



The library makes a punchy statement with astringent colours and a wall of black and white damask punctuated with picture-frame niche shelving. Joinery by HG Holiday 021-534-2448, wallpaper from Wallcoverings Inc. 021-465-6547 and artwork by Yiull Damaso 083-234-0870. The carpet Ying-Yang from Interface was laid by Florstore. Lazy armchairs by Wunders 021-447-5233 in Boston velvet from Hertex 011-262-4108.



The transitional zone or podium, as furniture designer Liam Mooney refers to it, that bridges the hotel interior with the commercial space was divided into small, intimate seating areas. The use of a single colour ensured that the individuality of both spaces was retained. Black lampshades by Wireworld, drapes by Best Blinds, highback seating manufactured by Don Bosman, furniture and coffee tables by Xandre Kriel.

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Repurposing the old brings
New Urbanism to Cape Town's Woodstock

COOL BY CONTRAST

It is curious how the beauty of an object can enhance exponentially when placed within a dramatically disparate environment. Think of how the exposed austerity of an industrial-style loft interior (on the face of it, unforgiving) turns out to provide a perfectly sensitive and gracious milieu for the cultivated charm of a period antique. Contrast that buoys the senses relies unequivocally on the skilful procurement of balance and proportion. But who's to know that just the right amount of salt on a slice of spanspek will offer a sublime gustatory response? Though such pleasing contrary couplings happen often by chance, for the modern-day creative it poses a continual challenge that ultimately distinguishes design that is indelible from that which is fleeting.

Destined for such permanence is the Upper Eastside's newly constructed four-star hotel, set in the industrial midst of Woodstock, one of Cape Town's oldest suburbs. It is the second stage of an audacious inner-city revival development that has seen architectural and interior design practice Design

Three Sixty transform the entire precinct occupied by the Bonwit textile factory into a thriving, mixed-use, multifunctional environment. With its close proximity to The Old Biscuit Mill, the Upper Eastside strongly recalls the inspiration behind New York's Boho-chic Meatpacking District and its neighbouring Chelsea Market. 'South Africans are slowly cottoning-on to the benefits of inner-city living where,' says architect Greg Viljoen, 'residents can enjoy the convenience of all facilities right on their doorstep.'

With commercial, retail and residential zones established in Stage 1, the completion of the Upper Eastside Hotel comes to represent the last word in the project's intended design philosophy of 'Live, Work, Play'.

Design Three Sixty's vision, which extended internally to the 183 hotel rooms and eight conference rooms, was underpinned by a loyalty to the industrial integrity of the existing architectural language. The fragmentation of the hotel's facade and its use of a bold linearity defined by planes of glass and exposed

steel, introduce both a new and holistic contemporary industrial aesthetic. 'The brand was entirely new,' explains Greg, 'so the need to conform was eliminated, allowing us to create a bespoke interior that could stand on merit almost anywhere in the world.'

Failure to link the two buildings in a manner that was cohesive yet sensitive to both identities could have proved the project's downfall. The hotel, however, rests comfortably beneath a glass-and-steel atrium with the geometric layering of the facade repeated harmoniously within. Translucent floor-to-ceiling black drapes create a dramatic, ethereal threshold between the two buildings, with oversized drum light fittings and modular seating by furniture designer Liam Mooney anchoring the voluminous transitional public space.

Further in is where the disarmingly vibrant interior truly establishes a confounding complement to its raw concrete surrounds. Interior design firm DIAD, a creative quartet of women headed up by Shiree Darley, devised a unique concept for the hotel's public spaces. In line with the development's concept of integration,

Throughout the hotel's public spaces, the juxtaposition of bright colour against a monochromatic background remains a unifying concept. The reception counter (manufactured and installed by HG Holiday) is fronted with a backlit glass screen from Shoote Images for Design 083-268-6560. Wunders Sun Ottoman upholstered in Endangered by Home Fabrics, Preston wingback in Home Fabrics City Lights by Petite Designs 011-474-8728 and laser-cut stainless-steel table from Salt & Pepper Furniture Design 021-418-5193. Commissioned Retro Lady artwork by Nicky Thompson 082-882-4791.

