

Dossier

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No 68

the art of the luxury vessel

by
DANIEL SCHEFFLER
aqua expeditions

When you think of the *Amazon* it's mostly wild animals, particularly crocodiles, and crazy colourful parrots that come to mind. It's that one place on the globe that still feels untainted by man's poison. For generations people have flocked to the Amazon to see this unharmed nature and to experience wilderness in its purest form. That desire to see something beyond what humans can create and revel in is strong for some and many have made the trek to find some kind of Amazonian peace.

Mostly rather small river boats carried guests up and down the river and dining was usually around a camp fire of sorts – bundubashing if you will. But Aqua Expeditions had another vision, an eco-luxury plan that promotes the consciousness around lighter



and more mindful travel but from the enjoyment of a luxurious boat.

And so *Aqua Expeditions*, a few years ago, called up Peruvian architect **Jordi Puig** again and designed the Aqua Aria, a 45 meter vessel that then set sail in 2011. This follows their success of their sister boat, the Aqua Amazon, a 40 meter vessel, that set sail in 2008.

Puig, known for his “spare, elegant yet comfortable” interior spaces included locals wood throughout the floors and Brazilian slate walls of Aqua Amazon. This was complimented with neutral soft furnishings and everything was intended to feel as much part of the outside surroundings as possible. The boat, designed for 24 guests, comes with a number of cabins and suites and the windows all around make for the best viewing of the Amazon and its mysteries. Even the bathrooms are worth noting, with eco-sensitive technology that gives the brand that worthwhile nod from conscious travellers.

The newer boat, Aqua Aria, is done in matte black and comes with 16 cabins. Floor to ceiling panoramic windows and an observation deck with a Jacuzzi is the best place to watch out for the famed pink river dolphins. And if you’re wanting some indoor time, it comes complete with

workout facilities.

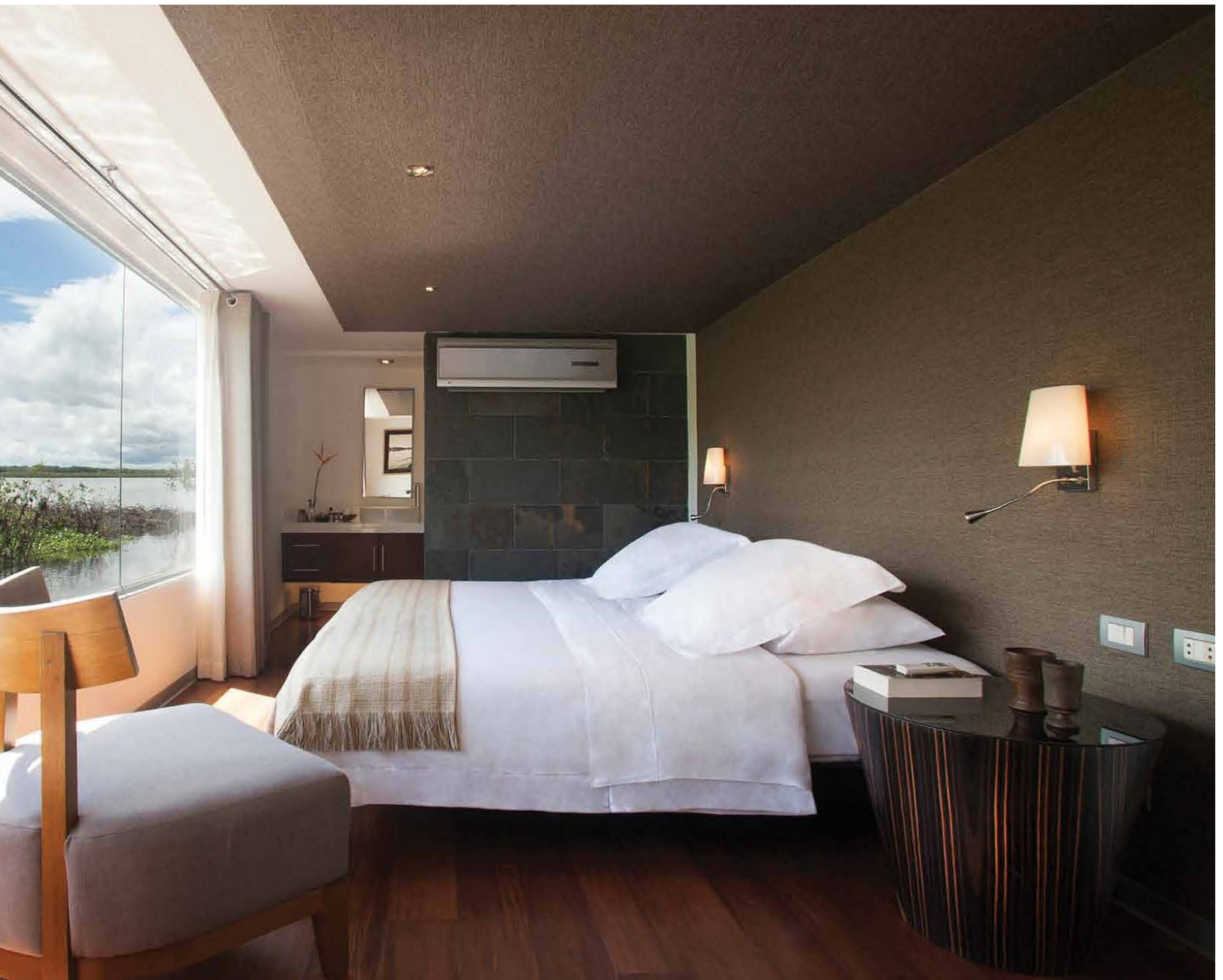
Part of a luxury vessel is of course the dining and *Aqua Expedition* has **Executive Chef Pedro Miguel Schiaffino** who takes care of that department. The chef uses many ingredients that only grow in the Amazon jungle and has spent years learning the traditional cuisines from the area, although based in Lima his search for sustainable ingredients is what makes the fare on board so unique. From fresh ceviche, to plantain and yucca gnocchi food on the vessel might just distract you from the views around if you’re not careful.

There is a certain art in doing nothing on board a slow floating vessel heading down a historical and memorable river. It’s about connecting with the wild, it’s about finding yourself and facing yourself in context with nature. Above all it’s beyond just relaxing or seeing the world, it’s a way to see how man is as much part of the animal and natural world – perhaps more obviously so right this moment.

HOW TO GET THERE

Johannesburg to Lima with the superb Lan or Tam via Brazil’s Sao Paulo. Then a quick hop with Lan Peru from Lima to Iquitos for an airport transfer to the Aqua Expeditions. lan.com and tam.com.br.





Nº 72 I ❤️ FOR THE EVERS



Arriving in *Venice* always has that certain magnetic charm to it – a movie set if anything really. But the real magic is that that happens every time, not just first time. Venice, certainly for me, is like visiting a playground where *Lady Gaga and Shakespeare* have equal footing. From the ridiculous to the sublime – private palazzo dinners, gondola rides with fascinating people and then of course that *Aqua Alto* that seems to rise more every morning when I leave my hotel to hunt for

an espresso macchiato, the same way you should be. I might be on a coffee run but the rest of the city is seemingly hunting for a something totally different: *The Venice Spritz*. Currently *Aperol* is the winning ingredient with its bright orange hue –even the early risers, dressed in three-piece wool suits have these in hand. And with this in mind, the city does love celebrating all things local, like their *Barena brand*, which is fashion inspired by ancient Venetian dress. Locals are seen sporting





smaller than average knitted ties with unstructured sports jackets as they hop on and off gondolas.

And so the sinking city is just always busy, so hard at it in fact that the sheer weight of all the tourists flying, boating, yachting, training and driving in is sinking it some more. So much so that the cruise ships are now to be banned from coming close – Venice officials announced last year. But that hasn't taken away any of its allure.

