

SPECIAL
EDITION

HONG KONG

ONE STORY

\$5 CAD
¥500

BY MERCI MEDIA CORPORATION

ISSN 2817-1276

April 28, 2023

ART | BUSINESS | DESIGN | HOSPITALITY | LEISURE | LIVING | TRAVEL | WELL-BEING | REAL ESTATE

www.merci-magazine.com

INWARD JOURNEY

My creative journey has been a continuous process of growth and refinement. I am excited to see where it will take me in the future.

OVERCOMES SPACE LIMITATIONS WITH INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS



When faced with limited space, designers are often challenged to think creatively and outside the box. This is where Max Lam Designs excels. With years of experience in the industry, the team has honed their ability to turn constraints into opportunities.

EMBODYING THE SUSTAINABLE IN RETAIL DESIGN



Max Lam Designs embraces the five senses to engage, elevate, and nourish. By incorporating visual displays, ambient music, tactile textures and scents, he creates for the retailer a multi-sensory experience that captures the attention and imagination of customers.

INTERIOR DESIGN



Collaborating with local artists and artisans is an essential and inspirational part of my approach to design. Working with artists can bring a fresh and inspiring perspective to our projects.

INTERVIEW



Max constantly redefines his journey through life, whether by learning new skills, experiencing new cultures, or pushing beyond his limits.

INWARD JOURNEY



Max believes that bespoke lighting has the power to transform a space and convey the essence of its creation. His 'Inward Journey' project is one such masterpiece.



nourish

ONE CITY HONG KONG

Opening essay by Lianne Hackett

Max Lam is a designer of many talents. Storyteller is perhaps not an obvious arrow in the designer bow armoury, but Max's narration of his studio's interior and product designs shows his talent for getting to the heart of a brief. With titles such as 'The Lightness of Being in a Japanese Restaurant', he sets the stage; it is as if he is breathing life into the space to come.

Dividing his projects into visual categories also gives a narrator's clues to what is to come with titles such as 'Warm Informality', 'An Inward Journey' and 'The Sweet Escape'. The delight he takes in client briefs is clear to see. That lighting is a central focus of his work is evident. A standout design is the 'Ripple' light. Not only beautiful and functional, 'Ripple' is also museum worthy, with the Hong Kong Heritage Museum having added 'Ripple' to its collection. The light was handcrafted in Murano, Venice in a collaboration with leading Italian lighting manufacturer, Viabizzuno. The design speaks volumes about the designer. In creating 'Ripple', Max brought into being his hope that we all can be the first one to start the ripple effect and ultimately create a friendlier environment:

"Taking inspiration from the water ripples, this lamp does not only capture the beauty and peacefulness of the natural phenomenon when a droplet is dropped into the water, but it is also shaped to bring out the spirit of the ripple effect, when one thing leads to another and a long term influence is created out of a very small event. The idea is materialized when a person gives a helping hand to someone in need, the act will motivate the beneficiary to help others and create a ripple effect to spread the good deeds."

2024 will see Max return to Murano to develop a new lighting design collection in the planning with Viabizzuno.

Playful design that delight is central to his work; the

relationship with dream cake makers Lifetastic a joy to experience. How fun for a child to be taken to a pop-up cake shop to find your own mini entrance, side-by-side to the adult doorway for your parent, and a wall of mini-paintings that you can swivel to your heart's content while munching cake? Genius idea! Max commissioned Hong Kong artist Eunis to create 392 small 'portraits' of Lifetastic cakes that can be swivelled into an all-blue wall to spell out the Lifetastic logo. The Lifetastic pop-up at Festival Walk resulted in Max Lam Studio being Asia category winner in the stellar 2022 UK Restaurant & Bar Awards.

