

belie

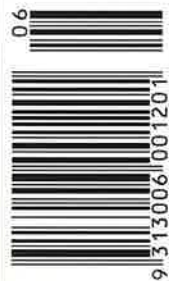
COLLECTORS' EDITION

DECORATING SPECIAL

CELEBRATING
AUSTRALIA'S
LEADING
INTERIOR
DESIGNERS



PLUS
**EXCLUSIVE
EXHIBITION
PORTFOLIO**
27 ORIGINAL
PHOTOGRAPHS
FROM AROUND
THE WORLD



\$7.50
(INC. AT LEAST 6% GST) (NZ\$9.95)

PERSONAL EFFECTS



Q&A

CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF LANDINI ASSOCIATES, MARK LANDINI, SPEAKS ABOUT DESIGN, TRENDS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING BRANDED.

TEXT BY EMMA LIEUTENANT.

WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO FOCUS ON – A SHOP'S RETAIL SPACE OR BRAND MARKETING?

Neither is more important. What is important is that there is cohesion between the two. I don't like advertising which over-promises because if it over-promises then it lets you down when you come into contact with the shop. If the shop is successful it doesn't actually need much advertising because it will advertise itself. There should always be a consistency between the two and there shouldn't be an over-emphasis on advertising for advertising's sake because people are smart.

That's why we invented the Volvo Gallery. If you have a gallery that is a beautiful space, that hosts great exhibitions, is a good venue for launches and parties, then people will have real experiences as opposed to artificial experiences. And if they have real experiences, then they will believe you.

WHICH DESIGNERS, PAST OR PRESENT, DO YOU ADMIRE?

I love different designers for different reasons. Tom Dixon for his continuous inventiveness. He has been a great friend and a great inspiration to me, in terms of the way that he works. I don't actually like a lot of the output of his work, because it's quite postmodern, but I do very much enjoy the way his mind works and the way he manages to change and come up with something that is really interesting as opposed to different for different's sake. And he has done that over the past 20 years without seemingly just linking himself to one style, and for that reason I think he is really engaging.

I like architects more than anything else. I really admire the work of [Japanese architect] Tadao Ando for giving the magic of light back to architecture. I don't believe Ando was actually classically trained, and he is a boxer which I used to do as well, so I kind of have some empathy with him there.

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF GOOD DESIGN?

It should look effortless and balanced. When it does you know it probably took an age to get right but it has a value that you can't achieve by simply throwing something together. If I had to choose an expression it would be: "beautiful simplicity" or "usefulness" – even if this usefulness were not purely practical. I don't like design that is overtly there for the moment.

WHAT'S THE DESIGN PHILOSOPHY YOU MOST IDENTIFY WITH?

I like to do things that are useful or improving. By this I mean that I hate expendability, transience and ephemera. I still remember the buzz I got when as a student I visited the Pompidou Centre in Paris by Renzo Piano. It was so inspiring and challenging but is still so relevant and will continue to be.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BAR OR SHOP INTERIOR?

Chris Connell has just done a restaurant in Melbourne called Terminal. He has taken that purist kind of Melbourne look: dark space, sort of undesigned, simple yet stylish, and shoe-horned it into an even smaller space. As for shops, I love hardware stores or busy delicatessens, second-hand book stores and back-street cafes in Rome. Sadly, things that have probably evolved rather than been designed from a clean sheet of paper. But, you know, this is still a valid way to achieve an end result.

WHAT DESIGN TREND WOULD YOU GIVE A WIDE BERTH?

Anything deliberately retro, particularly most of the domestic architecture applauded by many local councils in the name of good taste. It worries me that people look back 20 years and then reinvent it. It means the 1980s are going to be reinvented – which is a serious concern.

WHAT TRENDS DO YOU SEE COMING BACK THIS YEAR?

I see more texture being used. One of the things I love about Australia is I don't get asked that question anymore. Australia is less preoccupied with trends than Europe. The fewer trends we get here the better. Generally speaking, I think people are looking for comfort but they still want style, so natural materials and colours are coming back in.

CONTINUED PAGE 206

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT LANDINI ASSOCIATES HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR A DIVERSE RANGE OF BRANDS: REI, PADDINGTON, NSW; VOLVO GALLERY, SYDNEY, NSW; THE TEA ROOM, QUEEN VICTORIA BUILDING, SYDNEY, NSW; AWABA, MOSMAN, NSW.