded for their masterful combination of colors and textures, well selected furniture and accessories against a background that's dynamic in scale and proportion. Most of the living space follows a common motif; the bedrooms all have different themes.

A nook in the second floor is bathed in warm afternoon light. Generously stuffed armchairs grouped together form a welcoming sitting area. It separates the bedrooms and offers a more quiet space. Natural colors balance the pronounced theme of the rest of the house.

Living Room

Building on the developers' intentions of opulence and luxury, Cynthia fills in the grand living room with bespoke items for a rather formal set-up. The room sits on a double height space with a crystal chandelier and surrounded by a very lyrical champagne wall paper, featuring flowers and birds perched on tree branches. Large windows allow natural light to fill the room during the day.

An oversized tufted sofa upholstered in champagne velvet fabric is adorned with pillows decked in Fortuny-inspired fabric, tassels and fringe. Adjacent to it are two grand Louis XVI Fauteuil chairs in silver leaf finish. Accent tables accessorized with finials, antique books, topiaries and hand carved frames further enhance the old world charm. Completing the elegant look is the hand tufted Aubusson rug.

Dining Room

The main dining room has a Venetian theme with its fabric-based, Fortuny inspired wallpaper and high back dining chairs. Its focal point is an eight-seater dining table, set with gold rimmed plates on gold chargers and champagne flutes in amber, all under the sparkle of a crystal chandelier.

Bedrooms

Coming up with a different theme for seven bedrooms can be a challenge for even the most experienced interior designer. Cynthia shares some of her tricks: "I find a lot of inspiration from traveling. I love to read books so I get a lot of ideas. Inspiration is everywhere. I can see a graphic shirt and the pattern can be used as a design for a headboard. It can be a silver bracelet I bought in India that becomes a pattern for a metal screen."

The master bedroom features a romantic four-poster bed with sheer drapes. The transitional style wallpaper with touches of gold set the mood. An anteroom and a seating area with a sofa and two lounge chairs and coffee table stand between the bedroom and the upper living room. Two desks with chairs flank the bed, giving the husband and wife space to work. A huge walk-in closet and bathroom with shower and bathtub complete the master wing. Outside the master's bedroom is a balcony that can hold a table for four, where the couple can have breakfast overlooking the garden courtyard.

The boys' room has a blue and orange scheme with accents of choc-





olate brown. It was inspired by a football-themed pillow that became the DNA of the room. The wall was divided into two by installing a white painted picture rail. The bottom portion of the wall are upholstered in dark blue chambray fabric with nail studs as accents. This also acts as extra padding to control the noise expected from the young boys. The upper portion of the wall is painted orange. Various accessories and youthful artworks are displayed on the shelves. Two double beds and a desk with two chairs complete the bedroom.

The pink and white and green striped bedroom is designed for a little princess. The four-poster bed has lace eyelet curtains and mono-grammed beddings. The lighted shelves featuring dainty tea cups, picture frames, and butterfly figurines double up as storage, desk and display unit. The room also has a seating area with two tufted accent chairs and table with a tea setting. The girls' room has emphasis on vanity, seating/entertaining and display areas.

The yellow and white room is designed for the family's 18-year-old who loves bold patterns. The inspiration for this room is drawn from the mid-century modern art and global pop culture icon Jonathan Adler. The walls have a diagonal pattern on the lower wall painted in white, and the upper wall in yellow. A seating group with two chairs and a table are set up, which can be used as a dining area as well. The room also contains a secretaire that can be used as a desk while a read-

ABOVE: The Paris Room is decked in decor that pays homage to the inspiring City of Lights. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** In the boys' room, the walls' verticality is broken up by a white picture rail. Below it is a chambre wall covering that is accented in copper studs to further emphasize the datum line. Above it, the wall is painted orange, a bright contrast to the white figurines perched on the chair rail and the black and white photos hanging on the wall. Padded walls act as a noise barrier and protect the boys from injury.





OPPOSITE PAGE: Room for an 18-year old girl was inspired by design icon Jonathan Adler. Below bright and happy yellow walls are a diamond-patterned lattice, applied on the walls. Capping these off is the ceiling, which is trimmed in dark wood, a fitting contrast to the lightness of the color combinations below. **ABOVE:** The master suite's focal point is the romantic four-poster bed. Transitional wallpaper with touches of gold set the tone in this room and the romantic sheer fabrics soften the ambiance.



ing chair sits in the corner of the room. And lastly, this well appointed room comes with its own walk-in closet.

The larger guest room is on the ground floor, which Cynthia has designated as the 'grandparents' room' because of its location on the ground floor. It is outfitted with a more classic black and red look with enough accessories for entertainment. A large walk-in closet and a door that opens out to the courtyard make this room functional and ideal for older guests who do not appreciate walking up and down the stairs.

Entertainment Areas

The first of the entertainment rooms, known as the Paris Room, follows a theme of its namesake to satisfy the Francophiles. The L-shaped tufted sofa has Paris-themed pillows in different shapes and sizes as well as square ottomans upholstered in French-themed fabrics. Lighted book shelves contain displays of assorted luggage and picture frames.

The second entertainment room on the top floor of the guest annex is more masculine. Known as the billiard room and wine cav, this room contains a billiard table and a bar with bar stools. A dart set completes the entertainment along with the floor- to-ceiling wine rack display.

With years of experience and a undying passion for interior design, Atelier Alamaro is so in demand. Pre-existing structure or not, Cynthia believes in creating spaces that are the best version of a client's dream. She says, "We are generally open to our client's ideas and integrate our years of design knowledge and depth of experience to create interiors that are warm, cozy, sophisticated, timeless and impactful!"



A HOUSE OF MEMORY

A SENSE OF HISTORY, CUISINE,
AND LITERATURE MARK THE FLAT
OF FOOD CRITIC CLINTON PALANCA

BY GEOLETTE ESGUERRA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



LEFT: A vignette of vintage and antique pieces. OPPOSITE PAGE: French Provençal inspired dining room—from the muted palette of champagne, rose, and white contrasted only by the different shades of wood from the dining chairs, parquet, and the upright piano.

THE CRACKLING SOUND of a sweeping run of Beethoven begins your journey as you enter a different world—one of dark armchairs, scalloped drapes, and a certain old world charm. This is the home of Clinton Palanca and his family—wife Lourdes and daughter Lucy.

To the man who once equated eating carbonara with lack of adventure and imagination, Clinton certainly knows how a textured home translates into a well lived life. Arguably one of the most discerning writers who ever picked up a pen or fork, this food critic is a man of appetite who writes more about memories and pleasures at the table than merely about taste. Likewise, there is gravitas and a sense of history in the way his furniture, artworks, and knickknacks are curated. Akin to a gallery of the old and the living, the Palancas incorporate objects and mementos of their travels, culinary adventures, and reading life in their space.

Family friend Barbie Pardo-Tiangco shares her recollections with **Metro Home** when she visited the flat during the magazine shoot. “I remember this place used to be darker,” she notes. “Now it looks more feminine.”

Such is the transition of a former bachelor pad into a family home. Their home is an exercise in merging tastes and expanding areas based on spatial needs. “One’s home has to reflect the marriage,” explains Clinton, who slowly added interventions in the space.

Old world elegance

The drama begins in the foyer, with a vignette consisting of a gilded frame mirror. Vintage botanical prints are a natural continuation of the floral ornate pattern of the console table and the Jules Graux gilt bronze French clock, and the overlapping floral vine metalwork that holds the frame. This serves as an introduction to the play on bronzed and gilded surfaces that are found in the flat.





