

May/June 2018

The Safe, Seductive
Club Scene

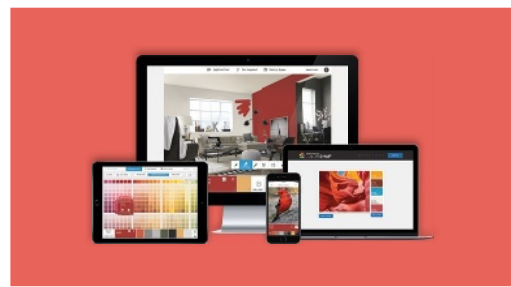
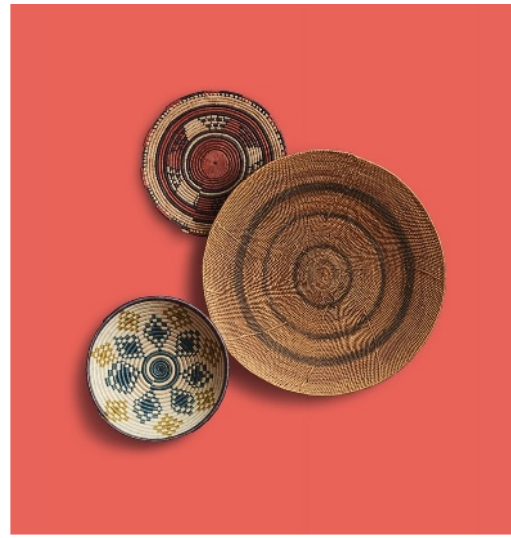
A Brand of
One's Own

The Evolution of
Outdoor Living

A photograph of a modern interior space, likely a club or lounge, featuring curved, illuminated architectural elements in shades of blue and red. The lighting is dramatic, with the blue elements glowing and the red elements providing a contrasting color. The overall atmosphere is sophisticated and contemporary.

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of Canada

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UNDERSTANDING BRANDING

Authenticity is key to the brand-building process. Branding is a “promise” to clients that their expectations will be delivered.

BY BARBARA THAU



Image: Peter Malinowski

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NIGHT & DAY

The design of a nightclub or dayclub must be as carefully choreographed as its music and shows. And, safety, as much as escapism, is a critical design element.

BY DIANA MOSHER



Image: Distillery

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MASTERING THE GAME

Although the success of a casino is driven by site-specific realities, its design should tell a story—whether, subtle, sophisticated, or playful—and seamlessly appeal to a wide variety of guests.

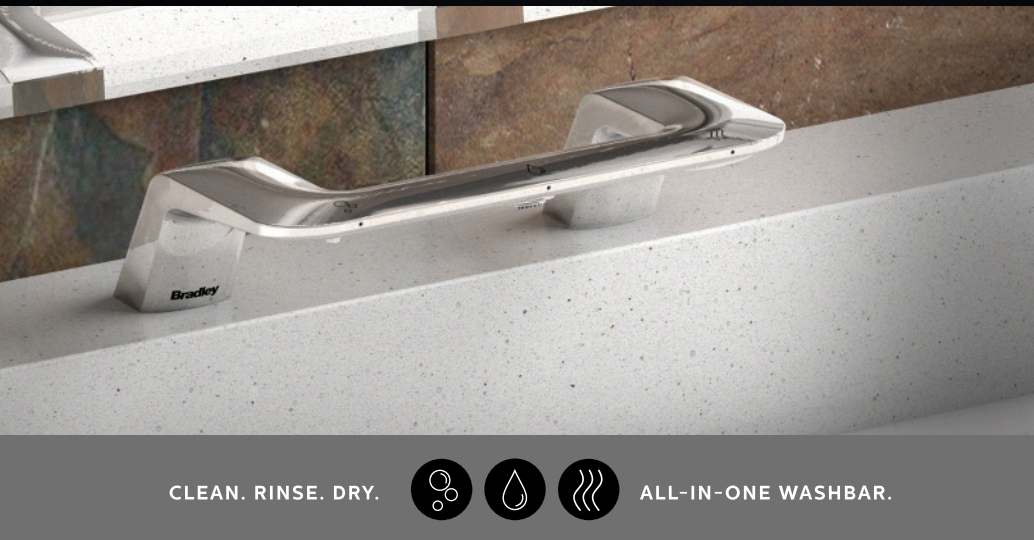
BY BRIAN J. BARTH



Image: Evan Dion



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COVER IMAGE:
Eric Scott Photography

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ICONIC PROFILE: ROGER THOMAS

Best known for his work designing unique, visually exciting casinos, this designer also is the creator of The Roger Thomas Collection, a line with partnerships in multiple major design categories.

BY AMBROSE CLANCY



Image: Sunbrella

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THE GREAT OUTDOOR ROOM

Gathering places have extended beyond a home's interior and do wonders for a home's value. Today, outdoor living spaces can be luxurious, functional, and achievable for varied budgets.

BY MICHELE KEITH

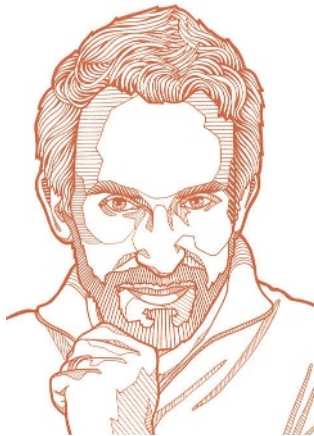


Image: Danilo Agutoli

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ON THE COVER
Vivid colors and dramatic lighting are just part of the story at Cascades Casino Kamloops designed by mackaywong.



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Clarification: In the March/April 2018 issue of *i+D*, the ICONic Profile (p. 44) stated Collin Burry has designed retail locations for Apple. Burry has worked on office space for Apple, but not the retail stores.

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ENGAGE, EXCITE, INSPIRE

Design professionals are venerated for their ability to create an experience through a series of carefully considered design decisions that culminate in one cohesive, immersive, and appealing result. Be it a residential or commercial project, it is the designer's research, breadth of knowledge, and attention to detail that bring a space to life, infuse it with the desired pulse, and make it memorable.

While such elements are crucial to all projects great and small, at entertainment venues like casinos and clubs, designing the proper pulse happens on a massive scale. As we approach the season for venturing out of our hometowns, having a little more fun, and stepping out into the great outdoors, *i+D* takes a deeper look at some of those entertaining destinations, including the one that could be in your own backyard. In such spaces, designers play a fundamental role in an individual's experience, touching everything from the color palette and selection of performance materials to lighting, seating, overall safety, and more.

In this issue, we examine the psychology behind casino design and the changing face of that segment ("Mastering the Game," p. 32), and we dive into the nightclub and dayclub scene ("Night & Day," p. 42), where safety blends seamlessly with extraordinary experiences. And, as it's the season for entertaining *al fresco*, our residential piece ("The Great Outdoor Room," p. 56) focuses on the ever-evolving outdoor space, an area where inexpensive folding chairs and picnic tables have been replaced by gourmet kitchens, advanced materials, and the same level of style and planning that is focused on a home's interiors.

As we move through such entertaining spaces, the designers' role is clear: Inspire awe, break molds, draft memories, and get everyone home safely. It's an enormous undertaking, to be sure, but just an average day in the life of a professional designer. ●

Randy W. Fiser
ASID CEO



Tony Brenders
IDC CEO



Randy Fiser,
CEO, ASID, and
Tony Brenders,
CEO, IDC.
(Image: Lindsay
Cephas)



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A gorgeous location with breathtaking landscapes, Quebec City has it all: cobblestone streets lined with centuries-old buildings, museums and churches from another age, a magnificent river, and the historic Château Frontenac keeping watch from on high.
(Image: iStock.com/ Pgiarn)



LIVING HISTORY

SITUATED ON THE BANK OF THE SAINT LAWRENCE RIVER, QUEBEC CITY'S HISTORY DATES BACK TO 1608. THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE IS THE ONLY FORTIFIED CITY NORTH OF MEXICO AND HOME TO THE LARGEST WINTER CARNIVAL IN THE WORLD. Quebec City also is home to Hôtel de Glace, North America's only hotel made entirely of ice and snow.

Rich with historic architecture, Quebec City consistently ranks among top destinations for travel and culture, including 2016 honors for culture destination of the year at the Leading Culture Destinations Awards in London and a *Travel + Leisure* readers' choice for best city in Canada the same year.

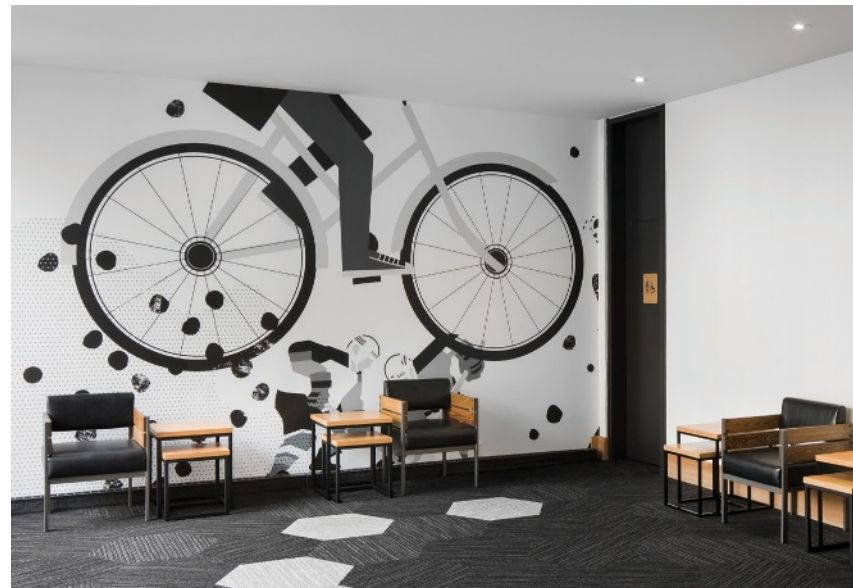
Landmark Stay

Widely regarded as the most photographed hotel in the world, Château Frontenac (Fairmont Le Château Frontenac) has overlooked the Saint Lawrence River and 2,200-foot-long Dufferin Terrace for more than a century. Celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2018, the historic hotel will host a series of events and exhibitions throughout the year to celebrate its illustrious past. The Château underwent a multimillion-dollar renovation a few years ago, with modern updates to rooms, the addition of more eateries, and a distinct icy blue theme throughout the lobby and other common areas chosen to reflect the ice floes that form in the Saint Lawrence River. With an eye toward a sustainable future, the hotel also has established Château Boreal, a green initiative that allows the hotel to grow its own boreal forest with the help of guests. The hotel plants a tree in the Montmorency Forest in honor of each guest who forgoes the daily cleaning of his or her room.



(FAR LEFT)
The Pierre Lassonde Pavilion (Pavillon Pierre Lassonde) forms new links between Quebec City, parks, and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.
(Image: Bruce Damonte)

(NEAR LEFT)
A pop-out staircase adds to the Pavilion's dramatic interaction with the surrounding natural environment.
(Image: Stéphane Brügger)



(ABOVE and RIGHT)
Local, modern, and always stylish, Hotel PUR is located in the heart of the city's Saint-Roch district.
(Images: Stéphane Groleau)

Cultural Adaptation

The work of the New York office of OMA (architects/partners Shohei Shigematsu and Jason Long) and Montreal-based architecture firm Provencher_Roy (architects/partners Matthieu Geoffrion and Claude Provencher), the modern Pavillon Pierre Lassonde (Pierre Lassonde Pavilion) has made a striking addition to Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. The all-glass building is the museum's fourth structure and reached completion in 2016. The idea was to form a link between the city and nearby Parc des Champs-de-Bataille (Battlefields Park) and to create a unifying effect for the museum itself. To reach the desired result, the architects stacked the new galleries in three volumes of decreasing size. The effect is that of a glistening cascade that ascends from the park to the city and offers the sensation that the park is spilling into the museum courtesy of skylights and the overall extensive use of glass. An angular, outdoor pop-out staircase offers form and function, adding to the contemporary vibe of the structure, while also encouraging movement among the galleries and a connection to the natural outdoor environment.