The Biennale, that runs through a large part of the year has for over 100 years injected a kind of Botox into the city with all kinds of ideas and avant-garde art - contemporary art at that. This past year the Iraqis brought the biggest game where Saddam's regime and occupation as the West sees it was poked and prodded. But then the inside out was presented too, the scenes behind the scenes that we think we knew. Then a little off the track was the *Tapies Antonia show*, at *Palazzo Fortuny* hidden in the middle of the city. Entering the building I was bored at first glance and then the answers to the universe just came flooding. Opening discussions about 'eye' and exactly what that means against this ancient backdrop of Venice managed to reveal the mystery of life. One lithograph

at a time. Of course hunger will strike after all this viewing pleasure overloading. And what better way than to cook your own meal with a local. With a new cookbook out it's local *Enrica Rocca* that will take you to the famed *Rialto Market*, buy ingredients and show you how to hammer them all together in her kitchen. On route she might even stop to buy a fur coat, with her doggie in tow. This will add to your street cred as a chef. Excuse me, a Venetian chef.

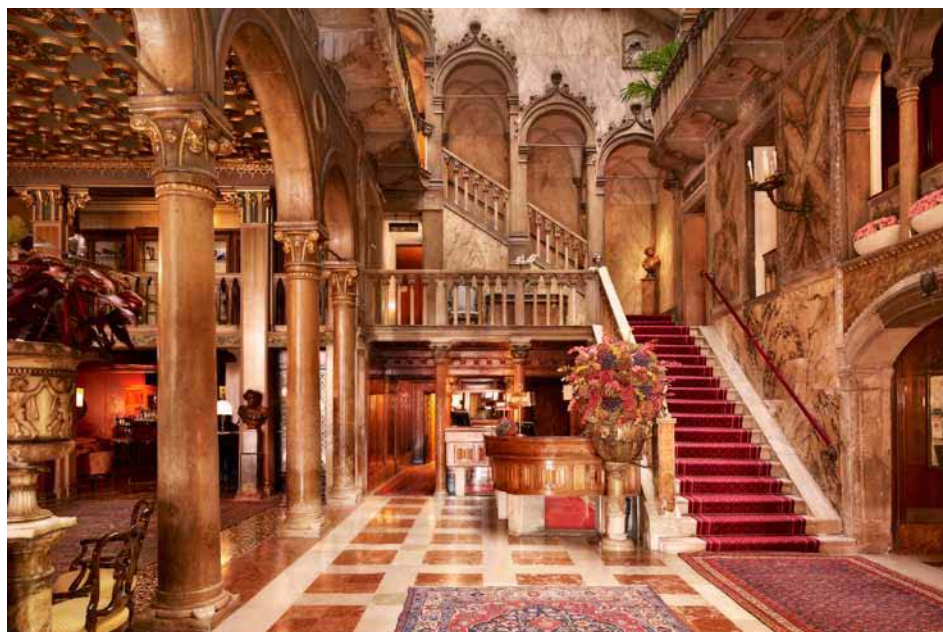
Since the *Aman Canal Grande*, recently opened a hop from the *Rialto Bridge* there really couldn't be a better bed in town. All of its Asian service wonderfulness and pared down elegance hosted in a 16th century Palazzo where the family still lives upstairs – make sure you look out for the count, an elegant and vibrant man. This is where you want to put your feet up, stare at the original frescoes (and some humorous new ones) and drink this daybreak Aperol. Of course the gondolas floating by can lure you out, but the pared down elegant design of the hotel (a nod to the great *Jean Michel Gathy*) will keep you right indoors.

But if it's a timeless classic you're after, it is the *Hotel Danieli*, that rare forever there option. And with their new wine suite they believe





in the finer things that Venice can offer – from food all the wine to drink. Surprises come in the form of wines from the new world and definitive Tuscan bottles. And once you’ve had enough fare and festivity the rooms below have that certain magic to them. All thanks to the **French interior designer Pierre-Yves Rochon** the signature suites of the hotel celebrate females that have a certain power and charm to them - from the cinema world to the operatic world all the way to regality. Think of a suite named after someone like Maria Callas and what it would be like to spend your evening appreciating the great diva and her voice. Or even better, the **Princess**



Suite where one of the world’s most graceful ladies left her mark for you to dazzle in.

All this mainland activity will leave you hankering for some art of relaxation and therefore the **Palladio spa**, just a boat hop across to **Giudecca**, will soothe you. Part of the **Bauer Group** of hotels, famed for their generations of incredible service, the Palladio spa offers the finest in all things wellness. Recommended would be the **Dr. Vitalis** steam cocoon for detoxing and a volcanic purifying treatment afterwards. Then, sit back in a lazy chair and look at **St. Mark’s Square** across the water and the hundreds of boats and gondolas splashing past. Just a moment to reflect on Venice, its centuries of history, its sense of place and everyone that came before you. Life can’t be so bad if you have Venice, right?



hotels
No 98

THE ART OF RESTING YOUR HEAD

story by Daniel Scheffler

THE SKEPPSHOLMEN THE ISLAND RETREAT



Stockholm is one of those cities where there seems to be more water than land, it comes in all formations – rivers, lakes, the Baltic Sea, streams and then all the waterways. So hopping over a little bridge to the island of **Skeppsholmen** south of the city center is where you will find the hotel's 1700s historical building. Actually it's also right next to the **Museum of Modern Art**. Besides for the hotel being a hot spot for brunch in the city, it is withal a design icon worked at by the interesting designers **Claesson Koivisto Rune** and **Erséus Architects**. The building,

originally intended to house the **Royal Marines**, is now filled with contemporary design items and tootle perfectly with that pared down simplicity that only the **Scandinavians** can get right. If you're smart you'll make sure to take a lover, and get a welcoming gift of underwear from **Swedish brand Bread & Boxers**. But even if you don't enjoy the Fika, that's the afternoon tea, that comes with chocolate breads and coffees - and the staff are all dressed in their official gear from **Acne**. It couldn't be friendly and chicer even if it tried.

HOTEL HASSLER THE OLD WORLD

Roma! That great city with all the most historical places in the world yet with no relevance in the modern age. Well, that's Rome for you. But in between the beauty of it and the majestic nature of the city is where the **Hotel Hassler** perches at exactly the right location - at the top of the Spanish Steps of course. And with all the elegance the city requires and it's magnificent views and iconic signage it's the one and only place to stay



when you're heading to the Italian capital. **Roberto E. Wirth, President and Managing Director** of the hotel, is the 5th generation of a famous dynasty of Swiss hoteliers – and it shows. The man comes to greet by hand and the attention to every need is taken care of with great care, not just duty. The gym, with views over the great city, couldn't be more a more perfect way to kick off a day of sightseeing but not before a great old breakfast in the hall downstairs – antiques and antiques dancing all around.

THE AMSTEL THE LEGEND

A Grand Dutch residence since 1867, some have said, "the heart and soul of the Netherlands resides here" – and it's evident with antique gas chandeliers and beautiful **Delft crockery**. The bold afternoon tea on the terrace at

the **Amstel lounge** overlooking the canal is where lovers of the city come to perch, catching a glimpse of little sailboats swinging past. And then there is the co-creation with ever-fabulous **Dom Pérignon** for the first ever **Champagne Suite**. Including the champagne brand, the **Rijksmuseum**, **Fendi Furniture** and famous **Dutch**



creators like **Piet Hein Eek** and **Erwin Olaf** were called in. The result is an elegant champagne and black coloured haven upstairs in the grand hotel where the finest bubbles are almost on tap.



BAUR AU LAC THE NOTHING IS EVER TOO MUCH

Situated on the most beautiful part of the Swiss capital, right on the great lake is where this beautiful elegant lady roosts. Besides for the ever-sexy **Rolls Royce Phantom** that can come fetch you at the airport or nearby train station, the hotel itself has a policy of



plenteousness. Nothing is ever too much to ask as you wander the halls, gardens and great restaurants at this one of a kind luxury powerhouse. For 170 years the same family has owned the hotel, and six generations later it's evident in its commitment to protecting its exquisite heritage. **Pavilion**, their contemporary restaurant, feels fresh in the little village of **Zurich** – and it's all the doing of **chef Laurent Eperon** who takes classic haute cuisine and rejigs it with a 21st century take. No wonder there is a **Michelin Star** and **17 GaultMillau** points floating around.



