

interiors_style_architecture_design

PERSPECTIVE

透視

october 07

卓越典範：
香港十四大國際級名牌

好客之道：酒店餐館空間設計特集

亞洲風尚：何光正暢談悅榕莊王國

All things Asian:
KC Ho's Banyan Tree Philosophy

Hospitality Special:
Checking Into Design at its Best



Building on Excellence: 14 world class brands in Hong Kong

HK\$35
US\$16.50
EURO13.65



771606 255002

High Contrast

An old 'tong lau' building in Sai Ying Pun was the starting point for designer Johnny Wong's lively interpretation of the boutique serviced apartment

TEXT: MADHAVI TUMKUR PHOTOGRAPHY: DICKY





A great deal can happen over a mug of beer. In the case of FAK3 designer Johnny Wong and the entrepreneurs of Kush, a casual meeting over drinks a few months ago brewed into a plan for a new service apartment property in Sai Ying Pun. The concept would reflect the youthful vivacity of all those involved — they would be flats that mixed business with leisure, or as Wong describes them, "edgy boutique style that was also functional and practical."

It was an idea that instantly appealed to the designer, dovetailing precisely with his adventurous approach to materials and injecting unexpected proportion and definition into even the simplest volumes. "Each of Kush's design concepts has a theme which brings together its design, surroundings and intent into one homogenous whole," he observes. "The theme for 255 Des Voeux Road West was called 'tribute', and paid homage to Hong Kong's legacy of pre-war Chinese-style 'tong lau' tenement houses". The structures usually featured three residential storeys above a ground-floor shop, and were predominant in south Chinese cities until relatively recently.

The 'tong lau' chosen for Wong's latest project was a surviving landmark in Central and Western district, though its rather dilapidated condition required a great deal of work be done before the designer could begin concentrating on the finer points of his brief. Besides installing a modern fire safety system, Wong clad the exterior of the structure in dark chocolate-coloured tiles. The 'public' areas of the interior were then treated to a feast of intriguing, and suitably 'edgy' detail. "The water pipes were coloured black to give an industrial appeal that contrasts with the gleaming black and gold mirrored stainless steel details used for window trimmings and balustrades, and the Chinese-style gold signage on every floor," Wong explains. Framed images of Hong Kong and design sketches of the building itself are scattered throughout the interior, allowing guests to experience a sort of 'time travel' as they move from floor to floor and space to space. As an environmentally friendly touch, motion sensors automatically switch lights on only as needed, and off again once spaces are vacated.

left High-tech accessories were fully integrated into each flat to save space while adding to the 'boutique' ambience



above A discreet folding door serves as both a room-divider and camouflage in the flat's living area and bedroom **opposite page, clockwise from top** A versatile 'Rock Island' kitchen serves as the heart of the flat's design concept • Nestled amidst old Chinese tenements in Hong Kong's Western district, the modern 'tong lau' creates a dramatic impact • The limited space in the room was overcome by creating compact kitchen that encloses the utilities within cupboards

"The contrast between the raw and the slick, the crude and the sophisticated between the entrance and the rooms, co-relates to the 'work and play' concept of the design"

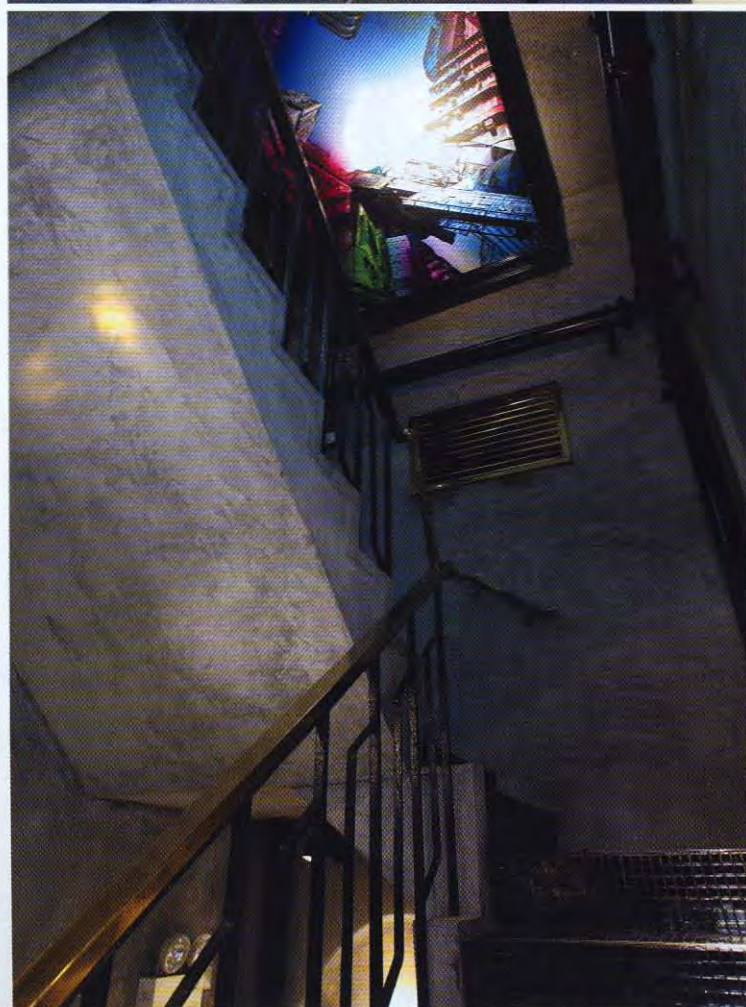
Mirroring the traditional arrangement of the 'tong lau', the building's six 550 sq-ft apartments nestle on its top three floors. At the heart of their flamboyantly luxurious appeal are blocky marble-clad kitchens inspired by Wong's previous award-winning 'Rock Island' concept for the Miele boutique in Causeway Bay. Monolithic and hard-edged in form, the 'Island' neatly conceals a built-in refrigerator, basin, microwave oven and minibar within its veneered cabinets.