If Max's designs for spaces where parents can treat their children are a joy, his designs for family homes bring fun to functionality. Max says that "Being a father myself, I understand the needs of new parents." His bedrooms for his clients' children have been described



nourish

“ I believe that in design, as in life, it's important to stay humble and trust your own instincts. It's easy to get caught up in trends and the opinions of others, but ultimately, the most successful designs are those that come from a place of authenticity and personal conviction. ”

as "jolly". Which child would not love to come home to such a room? Creating spaces that are full of colour is not only for the children. An early store design saw a rainbow stripe snake around the walls, bringing a playful 60s retro vibe to the space. Max also loves the other side of the colour spectrum, creating designs that are imbued with zen minimalism or Scandinavian clean-cut lines. He incorporates internal glazed walls and double doors as room dividers to bring natural light into spaces. This clever and eco solution is very much of the now, given our ever-greater need for the sustainable.

Japanese design is an inspiration for him, with one interior cited as homage to master architect Tadao Ando. This home led to a series of international awards, including in the USA (New York & Los Angeles), Italy and Germany and shortlisting in the 2019 Sky Design Awards (Tokyo). Max has been invited to participate in leading design platforms such as ICFF, New York, 100% Design in Shanghai and Light+Building Frankfurt. His work has sparked significant press coverage in Hong Kong and overseas with recent coverage in the iconic Polish publication Frame.

Max Lam's residential interior design portfolio is strong. His belief is that interiors "must have a timeless quality that complement and elevate the lives lived within". If inspired lighting design is a given for a Max Lam designs – he acknowledges 'the poet of light' Ingo Maurer as design hero - his choice of furnishings is equally

stellar with the Hansen wishbone chair, Eames recliner and Starck Ghost chair for Kartell having featured in his interiors. Content not only with designing in the three-dimensional, Max brings the five senses into client design. Touch and scent form part of his designs with one-off door handles and scent by way of candles tailored to the mood of the space. His vision? To make memorable the journey through the space.

A recent commission from Po Chen for the first Po House saw Max make a clean, contemporary solution to the brief of creating separate identities for the company's two divisions: essential oils / beauty products and sustainable fashion. The result is an elegant simplicity; the circular economy truly given the designer touch. His present projects are exciting to contemplate, with the studio returning to a luxury residential development in Macao to create a second show apartment; the first completed three years ago a big success despite being very 'un-showflat-y'; the artistic, minimal look Max created being out of the norm for such high-end developments.

The show apartment, entitled 'Inward Journey', won Show Flat of the Year at the prestigious Frame Awards 2020 in Amsterdam. The judging panel commended the design as "sensorial and well thought through". Max Lam describes the zen-inspired design as a "holistic journey that invites those inhabiting the space to slow down and journey into themselves", saying that the resulting

apartment is close to being "his dream home". 'Inward Journey' illustrates perfectly Max Lam's dedication to creating designs that inspire the inward experience of the interior space. The developer clearly shares the vision that more of the same is not the way forward.

Central to the tranquil design palette was the commissioning of eight Hong Kong artists whose work merges traditional craftsmanship with a contemporary way of thinking. Ceramics by Ryan & Wy elevate the simple act of holding a cup through the sense of touch – the textural feel an additional pleasure. Perfume artist Xavier created unique sandalwood and green tea scents for the apartment in candles and by diffusion. Japanese knot work by Zoe Siu is sited as art work and textural additions to the contemporary door handles. Max's attention to detail is exemplified by designing fretwork panels for the air conditioning ducts that seamlessly complete the fine wood work throughout the apartment; nothing intrudes on the tranquillity of the space.

Max Lam is at an exciting juncture for his studio, including with client explorations in Japan on the horizon. We can be certain that Max will make of the journey a beautiful story.

STORYTELLING

THE SWEET ESCAPE

LIFETASTIC at Festival Walk is not just a delight to the taste buds, but an enduring feast for all the senses. Conceptualized by Hong Kong-based design practice, Max Lam Designs, the 600 sq ft patisserie exudes a subtle sense of luxury through a multitude of details. Ethereal arches, sculptural light fixtures, warm brass, and a royal blue color scheme, all reinforce the visual identity of the brand.

Max Lam, the creative director and founder of Max Lam Designs, recounted the creative journey behind the project, saying, "We were tasked to create a blue box on the podium of Festival Walk, a high-end shopping arcade in Kowloon Tong with high mall traffic. The brief was to curate an enclosed yet visible grab-and-go patisserie. During this specific project, we were particularly challenged by space limitations and low ceilings."