A certain mystery is achieved by mood lighting, something that Clinton is very particular about. "I used to go around with a light meter to check," he reveals of his penchant for making sure the light temperature, like his food, is just right.

The living room and kitchen are divided by a semicircular wood table and a mirror, with an accent of the gramophone. Two-layered drapes mark the space to create a semblance of symmetry where there was none before, as the glass walls of the flat taper towards the kitchen.

The living area is highlighted by a lush, leather couch and a Lazy Boy, centered by a trunk-turned-coffee table of former President Manuel Quezon's wife, Aurora. This piece of Philippine history, a gift from his good friend, Manolo Quezon, bear the initials of AAQ along with stickers from her travels to different countries. A side table creates a point of conversation with a Chinese blue ceramic bowl that is home to their pet fish.

To further create symmetry, the door leading to the library is flanked by an electric wall sconce and black and white architectural prints on gilded frames. Attention to detail is further shown in the vignette to the right of the paneled door to the library. Here are elements from travel like the wooden casing switches from Bangkok, a print from the Sorbonne in Paris, over a vintage telephone placed over a table decorated with a tribal woven cloth handmade in the Philippines.

A tableau of contrasts

Across the room are objects that express modernity—Clinton's audio equipment that includes his record player, amplifiers, and speakers, and his Apple desktop. Yet there is great contrast with the way all these modern implements are juxtaposed with the backdrop of a heavy, wood shelf filled with old books—from heavy volumes of Shakespeare,

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, and works of Byron, Chaucer, Shelley, and even a battered copy of *Mrs. Beaton's Everyday Cookery*.

The tableau likewise seems to function as a museum of where past and present are juxtaposed, with mementos, photographs of Lucy, a rangefinder, Chinese brushes and ink, among other travel accouterments.

The former library was converted into a children's room over time. What was once a space full of books and audio equipment has been turned into a sunny nook for Raggedy Anne dolls, blackboards, doll-houses, Barbie dolls, and other furry playmates.

What is left of the place are the wooden panels at the back that seem to tell of the house's history. This is how homes adapt and change use over time—one would also expect the Palancas to convert this space to a study room in the future when little Lucy grows older.

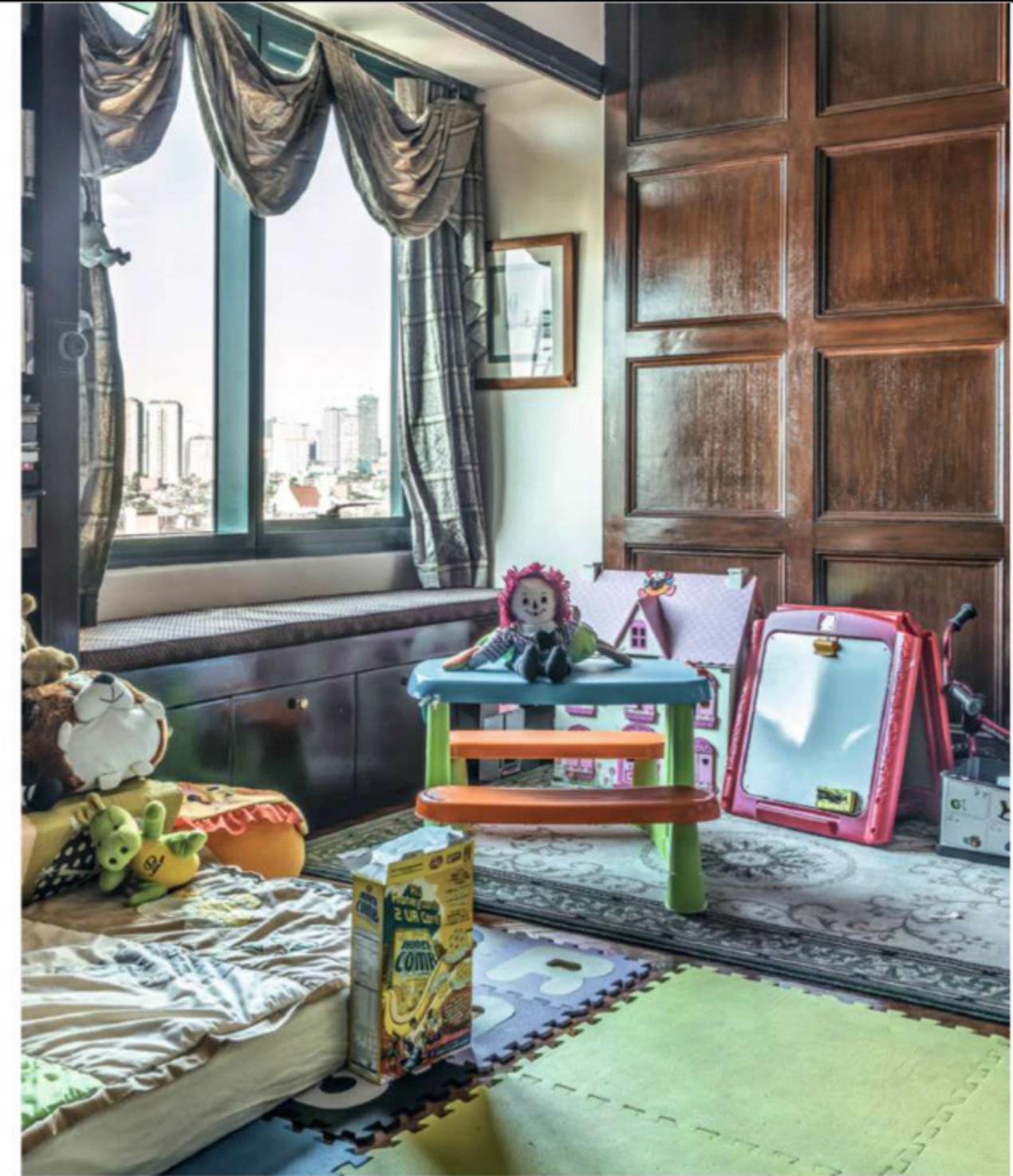
ABOVE: The kitchen is an odd mix of the old and new, with copper pots and pans used not only for cooking but accent pieces as well.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Living room and kitchen are divided by a semicircular wood table and a mirror, with an accent of the gramophone, highlighted by a lush, leather couch and a Lazy Boy, centered by a trunk-turned-coffee table of former President Manuel Quezon's wife, Aurora.





RIGHT: The colorful toys of their children is a contrast to the old elegance of their wood installations. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The kids' bedroom that doubles as a mini-library and playroom.



A living, working kitchen

The interior glass wall of the flat tapers towards the dining area, a corner we imagine to be the busiest during the frequent occasions the Palancas entertain. Clinton, who cooks as well as he can write, often makes use of his 12-year-old home for dinner parties.

This nook actually reminds you of a French Provençal dining room—from the muted palette of champagne, rose, and white contrasted only by the different shades of wood from the dining chairs, parquet, and the upright piano. A narrow buffet table holds some of the frequently reached for items like the coffeemaker, tea sets and service trays, condiments, and wine. An herb garden faces the window, giving the space a sunny, outdoor feel.

On one side is the door that leads to the kitchen. It is here that Clinton concocts his various food experiments, including bread, which he makes himself. There is some sort of cheeriness to the Shaker Style cabinets in maple that anchor the space.

You would immediately feel that the inhabitants here care much for food—theirs is a living, working kitchen that explores the joy of cooking. Bronze pots and pans of various sizes line the bottom of the cupboard, and with textures from a bunch of garlic and floral placements, these all serve as humanizing elements in contrast with the stainless steel and speckled granite countertop.