NOBIS THE MEETING PLACE

For a small city in the northern part of Europe, **Stockholm** does attract a certain cognoscenti – from the aesthetes all the way to the too cool designers. And **Nobis** is the holding place for all of it. Not only are the rooms design-considered and timeless, due to the great **Swedish star architect studio Claesson Koivisto Rune**, but also the atmosphere is one of casual elegance. The **Nobis Suite** for instance sparks

its beauty with two rooms complete with original panels and stucco from the late 1800s and if that wasn't enough has views the famed and historic **Norrmalmstorg Square**. Sitting in the great hall with a ceiling 28 m with some Swedish milky coffee and seeing as the wild young things of the city flick in and out is what it's all about here. Attracted by design and a community built respecting exactly that is what the hotel offers and so there is a sweet spot right in the center of the city.



ANDAZ PAPIGAYO THE SURF HAVEN

So besides for being the **Andaz** brand's first to open in Latin America and doing so with a new design aesthetic attracting great responses from guests, the hotel has developed a unique **Cultural Insider** program that brings together art, music and surf. **Alex and Mike Faherty**, with their **Faherty brand**, brings "How To Surf Costa Rica" as a guide to guests - complete with hidden surf spots in the country. According to

the hotel flora and fauna was a big inspiration in the design, and the lay out of the resort thus looks like "an imaginary gathering of animals using the shapes of cocoons and shells". Ponder this while you stand at the coffee shop featuring local beans. Rooms blend the natural surroundings with all the modern touches that guests are dying for and so it feels like you can surf all day and come back to a space perfect for running your giant tech company or whatever it is you do.





CASTLETON THE PRIVATE HEAVEN

Even if you can't own it, you will feel like you do.

It's the new concept from the buffs of luxury, *Singita*, whereby you get your mitts on with an exclusive-use safari country house. They're calling it exclusivity within exclusivity; we're seeing it more like a gift from the African gods where you can parade all your folly. What used to be the family home of Singita's founder has been rallied into an uber casual private lodge by *design house Cecile & Boyd's*. It's yours complete with all the safari basics like a swimming pool, wine cellar, gym, tennis court, spa and of course some sexy gardens to explore. While getting served shivery white wines and fare from the country-style kitchen you can happily rotate whopper verandas to trifle with all 6 double rooms. Now that's a perfect way to acquaint yourself with all the natural history curated collections and botanical prints around your new home.



CASTIGLIO DEL BOSCO THE ELEGANT

You have to consider that a member of the ever-glamorous **Ferragamo** family designed this little spot of heaven in the middle of **Tuscany**. And thus, every single small part from the linens, to the scents, to the back of house is somehow just a little more elegant. Driving into this estate, the rolling hills that Tuscany sports to proudly and the endless greens of the golf course and then the quintessential Tuscan village at the center of it all is what makes you want to move in for a lifetime. And that's what it's like here; you could live a whole life here. Between the fitness center, cooking classes, spa, Italian lessons and world class golf you could easily move into the village and become Italian. The villas, rustic farmhouses really, are designed by **Teresa Bürgisser Sancristoforo** and respect the tradition and the aesthetic – stone, wood, fire and antiques are all around. Pour some wine, of course only the finest, sit down in a low chair and look out over the green hills and lavender bushes – and life will slow down for as long as you allow it to.



ALMA BARCELONA THE STYLE EXPERT

Not everyone can have a perfect sense of style, not everyone knows how pared down and culling back is more than always the most sophisticated. Some hotels and resorts need to have the latest design furniture to strike their sense of style at the world. *Alma*, in the haute section of the great Spanish asset, knows exactly what style is and isn't. From the great underground spa that flows between rock and wood and water and glass with a calm sense of chariness, all the way to the elongated rooms with oversized beds and tender lighting – the maestro tinkers. Heavy large shutters move and allow for light and dreams to enter and escape and



sleep is somehow more comforting here, just as it should be. If you've dined enough and read the chic **El Pais** newspapers in the gardens then you can only head to the roof terrace for some sun. Overlooking all that's *Gaudi* and the distant ocean the space on top of this modernist hotel acts as



the sweet connection to the outside world. But for the rest, the hotel is a perfect bubble of pulchritude.

REGINA ISABELLA THE WELLNESS ESCAPE

So it's not just that *Elizabeth Taylor* and *Richard Burton* came to play here and that *Maria Callas* boomed her divaness around here, it's that it's a discreet little island that might not be as sexy as *Capri* but definitely competes with its sense of privacy. And in this day and age, let's just be honest privacy is much more important than some fading sexiness.



Located on an ancient Greek thermal spring, the spa uses the thermal water in all their healing treatments and even in their beauty products – a “multi-active water” source. Hours spent in the therapeutic water and soaking in minerals on a quiet island off the coast of *Naples* doesn't sound like a

terrible idea at all. The water licks the side of the hotel and deck chairs rest on the side of the perfect ocean just below – the invitation to swim in the golden water lingers in the breeze just the way you would expect it to in your fantasy jaunt.

LYDMAR THE HOME BODY

When entering this little hotel tucked away next to the *Grande Dame of Stockholm* and across from the Royal Palace, it feels like you've walked into your favourite aunt's house – the chic, warm and humorous aunt you love to



visit. Familiar, comfortable and extra caring *Lydmar* reflects a new course in hotels – instead of bombarding with all things fabulous it takes it all a step back and injects a sense of contentment. They call it “simple and straightforward” and it comes as a relief – liberated from the stiff fancy hotels the world sports. The *Lydmar* is a “second generation boutique hotel” and it feels exactly like that, unaffected by trends and passing ideals. The personality of the design, all hand selected and very specific, is about creating a sense of belonging not impressing with an international hotel standard or bending to the expectations of five stars. It allows guests just to feel like they've been a dozen times, even on their first visit.



SO WHERE IN THE world ARE WE now

story by Daniel Scheffer

Stronger that ever is the emergence of a clear dichotomy – ever clear glades of perspicuity and turbidity somewhat caress and trundle as the world tries to find itself again and again and again. Shakespeare’s pet, *Hamlet*, pointed out “nothing is ever bad, but only thinking makes it so” and that seems to be resonating as the world is both at a yoga class in Los Angeles and at war, again or still, in the Middle East and now Syria.

Terrorism now in capital DC, politicians and Putin going wild, semi-sexy athletes drugging and breaking down on Oprah, other half-celebrity athletes possibly killing their girlfriends, natural disasters in the offing and then of course the discoveries of new stem cells and planets and the multiple ways to tap into happiness through mediation, stillness or Kabbalah or whatever method is on fire this week, this minute, this instance.

Culturally the world is exploring itself through such diverse and wondrous ways. It seems to want more than ever to connect the systems in place that seemingly diverge and propel togetherness or oneness. Similar to the ancient rishis, from northern India, who sprouted knowledge of non-duality the world is finding ways to

bridge misconceptions and misaligned chaos in a newfangled way.

For instance *Camper*, running their “Together” series, they collaborate with leading designers in their different specializations and work to integrate culture, design and creative know-how into a single product that speaks in a patois that the global bazaar can understand and really “feel” not just see. For instance, a lover’s tangle with the *German designer Bernhard Wilhelm brings a shameless and unpredictable product to the Camper stores worldwide*. Or even more pivotal is the *Danish textile company Kvadrat’s collection that brings a wild freshness to the signature Pelotas shoes Camper has done for decades*. Exploring how the old ideas may still be “good or bad” but can be done in a way that honors the Now. For more on the Together collection, see camper.com.