Adding to the sense of drama is a lighting scheme Wong describes as "Light Fantastic". "The concept was for 'emotional' illumination that uses neon lights with different tongue-in-cheek colour connotations, such as green for 'envy', blue for 'lagoon', pink for 'candy' and purple for 'haze',"

Wong says. Another theme, dubbed "Black Nature", materialised as black coral shapes adorning the bathrooms, gnome figurines for balconies, and a white ivy motif for the flats' feature wall. "The contrast between the raw and the slick, the crude and the sophisticated between the entrance and the rooms, co-relates to the 'work and play' concept of the design," observes Wong. A putting range on the roof tops it all off.

In converting a dilapidated 'tong lau' into an exemplar of 21st century living, Wong and Kush have done rather more than simply create a new set of boutique apartments. They have saved a structure that, perhaps more than any other type, reflects the essence of Hong Kong — yesterday, today, and hopefully for many decades to come.





clockwise from top 'Black Nature' design elements adorn the bathroom interiors • A putting range was laid out on the building's rooftop in keeping with its 'work and play' concept • Graphics portraying structures of Hong Kong complement the building's rugged staircase and sleek gold mirrored stainless steel balustrades



above Lighting in the apartments is colour coded to match moods and create instant ambience

摩登唐樓

設計師 Johnny Wong 以活潑手法重新包裝西營盤的一幢舊唐樓，
將它變成風格突出的精品服務式住宅

撰文：MAHANI TUNKUR 攝影：DICKY

很多大計都是摸著酒杯底密密斟出來的。幾個月前，FAK3設計公司創辦人 Johnny Wong 跟 Kush 的幾位老闆就是在酒吧碰頭出在西營盤開設服務式住宅的計劃，概念是一切以好玩為主題的商務及休閒空間，正如 Johnny 所形容：「一間很有型的精品住宅，實用與功能並重。」

Johnny 一向喜歡實驗不同的物料，他塑造空間比例及定義的手法往往出入意料，所以新主宅的設計主題正合他的心意。他指出：「位於德輔道西255號的Kush，每個概念都有中心思想，貫穿成統一的風格及氛圍，渾然合成一大主題——向香港戰前的中式唐樓致敬。」唐樓的方程式是三層住宅加樓下地舖，這種獨特建築物曾經在中國南部城市相當普遍，近年剩下的已經不多。

Kush 255 前身是一幢中西區少數僅存的唐樓，未裝修前破舊得好像快要倒塌，整個結構外殼都需要重修一番，才可以讓 Johnny 開始構思細部的設計工作。他首先安裝一些符合最新防火條例的設備，然後用克力力瓷磚密鋪外牆。室內的公共範圍充滿美妙的細節，相當前衛有型。Johnny 解釋道：「水管樑黑色，充滿工業味道，跟黑金兩色的鏡面不銹鋼窗框及欄杆對比之下，效果十分醒目，每一層還有中國式金招牌裝飾。」四處掛滿一幅幅相框，畫面儘是香港景物及 Kush 建築物草圖，遊走樓層與

空間之際，新舊對照猶如一趟時空旅程。燈光自動感應操作，有人時才開啟，有效節省能源，支持環保。

Kush 255 的布局安排跟唐樓一樣，六間550呎的單位分佈於最高三層，每間內都有一個極盡豪華的巨型雲石廚房櫃，靈感來自 Johnny 早前為銅鑼灣 Miele 專門店構思的得獎作品 Rock Island。單件的廚房櫃觸感冷硬，整齊地收納了內嵌式雪櫃、洗碗盤及微波爐，廚櫃內更附設迷你酒吧。

Johnny 特別設計了一種燈光效果，加強空間戲劇感，他稱之為 Light Fantastic：「我想利用五彩繽紛的霓虹燈營造情緒氣氛，不同顏色代表各種感情，例如綠色象徵歡愉、藍色是珊瑚礁、粉紅色是糖果、紫色是薄霧。」另一主題是「黑色自然」，運用黑珊瑚的形狀裝飾浴室，黑色小矮人點綴露台，還有白色常春藤圖案的裝飾牆。Johnny 續道：「天然元素對比光滑的表面，門口的原始質感，跟優雅的房間互相輝映，跟總體的工作與玩樂主題十分配合。」屋頂天台有小型高爾夫球練習場，緊貼「好玩」的主題。

原本破損的舊樓如今已變成廿一世紀空間示範作，它的意義遠超過普通的精品服務式住宅。設計師與 Kush 所做的其實等於舊建築保育，連繫香港的昨天與今天，將一些道地的文化好好保留，延續它們的生命，迎接未來。E