Free Spirit

Located in Quebec City's Saint-Roch district, Hotel PUR was designed by LEMAYMICHAUD to offer a modern, youthful venue with a unique and defining design. The firm based its concept on a dynamic graphic design and filled entire walls of the lobby, guest rooms, and additional areas with oversized illustrative work, tying the feel of the hotel together from guests' first impressions to when they lay their heads to rest. In the lobby, a graphic wall reflects the vibrancy of nearby Saint-Joseph Street, while the walls in the guest rooms offer varied sketches of the city itself. Sleek, modern lines, coupled with light-wood finishes throughout, complete the independent spirit of the location, give it a cultural identity all its own, and offer a modern contrast to the historic city.

LEMAYMICHAUD also is at work on the next Strøm spa nordique, scheduled to open in Quebec City in the coming months. ●

ALL THAT MATTER

AT THE TORONTO DESIGN OFFSITE FESTIVAL 2018, a group of 12 local and international artists and designers were brought together to explore acts of material transformation and change. Curated by Toronto Design Offsite Festival, “Matter” was the festival’s fourth annual thematic exhibition.

“Matter” asked a critical question of its contributors and visitors alike: What happens when we take a long-term view of material life? The items created and exhibited considered everything, from the history and future of recycling processes on both a local and global scale to material memory and the everyday, sometimes poetic aspects of material use and applications. From a film on the waste we work to disappear to the creation of an entirely new material, “Matter” touched on the multitude of ways we use and reuse materials on a daily basis.

Funding for the exhibition was provided by the Ontario Arts Council, and gallery space was provided by Urbanspace Property Group. ●



1. SIMON JOHNS, “MISSISQUOI 04,” 2017. GOLD PLATED STEEL, ASH WOOD, STONE. The Missisquoi collection is a series of numbered, one-of-a-kind pieces born from reflections on building contemporary furniture in a natural, rural environment. The goal is for the furniture to illustrate a conversation between the fabricated and the elemental, a dichotomy of control versus imperfection, and our emotional response to such contrasting material qualities. The table shown here was designed and built specifically around the geometry of a found stone from the banks of the Missisquoi River, rendering it truly one-of-a-kind.

2. NICHOLAS HAMILTON HOLMES, “USEFUL/USELESS META,” 2017. SPALTED MAPLE WOOD. An exploration of material and form, Useful/Useless represents the raw joy of dreaming, designing, and building things. It pushes the boundaries of contemporary furniture by creating forms that may be useful, but also may be useless; objects created for no purpose other than beauty that, in the end, will likely be transformed into useful goods. META is a culmination of a five-piece design series under the Useful/Useless banner.

3. DEAR HUMAN, “PAPER-ROCK,” 2017. RECYCLED PAPER HARDENING AGENTS. A new material emerged during recent explorations at the Dear Human studio. Searching for ways to push the longevity of paper pulp material, a small amount of a cement-like substance was added to paper fiber, resulting in Paper-Rock, a significantly stronger material that also is lightweight and more sustainable than traditional concrete. The paper pulp component is derived of post-consumer waste collected from local businesses that is then dyed with natural pigments. The name Paper-Rock reflects the final material that tends to resemble granite or marble, with the paper pulp taking on crystalline qualities.

4. CREATORS OF OBJECTS, “FLATIRON TABLES,” 2018. RECLAIMED BRICK, TUFFSTONE, TEMPERED GLASS, CHARCOAL, GFR CONCRETE, BINDER SEALANT. Inspired by the footprint of the classic flatiron buildings in Toronto and New York, Flatiron is the first of a series of tables. The designers took the proportions of the triangle footprint and extruded it upwards to create a master mold in which they then layered raw materials like colored crushed brick, silicates, and found glass. The results are modern and substantial, yet deceptively lightweight.



LINEA vanity in Gloss White
AQUAPLANE sink
ELEGANZA faucet
NAVI mirror

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Introspection and brainstorming are in order when determining one's authentic brand. (Image: Nik Macmillan)



At Distilty, workshops help the company and its clients home in on the brand promise quickly and succinctly. (Image: Distilty)

UNDERSTANDING BRANDING

BY BARBARA THAU

LOOKING TO SHED HIS STUDIO'S B-MOVIE IMAGE, FICTIONAL CAPITOL PICTURES BOSS JACK LIPNICK TELLS THE CEREBRAL PLAYWRIGHT SITTING BEFORE HIM THAT THE WRESTLING SCRIPT IN DEVELOPMENT SHOULD MARK THE WRITER'S UNMISTAKABLE IMPRIMATUR. "We want that Barton Fink feeling," he tells John Turturro's character in the Coen Brothers' film, "Barton Fink."

Whether or not the playwright knows it, his "Barton Finkness" evinces a distinct brand equity that the studio head needs, and wants to buy into: The Fink brand is firmly essentialized, as is its potential value to a client, in this case, the head of a motion picture studio.

The scene gets at the heart of branding, which, at its core, begs the questions: Who are you? And, how does who you are distinctly serve your clients' needs?

Those questions are fundamental to building a design business, says Axle Davids, CEO of Toronto-based brand strategy firm Distilty, and Stephen Nobel, who runs design consultancy NOBELINKS and authors the online "Business Strategy Solutions" courses for the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID).

In successful branding strategies,
executives should not to buy
into ideas, but rather build in to them
via roundtable brainstorming sessions
to get at the essence of what their
brand is about.

Crash Course: Building Your Brand in One Day

Distility works to harness the power of groups to solve their problems and unscramble the branding puzzle, according to Davids.

At a young age and barely out of college, Davids was tapped for a digital skill set that company veterans lacked and entrusted with building websites as a creative director for companies like Disney, Hearst, and Lands' End amid the early days of the internet revolution. "A client would say, 'We need this product by Christmas—you've got five months to make it'; I had to develop techniques to get my team and the client's team aligned in a very short time," he recalls.

In a nod to necessity being the mother of invention, Davids intuited his father's work as a psychiatrist and his mother's work as an artist, "bringing psychology and art to bear on [the process]," he explains. The process developed into one-day workshops that are the key element of Distility, which Davids established in 2001.

Rather than a branding firm telling a client who they are, Distility instead extracts that definition from each client through guided workshops, which runs counter to how the process typically works, notes Davids. In the usual scenario, "branding agencies and consultants will say, 'We want to meet with you, interview you, and we'll go away and think about who you are.'" Months later, a 30- to 40-page document prescribes "here's who you should be, here's your brand promise and your personality, these are your top features and benefits." For the most part, the process "doesn't stick," as companies "need to have an awareness of what these [concepts] mean in depth. You wouldn't work with a therapist that way," Davids says.

In contrast, the firm subscribes to the belief that the answer is within you.

Distility's philosophy is to get executives not to "buy into" ideas, but to "build in to them via roundtable brainstorming sessions to get at the essence of what their brand is about." Interviews with a client's team are the raw material of its workshops. Distility draws from those key insights with the client team to nail down and flesh out a brand's DNA.

During the workshops, the Distility and client teams home in on a sustainable brand promise, personality, and key attributes, fine-tuning the focus with questions like "which brand promise are you more passionate about delivering?" During that process, Davids might say to a client group, "Here's 50 brand promises you came up with. Let's look at them—pick your top five points of difference." The result is that "we get them in one day to a point of consensus."



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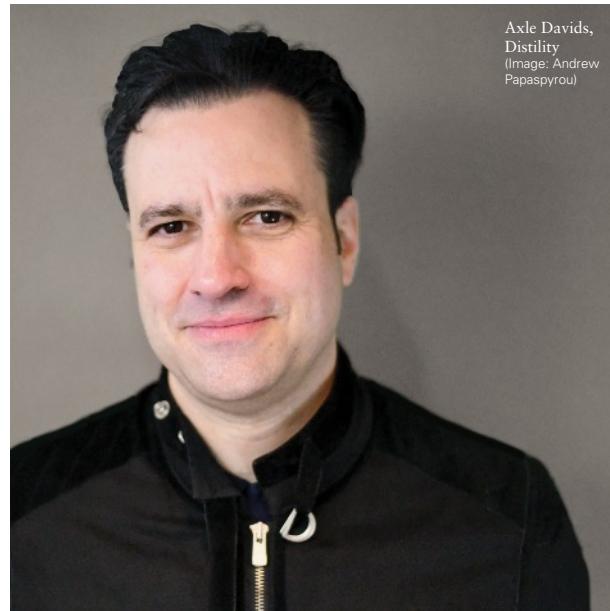
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Business of Design Branding



Axle Davids,
Distility
(Image: Andrew
Papaspyrou)

That's how the firm worked with Canada's Empire Communities, a developer of high-rise and low-rise residential condos.

As a patchwork of companies had a hand in branding the firm, Empire Communities' "brand-experience design was fractured," says Davids. A one-day workshop gave rise to a brand promise of "luxury you can afford, which allowed for a waterfall, or chain reaction, in everything they did." The workshop also crystallized Empire's brand as pioneers in eco-friendly, sustainable living, which was positioned as an element of its "calling" to "care for the world around us," according to its branding directive.

Getting to the Heart of the (Brand) Matter

By definition, brand essence is embodied unwittingly, Nobel explains. "In my view, the brand almost precedes the business, knowingly or not," be it an individual or a company. "Design professionals or even musicians, artists, or athletes are brands before they are business[es] that create. A brand is what others and clients perceive it to be."

Building a *successful* brand, however, should be a strategic endeavor, he advises.

Interior designers need only tap their everyday skills when building their own brand. For one, "design thinking' helps to design a brand through somewhat the same problem-solving or creative process designers employ to design interiors," says Nobel. So, "designers are rather qualified to create a brand using some of their design skills."

But, not before doing some soul-searching first. "Successful brands are first and foremost authentic," Nobel cautions. "Some serious introspection is in order."

The critical questions to get at one's authentic brand proposition are:

- What do I/we stand for?
- How do my/our personal values align with respect to other people?
- How do I/we stay true to those values when tested?
- What matters to my/our clients?



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Business of Design Branding

Stephen Nobel,
NOBELINKS
(Image:
Ashel Parsons
Photography)



Akin to Distillery's philosophy, Nobel says "deep exploration of our clients" is critical to the brand-building process. "How do we empathize with what matters to them? I admire brands that position the designer's empathy for their clients' needs and the processes they go through to satisfy those needs."

Too frequently, adds Nobel, interior designers position "great portfolios and prideful résumés" as their brand, rather than as simply benchmarks of their work. They also confuse a style or look with their brand promise.

A truly effective brand, he explains, will "deliver on the brand promise with surprise and delight every time a client interacts with it. Interior design is experiential for the client. And, I might add, more profitable when the designer aims high."

After defining an interior designer's brand, spreading the message "is a matter of precision," Nobel explains. As successful brands focus on specific customers, "it's important to determine where current and prospective clients are and through what channels they will be exposed to the brand message. Online, in print, in person are all channels through which pointed messages can be delivered." ●

BARBARA THAU
is a business journalist specializing in the retail industry and consumer news and trends. She currently is a contributing writer for Forbes.com for which she writes the weekly column, "Minding The Stores." She has been cited as a retail expert for media outlets, including USA Today, National Public Radio, and CNN Money.