To address the space limitations, two custom-designed arched entrances were created for adults and children, inspired

by Milano double doors. These provide a sense of airiness and spaciousness. Drawing attention towards the Art Wall at the back is a sizeable sculptural pendant that hangs across the display counters, visually heightening the low ceilings. Hong Kong artist Eunis's creation, comprising 392 small oil paintings, depicting the brand's signature layered cakes, adorns the Art Wall, serving as an innovative installation that gradually reveals "LIFETASTIC."

Max Lam Designs have completed the interior design for seven branches of LIFETASTIC, all with different design concepts but aligned brand identity. With cakes as visual art the focus of the company's design for the Festival Walk pop-up, its award-winning design for LIFETASTIC's Tsim Tsa Tsui branch was inspired by the patisserie's signature layer cakes.



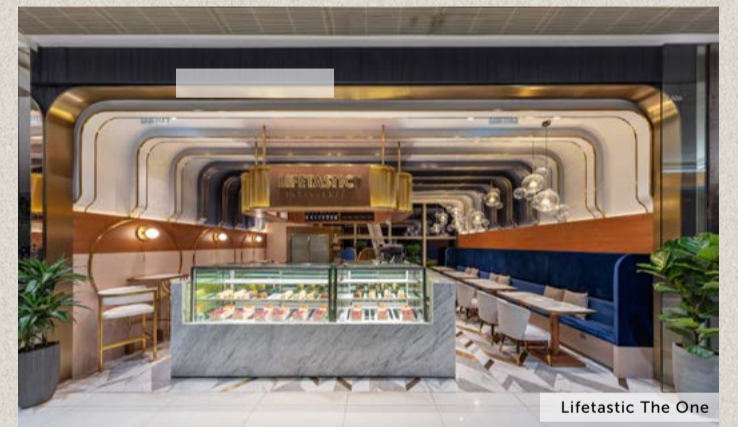
Lifetastic Festival Walk



Max commissioned Hong Kong artist Eunis to create 392 small oil painting of Lifetastic cakes



Lifetastic IFC



Lifetastic The One



EMBODYING THE SUSTAINABLE IN RETAIL DESIGN

"Through Sight, Sound, Touch, Taste, and Smell". To embrace the Five Senses for an Immersive Shopping Experience.

Max Lam Designs embraces the five senses to engage, elevate, and nourish the interior design of "nourish" for customers. By incorporating natural materials that engage sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell, Max Lam has created an immersive and memorable shopping experience that not only delights the senses but also creates a sense of natural harmony. From the organic textures of wood and stone, to the ambient music that evokes natural sounds, to the tactile textures of the products, to the in-store samples that use natural ingredients, and even the signature scent of the store that evokes a sense of natural freshness, each element works in harmony to create a multi-sensory experience that engages and delights customers on a deeper level. Max Lam's design shows how thoughtful and intentional use of natural materials can not only elevate the shopping experience but also create a sense of natural feelings and serenity.

BY MERCI MAGAZINE

ONE STORY, ONE INTERVIEW

INWARD JOURNEY

How did you transition from a business degree to founding your own boutique design studio?

After completing my Bachelor of Business degree, I realized that my true passion was in design, and I decided to pursue it as a career. I founded my own boutique design studio in 2013 as a way to express my creativity and bring my ideas to life. It has been an exciting and fulfilling journey so far, and I am constantly inspired by the possibilities of design.

Can you describe how your creative journey has evolved over time, from when you first started out as a designer to where you are now?

As a designer and the creative director, my creative journey has been a continuous process of growth and refinement. When I first started out, I was very hands-on with every project, focusing solely on the design aspect. But as I gained more experience and developed my business skills, I started to realize the value of design management and collaboration.

Now, I believe that design is not just about aesthetics - it's about creating value and solving problems for clients. My design senses have evolved to encompass a broader perspective, taking into account the business and practical considerations of each project. I strive to work closely with my team and clients to create designs that are not only visually impactful but also functional and sustainable.