So in celebration of being interesting AND interested, creativity and a new way of collaborating, inspiring and being inspired Dossier speaks to a series of “creatives” who have in their industries, and way beyond, explored something far greater than the obvious: through extraordinary and ordinary ways.



design ARMY

Founded in 2003 by the partners Jake Lefebure and Pum Lefebure, the design agency Design Army in Washington DC has racked up over 500 awards. Working with clients like Adobe, the Washington Ballet and Disney has kept their hands full with design that meets storytelling or so they say. For more on Design Army see designarmy.com.

DOSSIER: *What is beauty to you?*

JAKE: I think it has to catch your eye, and steal your heart to be beautiful. Otherwise it's trend.

PUM: It's not so much that something is beautiful; it's what is most memorable that is beautiful to me. You might meet someone who is not that beautiful, but his or her beauty is very memorable. I love the four seasons and how seasons change. I grew up in Thailand where it's hot all year long. DC has strong four seasons and it keeps me alive in a way.

DOSSIER: *How have you evolved the business since its kick off?*

JAKE: All the time – but what remains consistent is creativity.

PUM: We have better clients, better work and a better team. Our clients range from local to national, and we

do more than just graphic work. We offer 360 degrees – a wide range with more international clients, ones with more discipline. We keep the number of designers at Design Army small to keep the company small so we can remain hands-on and involved day-to-day with all our clients.

DOSSIER: *What makes you get out of bed every morning?*

JAKE: Making breakfast for our daughter Sophie.

PUM: Sophie, our daughter. But Design Army is my second child. You have to go to work; you have responsibilities. But our work is not really work. I'm blessed to get out of bed and go to work and create something. I really enjoy my work. It makes it much easier to get up every morning if you enjoy what you do. My work varies every day, too. One day I go to the studio/office and review projects or go on a photo shoot. Every day is an adventure. I might go scout a location...you never know.

DOSSIER: *Tell me about other couple duos that inspire you?*

JAKE: Sonny and Cher. Bonnie and Clyde. Peter Pan and Wendy. Any couple that has something magical or mystic are pretty good comparisons to us.

PUM: I'm inspired by nature instead of people.

Kit KEMP



The ultimate British chic designer, with a host of London hotels including Dorset Square Hotel and a New York darling the Crosby Street Hotel, talks about beauty, design and working with her husband. **For more on Kit and Firmdale Hotels see Firmdalehotels.com**

DOSSIER: *Your aesthetic is eclectic and fresh and it has been described as a “new Brit” approach. Tell me more about that and about your taste level?*

KK: I think that a contemporary English style is actually all about clean lines, retro touches, eccentric pieces of furniture, contemporary art and traditional mainstay - and that is quite individual.

DOSSIER: *You love textures and antiques, evidently, what else do you love in terms of design?*

KK: Fabrics are an important part of the design process as I'm inspired by their texture, colour and tone. If I see a fabric I love, I just have to use it in some way in my designs. I think my love of fabrics provides a tactile and feminine feel to my designs.

DOSSIER: *Tell me more about your creative process*

KK: Design is a private, intimate process and you have to embrace the many twists and turns it takes to create an exciting, inspiring but ultimately livable space.

DOSSIER: *Tell me about the new New York hotel.*

KK: That's further on, because where we're going to build, which is on 56th Street, has actually got another building on it, and that's got to be demolished before we then start again.

DOSSIER: *Give me all the details on the “flagship” opening in London this year, well the ones you're willing to tell me about.*

KK: It's going to be called the Ham Yard Hotel, and that's in SoHo, and it's one of our biggest projects. There's a sort of garden in the center that we're creating. SoHo itself is always very grey, so to be able to put five large oak trees in the center of somewhere, it's really nice. And there's going to be a few shops and apartments, and then we've got a full theatre and a bowling alley. I've never been to a bowling alley that I wanted to stay at for more than five minutes, so that's going to be a real challenge, and fun to do as well, actually.

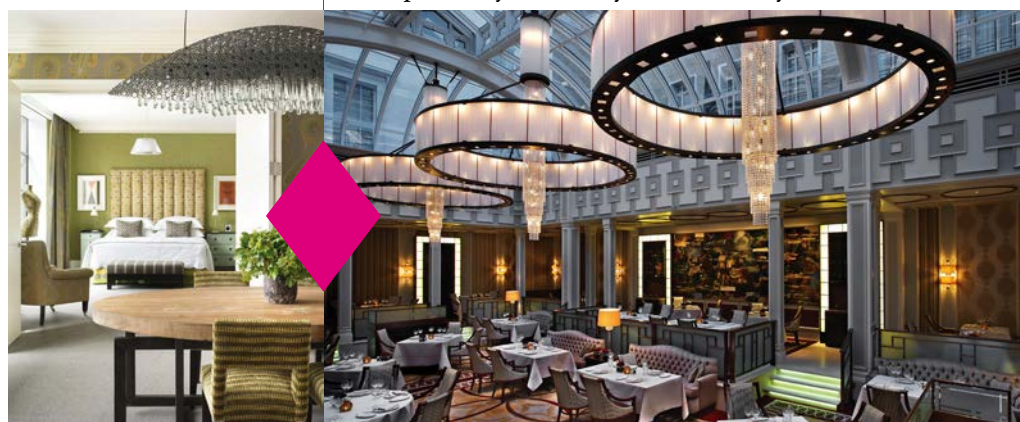
heinz BECK



Heinz Beck, the Michelin starred chef and eternal perfectionist, chats about his childhood food, how Germany and Italy influences him, and his London restaurant Apsleys. **For more on Heinz and Apsleys see lanesborough.com.**

DOSSIER: *Tell me how your childhood influenced your cooking aesthetic.*

HB: My childhood did not have a strong impact on my style as it has been characterised by the contrast between my parents, who wanted me to carry on the family business, and my passion for art. As I didn't have the possibility to become a painter, I found another way to express my creativity and curiosity.



DOSSIER: *You moved to Italy, from Germany, in 1994. Tell me how these two countries influence you in different ways.*

HB: From Germany I got rigor and technique, but in Italy I learned passion for taste and harmony.

DOSSIER: *Tell me about Apsleys and how it has been since the opening in 2009?*

HB: Previously The Conservator, The Lanesborough decided they wanted a restaurant with a more contemporary style so enlisted designer Adam Tihany to transform their grand dining room, resulting in a handsome, art deco interior featuring incredible chandeliers. I joined Apsleys in 2009 and the restaurant has gone from strength to strength. In February 2010 Apsleys became the fastest London establishment to be bestowed its first Michelin star.

DOSSIER: *Share your feelings and thoughts about the grand Lanesborough hotel.*

HB: The Lanesborough proved the perfect choice to partner with, as London's most prestigious hotel shares my philosophy of providing the highest quality of produce and services for their guests.

DOSSIER: *What do you think will be the next big focus in the “epicurean” world?*

HB: Health.

Suzi Malin, the London portrait painter, chats about her craft, Lucien Freud and what art means to her. Having studied at Slade School of Art, and painted Peter Sellers and Elton John, the artist is as interesting as she is talented. **For more on Suzi, www.facebook.com/suzimalin.**

**suzi
MALIN**



DOSSIER: *How does art make you feel?*

SM: When the entire world is upside down, I can lift up my paintbrushes and feel calm and in control. I guess the ability to create brings me peacefulness. Concerns about the chaos of life melt away just as time disappears with the joy of painting. I can sometimes cry with the frustration over difficulties I have achieving what I want but I can also reach the plateau of happiness too. I suppose that's called fulfillment.

DOSSIER: *Do you dream?*

SM: I have to say I would love a retrospective of all my work at the National Portrait Gallery. Over the years I have painted vast numbers of portraits but they go into private collections, you don't necessarily see them again nor does the general public. It would be great to see them all together so you can see how your work has evolved over the years (photos of them aren't the same!). I have passed through so many stages in technique and materials.