CIDQ SHOWS POSITIVE MOVEMENT

Since 1974, the Council for Interior Design Qualification (CIDQ) has been on a mission to ensure interior designers are competent to meet industry standards not only for aesthetics, but for public health, safety, and welfare as well. The importance of industry standards remains a crucial point for the profession today, as evidenced by the positive momentum CIDQ is experiencing. Registration for the 2017 National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) Exam increased 17 percent over 2016, which had been the previous high. And, end-of-year totals for 2017 saw 31,605 NCIDQ Certified Interior Designers, a record 11,524 Active Status Certificate Holders who continue to support CIDQ on an annual basis, and a 32 percent increase in new NCIDQ Certificate Holders.

According to the CIDQ 2017 Annual Report, the Fall 2017 NCIDQ Exam also marked the first time in CIDQ's history the examination was administered outside the United States and Canada, with 21 exams administered during a trial window at testing facilities in the Middle East region. The trial will aid CIDQ in assessing the potential for future testing administrations abroad.

The most recent published CIDQ tallies show the positive movement continuing, with 1,300 approved applications for the Spring 2018 Exam, up from 852 for the same period of 2017. ●

CIDQ 2017-2016 Comparison

2017
2016

Increase

17%

Exam Registrations

6,683
5,719

Increase

7%

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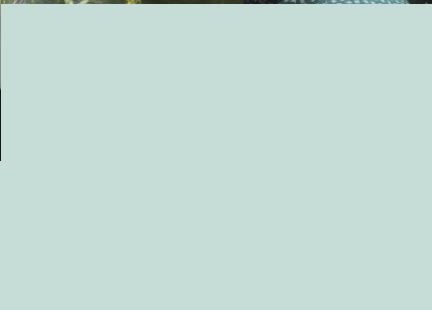
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Contributors

Casinos, nightclubs, outdoor spaces: Almost everyone has experience with at least one of these venues—and our contributing authors in this issue of *i+D* are no exception. In addition to sharing some interesting encounters, they offer their perspectives on what they learned when researching and writing their May/June articles.

1. Diana Mosher, *Night & Day*

“For me, great outdoor entertaining combines a meal cooked and eaten outdoors,” notes Diana. “I love to stay outside as long as possible, and dining by candlelight outdoors is a beautiful treat.” Indoors—particularly in a nightclub—is a different, yet fun experience. “Vanity at the Hard Rock Hotel Las Vegas is an award-winning nightclub that made an impression on me,” she says. “Designed by Mister Important Design, a firm known for its exuberant interiors, Vanity combines chic sophistication with Vegas glam, including an abundance of bronze and gold surfaces and a decadent chandelier featuring more than 20,000 crystals lit from within.” When interviewing her subjects about nightclubs and dayclubs (p. 42), Diana learned that distortion is the true problem with hearing difficulties in loud spaces—rather than music and background noise, as most people believe. “When the acoustics are designed properly, you should be able to carry on a conversation,” she offers.

2. Brian J. Barth, *Mastering the Game*

Although he brought casino design to life in his “Mastering the Game” article (p. 32), Brian admits he’s not much of a casino-goer. “But, I do appreciate the incredible attention to detail in some of these spaces. The Bellagio is awe-inspiring—a textbook example of the power of design to shape our experience.” What especially intrigued him when researching the topic was the science behind casino design. “One of my sources told me that hospitals are the only other interior environment he’s worked on that is so exacting,” he explains. Brian enjoys his Canadian seasons, but particularly loves growing food in his backyard, and then

cooking and eating it outdoors. “The growing season is short here in Toronto,” he says, “but we pack it full with planting, harvesting, grilling, and relaxing in our backyard paradise.”

3. Ambrose Clancy, *ICONic Profile: Roger Thomas*

According to Ambrose, a nightclub that left him with a lasting design impression is “the old Lennox Lounge in Harlem that recently fell prey to the wrecking ball. A great jazz club that had been around since the 1930s and was done in a wonderfully over-the-top art deco style. It was a warm, inviting place and everything your eye fell on was a source of delight. Killer music as well, and it jumped all night.” He enjoyed interviewing Roger Thomas for this issue’s “ICONic Profile” (p. 54), and was particularly “intrigued that a special building was constructed on a Las Vegas golf course to enclose a scale model of a new casino he was designing. It took two years and he worked on everything from carpets to chairs.” Ambrose evokes a lovely visual of one of his favorite outdoor spaces, the beaches along the East End of Long Island: “Lazy afternoons, moving toward long twilights, with clambakes and dessert under the stars.”

4. Barbara Thau, *Understanding Branding*

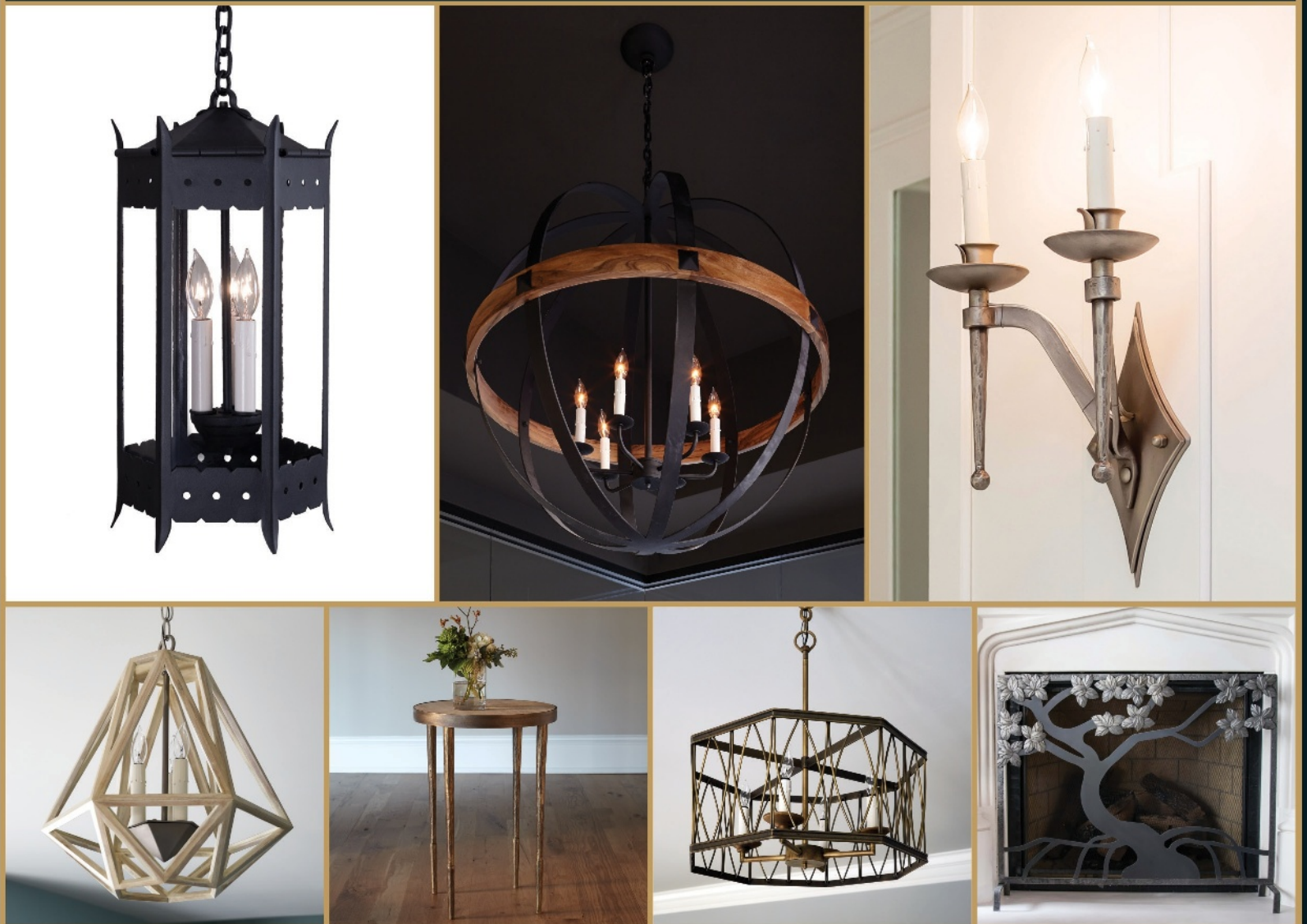
When interviewing branding experts for her “Business of Design” article (p. 22), Barbara was surprised by how much of their work is about getting to the core of somebody else’s, or a company’s, essence. “It seems when it’s done right, there’s a real selflessness to that endeavor, which I found refreshing,” she reveals. Not surprisingly, “doing it right” extends to her own experiences with casinos,

nightclubs, and outdoor spaces. “George’s at Kauffman Astoria Studios in Queens, New York, is a wonderful place to hear jazz: It’s like being transported to a 1940’s Barbara Stanwyck movie,” says Barbara, noting an even more personal connection with the outdoors. “Summer in my brother and sister-in-law’s beautiful backyard in Brooklyn, overlooking their carefully tended garden, is a highlight of the season for me. Family, good food, and silly, intergenerational conversations are all we need for good times there.”

5. Michele Keith, *The Great Outdoor Room*

Michele loves “escaping” Manhattan in my own flower-filled garden and visiting friends in their outdoor spaces, all right here in the city. Each is different, and fabulous in its own right: Some focus on the views, others are fanciful aeries. Some are city sleek, others evoke the jungle. All are wonderful places to spend time with people you enjoy.” Such a personal viewpoint made her article on outdoor rooms (p. 56) all the more fun and interesting to write. However, she recalls another time, another place equally as captivating. “I lived in Paris when I was in my 20s and, thanks to working in fashion, had an extraordinarily fun social life,” she explains. “One popular nightclub—I don’t recall the name—had a dazzling, all-black ladies’ room accented with crystal light fixtures. Ahead of its time, it seemed the height of sophistication to me.” ●

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By Brian J. Barth

Masterin the

Welcome to the ever-evolving and opulently complex world of casino design



Perched high above the
thundering waters of
Niagara Falls, Fallsview
Casino Resort provides
breathtaking views
of one of the natural
wonders of the world.
(Image: Fallsview
Casino Resort)



g Game

When you pull up to the Bellagio, the five-star casino resort in Las Vegas, you pass an eight-acre man-made lake with roughly 1,000 fountains that come to life in an hourly show of music and light, dancing and spraying in a spectacle that rises 460 feet in the air. You then enter the lobby, where an enormous, kaleidoscopic installation by Dale Chihuly—more than 2,000 hand-blown glass flowers—hangs down from the ceiling like a vortex. You feel as though heaven must reside on the other side.

After settling into your room, you must decide which of the many attractions to take in: The Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art, the Bellagio Conservatory and Botanical Garden, and *O*, Cirque du Soleil's permanent show, are among the top options. By day, you can unwind at the resort's world-class spa and browse the selection of 20-plus luxury boutiques; at night, choose from six decadent nightclubs and lounges, plus a smorgasbord of culinary adventures ranging from farm-to-table fare to small plates by Julian Serrano, the Michelin-decorated chef.

Oh, and, there's also gambling.

If the Bellagio were your textbook for casino design, it could be titled *The Design of Magical Kingdoms*. What happened to the dim, smoke-filled halls lined with guys who look like they just stepped off the set of *Bugsy*?