Collaborating with local artists and artisans has also been an important part of my design approach, as it brings a fresh and inspirational perspective to the projects. By working with them, we can create designs that are truly unique and meaningful.

Ultimately, I am committed to using my design skills and experience to create value and contribute to the community. My creative journey has been a fulfilling and rewarding one so far, and I am excited to see where it will take me in the future.

In one of your recent projects, we noticed that you worked closely with local artists and artisans to create unique and collaborative art pieces. Can you tell us more about your approach to incorporating local talent into your designs, and how you believe this benefits both your clients and the community at large?

Collaborating with local artists and artisans is an essential and inspirational part of our approach to design. I firmly believe that art and design are deeply intertwined, and working with artists can bring a fresh and inspiring perspective to our projects. Beyond that, it's also an opportunity to support and showcase local talent and contribute to the community. For me, the value of art in

design lies in its ability to add an emotional and personal dimension to the spaces we create. Art pieces can serve as a statement, and they can also create a unique and memorable atmosphere. By working with artists and incorporating their works into our designs, we can offer our clients something truly special and meaningful.

For me, the value of art in design lies in its ability to add an emotional and personal dimension to the spaces we create. Art pieces can serve as a focal point or a statement, and they can also create a unique and memorable atmosphere. By working with artists and incorporating their works into our designs, we can offer our clients something truly special and meaningful.

But it's not just about the end result - the process of collaborating with artists is also an inspirational and rewarding experience. It's a chance to exchange ideas and learn from one another, and to push the boundaries of what's possible in design. I'm always excited to work with our team and local artists to create innovative and inspiring designs that leave a lasting impression.

How would you describe your current personal style? How has it shaped your current design sensibilities?

As a designer, my personal style is influenced by a variety of factors, including my experiences, my design philosophy, and my love for vintage elements. I'm particularly drawn to the use of natural materials like wood and the clean lines and shapes of geometric forms. I believe that geometry is an essential aspect of design, as it provides structure and balance to a space.

However, I also enjoy incorporating vintage elements into my designs, whether it's through the use of vintage furniture or architectural details. I find that vintage pieces add a layer of character and history to a space that can't be replicated by anything new. The challenge is finding the right balance between the vintage and the modern, and creating a harmonious composition that tells a story and evokes emotion.

Overall, my design sense is rooted in creating spaces that are not only functional and aesthetically pleasing, but also meaningful and memorable.

I hear that you are a drinks connoisseur. What kind of drinks do you like?

While I used to enjoy a good whisky or gin and tonic, my tastes have evolved, and I now find myself drawn to the subtle and mild flavours of red wine. Perhaps it's a reflection of where I am in life - looking for something more mellow and refined. The sharp, bitter taste of whisky or gin and tonic no longer hold the appeal it once did, and



I find myself savouring the smooth and comforting notes of red wine instead. It's a reminder that our tastes and preferences are always evolving, just like our lives.

How do you stay active and healthy while balancing a demanding career in design?

I believe that exercise and being in nature are essential for maintaining a healthy balance in life. As someone who works in a demanding industry like design, it can be easy to get caught up in the daily grind and neglect your physical and mental health. That's why I make it a priority to exercise regularly and spend time in nature, whether that's through camping, hiking, or other outdoor activities.

Not only does exercise help me stay physically healthy, but it also boosts my mood and creativity. It's a great way to clear my mind and come up with new ideas for my designs. And when I go camping, I find that being surrounded by nature helps me feel grounded and recharged.

Of course, balancing a demanding career with personal pursuits can be a challenge, but I believe it's important to make time for the things that matter. For me, that means scheduling workouts and camping trips just like I would any other work commitment. It's all about finding a balance that works for you and staying committed to your own well-being.

BESPOKE LIGHTING DESIGNER CREATES MULTI-SENSORY EXPERIENCE

In the bustling city, a curious designer named Max Lam was inspired by the natural beauty of water ripples. Wondering how he could translate this phenomenon into a lighting fixture, he approached a leading Italian lighting company, VIABIZZUNO, to collaborate on his project.

