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INTERNATIONAL HOTEL DESIGN

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4BI & ASSOCIATES

BRUNO MOINARD, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER

Polymath Bruno Moinard has combined his wealth of talents and that indefinable French je ne sais quoi to the betterment of design worldwide, SPACE editor Can Faik meets him and associate director Claire Bétaille...

Bruno Moinard, architect, scenographer, designer, draftsman and painter, founded his agency 4BI in 1995 after leaving the team of Andrée Putman and Ecart International, which he had joined in 1979. His scenographic mastery with regards to many creations for museums, exhibitions and boutiques, including Fondation Cartier, brought him rapidly towards the universe of luxury. One of his strengths resides in the subtle, elegant, refined yet warm integration of French culture into each of his creations around the world.

What is your role at 4BI & Associates?
Relying on my international network of renowned clients, I created the studio in 1995. Claire Bétaille joined as associate director in 2013. Since then, we both deal with the whole design of worldwide projects, along with a team of 30 people.

What makes 4BI & Associates different to other design companies?
The variety of the projects entrusted to the studio, and our very own listening faculties. Our taste for meeting new people, for discovering new landscapes and horizons.

Our difference lies in the way that we look after a complete and personal relationship developed with each of our clients.

What five words would you use to describe 4BI & Associates?
Listening, humility, curiosity, made-to-measure, audacity.

How is the current economic climate affecting the hotel design market? And has 4BI & Associates felt the effects?
The changes in the global economy reflect in the different countries we work in. This evolution opens new markets to the agency and slows down others.

With so many hospitality designers in the industry, how does 4BI & Associates stand out from the rest?
The strength of 4BI & Associates is to design all kind of projects: private residences, retail spaces, hotels and restaurants, museums, scenographies, etc. This diversity is the key of our "savoir-faire" and leads to singular proposals, compared to the hospitality-specialised studios.

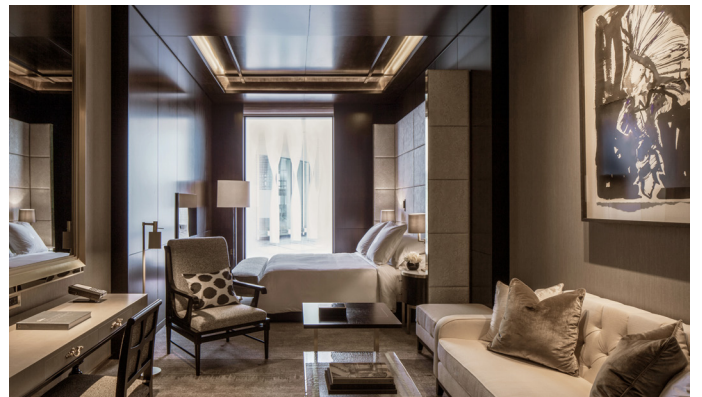
How would you define your 'Hotel Style'?
There is no "Hotel Style"! We bring a made-to-measure design outlook for each of our projects. We gather the identity of a country, a place, a brand, and we transpose its roots and origins in a unique style.

What does design mean to you?
A quest to reach a form of timelessness.

How important are public spaces in hotels?
They are very important! Many visitors do not stay overnight in the hotel: they meet here to share a moment of conviviality, just for a diner or a meeting. Public spaces will be the only areas kept in mind, embodiment of the whole hotel identity.



Bruno Moinard President and Founder
and Claire Bétaille Associate Director



Have you seen exceptional growth in any part of the world in hotel design?
When we first worked in China in 2009 to design a Diaoyutai Hotel in Chengdu, the city counted only two branded hotels. Today, all the international brands have a hotel there.

The same phenomenon is perceptible in Doha, Qatar, where the fast growth goes along with the perpetual creation of new city hearts, each of them tallying numerous new hospitality-branded places.

How did the 4BI & Associates come to be involved in the Four Seasons Ten Trinity Square project?

The story started with the design of a Members Club Chateau Latour inside Ten Trinity Square Hotel. As the studio designed François Pinault's vineyard in the Bordeaux area, we have been asked to suggest an English vision of the theme developed in the Southwest of France.

Followed a series of meetings, sincere relationships and exchanges were built with the owner of Ten Trinity Square who eventually named the agency as the new hotel's designers.

What was the inspiration behind the design concept of Four Seasons Ten Trinity Square?

The owner, Reignwood Group, briefed us according to its culture and open personality: East meets West. The building is the ancient Port of London Authorities, a dynamic and trading place: the idea of exchanges was thus

pursued, strongly connected to the very roots of the building around the main themes of travels, sailing, exotism...

How many people did you work with on the design project?

4Bi & Associates team worked with the client, the local architect team, the planning department for this listed building, the lighting designers, the Four Seasons' teams and the French Chef Anne-Sophie Pic's team.

What was the highlight of the project for you?

The project is in a very powerful building, the architecture itself playing a very important part, in front of Tower Bridge and at the foot of the Thames. A huge transformation was to operate in a magical place.

Were there any challenges faced while working on this project?

Beside the fact that a historical building listed implies some constraints, the challenges were due to the complexity of the spaces concerned: two lobbies, one restaurant, four meeting rooms and one meeting lounge, two ballrooms, various function spaces, more than twenty types of bedrooms and suites and members club with cigar-room, pool-room, dining-room, tasting-room, library...

What do you love about being a designer?

We love having the opportunity to lead exceptional projects and that alchemy with our clients make them satisfied.



Have you noticed any particular trends in hotel design?

There are lots of trends, we don't follow them.

What has been your favourite project to date?

We carried on the renovation of Chateau Latour Vineyard and loved it for its simplicity, its silence, the emotion that takes possession of the visitors, almost a form of meditation in harmony with the very present nature's quietness.

What would be your dream hotel project?

An Hawaiian Hotel for its tropical and lush atmosphere, a Kyoto countryside Hotel for its purity...

What's next for you?

We are currently working on more than 30 projects worldwide.

Is there anything exciting that you are working on at the moment that you can tell us about?

We have been entrusted with an exciting new hotel project in South Korea.

Where currently ranks highest on your travel wish list?

Iran, Bhutan...

Where do you see hotel design in the future?

Hopefully to be more and more unique, out of the brand duplication, authentic, without too much technology and gifted again with a sense of simplicity in luxurious spaces, materials, fabrics, lights...

What would you say are the three best places you've ever stayed?

The Amanfayun Hotel in Hangzhou, the Park Hyatt Hotels in Shanghai and Tokyo, the Hotel Eden in Rome and of course at Ten Trinity Square in London!

Let's finish with the issue of personal and work life balance. How do you aim to achieve a good balance and what do those closest to you think of your attempts?

Balance is achieved thanks to being very well supported.



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