Old-school casino design—low ceilings, no clocks or windows, and maze-like carpeting leading you from one gaming area to another, now referred to as “gaming” design—was pioneered by Bill Friedman, a gambling-addict-turned-casino-manager and a consultant to scores of casino developers across the globe. Friedman, a Las Vegas native, literally wrote the book on the topic, several actually: *Casino Games*, *Casino Management*, and *Designing Casinos to Dominate the Competition*.

“I lived through the Golden Era of Las Vegas when the remnants of the organized crime gangs that had brought in booze during Prohibition basically built The Strip,” says Friedman. “Casinos mesmerized me from the first time I walked into one as a child. They were completely different than what we have today, both in the markets served and in the way they are designed and operated.”

In fact, casinos of the era would come to be criticized for some of the very things that made them work in their day, aspects of design that wouldn't be recognized as important until years later—24-hour-a-day energy consumption and the negative effects a lack of natural light and fresh air can cause among them.

Friedman spent his career analyzing the relationship between interior design and casino profitability. His model was to create a dense labyrinth of gaming spaces that focused on the needs of serious gamblers, not casual tourists. These were places you could literally get lost in, which was exactly the idea. He believed expansive rooms, open sight lines, and elaborate décor diverted people's attention from what casino owners of the day wanted them to do—gamble. In Friedman's mind, the gaming equipment was the décor. Hotels, entertainment, and other amenities were part of the package, but these were a sideshow, often operated at a loss, to the casino floor.

In the 1990s, the “playground” school of casino design, which emphasizes open, resort-like layouts and elaborate interiors, began to take root. This approach, which persists today, still caters to serious gamblers, but attempts to reach a much wider audience: tourists, conventioners, bachelor and bachelorette parties, wedding groups, and pretty much anyone else looking for a thrilling destination. Gone are the low ceilings. Natural lighting is in, as are “barns”—casino lingo for large, open gaming floors designed to create a sense of wonder. And, gambling is just one of the many attractions. At a number of today's casino resorts, the whole family is welcome; mom, dad, and the kids all will find something of appeal. Revenue from the gaming floor is still important, but it doesn't make or break the entire operation as in days past.

“My job is to create emotional excitement that endures—spaces that are so layered that they are as much fun to walk in to the 200th time as they were the first time.”

—ROGER THOMAS, WYNN DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT



In the atrium of Wynn Las Vegas, a colorful floral display changes throughout the year. (Image: Barbara Kraft)



1.

2.

- 1. Dining cabanas delight guests at Costa di Mare at Wynn Las Vegas. (Image: Barbara Kraft)
- 2. Designed by HBG Design, an intense palette and dramatic overhead installation are in play at WinStar World Casino and Resort, in Thackerville, Oklahoma. (Image: Peter Malinowski)
- 3. HBG Design incorporated natural elements to create a warm front desk area at The Point Casino & Hotel, in Kingston, Washington. (Image: Martin Bydalek)
- 4. An outdoor patio at Fallsview Casino Resort invites guests to get warm by the fire while taking in the sweeping views. (Image: Fallsview Casino Resort)



3.



4.

The Bellagio often is cited as the pinnacle of playground design. Roger Thomas, executive vice president of design for Wynn Design and Development (See also “ICONic Profile: Roger Thomas,” p. 54.), who created the Bellagio’s interiors, says his philosophy is pretty simple—though it is anything but formulaic. “My goal is to create an experience that is so appealing, so comfortable, and so stimulating that my guests want to come back for more,” explains Thomas. “They realize it is unique because all the components are unique, and, if they’re going to get it again, they have to come to us to get it. My job is to create emotional excitement that endures—spaces that are so layered that they are as much fun to walk in to the 200th time as they were the first time.”

To do so, Thomas builds full-scale models of key sections of each casino project—typically, “a slot area, a pit area, and a pathway area,” he says—before the design is finalized. “It can be a two-year exercise of changing carpet, lighting, furniture, paint—tearing everything apart and putting it back together. We leave no stone unturned in our search for the most extraordinary gaming space on earth.”

His approach certainly seems to be working: The Bellagio pulls in four times as much revenue per guest room as the Las Vegas average.

Not a Game of Chance

For decades, the casino industry was synonymous with Las Vegas, Atlantic City, and a smattering of other gambling outposts. Today, casinos are legal in every Canadian province and in all but nine U.S. states. As a result, the scope of casino design has greatly expanded. While the Bellagio is a stunning case study, it had a construction budget of \$1.6 billion; in contrast, the vast majority of casinos are far less extravagant.

“It’s easy to believe that Las Vegas defines what a casino is, but that is the tip of the iceberg,” says Gordon MacKay, co-founder of the Toronto-based hospitality design firm mackaywong, which has 14 casino projects under its belt and another 14 in the pipeline. “Most of the casino facilities in the United States and Canada can’t afford to invest the kind of money they do on The Strip. The marketplace is focused on a few large destination casinos, but, in reality, most casinos are reliant on local clientele. The investment is modest.”

Beyond the bright lights of Vegas, common themes in casino design quickly dissolve into site-specific, market-specific realities. What works on a First Nations reserve in northern Manitoba, Canada, is a far cry from the secret sauce of a riverboat casino in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, but a number of questions commonly arise in the design process. One hurdle comes up almost immediately: to theme or not to theme. Or, more to the point: How overt should the theme be?

Overtly themed casinos—think Caesars Palace, which is essentially a monument to ancient Rome—were a staple of the Bill Friedman era, but such obviousness is less chic today. “It used to be casinos were designed on the principle of making it look like a UFO just landed in the middle of a farmer’s field. It was all about being exotic,” reveals Mackay. “Then, the pendulum swung completely in the opposite direction and everything was dark woods and beige walls.” Now, the trend is somewhere in the middle. Mackay says casino clients today want the design to tell a story, but “in a subtle and sophisticated manner.”

Place-based storytelling is definitely en vogue, he adds. “We’re not going to do a Tiki hut concept in Hanover[, Ontario]; we’re going to look at history and cues around Hanover as a place and start to develop storylines that resonate in a meaningful way within that context. That being said, we just did a casino renovation in Winnipeg[, Manitoba], that almost has a subtropical feel. We didn’t go in there and put fake palm trees all over the place. We took more of a warm climate architectural approach and infused it with cues that emotionally put you in a place to feel good about being there. That’s meaningful in a place like Winnipeg, where people appreciate a retreat from winter city mode.”

Casino clients today want the design to tell a story, but “in a subtle and sophisticated manner.”

—GORDON MACKAY, mackaywong

Casinos’ Increasingly Sustainable Strategies



Casinos across the continent are setting positive examples by making sustainability a priority. From energy efficiency to waste reduction to cleaner indoor air and more, the future for these gaming palaces is decidedly green. Following are just a few examples of exemplary sustainable efforts.

- In 2016, Niagara Casinos earned the Greatest Greenhouse Gas Reduction Award from the Niagara Sustainability Initiative (NSI) for reducing its lighting energy consumption and absolute carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 736 tonnes between 2014 and 2015.
- In 2015 alone, Wynn Resorts diverted 17,369 metric tons of waste from the landfill and reduced water consumption by 30,020,000 gallons over the prior year.
- At Cascades Casino Kamloops, heating and cooling on the gaming floor is provided via specially designed custom heat recovery ventilators. The ventilators ensure the stale air leaving the building preheats the air coming into the gaming area from outdoors; the system saves both natural gas for heating and electricity for cooling.



A dynamic light fixture plays with the carpet pattern below at Cascades Casino Kamloops, designed by mackaywong. (Image: Eric Scott Photography)



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Some larger casinos dispense with a central theme altogether. “Because our customers have varying tastes and preferences, many of our offerings differ considerably from each other in terms of their design and presentation,” notes Richard Taylor, president of Niagara Casinos, a company that operates Fallsview Casino Resort and Casino Niagara, which are both perched alongside the massive waterfall on the Canadian side of the border.

Taylor views this differentiation as a way to cater to multiple client types—men, women, aging boomers, millennials—which increasingly is important to the success of large casinos. “It allows us to provide a host of options for our guests, based on their preferences and tastes,” he says. The consistency of experience, in this case, comes through maintaining the same level of quality throughout the site. “Back-of-house operations are handled by the same people to ensure that we are able to provide a coordinated level of service. So, while the surroundings may change depending on what aspect of our resort a customer is visiting, they always will receive the same level of care from our staff.”

In this way, the design of casino resorts differs little from other hospitality contexts. The complexity arises largely from combining so many elements into a single development that has seamless transitions and feels like a cohesive whole.



HBG Design created a peaceful sitting area amid gaming stations at Wind Creek Wetumpka Casino & Hotel, in Wetumpka, Alabama. (Image: Jeffrey Jacobs)

“We are doing much looser gaming floor layouts with fewer slot machines and lots of little lounge spaces, beer gardens, and areas for group activities.”

—NATHAN PEAK, HBG DESIGN

Material Worth

Materials palettes are a major concern in casino design, not just from the perspective of aesthetics, but durability: Casinos typically operate 24 hours-a-day, 365 days per year, so the flooring, wall coverings, fixtures, and furnishings need to be tough as nails.

There also are exacting requirements specific to the trade. Lighting above the game tables must be bright enough for the folks who monitor the surveillance cameras for cheaters to see what’s going on, and the light fixtures themselves must be positioned so they do not interfere with the cameras’ sight lines. Thomas developed chandeliers with cameras embedded in them specifically for this purpose.

One of the most consequential decisions an interior designer will make on a casino project is the choice of carpet; it is rare to find a casino that uses any other sort of flooring in the gaming area. Elizabeth Bonner, creative design director at Durkan (part of the Mohawk family of flooring companies), says carpet and casinos have a long and colorful relationship. “The tradition is to use highly colorful and illustrative patterns on the gaming floor. It’s part of what transports you to a different place.”


Despite various conspiracy theories relating to casino carpets—some have postulated that wild patterns are employed to camouflage any chips that fall to the floor, which the casino then rakes up and pockets—Bonner clarifies that the tradition actually has very practical underpinnings. Casino floors take a beating from foot traffic and spills, so the more convoluted the pattern, the less likely the eye is to notice stains or wear and tear. “I call it the meatball factor, the idea that you can drop a meatball anywhere on the carpet and you can’t see it later.”

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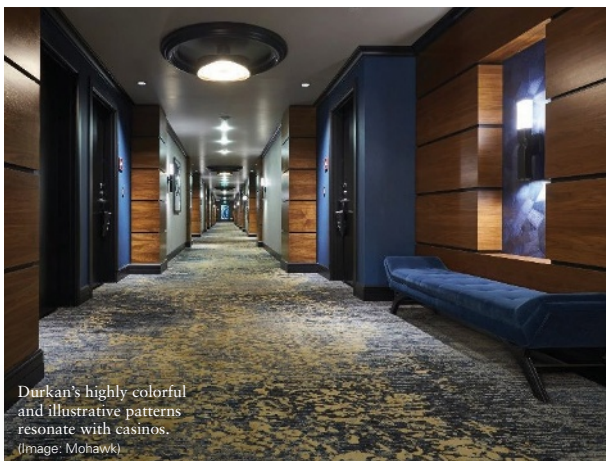
Well Played

Zany carpets are one tradition that remains in casino design, even as many others flutter away. In addition to the trend toward expansive resort-style layouts, casinos are looking to the future with things like sustainable design. LEED-certified casinos are on the rise, and Las Vegas is becoming known as one of the greenest cities in the country, a movement led, at least in part, by its casino magnates. Fallsview Casino Resort in Niagara Falls, Ontario, recently installed a biogas digester to convert organic waste to energy. And, suppliers like Mohawk are doing their part: Definity, the company's high-end 24-tone carpet line favored by casinos, is made from recycled plastic bottles.