Together, Max Lam and VIABIZZUNO brought Ripple Lighting to life. The stunning fixture was expertly crafted by an experienced glass artisan from Venice and featured a unique pattern that created a soft and diffused light, reminiscent of the tranquility of water ripples.

Through their collaboration, Max Lam and VIABIZZUNO were able to combine their expertise and create a lighting fixture that not only captured the beauty of nature but also promoted the ripple effect of small acts of kindness. Ripple Lighting quickly gained recognition, winning numerous awards including the Hong Kong Best Global Design Award, as well as two Silver Awards at the Global Design Award and K-Design Award in Korea. The Hong Kong Heritage Museum has added 'Ripple' to its collection.

Thanks to Max Lam's curiosity and vision, combined with VIABIZZUNO's expertise, Hong Kong designers have made a prominent mark in the world of lighting design, and Ripple Lighting remains a shining example of the beauty and potential of the city's design industry.

Ding Ding at COBO HOUSE & ARTISAN ROOM

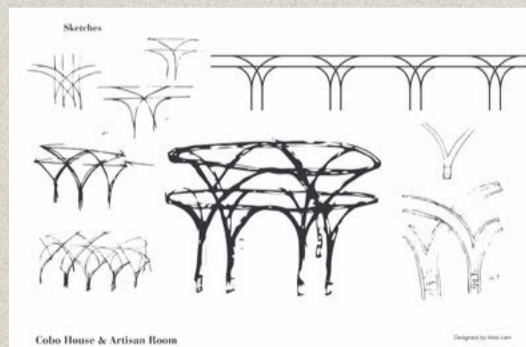


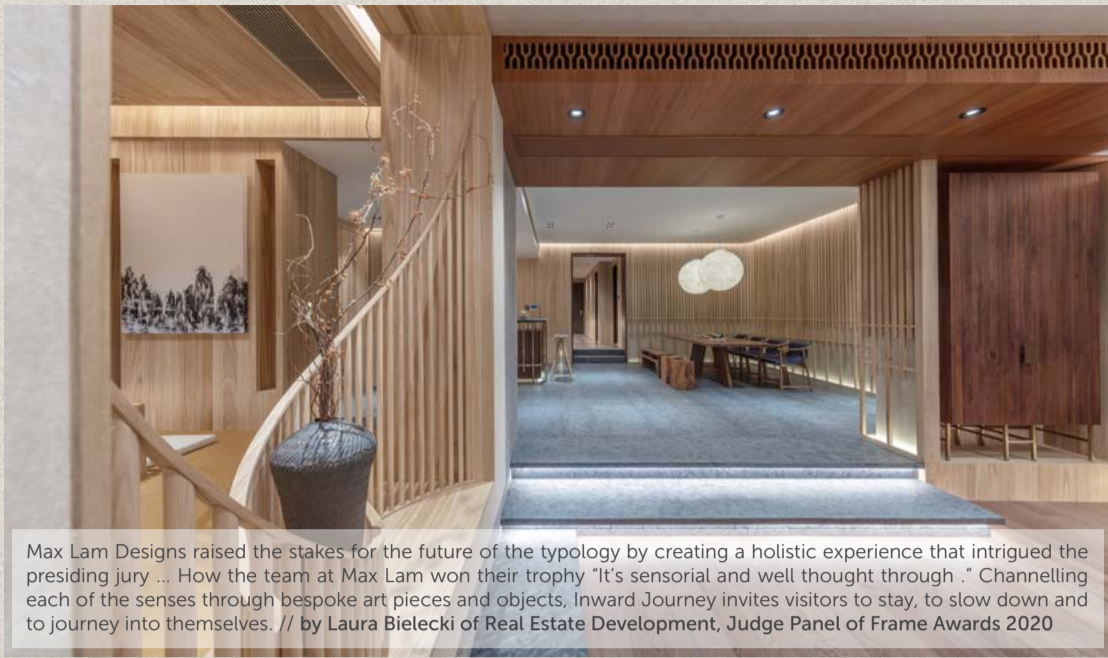
"Lighting is a dynamic and essential element in any space. As a designer, I believe that bespoke lighting products can do more than just illuminate a room. They have the power to transform a space and convey the essence of its creation.