Books and more books everywhere

If there's one thing to note about the house of the Palancas, it is the presence of books everywhere—filling nooks and crannies, shelves, and possibly all planar surfaces. Since the library was converted to the playroom, most of the books were naturally transferred to the bedroom. Amidst the walls of pale pink with gold trim are shelves of books, which could overwhelm even a librarian.

"To the side are Lourdes' medical books while Lucy's books are also found beside the bed." Taking after her parents' love for the written word, Lucy picks out her book for the night before she sleeps. The reality of married life and shared space is glimpsed in the merged marital bed and single bed for the child.

While the Palancas seem to have made good on merging their space, this might as well be the last time you will see their flat as it is. Plans for renovation are underway.

"It's the last hurrah for the apartment, so this shoot is quite timely," says Clinton. Soon, a Chesterfield sofa will replace the leather couch, changes on the gilded cornices and chandelier are set to be made, and the couple will rethink and reimagine the current configuration of spaces.

It is a house of history and memory, and soon, the Palancas will be adding more tales to their already storied apartment. **11**

Styled to Inspire

7 DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT LOOKS
YOU CAN ADAPT FROM MANILA'S
LEADING DESIGN HOUSES

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES AND PAULO VALENZUELA

Zen Organic

OMO is a repository of thoughtfully designed pieces in natural materials— wood, rattan, and bamboo, by Movement 8 design icon, Milo Naval. In neutral and natural tones, his pieces bestow on a room a relaxed, calm vibe. Their power lies in their scale. The juxtaposition of wide floor lamps, and extra-thick table tops with sofas and loungers create a large impact on the space, requiring a few pieces to make the statement. Here, aesthetic appeal is created through a dramatic play of scale and texture. The colors rely on a distinctively quiet palette against warm white walls, to underscore the inherent character of the furnishings' materiality. *For store information see Where to Buy, p.141.*



Local Global

A master in telling stories through vignettes, Ito Kish creates a corner that is brimming with references to various time periods, cultures and histories. Here, he pairs elements from his local Basilisa collection, the one-seater and the bar stool, made of the humble tropical material, *solihya*, with a bureau in the Mid-century Modern style. Adding glitz to this corner is a neoclassical mirror, gilded, but tempered by a patina. Set against a cool gray background, pops of color, purple and mustard on the accent cushions, and a refreshing turquoise on the tabletop ornaments, finish the ensemble with the designer's celebrated flair. In his hands, it's all about a disciplined creation of tension, just enough to push an interior to the point of studied perfection. *For store information see Where to Buy, p.141.*



Updated Classic

Hive by Restoration is known for its masterful adaptation of classic furniture forms. In this setting, a canopied wing back chair serves as an accent piece to a bedroom ensemble whose focal point is a canopy bed, richly rendered in stained wood. It is detailed by Roman motifs, such as Acanthus leaves and dentil mouldings. A mirrored night stand, along with metallic tabletop accessories, provide glint and polish to the room. A pair of tufted ottomans against the bed adds to the room's vocabulary of traditional interior design devices. Against a wall bathed in an electric orange, the classic pieces are brought to a contemporary setting, instantly updating the ensemble. The addition of a cowhide rug lends unexpected panache to an otherwise traditional coterie of furniture pieces. *For store information see Where to Buy, p.141.*



Oriental Sophistication

In W17, arbiters of fine taste, Andy Vasquez-Prada and Kaye Tinga, create a setting replete with orientalia. A grouping of four Asian screens hang on a dark gray wall. In the foreground is an ensemble of pieces fashioned of petrified wood. Snarled wooden trunks that appear woven together, retaining their natural bent, function as the tabletop base while still in wood, rotund ottomans rest on a sisal rug. A bevy of Asian accessories are set on the table, a pair of celadon vases, one of which is shaped like a gourd, acrylic-mounted stone orbs, black-glazed pottery and corals mounted on acrylic. A panel of persimmon-colored silk boldly punctuates the setting. *For store information see Where to Buy, p.141.*



Rocking the Retro

At Space Encounters, Wilmer Lopez and Thor Balanon continue to champion the revival of Mid-century Modern silhouettes, which is what makes their setting an instant throwback to the 1950s. A sofa decked in black leather with white piping and tufting with white buttons is reminiscent of diner waitress uniforms. It is flanked by a chair that references the form attributed to design icons of the period, Charles and Ray Eames. The barrel stools in the foreground function as center tables. On the sofa, the pillow dressed in gold leatherette makes a statement by offering a glimpse into the days of disco and gold lamé. Here, a mix of twentieth century time periods in the furniture's shapes and finishes transport one to the not-so-distant past. For store information see *Where to Buy*, p.141.



Abundantly Opulent

In his furnishings gallery, A11, Eric Paras concocts a room that is rich in nostalgia and romance. Overstuffed pillows in florals paired with stripes are strewn on a divan. A bold black and white checker is draped on the table that overflows with all manner of planters and serveware. In the foreground is a tufted tangerine ottoman. Perched on it are black and white tea service accoutrements. A rattan armchair richly detailed with dainty arabesques and curlicues plays host to a flock of pillows, crocheted and in chintz. In the background, a chest of drawers bursting with more pillows and an urn fashioned of cardboard composite flank a cupboard that is also abundant in books and serveware. Dotting his composition are a playful menagerie of small animals — bird prints and rabbit figurines. Candelabras light this nook where the opposite of the design dictum “less is more” reigns. For store information see *Where to Buy*, p.141.





Urban hipster

Rosy Yabut-Rojales' My Apartment showcases a corner casually put together with furnishings that are more masculine in its appeal. A tufted wing chair in navy blue is decorated with skulls, courtesy of Rojales' collaboration with biker metalsmiths, 13 Lucky Monkey. To its side is its antithesis in character, crate-like side tables that are very "art school dorm" in their appeal. Faux taxidermy rendered in MDF crowns this corner, set against a dynamic wallpaper that represents an urban map. Here, it's all about a young, vibrant nonchalance with severe attention to style. *For store information see Where to Buy, p.141.*

gardens

Indoor Oasis

A brown thumb or lack of lawn space are no longer valid excuses to avoid growing your own garden. Terrariums are perfect for the modern lifestyle especially ones with tillandsia, air plants that do not require a lot of work to maintain. It can be placed anywhere in your room, no matter how small (or big!) one's area is, not to mention how low-maintenance it is. So, start living green, let a bit of Mother Nature in, and make your own plant terrarium or you can get one at MY APT. by Heima.



Green walls
If having actual plants in your space is not your thing, why not try adding green to your life with this garden-inspired artwork from Space Encounters for P3,500?



Right in the pot
Grow flowers or seedlings or small plants in this small ceramic pot from Artellano 11 at P225 a piece.



Watering the roses
English rose watering cans make pretty gardening accessories. Made of galvanized steel, it is a tool you can use in the long run. You can get one at AC+360 at P3,480.



A SLICE OF HEAVEN

A PEACEFUL SANCTUARY,
INSPIRED BY THE DIVINE

BY ELGA D. REYES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES

The Blessed John Paul II Pavilion features big glass windows to allow natural light to fill the space, while outside there is a relaxing nook under the tree to enjoy the cool breeze.



STEPPING INSIDE THE GROUNDS of Angelfields and drinking in its vast, unfettered greenery is akin to a spatial cleanse. No commercial signs nor tacky promotional tarpaulins, no crowded guesthouses, and perhaps more important, no unruly guests. All eight hectares of undulating land soothe your sensibilities—and your soul.