But, perhaps, the biggest change afoot in the casino world is designing for millennials. The question is how. So far, this demographic has not proven to be particularly interested in gambling. They do love games, just different ones than what casinos traditionally offer, according to Nathan Peak, a principal at HBG Design, a firm with offices in Memphis, Tennessee, and San Diego that specializes in off-Strip casino projects. "Millennials are interested in interactive games more than the insular experience of a slot machine," he says; above all else, they are looking for a social experience. "In our recent casino projects, we are doing much looser gaming floor layouts with fewer slot machines and lots of little lounge spaces, beer gardens, and areas for group activities."

HBG is taking this concept a step further by designing areas adjacent to the gaming floor specifically for non-gambling games. This includes venues for eSports, a meteorically popular concept in which rowdy video-game tournaments are conducted in a stadium-like environment, complete with cheering crowds and age 21-and-up concessions. The casinos of the future very well may be about gaming in the broadest sense, not just about the type that involves bets.

Emily Marshall, interior design discipline leader at HBG, says the good news is that millennial tastes actually dovetail perfectly with one thing that casinos have always excelled at: "They want a unique, immersive experience. Millennials don't display many of the specific habits and patterns of the previous gamer generation, but this is one thing they do have in common." Playing games, after all, is at its core a healthy—and universal—form of escape. ●



Durkan's highly colorful and illustrative patterns resonate with casinos. (Image: Mohawk)

BRIAN J. BARTH
is a freelance writer with a background in environmental planning and design. He has written for a range of publications, from Landscape Architecture Magazine to *NewYorker.com*.



What Makes a Great Casino Hotel Room?

The casino hotels of yesteryear were largely an appendage of the casino itself: colorful, theatrically themed, and sometimes a bit rowdy. Today the opposite is true. "A growing trend is to design the guest rooms as a sanctuary," says Nathan Peak of HBG Design. "When people come to casinos, they want to have fun; but, when it comes to the overnight stay, it's about getting away, having a quiet resting place. So, it's important in a casino development to have a buffer between the high-activity zones and the resting, replenishing zones."

Peak is a fan of using biophilic features—elements that mimic the soothing effect of the natural world—in casino hotels. At a Native American-run casino on Bainbridge Island (just north of Seattle in Puget Sound), for instance, the firm employed the tribe's traditional artwork, which has a naturalistic, meditative feel, as a design motif, along with materials that are indigenous to the area, such as warm-hued cedar wood and smooth river stones. "Biophilic design is all about creating a connection to nature," explains Peak. This might translate literally to a stunning view, he adds, or simply the use of a "monotone, highly textured palette. We're not using a lot of bright colors in our casino hotel interiors; the emphasis is on more of a muted feel with lots of natural finishes."

Equally important to this trend is sound or, more to the point, a lack of it. Sound-proofing insulation in the walls helps, but a recent technological innovation is catching on among casino developers as a way to completely turn off the clamor that comes with a festive 24/7 venue. In November 2017, a new sound masking system called MODIO, designed specifically for hotel rooms, debuted. This is no ordinary white noise machine, says Niklas Moeller, vice president of K.R. Moeller Associates Ltd., the Canadian company that invented it. Technically speaking, white noise is a sound composed of "a wide range of frequencies that are all broadcast at the same level. Many people actually find it hissy and grating."

MODIO, in contrast, provides a custom mix of different frequencies that effectively drown out aberrant and annoying noises from outside the room. "We can configure a customized sound profile for each room design based on its size, furnishings, and acoustics," explains Moeller. "Casinos are looking at it as a way to deal with the sound of entertainment venues, noise from The Strip, and guests with varying round-the-clock schedules. Since the launch, we've had almost unmanageable levels of interest from hotels all over the world."

Peace, serenity, and a connection to nature; three things The Strip's earliest patrons never would have expected to find.

The MODIO sound masking system can be configured with a customized sound profile appropriate to a specific space. (Image: K.R. Moeller)



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At Rebel in Toronto, Studio Munge created a visually striking platform, which includes a 32-foot synchronized rotating light system that mesmerizes the dancers below.
(Image: Maxime Bocken)

Night &

Day

From a chill living room vibe to a VIP bird cage on the dance floor, nightclub—and dayclub—design has broad appeal

In the heyday of disco, one way to tell you were in a great nightclub was by the quantity of graffiti on the restroom walls. Not so much anymore. The new breed of nightclub is meticulously maintained and designed with a high level of finish and durable materials that will even stand up to the abuse inflicted by a stiletto heel. A trip to the powder room can transport patrons into a dazzling ambience not found in their day-to-day venues, with comfortable seating that encourages lingering for a chat with girlfriends. The men's lounge might include upscale amenities, such as humidors.

Nightclub design has to do with the pursuit of the unobtainable, according to George Kelly, principal of Kelly Architects in Los Angeles, whose team designed the 40,000-square-foot Avalon Hollywood in LA during the Paris Hilton era. "Even though Madonna didn't actually hang out at Studio 54 very often, there was always the possibility that you might run into her," says Kelly.

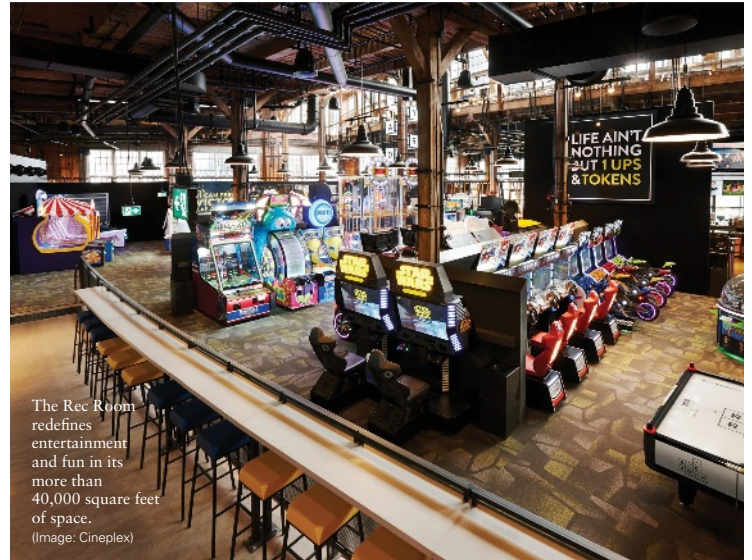
His nightclub designs take these sometimes unrealistic expectations into consideration. "First, you have to get a drink," he says. There has to be a big bar somewhere up front. From that bar, there needs to be a view to another part of the club. You and your friend will see interesting people in the distance and say, "Who's that? Let's go over there," and you start moving. "Of course, by the time you get to that next bar, the people have already gone," Kelly adds. "So you say, 'Let's have another drink.' Now, you have a different perspective of the space; you wonder where does that staircase go?"

Next thing you know you've been there three hours. "You've had a number of drinks and you feel like you've been on this adventure, this pursuit," says Kelly. Avalon Hollywood has 11 bars on its three floors. It's going on 15 years, which, according to Kelly, is phenomenal for a nightclub. "There are very few in the history of the United States that have gone on for that long."

The Main Attraction

Operators also can build a loyal following by offering unique programming that others don't. In Toronto, The Rec Room is a family-friendly entertainment complex owned by Cineplex Entertainment LP. The facility offers more than 40,000 square feet of games and eats. It's an "all ages" space until 11 p.m. After that, the entertainment—including a glam dance floor, high energy acts, and intimate performances—are geared toward an adult audience. But, The Rec Room is not a nightclub, according to Deni Poletti, principal of Core Architects in Toronto.

"The inference with nightclub is that it is open [only] during the evenings and it caters to a specific group," explains Poletti. "The planning of The Rec Room is very fluid. The layout is inclusive in nature and avoids any potential for segregation." Adults and children move through the space freely and can participate in gaming, attend venues in the special event space, or sit for a meal while enjoying televised sports on the big screen. The design was never conceived to transition between daytime use and evening use. All age groups concurrently can enjoy the various programmed elements The Rec Room has to offer.



The Rec Room redefines entertainment and fun in its more than 40,000 square feet of space. (Image: Cineplex)



Coupled with immersive lighting and sound, E11EVEN Miami's round, artulating stage rises out of the ground and ensures everyone has a good view. (Image: Dale Stine)

"The planning of The Rec Room is very fluid. The layout is inclusive in nature and avoids any potential for segregation."

—DENI POLETTI, CORE ARCHITECTS

"E11EVEN Miami is known for choreographing its own music and shows, which are similar to the aerial acrobatics shows you would see at a Cirque du Soleil event," says Tom Telesco Jr., principal, Telesco Construction in Bay Harbor Island, Florida. Located downtown with easy access to South Beach, the 20,000-square-foot nightclub was designed around this immersive entertainment feature.

A round, artulating stage rises out of the ground during showtime. "It's a key design element that satisfies the visual appetite of the clientele. It ensures everyone has a good view and adds a level of drama, too," says Telesco, whose father, the late Tom Telesco Sr., designed E11EVEN Miami with veteran operator Dennis Degori, CEO and creator of 11USA Group. The club's state-of-the-art lighting and sound package includes 600 square feet of LED video walls and intelligent lighting. A rooftop pavilion deck with a retractable awning features an amphitheater and outdoor bar, as well as an interior restaurant component.

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- Quality of writing
- Quantity of writing
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SEATING + TABLES

Another creative business model has been put forth by Rebel Entertainment Complex, a Toronto venue extensively remodeled by Studio Munge. Rebel functions as a corporate day meeting space, as well as a concert hall. The nightclub's design touches on four key themes: powerful sound, immersive light, sensual forms, and tactile details.

"International cities and luxury fashion were a key ingredient, as our original creative concept and mood stemmed from a Roberto Cavalli gown," says Alessandro Munge, principal, Studio Munge. "Our narratives continued to evolve, and, by the time Rebel opened its doors, that lovely dress had blossomed into a symbolic motif of woman and animal."

The back of the club was raised up a few steps to ensure the stage is visible from all angles, a feature that's equally important during corporate presentations. Opposite the central podium are exceptional views of Lake Ontario, the CN Tower, and a sparkling cityscape.