DOSSIER: *How did your talent come to you?*

SM: I was four and I pinched the soaps from the bathroom quite regularly so I could sculpt a face out of them. In those days, we had cuticular soap so we had ledges of blue sculpted faces throughout the house. I don't know how my mother resolved the problem of how we washed our hands because there

wasn't such a thing as liquid soap in that day!

DOSSIER: *What is most valuable to you?*

SM: My easel which is a very beautiful heirloom and I couldn't work as well without it. Originally it was first Spanish owned by a man who sold his collection of Goya's to the Thyssen family on it. He insisted that when he died it was handed on to someone deserving and that no money ever changed hands. I inherited it from the philosopher and poet Jean Padova. One day it will belong to my son Oliver who is a marvelous artist.



No 108

the **aR** of Seeing

by Daniel Scheffler

BUT IN TRUTH HONG KONG IS SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST A LITTLE STOP OVER, IT'S A WHOLE WORLD IN ITSELF. FROM THE ANCIENT CHINESE CULTURE OF KOWLOON, TO THE HIGH-RISE MODERNITY OF HONG KONG ISLAND THE CITY STRADDLES THE DIFFERENT WORLDS WITH A WHISTLE IN ITS STEP AND A FEATHER IN ITS CAP. HERE THERE IS TOO MUCH TO SEE, TOO MUCH TO TAKE IN AND WAY TOO MUCH TO UNDERSTAND. BETWEEN THE NEW, THE MIXTURE AND THE FULL ON EXPERIENCE IS A NEW WAY OF CELEBRATING THE ART OF SEEING THE WORLD.



THE NEW



The hipsters and new kids on the block have all moved out to ***Diamond Hill*** in the northeastern part of ***Kowloon***. Currently in the process of new development and a new harbor spread, the area is attracting the young and the innovative, people looking for space a little away from the watchful eyes of the masses in the city. So it's in between some great textile factories and oversized wholesale stores that the ***Pentahotel*** opened its doors. Seemingly out of the way, the

Pentahotel represents an easy to indulge (and afford) stylish space where digital nomads can come set up laptops, play at the games room or eat at the indoor street food café. And if you're off exploring this new and innovative neighborhood where the unexpected quickly becomes evident, you can also rock climb inside an industrial building that's just around the corner for a totally non Hong Kong experience.



This great city has an east meets west dynamic that is both intriguing and confusing. The rise of the east, the decline of the west and the inverse has always been part of Hong Kong's DNA. The colonial building that is **Hullett House**, dating back to 1881, is where this marriage is most evident. There is a suite in the hotel that has a hand-painted Qing dynasty mural,

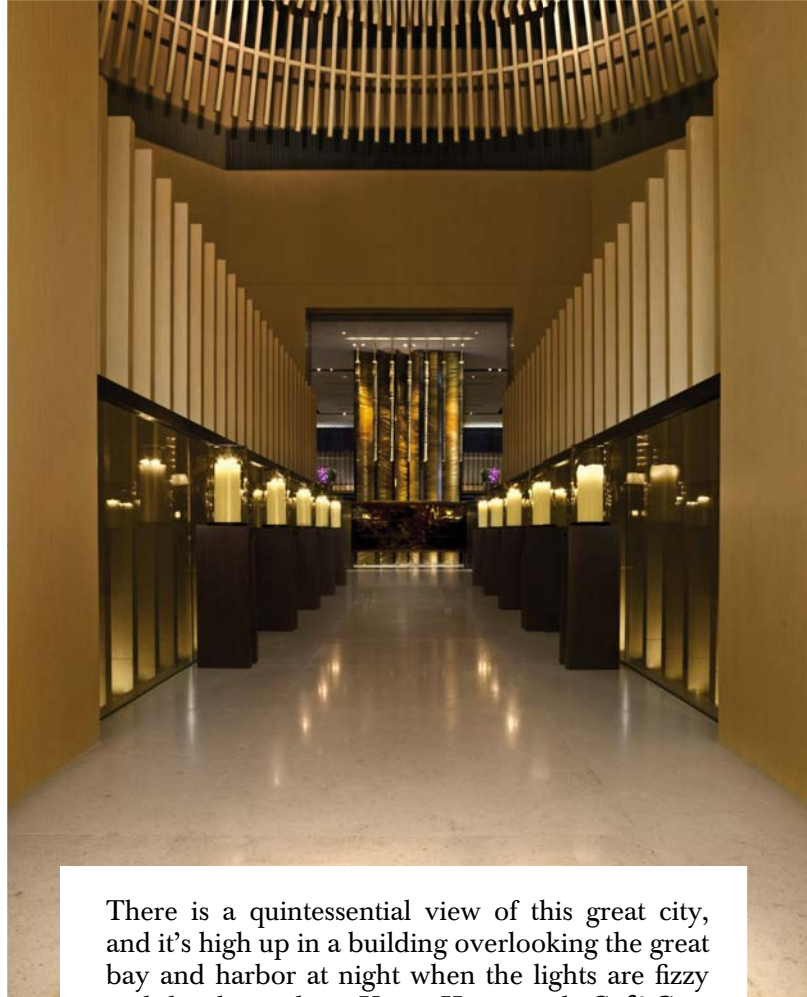
another that is English pastoral with hand painted native songbirds and even one that's a China pop art delight. The dining options here include **St. George**, reminiscent of a 19th century gentleman's club, and **Loong Toh Yuen**, Cantonese restaurant featuring elements of the teahouse culture of 1930s Hong Kong.

HULLETT HOUSE

THE

COMING





There is a quintessential view of this great city, and it's high up in a building overlooking the great bay and harbor at night when the lights are fizzy and the sky is clear. *Upper House*, with *Café Gray* in its belly is where this view is at its finest. A moment of quiet reflection over man's creations whilst holding a cocktail or ordering a tasting menu that could include black truffles with sea bass or veal saltimbocca. Not to mention a passion fruit omelet soufflé.