"The overall concept was to create a series of layers wherein the clientele would experience visual discoveries and the illusion of progressing from space to space."

Shiree Darley

The eStreet bar and lounge has a kaleidoscopic feel of colour, pattern and reflection. The lofty space is exaggerated further by the bold striped wallpaper and an enormous expanse of glass behind the bar. Adjusting the lighting levels of cascading chandeliers, bar panels and ceiling recesses transforms the space from cheeky cocktail to high-end nightclub. Bar counters and laser-cut screens by HG Holiday and wallpaper by Wallcoverings Inc. The crystal chandeliers were custom-made by ADA Lighting and the bar stools, in Max Fuschia by Home Fabrics 011-266-3700, are from Wunders. Porcelain floor tiles from Tactile and the custom-designed rug is from Nakara Carpets 021-851-8115.



The atmospheric Cigar Lounge features banquette seating by HG Holiday and custom-made tables by Interior Decor International 031-500-9604 and Patrons Club Chairs by Wunders, upholstered in Hertex Boston Velvet and Home Fabrics Picasso Ocean. Dark oak timber floor by Florstore.



DESIGNER SWAG

» Artist's armchair
R10 967 excl Vat
excluding fabric, OKHA



« Teardrop light
R170, Woolworths



» The Little Desk That Could
R4 500, Liam Mooney



» Wavy round lamp table
R995, Coricraft



» Grey Archo
P1-E1-3
Plascon





all the areas that accommodate guest activities – reception, nodes for pause, library, restaurant and bar – have been contained within one large arena.

‘The overall concept,’ informs Shiree, ‘was to create a series of layers wherein the clientele would experience visual discoveries and the illusion of progressing from space to space.’ The double-volume spaces were exploited, creating mezzanine levels and raised platforms that function with laser-cut screens and post-box frames to shrewdly zone off areas. The effect is an intriguing and dynamic play of positive and negative spaces that afford intimacy rather than separation, offering guests the choice of either interactive or individual experiences.

The 1920s provided much of the inspiration for the interior, which is as boisterous visually as the decade was socially. The interior’s foundation of black and white (referencing the advent of the film industry in this era as well as photography as a recognised art form) provides a backdrop for a range of electric colour juxtapositions and bold pattern compositions that interact in vivid animation. ‘We wanted the polished design detailing to create an undeniable sense of glamour,’ says Shiree, ‘evocative of a period characterised by delicious indulgence and excess.’

That the hotel was placed in the Highly Commended category for Best Interior Design at the recent 2010 Europe and Africa International Property Awards is testament to the dextrous implementation of a slick stratagem that remains sensitive to its architectural context. **TB**

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Design Three Sixty 021-462-6630

DIAD 011-021-6834, diad.co.za

Liam Mooney liammooney.co.za



THIS PAGE

Design Three Sixty executed a comfortable contemporary style in the 183 rooms, which include Superior, Executive and Loft suites. The elevated location of the Upper Eastside offers guests panoramic mountain and sea views. LEFT What could have been a bland public space adjoining the hotel and retail area has been articulated with timber benches and mobile platforms by MRail, pendant light fittings from What if the World and a combination of Astroturf, Florstore and contrasting black-and-white porcelain floor tiles from Tactile.

OPPOSITE

The residential section of the Upper Eastside mixed-use development (liveworkplay-here.com) offers bachelor and two-bedroom units as well as duplex barn lofts. Show flat by Liam Mooney. Seen here is The Little Desk That Could and Campbell stool by Liam. Desk lamp by Pederson and Lennard and mirrors from Dokter and Misses. liammooney.co.za

“I think it’s great that a development of this size and scope used local designers and manufacturers with small businesses. I personally believe that using local is one of the most powerful ways to be green.” Liam Mooney