Through the careful selection of different shapes and sizes, colors, temperatures, reflections, and refractions, bespoke lighting can tell a unique and personal story. Each piece can be a work of art in its own right, adding depth and meaning to the space it illuminates.

As a lighting designer, I strive to create bespoke lighting products that not only serve their functional purpose but also add character and depth to the spaces they inhabit. I believe that through thoughtful and intentional design, we can transform the way we experience and interact with our environment, ultimately creating a more beautiful and meaningful world.

- Max Lam





Max Lam Designs raised the stakes for the future of the typology by creating a holistic experience that intrigued the presiding jury ... How the team at Max Lam won their trophy "It's sensorial and well thought through." Channelling each of the senses through bespoke art pieces and objects, Inward Journey invites visitors to stay, to slow down and to journey into themselves. // by Laura Bielecki of Real Estate Development, Judge Panel of Frame Awards 2020

A show flat in Macau entitled 'Inward Journey' won Show Flat of the Year at the prestigious Frame Awards 2020 in Amsterdam. The judging panel commended the design as "sensorial and well thought through". Max Lam describes the zen-inspired design as a "holistic journey that invites those inhabiting the space to slow down and journey into themselves", saying that the resulting apartment is close to being "his dream home".

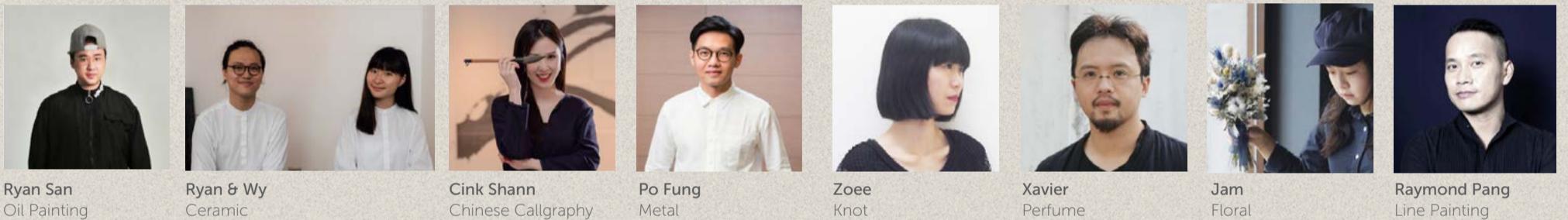
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'Inward Journey' illustrates perfectly Max Lam's dedication to creating designs that inspire the inward experience of the interior space.

* FRAME Awards of Showflat of the Year for project 'Inward Journey'.



The nine artists



"Discover the Secret to Achieving Residential Harmony"

How Luxury Living Can Transform Your Life and Well-being"



Max believes that every element in a residential space should be carefully considered and crafted to create a cohesive and harmonious environment. From the furniture and lighting fixtures to the wall finishes and decorative accents, each detail plays a crucial role in shaping the overall atmosphere and experience of the space, saying:

"For me, this attention to detail is not just a matter of aesthetics - it's also a reflection of my commitment to quality and craftsmanship. I believe that every element should be designed and executed with the utmost care and precision, using high-quality materials and techniques. In my residential design projects, I work closely with clients to understand their needs, preferences, and lifestyles, and to create a space that truly reflects their personality and vision. Whether it's a modern and minimalist space or a more traditional and eclectic one, my goal is to create a home that is not only beautiful and functional, but also a reflection of the client's unique style and personality. And I believe that this level of attention to detail and personalization is what sets my designs apart and creates a truly exceptional residential experience."

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Photos courtesy of Max Lam Designs (Hong Kong)

#ISSUE 09
#ISSN 2817-1276

Managing Director: Peggy Lui
Editor and copywriter: Lianne Hackett
Art Direction: Peggy Lui
Design by: Merci Design Workshop
Printed in Japan/ Canada

One Story by Merci Media Corporation is a Trademark publication.
Trademark file number 2222129.
It all begins with one story - One Brand, One Solution, One Story.