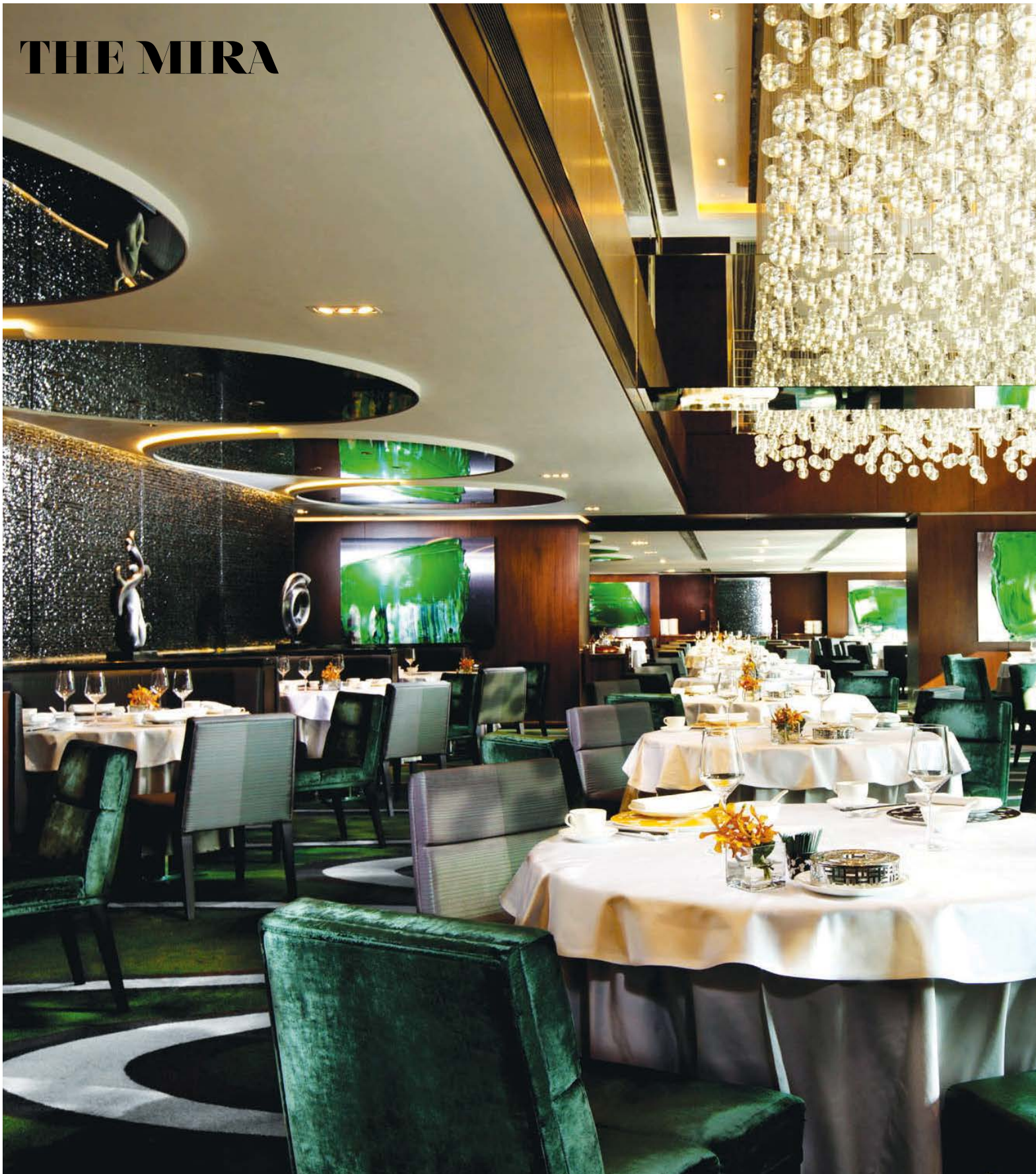
UPPER HOUSE



THE View

THE DESTINATION

THE MIRA





Sometimes part of reflection is taking time out to totally indulge. ***The Mira***, with its many avenues to do exactly that, can offer a helping hand. The spa underneath offers a quiet moment of reflection in between the latest skincare technology on offer from ***Aromatherapy Associates***, ***Parisian skincare pioneer Anne Semonin*** and ***New York's Somme Institute*** featuring clinically driven, transformative facials. Heading upstairs there is a direct link to the shopping mall, with every indulgent brand you can think of, so retail therapy can be activated in the way only Hong Kong knows how. And then, best of all, the hotel has dining options for every mood: ***Whisk*** for a never ending brunch, ***Room One*** for snacks and Cuisine Cuisine for a contemporary take on Chinese and Cantonese fare. Now that's you've reached your full and enjoyed all that life can offer, reflection is inevitable.



No 114

p

photographers
ISSUE

by Daniel Scheffler

For the *Photography Issue 2014* of *Dossier* this year, it was all about selecting three very different photographers and a production designer to interview to gain insights into the ever-changing and oh-so-rapidly changing profession of photography and aside the lens. With *Instagram* and the likes the whole world is suddenly a photographer and then *Photoshop* on the other extreme has eased its way into the lives of every photographer, and production designer, making things better and worse all at once. But away from all the controversy and complications is also the pure art and bliss that comes with the craft, and that is where these virtuosi chew the fat.

"Hell Ulrica"
BY Pieter Hugo



Interview by Daniel Scheffler

ANTON DE SOUSA COSTA

WWW.ANTONDESOUSACOSTA.COM



D: What makes a powerful photograph?

A: Purists will talk about light, technique and so on. Yes, that's all relevant but it's not what necessarily makes a powerful photograph. A powerful photograph first and foremost 'communicates' and if it is backed with a message through visual language, timing and light, well then you have it.

D: What do photos make people feel or experience?

A: We all react differently to a photograph depending on our past reference of what we are seeing before

us. Photographs are a reflection of our dreams and our realities, what we know and what we don't know! They can tell stories or act as fantasy. A photograph can evoke all sorts of emotions: pain, suffering, love, fear, joy, compassion. A photograph is a reflection of humanity...something we ALL relate to.

D: What do you dream about?

A: My sub conscious would not be too happy if I spoke on its behalf.

D: Tell me a story about the first time you discovered your talent as an artist.

A: For some or other reason I used to draw BIG 'ships' in grade 2. Hospital ships with a big red cross and my teacher would look at them with a look of great approval and say: "You're going to be an artist one day". I think it was THAT simple really. Although I think she regretted saying that because every time I was meant to be working on my alphabet I would be drawing yet another hospital ship to impress her. When you're a six-year-old kid you'll believe anything an adult tells you.

D: What is the single most valuable thing to your craft as a photographer?

A: Patience.

D: How do you feel about Photoshop and digital enhancements?

A: I'm not a purist and therefore love digital darkrooms. There is a lot of gadgety stuff you'll find in Photoshop or on other software out there. It all has a place I guess. Personally I prefer to keep the light and colour within a believable reality. Depends what photography we're talking about. Every digital enhancement produced comes from a tool available to us. It's how and for what purpose we intend to use these tools that makes them relevant or marks our signature style.

D: Tell me more about your work.

A: My work is currently torn between open space and urban rush. It's young it's evolving and it's searching for its place. Within the context of South Africa, it's the contradictions and disparities between rich and poor that appeal to my photographic conscience. The more I shoot the more I start to realise that that is what I am seeing through the lens.



NICK ONKEN

WWW.NICKONKEN.COM

Interview by Daniel Scheffler

D: What is the powerful thing about photography?

N: Visual storytelling and communication is the most powerful thing about photography. Imagery is powerful in the sense that you can really convey in one still image a full story of someone's life, the beauty of a landscape, an aspiration of a vision, and a scene life moments, etc. What I love is the power in capturing those things in a single photograph.

D: What is the single most valuable thing to your craft as a photographer?

N: The single most valuable thing to my craft as a photographer is VISION. Without vision you are lost. Everything about photography from visual style to where you want to be with your career/art all comes down to vision, as with anything in life. Vision is the key element that allows you to create anything. Vision will carry you through the ages and allow you to create your full potential and live in your authentic self.

D: What is your signature style like?

N: My signature style is very moment driven. Capturing aspirational and real moments that are soulful that people can resonate with. I'm attracted to bright poppy colors in what I'm photographing, and my overall image tones. I love energy and movement.

D: What is your creative process like when you work?

N: My creative process differs from shoot to shoot. Some are more produced than others, but most of what I love is creating the magic in

the moment of the shoot. Having a good idea of what we are going for, then creating the situation that allows for spontaneity.

D: Tell me more about your work.

N: My work is what I live. The places and moments that I experience, and the moments that I aspire to in my life. As photographers we shoot our life as it happens. My life has become about my loves of travel and moments. My personal work tends to be my travel work because it is a true reflection of the way I love to explore and experience the world. My book "Photo Trekking" is a manifestation of that exact passion. Travel work has also led into the world of humanitarianism and using my gifts to make the world a better place. One of my favorite charities, that I've contributed heavily to, is Pencils of Promise that builds schools for kids in the developing world. Education is the biggest thing the world needs outside of love. I love to create work that communicates and adds to the world in a positive way. My commercial work is a spin off of my personal and travel work as I love to create aspirational moments that could exist, but also allows people to feel connect them.







Interview by Daniel Scheffler

PIETER HUGO

WWW.PIETERHUGO.COM

Never fearing dissent from the masses of critics, photographer Pieter Hugo has over the last decade created work, albeit seemingly only artistic, that delves into the political as he verifies a new way of seeing Africa - away from the typecast. The thirty-something *Cape Town born photographer* is self-taught and was said to have picked up a camera at age 10 calling himself "a political-with-a-small-p photographer". *Called "astute" by various critics in national and international press*, the unassuming Hugo is known to use a *Hasselblad* camera and said to *shoot in 4x5 format*: creating work that's more than astute and everything but bashful.