International cities and luxury fashion contributed to the creative concept for Rebel.
(Image: Evan Dion)



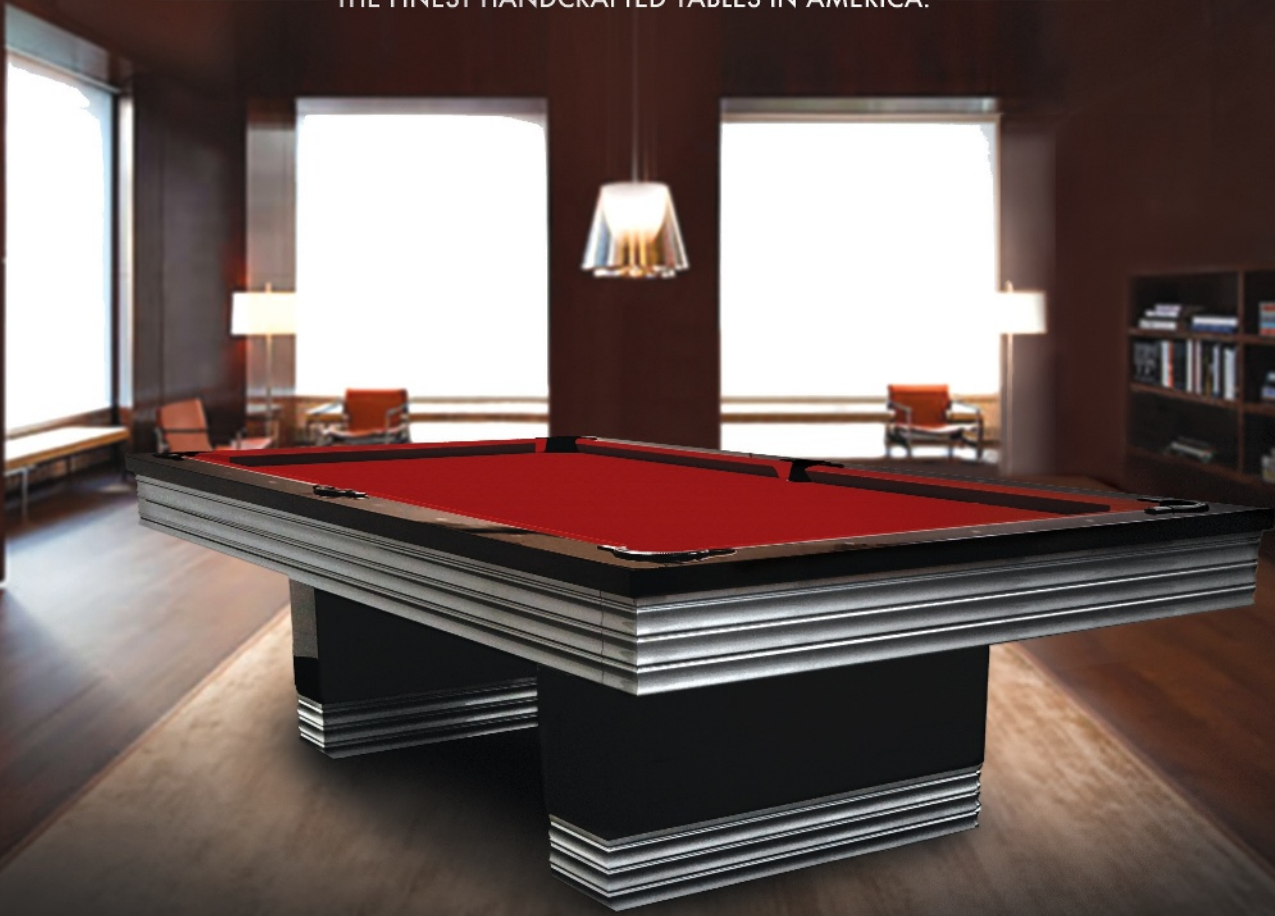
Rebel takes clubbing to a new level, and features perfect sight lines from more intimate seating areas.
(Image: Evan Dion)

"At the mezzanine level, the reserved booths and balconies will give you the most sensational high views of the stage and dance floor for an exclusive VIP treatment," explains Munge. While very exclusive, Rebel's VIP booths won't ever feel like "downtime" and they remain high energy as they're always visually connected to the crowd.

For the most daring patrons, additional VIP booths have been designed as split opened bird cages positioned in the middle of the dance floor. "Those certainly don't get quiet," says Munge. "Humans love to dance; we are social and expressive creatures. Rebel, with its incredibly powerful sound system, immersive lighting, and sensual textures, is an invitation to forget about the drama for a few hours and live in the moment."

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“Rebel...is an invitation to forget about the drama for a few hours and live in the moment.”

—ALESSANDRO MUNGE, STUDIO MUNGE

1. Tactile details at Rebel delight and astound at every turn. (Image: Evan Dion)
2. The club universe evolves throughout the night at Rebel in Toronto. (Image: INKEntertainment)
3. The design of OMNIA Dayclub Bali inspires both tranquility and fun. (Image: Martin Westlake)
4. The Sayers Club in Los Angeles recalls the feel of an old speakeasy. (Image: Ryan Forbes)



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At OMNIA Dayclub Bali, VIP cabanas tucked behind a DJ booth, as well as exclusive bungalows with private plunge pools, offer next-level luxury. (Image: Martin Westlake)



Party by the Pool

After having designed the 75,000-square-foot OMNIA nightclub for Hakkasan Group at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Rockwell Group is designing a series of OMNIA Dayclubs. The OMNIA Dayclub Bali opened in April, boasting a truly one-of-a-kind location. “It’s situated inside a natural amphitheater atop a cliff on the southwestern tip of the Bukit Peninsula of Bali overlooking the Indian Ocean,” says Shawn Sullivan, partner and studio leader at Rockwell Group.

“Our design approach integrates the nuances of the natural rock formations to create a collection of dining and lounging experiences that are both social and have heroic views of the ocean,” adds Sullivan. Contemporary details blend with local materials and craftsmanship to create a venue that feels modern, yet authentic to the locale.

According to Sullivan, dayclubs combine a more laid-back pool setting with the high energy of a nightclub’s atmosphere. Guests can listen to world-class DJs during the day or lie out, order drinks and food, and relax. At OMNIA Dayclub Bali, an infinity pool is surrounded by a variety of seating styles and a dry/wet bar—all terraced around the DJ booth. Does the party continue into the evening? “Absolutely,” says Sullivan. “Many dayclubs serve as an oasis by day and extend into a nightlife destination in the evening.”



Glittering infinity pool curves meet endless ocean views at OMNIA Dayclub Bali. (Image: OMNIA Dayclub Bali)



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Keeping It Chill

At The Sayers Club, another LA nightclub designed by Kelly Architects, there's no dancing; instead, the concept was to recreate the intimate feeling of watching musicians from the VIP lounge during a recording session. Kelly designed the space around the band in the middle of the room, surrounded by sofas and tables like a living room.

"Whether it's a venue for 100 or 1,000 people, we design for maximum capacity. They're not tripping over each other; they're not getting their phones out because they can't see their drink—and there's no line at the bathroom," explains Kelly. There's also no screaming at the bartender, because the bartender is capable of cranking out seven to 10 drinks. According to Kelly a properly designed bar is configured to enable the bartender to put a drink out every 45 seconds to a minute-and-a-half.

"It's all about the details," he adds. Materials and finishes need to stay looking fresh and clean. "The demise of a lot of nightclubs is after the first couple of years when the furniture and fabrics become torn or grimy. All you get then are your 'lower expectation' crowds. People who pay less, drink more, and tear up the place." ●



The concept at The Sayers Club was to recreate the intimate feeling of a VIP lounge during a recording session. (Image: Ryan Forbes)

DIANA MOSHER, Allied ASID, is a New York-based interior designer and media consultant. She also is the 2017-2019 communications director for the ASID New York Metro chapter.

Safety First



A mass shooting is defined as four or more people shot in one incident, not including the shooter. It's horrifying to know that there is a mass shooting in the United States nine out of every 10 days, according to data from the Gun Violence Archive. The Lexington, Kentucky-based nonprofit was founded in 2013 by former computer analyst Mark Bryant. These tragedies are happening more frequently, but, as reported in *Mother Jones*, "US Mass Shootings, 1982-2018 Data From Mother Jones' Investigation," they are not a new phenomenon.

In June 1984, six patrons were killed when a man opened fire at an upscale Dallas nightclub after a woman rejected his advances. Thirty-two years later, in June 2016, 49 were killed when Omar Mateen attacked the Pulse Orlando nightclub in Florida. Sometimes, the unthinkable happens outdoors. At least 58 people were killed and more than 515 injured after a gunman on the 32nd floor of the Las Vegas Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino opened fire on the Route 91 Harvest Festival across the street.

As the debate continues about why no other developed nation comes close to the rate of U.S. gun violence, designers, facilities managers, and security experts are tasked with creating safe spaces. Can design help prevent a suicide bombing like the one that killed 22 at an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, England?

"We talk about egress and how do we get people out—also about situational awareness and the importance of exit signage," says George Kelly of Kelly Architects. Whether it's a shooter, an earthquake, or a fire, people need to be able to escape the premises quickly. In 1972, 37 people lost their lives and 54 more were injured when a fire was set at the Blue Bird Cafe, a nightlife complex in Montreal. Reports from survivors were that the primary fire escape routes were blocked by flames and patrons were left with no options but to jump from a second story window onto parked cars or cram onto a fire escape whose railing broke under the pressure of overcapacity. Today, designers say, when designing back patios or second floors, the gates have to lead all the way down and out, and then across the street.

A fire department can come in and shut down a nightclub because 2,000 people are all in the lobby on the main floor; 500 of those individuals are supposed to be upstairs on the patio and in the second-floor bar. Kelly advises that you have to keep patrons moving, and keep the flow happening. Aisles and doors must be clear. He also notes that, if the aisle is the best view, then the design isn't good. You might need to move that aisle somewhere else so people don't want to linger there.

At the onset of any project, the Telesco Construction team identifies and addresses potentially risky structural elements and ensures a safe environment

free from tripping hazards that would prevent safe egress from the facility. Local codes provide a good guideline in terms of required pathways, egress lighting, fire alarms, fire sprinklers, and how to alert patrons of an incident requiring their attention or evacuation.

Nightclub safety also is tied to the operations team and to having an effective but friendly staff in place. The best security plans enable the team to have eyes on everything without intimidating the patrons who are able to move easily throughout the facility.

"At Rebel, we created a space for lovers to gather—but with all safety measures met in case of evacuation needs," says Alessandro Munge of Studio Munge. Safety measures also include elevated railings and strategic banquette placement to prevent a different kind of tragedy: making sure potentially inebriated dancers will never fall off the balconies.

Such calculated design decisions point to one of the most important paradoxes of safety in club design: invisibility coupled with ease-of-use. Patrons must be able to easily benefit from yet not be overwhelmed by the safety elements built into a club's layout and overall design. After all, they aren't there for a formal lesson in egress, they're there to forget their cares and dance the night—or day—away. The safety is quietly and efficiently built in.

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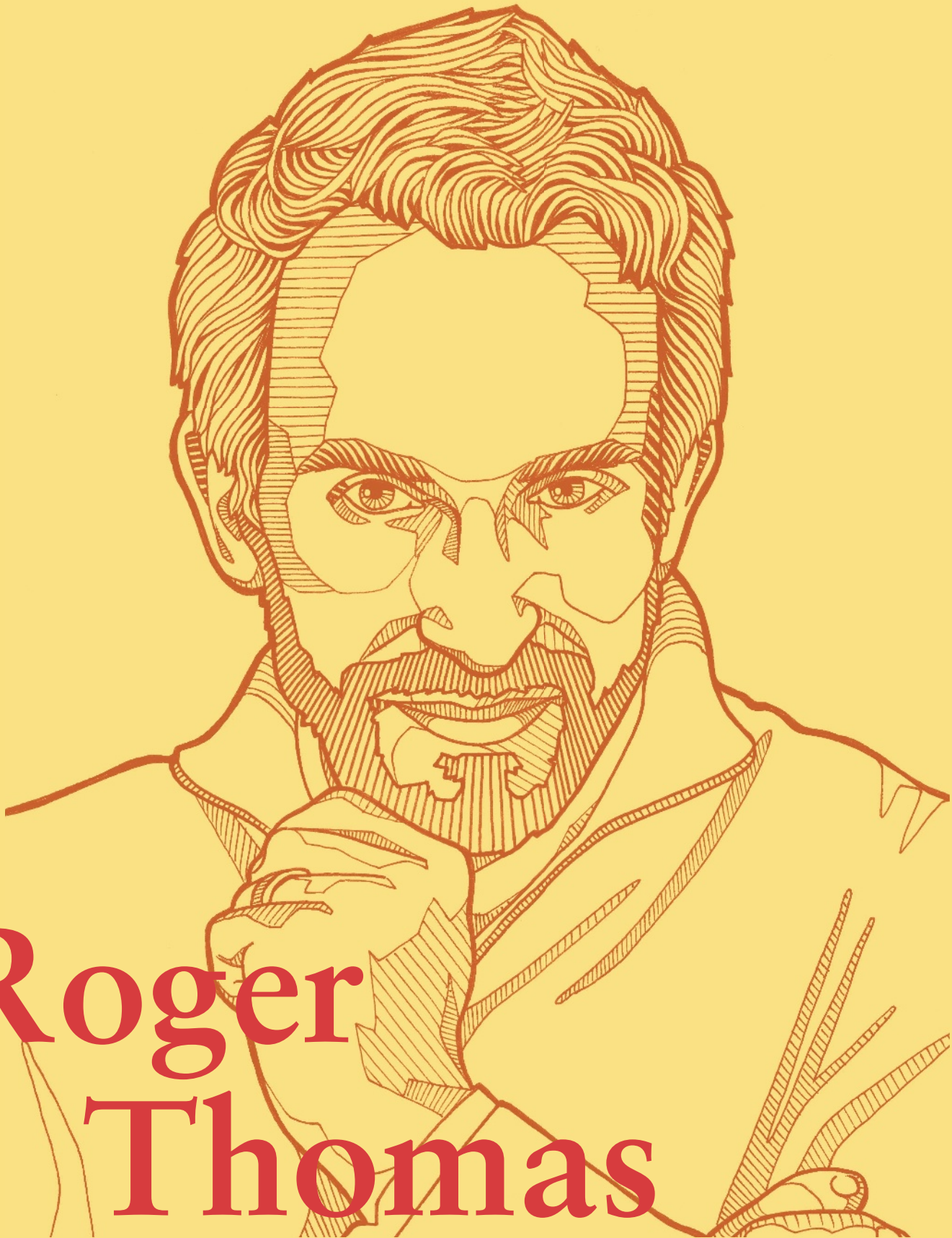
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ICONic Profile