Angelfields Nature Sanctuary is steeped in spirituality, from the serene atmosphere and the flora and fauna full of life to the design of the environment and the owners themselves. This hideaway in Silang, Cavite is peace on earth.

Genesis

Indeed, the place—before it became the bed and breakfast it is today, plus a popular wedding venue—started out as a private escape. Bernardo Concepcion, or Bernie, and his wife Maria Angelina used to frequent Nasugbu, Batangas some 20 years ago. And to avoid the traffic jam along Aguinaldo Highway, they passed by the then dirt road from Tagaytay to Sta. Rosa. “That was when I fell in love with this part of the countryside and began the search for some land,” Bernie says.

By 1997, they had their space, which they have cultivated and planted with an assortment of flowers, herbs and bamboo. Bernie wanted a thriving forest in Angelfields and through the years has added a variety of trees. In the foremost garden of the sanctuary, for example, where wedding receptions are usually held, 14-year-old mahogany and acacia trees surround the area. Narra trees were planted recently.

Bernie is always mindful that “structures can be built in months, but it takes two decades for a tree to show its beauty.”

The creation of the property was a labor of love, the landscape design studied what would suit it best. Bernie, noting the Baguio-like

topography with gentle slopes to extreme terrain, used stone to define areas in the property, and to lay out the meandering pathways and give the *casitas* a subdued façade.

Building on beliefs

The environment influenced the architecture at Angelfields. All four *casitas* (San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco and Carmel), Cucina Bernardo and the striking Blessed John Paul II Pavilion and Chapel were designed to blend in with the surroundings. Bernie’s constant brief to the architects who worked on different parts of the property was to keep it “simple, functional and easy to maintain.”

Visitors are surprised to discover that big-name architects are behind the sparseness and clean lines that mark the contemporary look of the guesthouses and main building. Bernie, though, would rather offer another name as the visionary of the place. The almighty architect for him is the Lord. “He is the master planner, the architect, the good shepherd and the landscaper.”

Angelfield's Bernardo Concepcion recommends that guests walk, hike or bike along the many winding trails of their nature sanctuary. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The pavilion and casitas, though designed by different architects, maintain a uniform look of simplicity filled with coziness.





Despite the straightforward, no nonsense design of the buildings at Angelfields, it projects character from all angles. OPPOSITE PAGE: Tending to the expansive garden of Angelfields is the current concern of Bernardo and his wife Maria Angelina. Together, they selected the trees and plants they wanted for the landscaping of their provincial getaway.



He inspires the whole sanctuary, and it was a blessing for Bernie that his dear friend Architect Luigi Sison also draws on his beliefs for his work. He designed the pavilion with the shape of the cross in mind. Recently, he was commissioned to do the Holy Family Center, which the Concepcions aim to have completed by end of this year.

Another architect in the Angelfields list is Bobby Mañosa, who designed their very first structure—the kennel. A strong voice for Philippine architecture, Mañosa was responsible for the heart of Angelfields. Bernardo and Maria Angelina both love dogs, and back in the day, they bred as many as 20 Labradors. Angelfields is their registered kennel affix with the Philippine Canine Club.

“The Labs had first priority for shelter, so in the early years I slept in a tent,” reveals Bernie. Today, while they are down to just seven dogs, and breeding is only done every two to three years, the kennel or the barn is where he sleeps.

Meanwhile, the rest of the family each has a designated *casita*. The children stay at Casita Francesco and San Jose when they are on vacation at Angelfields. These *casitas* were designed by Arch. Luis Zialcita, again building on the premise of life without excess, and complementing the rest of the architecture. The dominant features of the buildings are its high-pitched roofs and the huge windows that not only let the fresh air circulate but also allow ample natural light to permeate the spaces.

Field of dreams

Bernie is now a retired man. After spending 33 corporate years working with livestock, he finds joy in the leisurely tending of his garden and animals. He is happy here in the country, away from the chaos of the city. There is no television anywhere in the property. Entertainment comes in the form of communing with nature and the Creator, he explains.



Sheeps are a prominent fixture at Angelfields, aside from the garden and bed and breakfast amenities, since Bernardo considers himself a lost sheep guided by the divine Shepherd. RIGHT PHOTO: Because of the evident spirituality and serenity of the sanctuary, Angelfields has become a popular wedding venue.

There are horses that guests can ride, over 100 white doves to feed, 13 Peking ducks in three ponds to watch languidly and more than 30,000 tilapia to fish. There are also three ewes, two mares and a ram and lamb, on top off the kingfishers and yellow orioles that visit the sanctuary.

Currently, Bernie's dream is to breed sheep. He says, "I pray the Lord will bless me with 99 sheep. I represent the one lost sheep, and that makes it 100!"

But for all the spiritual elements of Angelfields, he refuses to call himself a pious person. Throughout the interview, he often professes, "*Dominus est* — it is the Lord."

He credits the Lord as the energy that gives life to the property. The growing number of wedding receptions held here, for instance, was not in the plan. When they opened their family getaway, it was meant to be a place of retreat, where you can also dine and relish homemade dishes in their restaurant Cucina Bernardo. And then the brides and grooms discovered the place.

And Bernie will continue to welcome them, knowing that his garden matches what weddings are all about—"the beginning of life." Part of his future plans also includes a climate-controlled event facility with a view of the ponds and outlying scenery, plus a rainwater harvesting system for the dry months.

Bernie is all about nurturing this once idle land. His attention to detail is thorough, yet with a light-handed touch, from the precise location of a *casita* framed by clumps of trees to ensuring no insecticides are used in managing the plants and animals.

His guiding mantra is one of several verses scattered around the property: "Do whatever He tells you." And the result, also enshrined in another displayed quote, is "Peace to all who enter here." **📞 Contact Angelfields Nature Sanctuary at 09209684603 and 09175424024 or email angelfields@gmail.com.**





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entertaining



A Night of Thanksgiving, p. 134

A Night of Thanksgiving

AS METRO HOME MARKED ITS 10TH YEAR, IT WAS ONLY FITTING TO CELEBRATE IT WITH EVERYONE

BY LEAH PUYAT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

LEFT: The Peninsula Manila's Old Manila Executive Sous Chef, Samuel Linder, in preparation for Metro Home and Entertaining's tenth year anniversary feast. BELOW: Centerpieces and table decorations in harvest colors by Patricia Pasterelo of Spruce.



In keeping with the Thanksgiving theme, the table was adorned with flowers in rusts, oranges, yellows and browns. Illustrating abundant harvest, fruits, gourds and miniature pumpkins on tree stumps and butcher's blocks were also used as accents.

AS NAYSAYERS PROCLAIM that print is dead, it becomes even more imperative to celebrate milestones in a magazine's life. To mark **Metro Home and Entertaining's** tenth year, ABS-CBN Publishing, Inc. hosted a low-key, elegant and intimate dinner inspired by the quintessential American holiday, Thanksgiving. The Conservatory of the Peninsula Manila was the perfect venue for this modest but still momentous occasion. Patricia Pastelero of Spruce, one of the today's most popular and in-demand florists, gamely took on the task of decorating the tables. "It was a fall harvest themed set-up, so I used flowers in rich, oranges, yellows and browns, incorporated with wood elements. I mixed in fruits and mini gourds which complemented the look." The menu prepared by the Peninsula Manila Chefs, headed by Executive Sous Chef Samuel Linder, also echoed this treasured tradition, with pumpkin soup and a turkey main course.

The party was also a big, warm welcome for our new Editor-in-Chief, Anton Barretto. For a very personal touch, Anton wrote by hand the dinner's place cards. And he gave a short and sweet opening speech, which was a big surprise to those who knew him well, as he is more comfortable with casual tête-à-têtes than with public speaking.