Hugo's latest work *"There's a Place in Hell for Me and My Friends"* *comprise a series of portraits that accost the looker-on with its ability to seemingly transcend race, gender and hopefully prejudice*. Apt in a time that South Africa is looking back, then 15 years on, post-Apartheid in a new state of race and colourfulness. *The heightened monotone of skin translated into dark tinges* is what makes the work more and more interesting to stare at. As the composition manages to dislodge the range of dubiety and variance it gives way to reveal the role and roles that race play on a superficial skin level and allows for a betrayal of partisanship.

Hugo's supposed premise with this fund of work is that *we are in fact all "coloured"* and that becomes apparent as he manipulates the colour channels and enhances some of the grey scales in the work of these people all of sundry ethnicities, and ideals. An accompanying essay (displayed at his retrospective opening at the *Fotomuseum den Haag in March*) rifles through the technical digital facility and discusses how Hugo manipulated melanin pigments (pheomelanin for red and eumelanin for yellow) to a place of darkness showing as blacks and greys. The essay boldly stated, *"humanity today represents an ever-developing photograph of the entirety of its own existence"*, a marvellous tract of progress albeit again from Darwin's camp of adaptation. It was *critic and icon Susan Sontag* who *claimed*

in 1982 that photographs "are indeed able to usurp reality because first of all a photograph is not only an image, an interpretation of the real; it is also a trace, something directly stencilled off the real". Hugo's latest work takes this postulation and throws it loosely in the wind to germinate where it needs to by embracing the exactly that, the stencil. The origin of stencilling comes from the 18th century and means to ornament with various colours, a technique Hugo uses here to challenge what is real and what is all part of the construct that South Africans, and humans, see each other and themselves.

The last two years has been teeming for the *Nick Cave devotee*, as he was included on *Photography of The Rainbow Nation at Museum Beelden Aan Zee in Holland, There and Back at the Folkwang Museum in Germany and at the Foto Triennale in Denmark* and had a survey exhibition at *Fotomuseum Den Haag in Holland* that travelled to *Musée de l'Elysée in Switzerland*. Oh yes, and then the *Deutsche Börse photography prize nomination*.

The Deutsche Börse photography prize includes an exhibition of four artists shortlisted for an annual award and *was won in September by British artist John Stezaker for his cutting and pasting of photos*. But Hugo's work *"Permanent Error"* that *focuses on a dumping ground for tech-waste, on the periphery of Accra, the capital of Ghana* with its slum denizens relying on the processing and burning of discarded material was the crash-boom-bang of the four. "Permanent Error" carries that with a certain force of endangerment and blunder uncalculated by the western world. Known for his almost circus performing witches, who also collect debt, in Nigeria, his work continues to explore an almost-subculture through its gloaming where the subculture is so uneasy with itself it almost tips over with its own demise. The way that Hugo keeps bringing a new way of seeing into his work is what brings the scratching inhumane-humanity into his craft – a single shot at a time.

No 148

the art of wellness

by
DANIEL SCHEFFLER

THE WORLD IS LOOKING FOR WELLNESS, TO
HEAL IN WHICHEVER WAY POSSIBLE – IT IS THAT DESPERATE.
THE EAST IS LOOKING TO THE WEST FOR
INSTANT FIXES AND THE WEST IS LOOKING TO THE EAST TO
UNDERSTAND AGE-OLD TRADITIONS AND WAYS
OF HEALING. ONE IS NOT BETTER THAN THE OTHER,
AND THE REALIZATION NOW IS
THAT THE MERGING OF THE TWO
IS WHERE TRUE HEALING IN THIS 21ST CENTURY
LIFE CAN ACTUALLY HAPPEN.

AND SO VIETNAM, THE LAND OF
RICE PADDIES, ROCKY SEASCAPES AND
RAPID EXPANSION, PLAYS HOST TO SOME OF THE
WELLNESS THAT COMES FROM ESCAPE, SPIRITUALITY,
MEDICINE, TRANQUILITY AND OF COURSE FRESH AIR.
VIETNAM REALLY HAS QUICKLY BECOME THE HOT NEW
DESTINATION AND SO THE TOURISTS HAVE FLOCKED
AND THE WORLD HAS STARTED TO PAY
ATTENTION AND SPEND THEIR MONEY IN THIS
S-SHAPED SOUTH EAST ASIAN STRONG HOLD.
ONE OF THE MAIN ATTRACTIONS,
THEIR UNTAINTED NATURE IS WHERE
TWO VERY DIFFERENT RESORTS HAVE ESTABLISHED A
RETREAT AND A PLACE WHERE WELLNESS IS CONSUMMATED,



AMANOI

The latest of the *Aman Resorts*, *Amanoi*, is situated a little drive outside of *Nha Trang on the east coast of Vietnam*. Driving to the resort is in itself part of the commitment to finding some stillness, winding roads and farm scenes pass as you venture along the coast. In the distance appears what seems to be a temple, but it's the main pavilion of this new resort. Perched up on some pinkish, if you're looking from far, rocks the resort brings about a certain stillness just from its locality. Far from man's decline, man's desires and rightfully inserted ever-so lightly between heavy vegetation and rocks that have been shaped and carry centuries of wisdom.

The resort doesn't come with bells and whistles promising enlightenment, it comes with a discreet sense of power that is felt in the smiles of the discreet staff, the look out of the yoga pavilion onto the lake and the care that quietly arranges your room every time you head out. The spa, crowned by healers and facilitators, summons serenely and wellness here isn't just about a massage or a session in the Pilates studio. Wellness here runs deeper and more sincerely than that. Just ask intuitive *vibrational healer Steven Jeanes* who realms around the Aman Resorts. The



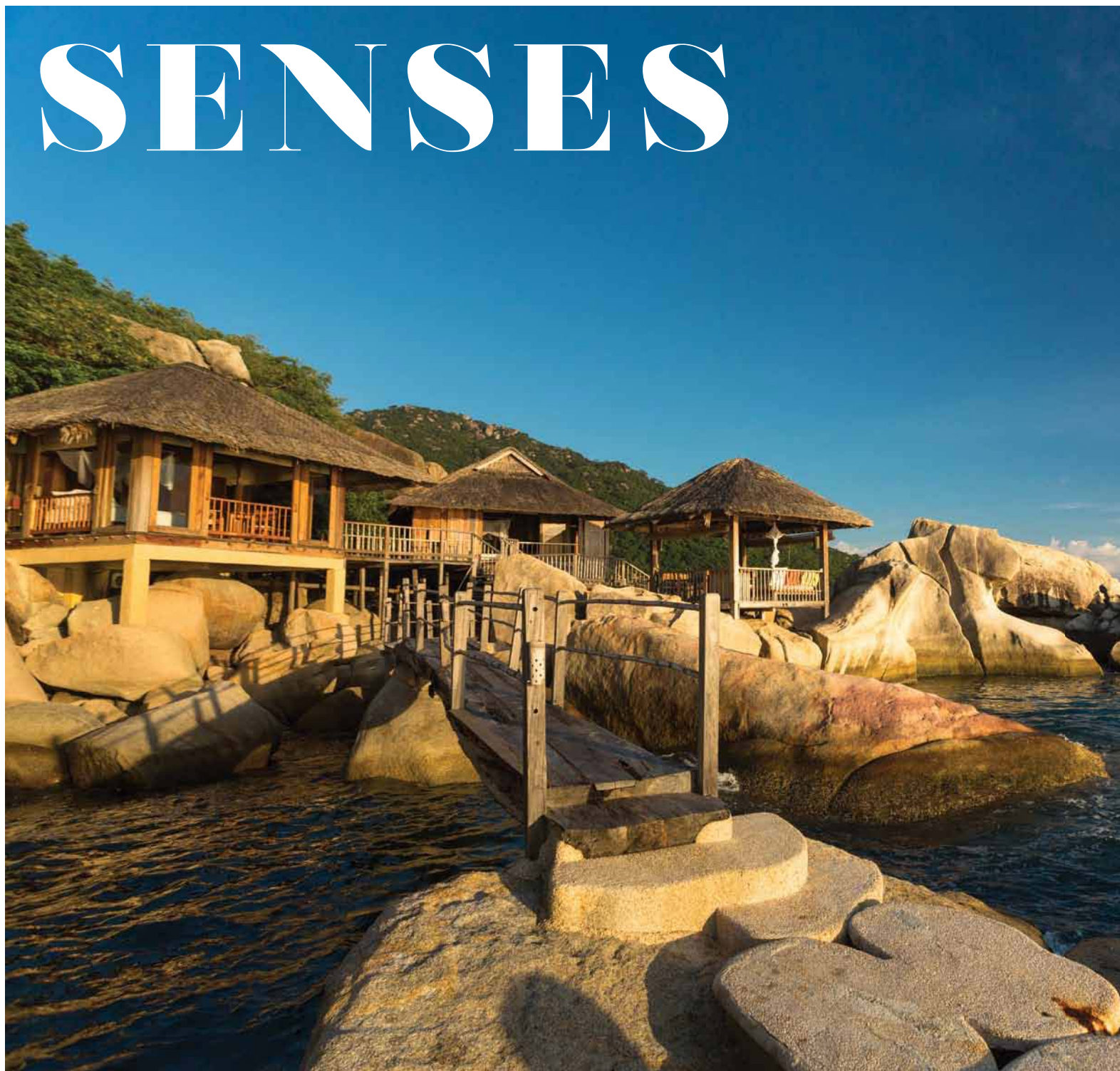
place, the people and the vision of the founder of Aman, all acting like a briny consciousness that opens up a physical, mental, and spiritual realm - if the seeker is open to it of course.