Roger
Thomas

There was a time when American casinos were dimly lit, low-ceilinged caves. Once in, it was nearly impossible to find your way out without asking. The idea was that the design would focus patrons on only one thing—gambling. Roger Thomas was one of the leaders who found that idea as harebrained as it was counterproductive. As executive vice president of design for Wynn Design and Development, Thomas has created casino complexes that are places of visual delight, art, and luxury—places, he says, that people are eager to return to again. His dazzling work can be experienced in Wynn casinos in the United States and abroad, including in Macau, China. He currently is designing the Encore Boston Harbor casino for Wynn, which is scheduled to open next year.

Educated at Interlochen Arts Academy and The School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts, Thomas received a BFA in Art History, and has been published in many leading journals, including Architectural Digest, ELLE Decor, Interiors, and Hospitality Design. In addition to his work for Wynn, he is the proprietor of The Roger Thomas Collection, designing for many instantly recognizable brands.

The recipient of many awards and honors in his profession, including the Excellence in Design award from the Interior Designers Institute, Thomas is a five-time member of Architectural Digest's AD100. In 2015, he was installed in the Interior Design Hall of Fame.

Raised in Las Vegas, he still lives there, but spends weekends in Marin County, California, with his husband, Arthur Libera.

i+D: There's an expression that a person who lives his whole life in one place becomes a stranger in his own hometown.

Thomas: When I grew up in Las Vegas, there were 30,000 people; then 70,000; and, by the time I left to go to college, there were about 120,000 people. Now, there's three million. (Laughing) So, yes, I'm a stranger in my hometown.

i+D: Were you in Las Vegas last year when the mass shooting occurred in October?

Thomas: I was asleep at home. The thought was: How could this possibly happen here? That was common to all of us who were close to the catastrophic tragedy. A disconnect of time and place. An immediate pang of fear, and all the time you're grieving the losses and thinking of your friends and family members who were so close to being there.

i+D: How old were you when you first went to a Las Vegas casino?

Thomas: Three or four. My father founded the first bank that loaned money to a casino. Going to the coffee shop at the [former] Desert Inn was not unusual. That's where you went.

i+D: Must have been exciting as a kid.

Thomas: Didn't everyone grow up like that? I was unaware that everyone didn't have his or her birthday parties at the Frank Sinatra dinner show.

i+D: Can you pinpoint the moment you decided that making casinos dark and impossible to navigate was stupid and impractical?

Thomas: I thought, I don't want people to be *in* a casino. I want them to be in *their* casino, to have ownership wherever they are, whether it's playing slots or table games. What's important about design is not the color schemes you present, or making it confusing to try and trap people. My goals are drama, romance, mystery, comfort consideration, a little titillation, and humor. I want guests to realize that if they love the experience, they *have* to come back.

i+D: How do you achieve that, with making spaces durable and easy to maintain while getting the wear of thousands of people a day?

Thomas: With great difficulty. With enormous amounts of time testing, trying, thinking, and talking with people who have to maintain the spaces. Steve Wynn always gave me the great advantage of allowing me to build a scale model of every casino we ever built. The Wynn casino model was built in a Butler building [a prefab metal structure] on the Desert Inn golf course and evolved over a two-year period of changing carpets, colors, lighting, furniture, everything. I spent those years getting everything balanced with everyone's input. When I walked into the model for the 300th time, I went—wow!

i+D: You're an eyeglass fanatic.

Thomas: I used to own dozens and dozens of pairs. But, I was much younger and my prescription changed every five years. Now, my prescription changes like I change my shirt. I'm down to basic black, blue, gray, and clear. Far less adventuresome than magenta, orange, fuchsia, and every shade of green.

i+D: What was the first thing you designed or built?

Thomas: There were five children in my family and we inherited this magnificent, huge set of building blocks of 200 or more pieces. I'd sit endlessly building environments. We would ride horses out into the desert and I'd sculpt landscapes with red rocks and make sand castles, creating fountains and ponds, spending hours creating fantasy worlds.

i+D: Where did that come from?

Thomas: I was born with it. I don't think the need to build is learned. I've always drawn, painted, and played in the mud.

i+D: Your first job?

Thomas: My first paid job was when I was 16 and an assistant to bank tellers. That lasted a month.

i+D: A whole month?

Thomas: Don't pursue work for money. Pursue it for passion.

i+D: What's the difference between designing a casino in Asia as opposed to North America?

Thomas: What we found opening a casino in Asia was they play baccarat. Period. They sit at dining height so the rooms had to be entirely different architecturally, rather than barstool height with black jack, or standing at a craps table, or sitting at a slot machine, which is basically a light fixture. So, it was an entirely different way of getting the balance of intimacy and easy wayfinding. The chairs become very important. Mies van der Rohe said that skyscrapers are easy, chairs are hard.

i+D: What frightens you?

Thomas: Creating a space that is architecturally safe.

i+D: What makes you laugh?

Thomas: I can laugh at a wonderful sight of color, form, and light. I giggle when I walk into our atrium at Wynn and they've changed the floral combination.

i+D: You were raised in the Mormon Church. How did your upbringing affect your life?

Thomas: I left the church when I was about 13. There are several members of my family who are devout to this day, and others who don't participate. I've sought spirituality in other ways. I had the art school self-destructive phase.

i+D: You have to go through that.

Thomas: Evidently I did.

i+D: You're on a desert island and allowed only one kind of music. What is it?

Thomas: Mozart.

i+D: Someone once said that, if Mozart had lived past 35, he would have written *all* the music.

Thomas: You could make the argument that he did write all the music.

i+D: When you look up from your desk, what do you see?

Thomas: Well, first, the trick is to look up. Who has the time to do that? Looking up, I see a cubist painting, a neo-classic bronze sculpture, a Morris Lapidus lamp, a portrait painted of me 40 years ago in the style of John Singer Sargent, a photograph of Andy Warhol doing my portrait... Call me a failed minimalist.

i+D: Waking up, how long is it before you begin thinking about work?

Thomas: Seconds. I often wake in the middle of a dream walking through a new space. ●

AMBROSE CLANCY
is the editor of the Shelter Island Reporter and a novelist, nonfiction author, and journalist. His work has appeared in GQ, The Washington Post, and Los Angeles Times.

The Great Outdoor Room

By
Michele Keith

Insider tips for outside spaces

It started in the 1940s with dolled-up California movie stars—the women in full-skirted dresses, the men in blazers—hosting cocktail parties around the pool. Guests relaxed on cushioned *chaise longues*, canapés stayed fresh on umbrella-topped tables, uniformed butlers kept the champagne flowing.

Today, however, outdoor living rooms are much more than that. They're for everyone at every price point in every geographic location at every stage of life—and filling a vast spectrum of needs and desires.

To learn how we got here and where we're going, we spoke with industry insiders who are creating outdoor products and possibilities that are changing the way we view the great outdoors.

Designed by Michael Vanderbyl,
inspired by classic sailing
yachts, the modular Hatch
Collection pairs teak with sleek,
powder-coated, aluminum.
(Image: JANUS et Cie)



Luxe Living

Janice Feldman, founder and chief executive officer of JANUS et Cie, says, “People have always wanted to enjoy the outdoors, and, as our culture has found more prosperity, there has been a natural progression to enjoy luxuries, which we now view as the norm. Outdoor living is today a necessary and welcomed part of everyday life.

“Also,” she adds, “luxury hotels have always had great outdoor spaces and...consumers recognized that they could have that ‘luxury lifestyle’ in their own backyards, very much informing and simultaneously strengthening the outdoor life at home.”

Presenting a different twist on luxe living at home, Allen Gant III, the casual market manager for Sunbrella, explains: “The economic downturn [of a few years ago] led homeowners to keep a closer eye on discretionary spending, especially with regard to vacations. Spending more time at home, it was a natural reaction to make improvements on their houses, and, thus, outdoor spaces ultimately became ‘staycation’ destinations.”

Stephen F. Elton, chief brand curator of Brown Jordan, agrees. But, for a more protracted view, he relates that when the company was established in 1945, most people had little more than Adirondack chairs and picnic tables outside the back door. “Our founder, Robert Brown, wanted to reinvent the category with innovative materials and create ‘outdoor art,’ as he called it.”

He accomplished this with designer Walter Lamb, and was so successful that many of the original designs are still sold today—along with new ones like chairs that gently glide back and forth.

“People are increasingly looking to expand their living spaces, and outdoor areas...are the quickest and most cost-effective way to do so,” says interior designer Gil Walsh, who works primarily in and about Palm Beach, Florida, and Martha’s Vineyard. “There has also been an explosion in outdoor furnishings, fabrics, and accessories that provide us much more flexibility and creativity to design outside.”



Warm yet architectural with its tapered teak frame, the Konos Collection by JANUS et Cie’s founder Janice Feldman, is well suited to modern settings. (Image: JANUS et Cie)

A Good Investment

“Not only do outdoor rooms increase a home’s value,” notes Walsh, “they enhance their overall appeal, especially for people fond of entertaining. My clients are looking for exterior rooms to function just as the various rooms of their homes do: cooking/barbecuing, watching TV, quiet spaces, maybe with a water feature, for relaxing and reading, fire pit areas to gather family and friends for cocktails, dining areas with awnings.”

“It used to be landscaping that added value to a house,” says Elton. “Today, it’s how the outdoor space is furnished.” He reveals that customers frequently tell him the reason they obtained the asking price when selling their home was that the outdoor furnishings were included. “Outdoor furniture is the fastest growing of all furniture categories,” he adds. In fact, analytics and advisory firm Transparency Market Research anticipates 4.9 percent growth in the global outdoor furniture market for the 2017 to 2022 period.

Noting how outdoor living rooms increase a home’s square footage, Feldman says, “People are more adept than ever at seeing value when making purchases, including a home. Having an outdoor space is as much a decision of the [fiscally responsible] mind as it is of the heart.”