Catriona Gray, a modern chanteuse, sang some carols to add an uplifting and joyous note to the night. Friends, old and new, were happy to slow down in the midst of the holiday season to take in a more languorous, and less raucous celebration. The scale of the festivities was adjusted in response to the nation's state of calamity in light of the recent tragedies, but it was still a poignant moment, of honoring the past and looking toward the brighter and better future. ❶

RIGHT: Handwritten place cards for each of the guests provide a warm and personal touch by Metro Home's Editor-in-Chief, Anton Barretto. BELOW: Main course of sous vide turkey with a side of confit leg chestnut stuffing by Chef Samuel Linder.

Roasted Pumpkin Soup Infused with Lemon Grass

Recipe by Chef Samuel Linder of Old Manila, Manila Peninsula
Yield: 4 servings

- 1 lt. chicken stock
- 0.1 lt. white wine
- 50 gr. onion, chopped
- 3 cups pumpkin
- 5 tbsp honey
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 1 tbsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 5 cloves garlic, finely chop
- 5 stalks lemon grass
- 1 tbsp cilantro, chopped
- 40 ml Greek yoghurt
- 50 ml oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

FOR GARNISH:
Yoghurt
Coriander

1. Roast pumpkin with honey in the oven on medium heat for 30 minutes.
2. Sauté onions and garlic in butter, add pumpkin.
3. Deglaze with white wine.
4. Add in chicken stock.
5. Bring to a boil, and simmer for 20 minutes.
6. Stir in nutmeg and cumin.
7. Add cream.
8. Simmer for another 10 minutes.
9. Blend to a smooth creamy consistency.
10. Season with salt and pepper.
11. Add bundles of lemongrass. Simmer for 5-10 minutes until the lemongrass scent is noticeable when tasting the soup.
12. Garnish with yoghurt and coriander. Serve immediately.

Confit Leg-Chestnut Stuffing

Recipe by Chef Samuel Linder of Old Manila, Manila Peninsula
Yield: 8 portions

- 1 cup ground pork
- 1 cup turkey leg confit
- 1/2 cup glazed chestnuts
- 1/4 cup bacon lardon
- 200 ml milk
- 2 pcs eggs
- 1 cup white bread, cut into cubes
- 1 sprig chopped rosemary
- 1 tbsp chopped garlic
- 2 tbsp onions, brunoise
- Salt and pepper to taste

MISE EN PLACE:

1. Soak the bread with milk.
2. Chop the chestnuts into chunks.
3. Cut the onion and chop the garlic.
4. Chop the rosemary.
5. Flake the confit legs.

1. Sauté the bacon.
2. Sauté the onion and garlic
3. Mix the chestnuts with the ground pork and confit leg.
4. Add the bacon and onion.
5. Add the soaked white bread.
6. Add the rosemary and mix it well.
7. Season with salt and pepper

- and cognac (to taste).
8. Chill the mix for 30 minutes or until cold.
9. Form into logs, place on baking tray and bake on medium heat until core temperature of 74°C is achieved (approximately 30 minutes).

A Perfect 10

A GLIMPSE OF METRO HOME'S 10TH YEAR THANKSGIVING DINNER AT THE MANILA PENINSULA CONSERVATORY

BY LEAH PUYAT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALAN SANCON



Metro Home's EIC, Anton Barretto



CEO of ABS-CBN Publishing, Inc. Ernie Lopez giving a speech

“Few moments can rival the mix of emotions as a homecoming. Ten years ago, my friends Marissa Lopa, Maggie Go and I came together as a triumvirate to form a vision as contributing editors to Metro Home. I hardly have words to describe the pride and at the same time, some trepidation, that now comes over me. I can only say that with the great team we now have, we will give the best that we can do.”

—Anton Barretto

“Metro Home is my go-to source for innovative interior design ideas in the last ten years. A decade of commitment to modern Filipino living is what Metro Home is to me. And now under the new editorship of Anton Barretto, the magazine’s strength as the ultimate guide to home and design ideas has intensified. Anton is a great storyteller as a person and he has integrated this trait into his passion for interior design as seen in the new pages of Metro Home.”

—Melo Esguerra



Metro Home writers Leah Puyat (right) and Tess Villareal (left) posing with designer Nix Alanon (middle)



Anton Barretto with ABS-CBN Publishing, Inc. Content Director Christina Lopez (left) and Grace Baja (right)



Cura V's Trisha Bermudez-Calma and Nicole Whisenhunt



Our first cover girl Stephanie Kienle-Gonzalez with sister Jessica Kienle and Dani Aliaga



(From left) Photographer Paul del Rosario, interior designer/stylist Mark Steven Perez, and Metro Home contributor Rapha Kiefer



Metro Home contributors Chino dela Torre and Cal Tavera



G. Toengi covering the event for Rappler.com with husband Tim Walters



Josephine del Gallego with Melo Esguerra



The man responsible for the delicious food, Executive Sous Chef Samuel Linder

The VIP List

MY 'VERY IMPORTANT PARTY' CHECKLIST FOR 5 TO 50, TRIED-AND-TESTED FOR EASY ENTERTAINING

BY CARISSA COSCOLLUELA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY UY AND IAN CASTAÑARES



Hosts: Dinner parties at home for anywhere from 6 to 20 people, and usually just my closest friends. Some will come really dressed up, others in shorts and slippers. It doesn't really matter to me (but it does to my mother!), it's the company that counts!

Food: If I'm having it catered, it would be by Margarita Forés of Cibo or by Via Mare, both very reliable and professional. Plus, they have very good linen and silverware. If the menu is Filipino or Spanish, then we usually cook at home. Guest favorites: Adobo with Chestnuts, Kare-Kare, Sinigang, Callos, and Cocido. I love serving local delicacies like Tinapang Bangus from Bataan, giant Ensamada from Pampanga, and Dulce Gatas from Negros. Our cook also makes great desserts like Canonigo, Pavlova, and Pannacotta.

Favorite food orders: Caviar Pie and Smoked Salmon Pie from Amanda Tengeo Banson, Chicken a la King from Des Torres, Truffle Lechon from Pepita's Kitchen, Cochinillo from Vanna Calalang Severino, Prince Albert Cake from Roshan, and Peach Walnut Pie from Baby Yulo. When I travel to Hong Kong or Singapore, I handcarry Awfully Chocolate's sinful desserts and truffles to serve to my guests.

Drinks: I learned how to make Sangria with Cava in Spain, so I like to serve that. Otherwise, it's always nice to have champagne as a prelude to dinner. I'm not a big drinker and I couldn't tell you if something is footwash, so I ask JP Santamarina of Premier Wines and Spirits to recommend wine that goes well with my menu.

Table settings: I use what we have at home. When I went to Syria, I bought these beautiful ivory tablecloths and table napkins embroidered in delicate gold and cream thread. Other than that, I've never

bought any tableware for myself. I'm lucky to live under my mother's roof, and she's got all these beautiful Spode and Flora Danica plates, Rogers and Paul Storr silverware and Bacarrat crystal from my grandmother. All I know is I'd better not break them! Sometimes I do my own place cards and menu cards. The Internet is full of great sites with templates and graphics!

Flowers: I let the caterer take care of it with basic guidelines: whites, greens, neutrals, and maybe blush. I might also call Mabolo or Floriade. When it's a DIY kind of day, I buy flowers at Dangwa or Market! Market! and arrange them myself. Peonies are my favorite, but they're not easy to come by. Roses, lilies (except calla), hydrangeas, phalaenopsis, and tulips are good. Absolutely no chrysanthemums, Shasta daisies, and anthuriums.

