



CENTURION

MAGAZINE ONLINE

HOME SECTIONS SPECIALS ABOUT US

SEARCH

LAST UPDATE: JUNE 18TH 2012



« BACK TO OVERVIEW

BLINKing Ahead

AWARD-WINNING ARCHITECT CLINT NAGATA ON HOSPITALITY DESIGN

BY JESSICA MILLER | JUNE 17TH 2012 | 08:10 PM



When the young team at Asia-based BLINK Design Group laid out the plans for the new Conrad Sanya Haitang Bay hotel, their chief concern was reconciling classic French Riviera glitz with the tropical setting of Hainan Island. The realisation of their fusion project, however, brought more satisfaction than expected when it took home the Hospitality Design Award for Best Luxury Hotel. BLINK founder and creative director Clint Nagata talks about what's next for the firm and the art of hospitality design.

CENTURION: WHAT ARE THE KEY INGREDIENTS IN DESIGNING A HOTEL THAT PEOPLE NOT ONLY WANT TO STAY IN, BUT WILL TALK ABOUT FOR YEARS AFTER?

Clint Nagata: We try to create experiences rather than architectural statements. Our designs aim to create memories and evoke feelings that last beyond style. We don't believe in style, but in creating bespoke designs that capture the essence of a place.

DO YOU HAVE A DESIGN PET PEEVE WHEN IT COMES TO OTHER BUILDINGS YOU HAVEN'T DESIGNED?

I am not a fan of architecture that is more about the architect rather than about it's users. I believe that good design gives back to the users in some form. I am also not a fan of resort designs in which the architecture and interior design do not relate to each other.



CENTURION INSIGHTS

THE BIG QUESTION: SMOOTH SAILING

For many, yachting and sailing is one of life's great pleasures, bringing them closer to the oceans and nature. What is your level of engagement with the subject?

- Owner/regular sailor
- Charter/occasional sailor
- Curious to learn more
- Other (please state)

SUBMIT

Click on SUBMIT to send your vote and view results

CURRENT TOP TEN STORIES

- 01 **CULTURE** The Jubilee Rocks ...»
- 02 **MOTORING** All Green, All Speed ...»
- 03 **WATCHES** Luxe Of The Irish ...»
- 04 **GOURMET** Chomp For Change ...»
- 05 **TRAVEL: HOTELS** Suite Dreams In London ...»
- 06 **HOME & PROPERTY** Specific Objects ...»
- 07 **HOME & PROPERTY** The Queen Of Carpet Design ...»
- 08 **FASHION** Paris Spring Fashion Trends 2012 ...»
- 09 **FASHION** Milan Spring Fashion Trends 2012 ...»
- 10 **FASHION** London Spring Fashion Trends 2012 ...»

CENTURION

CENTURION COLLECTABLES

Click to discover the CENTURION Collectables special.

MAGAZINE »



WHAT BUILDING WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MOST INSPIRING STRUCTURE YOU'VE EVER SEEN?

I have always been inspired by the work of Geoffrey Bawa. His designs are timeless expressions of modern tropical architecture that have stood the test of time. Gently nestled into the hillside, his Kandalama Hotel in Sri Lanka is an unassuming master piece in tropical architecture.



BLINK NOW OFFERS CREATIVE SERVICES IN ADVISORY, IDENTITY MASTER PLANNING, ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN. WHAT AREA DO YOU PERSONALLY FIND MOST SATISFYING TO WORK IN?

Personally I like to work on projects that allow us to stretch our creativity as both architects and interior designers. I don't understand why one often precludes the other. Surely the aim is to create a seamless, integrated whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Architecture and interior design should be lived and experienced, not stared at from a remove, and certainly not divorced from each other.

OF THE MORE THAN 300 PROJECTS COMPLETED BY BLINK, WHICH HAS BEEN THE MOST PERSONAL OR MEMORABLE FOR YOU?

I am excited about our work on the interior design for two new Regent Resorts – Regent Bali and Regent Phuket. Both resorts will open this year. We were particularly happy with our collaboration with Regent President Ralf Ohlertz to conceptualise the re-birth of the Regent brand. While both designs are different in every way, they both share a modern Asian sense of design through materiality and sensuality.



IF YOU COULD TAKE ON A PROJECT ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, WHERE AND WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

As a young firm, we have been very fortunate to have opportunities to work on projects in locations as diverse as Nairobi, Fiji, Maldives, Beijing, Croatia, Jordan, China and Indonesia to name a few. Yet having grown up in Hawaii, I have always had a passion to return back home to the US to design a resort that captures the spirit of the islands inspired by its Asian roots.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF HIGH-END ARCHITECTURE/DESIGN?

I think people are getting more and more global in their experiences and travels. It is becoming increasingly more important that designs not only foster a sense of place, but more so help in creating bespoke experiences that help transcend the ordinary.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST EXCITING EMERGING DESTINATION IN THE LUXURY HOSPITALITY SECTOR RIGHT NOW?

Countries such as India, Brazil, China and Russia all have the potential to have the largest impact on the consumer market. I believe China will continue to be the world's most important luxury market. As more products become available to more people, the pressure increases to offer something truly special.

[Visit the BLINK Design Group homepage](#)

[Go to the Conrad Sanya Haitang Bay website](#)