Luxury and wellness has changed, a spa with the usual offerings are no longer relevant – what the world is craving now is a truly holistic look at wellness. Holistic, an overused and deformed word, has plagued the industry for too long and lost it's meaning. But places like the Aman Resorts are rescheduling the word, appropriating it as to take on its essence once again. It's of course the choice of the guest whether they want to have just a little massage, or change their life as a connection to something bigger than themselves.



SIX

SENSES



Heading north of *Nha Trang* and a little boat trip later, is where the *Six Senses Resort Ninh Van Bay* settled. Enclosed by a nature reserve the pristine wildlife all around makes the resort feel

isolated and reposeful – as if it was far away from civilization’s bother. Besides for the rustic luxury design in the villas, the resort indulges guests with the ultimate in luxury – time away from the madness of the daily roast and space a plenty. Waking up in the beach villa and walking down to the quiet private beach is where the stillness of the resort begins. From there it’s yoga on the rocks and then straight to a *Vietnamese Well Being Journey* that includes cleansing with indigenous plants and herbs and *Reiki* crystal healing. If you’re lucky *Ms. Nhung*, who is blind from birth, will furnish you with her curative hands. But if you investigate *Vietnamese* traditional medicine, a whole world of wellness reveals itself. The ethnic minorities, such as the *Mien and Hmong*, believe that there are supernatural factors, more so than biological factors, which contribute to sickness. And so they seek treatment from priests who they believe can communicate with higher beings. Even if the Resort does not come with its own temple, the island and surroundings have many alternative avenues to explore – just open your eyes,

sixsenses.com/resorts/ninh-van-bay



Nº 152

Tokyo

by
DANIEL SCHEFFLER



FORGET ART AS YOU KNOW IT. TOKYO'S ART SCENE IS DIFFERENT TO WHAT WE KNOW IN THE BIG CAPITALS OF THE WORLD, VERY DIFFERENT INDEED. UNLIKE NEW YORK AND LONDON THERE IS NO GALLERY DISTRICT WHERE SHOPPING FOR ART, OR BROWSING FOR EYES ONLY IS EASILY DONE – ART WORKS ARE SCATTERED FREELY AROUND THE BIG CITY AND THE COMMITMENT TO FIND THEM IS PART OF THE PROCESS. SOMETIME THE ART WORKS AREN'T EVEN IN GALLERIES, so the hunt really is a massive commitment, EVEN THE ART FAIRS WON'T REVEAL IT ALL TOO EASILY. BUT ART HERE REQUIRES THAT, IT NEEDS SOME PARTICIPATION FROM THE VIEWER BEYOND JUST DOING A WIRE TRANSFER. IT MEANS THAT THE VIEWER BECOMES AN ARTIST, AND THE ARTIST BECOMES THE VIEWER.



Even though *Tokyo* is new on the block when it comes to contemporary art fairs, with Frieze and Basel pretty much leading the pack, the city has become a healthy and desperately necessary alternative to the usual suspects. Art, and in particular contemporary art, has felt trite and the

opposite of ingenious for too long – the Japanese capital has vowed to change that. And it will do so with its usual mannered and highly considered way of doing things – nothing brazen, nothing witless all in beautiful whispers. The Art Fair Tokyo (March 7-9, 2014) for instance



is where the *Suntory Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Toguri Museum of Art, Pola Museum of Art, Mitsubishi Ichigokan Museum Tokyo, Mori Art Museum and the Yokohama Museum of Art* band together with 145 galleries to produce an space where art can be seen and engaged with. Their philosophy, that art is a healer, is evident in the seriousness of the event.

The *Park Hyatt Tokyo*, the most exquisite hotel that the city has to offer and possibly one of the most exquisite hotels the world has to offer, brings its own commitment to contemporary art in the city. Their collection starts at the front door with “Gutsy”, an enormous handmade mask crafted by *Japanese artist and actress Mieko Yuki*. “Airflow”, a work by painter and sculptor *Antony Donaldson* glorifies the central foyer and then highly personal paintings by *Yoshitaka Echizenya* are dotted in public areas and are features in each of the guestroom and suite bathrooms. The obvious “Lost in Translation” references are glorious, the design is pared back and timeless and the feeling of belonging to a grand future and an elegant past all at once is what this space offers.

And then there is *The Palace Hotel Tokyo, the Official Partner Hotel of Art Fair Tokyo 2014*, who with their belief in “harmony with nature” expresses this sentiment through the range of artworks inside this newly refurbished hotel. The hotel, with its 720 pieces of art, give guests a “garden tour” of the works and manages to extend respect to traditional local art with a large nod to international artists. Some of the highlights include “*Echoes-Crystallization*” by *Shinji Ohmaki* who says “*Representing the desire to create a new world, this piece is a reminder of the sights and sounds that are disappearing from our lives as society develops*” and “*Himaku / Sunflower – 2012*” by *Masahito Katayama* who says “*I hope to connect with both the order and harmony of nature and the power and mystery of life that exceeds the*

bounds of human understanding”. But besides for the extensive art collection the Evian spa, with panoramic views of the Palace Gardens, is utopian as a way to experience French pampering with Asian therapies,





Edible Art

If all the art has caused some great hunger in you the Conrad Hotel Tokyo downtown has five restaurants to choose from, each unique and more than finger licking

Collage: Michelin-starred chef Shinya Maeda believes in modern fine French, mixed with



all the best European styles. Think Conde de pin of tilefish with chorizo and saffron, canard Challandais, turnip with foie gras and a chocolate soufflé.

Cerise: Easy brasserie style, quinoa and grilled prawn salad with homemade ice cream hits all the right spots.

China Blue: Set in a quiet corner of the hotel, the award winning Chinese restaurant offers a private dining room overlooking Hamariky Garden and Tokyo Bay.

Kazahana: Traditional Japanese cuisine flashed with a

contemporary twist like sushi, Kaiseki and Teppan dishes all set in a minimal space high up in the skyscraper section of the hotel.



TwentyEight: Actually this is where to settle in for a Japanese whiskey after a long day of art buying, viewing, loving and critiquing.