And, while furnished outdoor spaces began with the wealthy, “the outdoor living space trend is completely scalable and attainable,” according to Gant. “Whether you have a lavish and spacious patio or a simple balcony, there are performance options available.”

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"With proper care, many homeowners find that our fabrics long outlast their warranties," says Gant. "For Sunbrella shade fabrics, we offer a 10-year limited warranty from the purchase date. If your fabric suffers color or strength loss due to normal use and exposure during the warranty period, we will replace it. For Sunbrella upholstery fabrics, we offer a five-year limited warranty." What customers like is that most stains can be removed easily "with no worry of harming the fabric," perhaps one reason more and more people are choosing to use them inside the home as well.

Taking up that thread, Elton says that "especially with the mid century movement we're currently experiencing, our accent chairs, some with leather elements, occasional tables, decorative pillows, and casual dining pieces are being used indoors as well as outdoors."

Adds Walsh, "It's fairly easy to find manufacturers who not only make products that can withstand the elements—hurricanes being the exception—but are just as beautiful and luxurious as those you can find indoors."

Proud not only of the "timeless, elegant design, quality, and innovative materials and color of Brown Jordan products," Elton elaborates: "We back up everything we make, as long as it's taken care of correctly, and utilize a variety of practices to check each product as it's being developed." In addition, the company uses some of its own stores as "incubators" to verify various aspects of a product prior to its release.

Feldman mentions that her in-house design and development team is dedicated to "creating great pieces that withstand the harshest environment...for life outdoors, anywhere...in all types of spaces and places all over the world."



Designer Gil Walsh creates an inviting outdoor living area with comfortable furniture and a rattan-highlighted dining corner. Drawn from nature, the colors inspire tranquility. (Image: Kim Sargent Photography)



Sunset-bright or softly neutral, Sunbrella's 100% acrylic fabric is both attractive and easy to care for. (Image: Sunbrella)

Tech Talk

When it comes to designing outdoor rooms, Walsh says, "My clients want to bring indoor comfort to their outdoor living spaces." So, in addition to paying homage to the outdoors, with colors inspired by nature, the sea, and sky, and utilizing such accessories as candles, throws, rugs, and pillows that "represent the warmth and comforts of home, and that generate an emotional response of calm and serenity," she pays close attention to illumination.

"Clients ask for dimmers, timers, the ability to easily control their outdoor lighting. I think the Instagram-loving, tech-obsessed millennial generation will continue to propel outdoor living spaces forward into highly functional spaces," she continues, "as they value experiences and convenience more than previous generations."

Gant adds, "The outdoor room will undoubtedly get 'smarter.' Just as smartphones and smart cars have evolved, so will the smart home. Comfort and ease of use will drive the atmosphere in the outdoor room, and temperature-control systems will allow for longer outdoor seasons for more homes. The outdoor room will truly become a seamless extension of our lifestyles."

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Based on a 1956 design by Tadao Inouye, the sculptural Kantan chair has been reinvented with resilient Suncloth straps that conform to the body for comfort and support.
(Image: Stuart Watson)

What's New, What's Next

Along with new textures that resemble linen, men's suiting, and boucle yarns, Gant is "excited about new partnerships that put an entirely fresh lens on...the products we can offer." One is the Pendleton by Sunbrella collection, which reconstructs the traditional designs of Pendleton wool blankets for the enduring performance qualities of Sunbrella upholstery fabrics.

"Natural and natural-looking materials, such as teak, pre-weathered teak, or natural-looking woven furniture, complement the natural world and colors that surround people when they're outside," says Feldman, explaining what her clients look for. As to styles, she adds, "there's a wide spectrum between your grandfather's traditional rustic look [and] the tech entrepreneur's new modern that designers can call upon to suit any outdoor environment."

"Our Konos collection redefines teak furniture with a beautiful, conical teak construction [that] is a hit this season, as is our Habitat collection of vases and tabletop objects that are very sculptural and reminiscent of ocean corals." Feldman also mentions the Masterpiece collections that are built to be passed down as family heirlooms.

"Wherever we go," Elton says, "we see outdoor furnishings growing. There's no indication that growth will stop." ●

MICHELE KEITH

is a New York-based writer whose work has appeared in The New York Times, ASPIRE Design and Home, Luxury Listings NYC, and DESIGN, among other magazines. She also has written two coffee table books for The Monacelli Press: *Designers Here and There* and *Designers Abroad*.

Cooking *Al Fresco* +

Outdoor living spaces? "The biggest wow we've seen in the house-building industry, ever!" says Ernie Lussier, owner of Canada Outdoor Kitchens. And, the most exciting part of them, he says, is surely the kitchen.

Designing, building, and installing outdoor kitchens tailored to a customer's lifestyle has been Lussier's focus for the last five years. Formerly a custom home builder, he began the business, based in British Columbia and Alberta, Canada, to fill the void he discovered while researching outdoor eating areas for his own family.

Today, he's able to say to clients, "We can source anything. Give me your wish list," and starts itemizing such favorites as ice makers, pizza ovens, beer dispensers, and dishwashers.

What makes his kitchens unique is how every item works together, both aesthetically and functionally. "We design them so that, once outside, there's no need to return to the house," explains Lussier. As to looks, "even though it's outdoors, we don't lose the luxury. There are so many options, colors, materials, textures, and cabinet profiles, plus the technology—we can make it so that you can, for example, control your grill from miles away using an iPhone."

"Hot now are our 3-season rooms, composed of permanent roof structures with heaters and either tempered-glass partitions or retractable screens that function as walls," he continues. "Offering protection from wind, rain, and bugs, they also keep the heat in on chilly nights."

Lussier forecasts a 10 to 20 percent growth in outdoor kitchens, adding that he foresees his own business increasing 100-fold within the next three years.

A different business model, but with the same goal of devising high-style, highly functioning outdoor kitchens, Viking Range was "one of the first companies to offer commercial type, outdoor grills," says Director of Marketing Tim Tyler. It was 1997 and met with such success that Viking soon expanded its product offering to include all kinds of appliances for outdoor use. Next came gourmet residential kitchens, and, with that, the indoor kitchen moved outdoors where people love to entertain.

With nearly endless possibilities available, Viking offers its online *Outdoor Kitchen Planning Guide* that allows customers to create their design, select the desired products, and request a quote. Once agreed upon, product is sent from an authorized Viking dealer and a qualified kitchen installer in the customer's market is suggested so that a professional installation can be ensured.

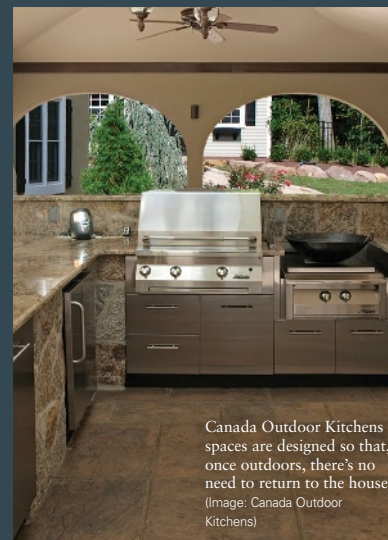
According to Tyler, "Moderate-sized homes are not forgotten. We offer many smaller-sized products for outdoor kitchens," mentioning the freestanding grill that measures a compact 30 inches wide.

Popular items for this summer are the new Viking 5 Series outdoor grill with 25,000 high-intensity BTU cast-brassgrill burners, the Wok/Cooker, and the Easy Lift Canopy System.

Finally, Tyler says, should anyone doubt the company's dedication to creating products that really help to create outstanding meals, take heed: "Our industrial design group and engineers not only work closely together, but cook on the Viking Barbeque Team where they share recipes, cooking ideas, and inspiration."



Viking offers heavy-duty gas grills, warming drawers, refrigerators and even vent hoods for outdoor living areas.
(Image: Viking Range, LLC)



Canada Outdoor Kitchens spaces are designed so that, once outdoors, there's no need to return to the house.
(Image: Canada Outdoor Kitchens)

NeoCon



The Wired Future

Nick Thompson, Editor in Chief, *Wired*

The story of how science and tech will change our lives is one of the most important in the world. And no one's more equipped to tell it than Nicholas Thompson. A veteran editor, he revolutionized *The New Yorker's* online platform and transformed the magazine. Now, as the editor-in-chief of *Wired*, he's working at the forefront of digital innovation—championing tech's role in making the world a better place.

As the new editor-in-chief of *Wired*—one of the most prestigious positions in the world of technology—Nicholas Thompson is staking out a bold, optimistic vision for covering, and responding to, the changing realm of digital culture. From artificial intelligence to entertainment, privacy to social media, ethics to war, Thompson leads the news cycle—and in talks, he champions the ways tech can enhance our lives, both as a quick-witted, brilliant keynote speaker and as a charming, provocative host.

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Interior Designers Institute www.idi.edu

Interiors www.interiorsmagazine.com

Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen Center for the Arts www.academy.interlochen.org

The Roger Thomas Collection www.therogertomascollection.com

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Informative
About usability
About inclusivity
About understanding
About behaviour and feeling
Creating a culture that shapes values
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- Daniela Barbon,
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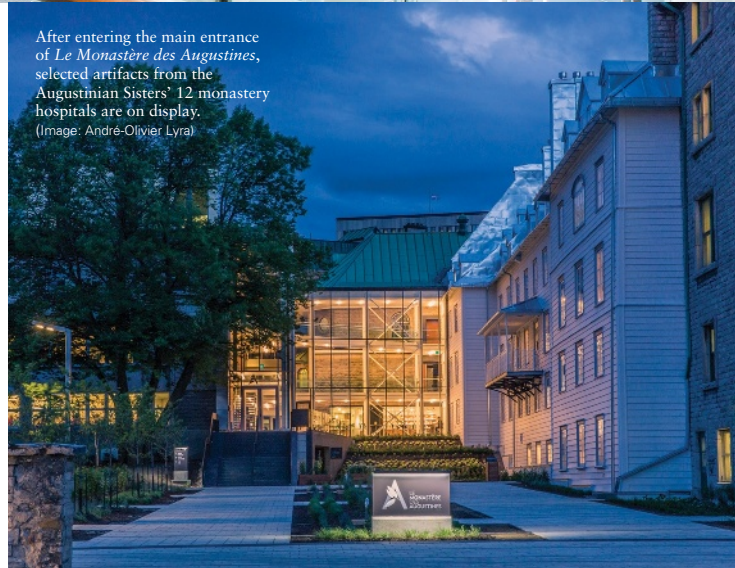


At *Le Monastère des Augustines*, the original buildings blend harmoniously with the new construction's contemporary architecture.
(Image: André-Olivier Lyra)

HISTORIC ROOTS

Established in 1639, *Le Monastère des Augustines* in Quebec City was the first hospital complex in North America. Its restoration and rebirth complete in 2015, the modern interpretation of the monastery is a unique blend of culture, history, and wellness. Today, the award-winning property includes a museum, healing center, hotel, archives, reserve, and gardens. The sustainably operated facilities welcome guests into a unique experience in holistic health rooted in the very heritage of the Augustinian Sisters.

The July/August issue of *i+D* will dig into the topics of historic preservation and adaptive reuse and investigate the ways in which historic design can inform and live harmoniously amid the current built environment. The benefits of saving historic properties affect us on educational, cultural, and emotional levels and prove we don't always have to tear things down to start something new. ●



After entering the main entrance of *Le Monastère des Augustines*, selected artifacts from the Augustinian Sisters' 12 monastery hospitals are on display.
(Image: André-Olivier Lyra)

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