Music: If you've ever ridden in my car, you'd know my choice of music is cheesy. Everyone makes fun of me. I usually ask one of

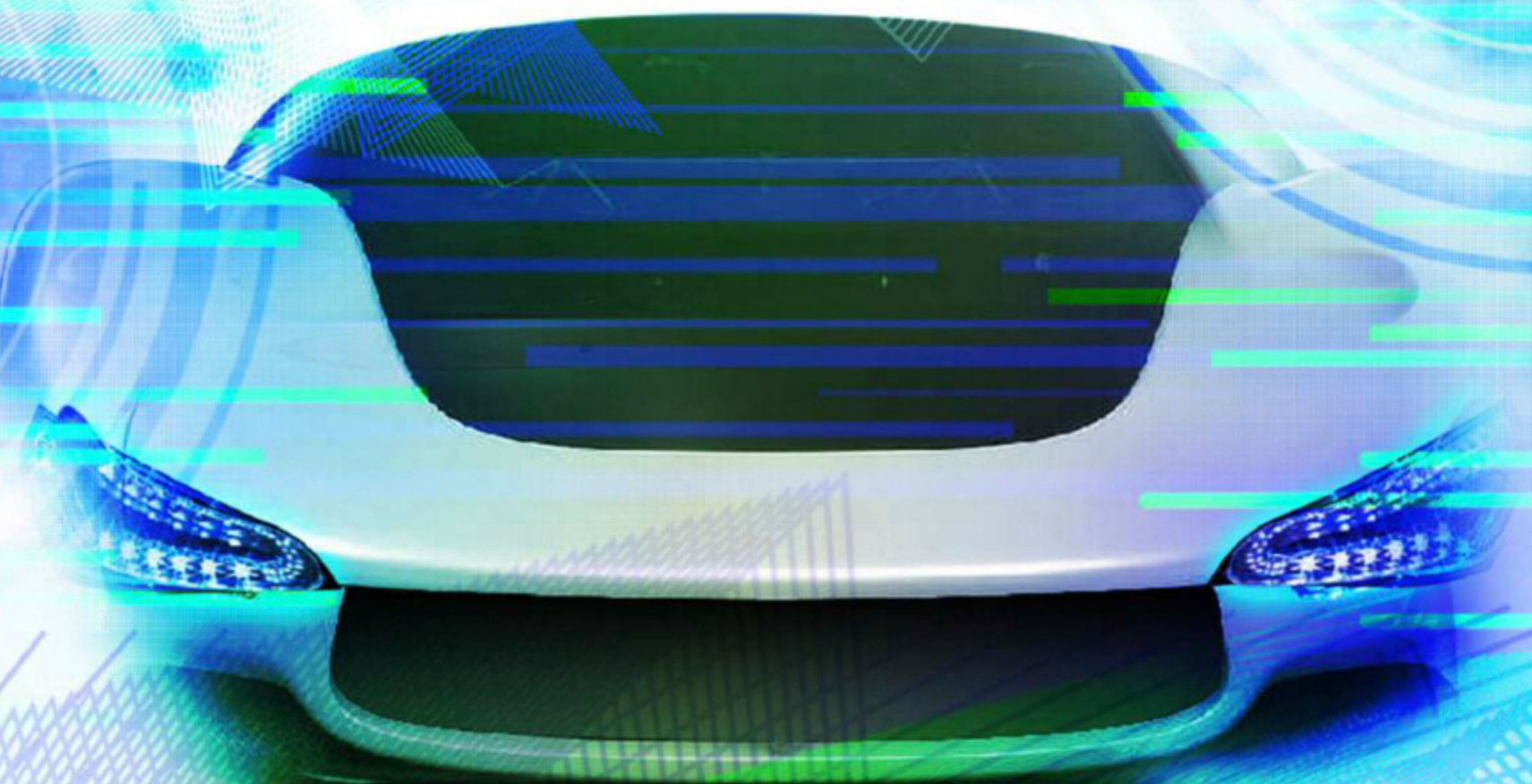
my guests, most likely Dino or Marivic Pineda, to bring an iPod and I plug that into a dock.

Giveaways: On a special occasion, like my birthday, I'll do a bag full of goodies like personalized cards or notepads by Cecile Poblador, personalized luggage tags, chocolate filled shortbread cookies by Shorts Gourmet Manila, a canister of TWG tea, handmade organic soaps and cosmetics by Tess the Farmer, home fragrance by Cling, candle by Cereo, and always a religious item like a prayer book, rosary, or small icon. 🙏

1. Awfully Chocolates sinful and sweet dessert. 2. A canister of TWG Earl Grey tea. 3. Moët champagne recommended by JP Santamarina. 4. Organic soaps by Tess the Farmer. 5. Chocolate filled shortbread cookies by Shorts Gourmet Manila. 6. Personalized cards and notepads by Cecile Poblador. 7. Heirloom table setting by Carissa Coscolluela.



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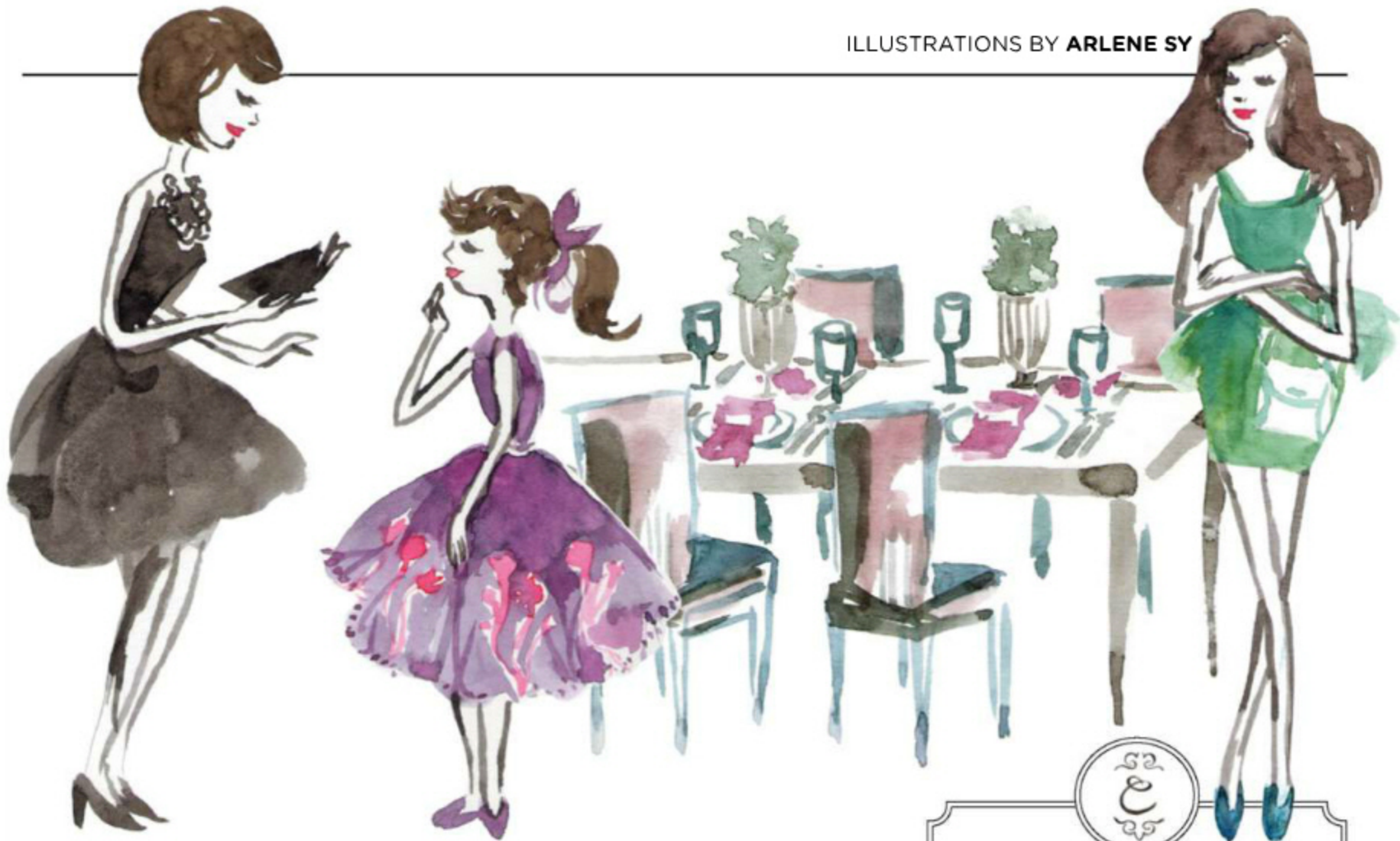
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The good guest

BOTTOM LINE: BE CONSIDERATE OF YOUR HOST AND FELLOW GUESTS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ARLENE SY



CAT: This is my mom's etiquette book. I am taking my niece to her first dinner party, and I thought I would read up on some basic reminders on being a good guest, and pass on this knowledge to her.

MS. DEMEANOUR: My favorite rule for being a guest is the sage advice of the Duchess of Windsor. She said that when you accept a dinner party invitation, you have the moral obligation to be amusing.

CAT: Oh, she's very amusing! I may even have to restrain her from monopolizing the conversation. I do not have to remind her to speak to both people at her side, even if they are strangers.

MS. DEMEANOUR: Then as long as your niece remembers to put her napkin on her lap, take the cutlery outwards going in, and to pass both the salt and pepper when someone asks for just one, she should be fine.

CAT: And she must remember these: No elbows on the table, sit up straight, and be interested in the conversation, or at least, feign interest.

MS. DEMEANOUR: You and your niece can even go shopping together for a hostess gift, and make a girls' day out of it!

Gentle Reminders

- The first rule to being a good guest is to respond immediately to the invitation, whether you are sending your confirmation or your regrets.
- Respect the seating plan, and do not dictate to the hosts where you will sit.
- Be agreeable and charming, even when others are not. If you are offended or appalled, let it pass as a sign of deference and respect to your hosts.
- If there are rude guests who talk too loud or slurp their soup, do not correct their manners.
- Write a short note the next day to thank your hosts. A gift is not obligatory, but it's a kind and thoughtful gesture.



ac+632, 2/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati City. Tel. 758-2564, Fax: 758-2597. Email: ac632@pldtdsl.net; **A-11**, 2680 F.B. Harrison St. Pasay City. Tel. 832-9972. Email: a_eleven05@yahoo.com; **Alessi**, Bldg. 5, Bonifacio High St., Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Tel. 856-4452. Lower G/F Greenbelt 5 Ayala Center, Makati; **Awfully Chocolate**, Website: www.awfullychocolate.com; **Bisazza Mosaico**, Niog II, Ilaya Street Bacoor, Cavite. Tel. 7418016, Fax: 417-8460. Email: ric.atienza@bisazza.com.hk. Website: www.bisazza.com; **Cura V**, inside Adora, 3/F Adora Greenbelt 5, Legazpi St., Ayala Center, Makati City and 2/F Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati; **Dimensione**, Unit 901 Quadrant 5 Block 6, Bonifacio High Street, Taguig City. Tel. 856-6756. Fax: 856-6755. Website: www.dimensione.com.ph; **Heima**, Suite 229, LRI Design Plaza, Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 798-0033. Website: www.heimastore.com; **Haute Design**, Unit 229, LRI Design Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 798-0033. Email: designhaute@yahoo.com; **Hive by Restoration**, 3/F Greenbelt 5, Legazpi St., Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. 729-8717; **Kish**, 233 N. Garcia St., Bel-Air, Makati City. Tel. 896-8366, Fax: 896-8367. Email: info@kish.ph; **Ligne Roset**, 3/F Mos Design, B2 Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Fort, Taguig City. Tel. 856-2748 ext. 4, Fax: 403-6620. Website: www.ligne-roset.com; **My APT. by Heima**, Suite 225, LRI Design Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St. (Reposo), Bel-Air II, Makati City, 804-3772; **Nest**, Jupiter St. cor. Paseo de Roxas, Bel-Air 3, Makati City. Tel. 818-8811 and 403-3062; **O.M.O Furniture and Accessories**, Suite 129, LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia St., Bel Air II, Makati City. Tel. 403-1208; **Philux**, P1 Level Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Drive cor. Plaza Drive, Makati City. Tel. 898-1973. Fax: 809-5534. Website: www.philux.ph; **Phoenix Stone**, main office at L and S Building, Manila. Tel. 521-6298; **Shorts Gourmet Manila**, Mobile no. 0917-8788818; **Sifra Interiors & Objects**, 3/F Greenbelt 5, 3/F, Home Zone Glorietta 4, 2/F LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 501-3220 / 752-7174. Email: sifra.interiors@yahoo.com; **Space Encounters**, Unit B Mezzanine, Padilla Bldg., F. Ortigas Jr., Ortigas Center. Tel. 910-8031.



Email: info@spaceencounters.net, Website: www.spaceencounters.net; **TWG Tea Company**, Level 1, Greenbelt 5 Mall Legaspi Village, Makati City. Tel. 720-8665; **W17**, Warehouse 17, La Fuerza Compound, 2241 Chino Roces Ave. Makati City. Tel. 478 - 1717. Email: Inquiries@w17home.com. Website: www.w17home.com

Designer Directory
Olivia d'Aboville, website: www.oliviadahoville.com; **Tisha de Borja**, E. Murio Workshop, Merville Access Road, Merville Parañaque City. Tel. 776-5492. Email: norma@emurio.com; **Matthew Brill**, Prizmick & Brill, 3/F Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Makati City and 318 A, 3/F LRI Design Plaza, Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati City. Email: info@prizmickbrill.com. Website: www.prizmickbrill.com; **Jinggoy Buensuceso**, Website: www.jinggoybuensuceso.com; **Kenneth Cobonpue**, The Residences, San Lorenzo Tower, Entrance at Esperanza St. or Arnaiz Ave. Greenbelt, Makati City. Tel. 576-1639 and 576-1642. Email: info@kennethcobonpue.com. Website: www.kennethcobonpue.com; **Carlo Cordaro**, Atelier-A manufacturing plant, CFVC Gate 2, Mactan Economic Zone 1, Cebu City. Tel. 340-0301. Fax: 340-0287. Email: marketing@filvener.com. Website: www.atelier-a.it; **Christina Gaston**, Hacienda Crafts Company, Hda. Sta. Rosalia, Manapla, Negros Occidental. Email: info@haciendacrafts.com. Website: www.haciendacrafts.com; **Niccolo Jose**, Studio 10.10, Unit 227 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati City. Tel. 822-6976. Email: studio1010.ph@gmail.com; **Jessica Kienle**, see *Philux store info*; **Ito Kish**, see *Kish store info*; **Daniel Latorre Cruz**, Handmade by Latorre Cruz, website: www.latorrecruz.com; **Budji Layug**, Budji Layug + Royal Pineda, G/F, W Tower, 1117 39th Street, Bonifacio North Triangle, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Tel. 403-5502 to 04. Website: www.budjiroyal.com; **Gabby Lichauco**, Openstudio & Emi Handmade, 4/F, 999 Stanisco Tower, Pedro Gil St. cor. Agoncillo St., Ermita, Manila. Mobile no. 0917-5302883. Email: gabby.openstudio@gmail.com. Website: www.openstudiomnl.com; **Milo Naval**, see *O.M.O Furniture and Accessories store info*; **Didier and**



Veronique Kerveillant, Costa de Sul, FS 014 MC Home Depot, 32nd Street, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City. Tel. 856-2383. Email: projects@costa-del-sul.com. Website: www.costa-del-sul.com; **Per Larsson**, JB Woodcraft Inc., 460 San Miguel, Betis, Guagua, Pampanga. Telefax: 900-2750. Email: jbwoodcraft@pldtdsl.net. Website: www.jbwoodcraft.com; **Wilmer Lopez and Thor Balanon**, see *Space Encounters store info*; **Valeriano Padilla**, Padua International, 2320 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City. Tel. 236-4066. Email: padua.international@yahoo.com; **Debbie Palao**, Design Ventures Cebu, Inc. showroom and factory, Upper Tingub, Mandaue City, Cebu. Tel. 346-0819 and 346-0821. Website: www.debbiepala.com; **Ann Pamintuan**, The Gildex, Inc., The Apo View, J. Camus St., Davao City. Tel. 222-5162. Email: info@annpamintuan.com. Website: www.annpamintuan.com; **Eric Paras**, see *A-11 store info*; **Benji Reyes**, Email: benji.reyes@gmail.com. Website: www.benjireyes.com; **Luisa Robinson**, Luisa Robinson Atelier, email: info@luisarobinson.com. Website: www.luisarobinson.com; **Ana Rocha**, Bijou, Filipino Zone, 2/F Greenbelt 5, Legazpi St., Ayala Center, Makati City. Tel. 724-1342; **Vikki and Paula Rodriguez**, Detalia Aurora Inc., Zone Paliya, Paknaan, Mandaue City, Cebu City. Tel. 420-4556. Email: marketing@detaliaaurora.com. Website: www.detaliaaurora.com; **Bong and Rossy Rojas**, see *Heima store info*; **Stanley Ruiz**, Email: info@stanleyruiz.com. Website: www.stanleyruiz.com; **Wataru Sakuma**, Website: www.watarusakuma.com. Email: info@watarusakuma.com; **Rosen Sambile**, Sticks Design, 144 Ilang Ilang St. Gregoria Hts., Bgy. San Isidro, Taytay, Rizal. Tel. 669-1560. Email: sales@sticks.ph and mgt@sticks.ph. Website: www.sticks.ph; **Leo Saño**, Locsin International, 2/F Unit 209 LRI Design Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia Street, Bel-Air II Village, Makati City. Tel. 846-1498. Email: locsin@locsin.com. Website: www.locsin.com; **Vito Selma**, Don Sergio Suico St., Canduman, Mandaue City, Cebu Email: info@vitoselma.com. Tel. 422-1676, 422-1601 and 422-1633. Website: www.vitoselma.com; **Jude Tiutioco**, Industria, A11 Gallery, 2680 FB Harrison St., Pasay City. Tel. 832-9972. Website: industriahome.com

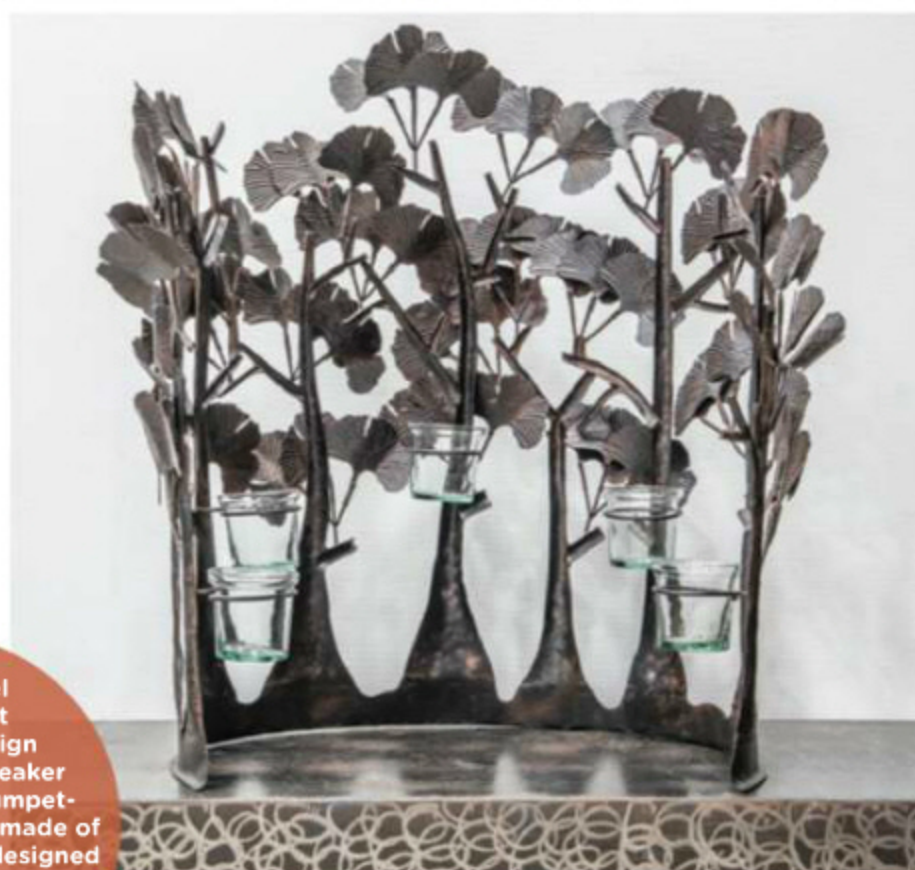
Musings in metal

THIS GLASS AND METAL DESIGN WHIZ PUTS THE “FUN” IN FUNCTION WITH OUT-OF-THE-BOX DECORATIVE ITEMS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



LEFT: Miguel Aguas' latest innovative design is a bluetooth speaker concealed in a trumpet-shaped floor lamp, made of wrought iron, and designed to look soft and fluid. RIGHT: His candle holders make unique table accents.



WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT INSPIRATION? Nature or organic things.

WHO OR WHAT WAS THE DESIGN INFLUENCE OF YOUR CHILDHOOD? Painting with my father every weekend; weekends in the mountain of Angono, Rizal (where I go on activities like hunting, camping, and trapping with the local folks); kite flying; disassembling my

toys and hoping to put them back; accompanying my father in his projects from foundation to finishing; and working for my Dad for 11 years in his manufacturing of concrete products.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST COMMONLY REPEATED DESIGN MISTAKE? Copying.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANY PART OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE

OF MANILA, WHAT WOULD IT BE? Transportation.

WHAT IS YOUR DESIGN INDULGENCE? At present, I'm indulging in creating and designing lighting fixtures and furniture.

WHAT, FOR YOU, WOULD REPRESENT AN IDEALLY DESIGNED SPACE? I would imagine a space that would

answer my questions of “why” and “what for.”

WHAT IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED BUT IS ACTUALLY A FINE DESIGN? Attention to details.

APART FROM HIRING AN INTERIOR DESIGNER, WHAT ADVICE CAN YOU GIVE TO HOMEOWNERS DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR CURRENT SPACE? You should guesstimate a budget.