

“Design is a phenomenon that makes your life easier”

DESIGN ISN'T JUST YOU LIVING IN YOUR PERFECT DREAM SPACE, IT'S ALSO SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOUR LIFE EASIER. WE THINK THAT PEOPLE ARE DEPENDENT ON THEIR POSSESSIONS, BUT IT'S THE OPPOSITE, THE POSSESSIONS ARE THERE TO SERVE THE PEOPLE.

***In one of your interviews you said that you were a “designer by design”. Can you tell us a little about yourself?***

I really believe that i am; there is a part of my brain always urging to create new things. If you look at any designer from around the world, of course you'll say that it follows very closely to the education they had; but it's a very different thing for it to be a part of who you are. When i was just five i was already making unusual shapes with legos, i also gave a piano concert when i was 3 at the AKM. I think the left back part of my brain is filled with more energy than the rest... I believe your father was the first person to sell the round bed in Turkey...

We are from Skopje, when my family came here around WWII the Grand Bazaar in here was mostly filled with furniture, during that time the imports and later the exports began and my father was one of the first people who made the round bed in here. Design can come from your genes, but it also has a lot to do with the air you breathe, the place you live in, i am where i am today thanks to all of these things.

***So, how do you prepare yourself for the design process?***

It's a certain lifestyle; when i'm planning to design your house or another space for you, i try to spend as much time as possible with you, try to put myself in your day to day life, i will eat with you and come over at the evenings, because everybody wants to live in different spaces. A good designer should be able to listen, and then take these brand new informations and put them down on paper, make you like it and apply it the sameway... Being a designer depends on so many things and if you don't have even one of those things you will be a failure. I don't have something special i do when i'm designing; but i really do think a lot, and i don't stop thinking i'm done, so if i'm designing your house today i won't have a meeting with someone else and what i decided on usually comes out of me when i'm asleep.

***And what is the importance of design on your day to day life?***

Design is very important, but you mostly see that importance in northern countries. Design is actually a concept that increases your life comfort and quality. Design isn't just you living in your perfect dream space, it's also something that makes your life easier. We think that people are dependent on their possessions, but it's the opposite, the possessions are there to serve the people. Because this is such an overlooked part of





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stay on the earth all your life. That's why i'm trying to make qualified buildings in Turkey, the US and Baku; i also don't take criticism for my buildings, because nowadays you can change anything into design a tea glass, a phone, a chandelier and some people just won't like it... But the always right way to design is to make a building that will serve the people, even though it's definitely important to make pretty and interesting buildings and disciplines like LEED must not be forgotten as well. I believe in the future Turkey, all architects and engineers will be using these.

**Can you talk about your architectural works in Turkey?**

I made five ultra modern villas in Gaziantep, influenced by hollywood called Five Star by Şafak Çak. For a place like Gaziantep in the Southeast, i placed the pools so that they can't be seen from the other villas. Right now i'm also making a new place as a part of urban transformation in Bakırköy. I have a building on Halaskargazi, a skyscraper on Büyükdere Street. We are trying to use the best materials ever used.

**How did you assemble your team?**

In our line of work, you need a good team that will support your weight at all costs. Today in production my team is around 500 people, over 1000 with the subcontractors. I have a team that supports me when i'm practicing my own experiences. We do work a little bit too hard, but in the end it's all worth it for our clients gratitude.



**What are your thoughts on sustainability and ecology in interior design?**

I really lack the information and preparation to be able to properly answer that question, we have three professors in our company who give us conferences about these issues all the time to enlighten us. In context of how to make a house ecological is to avoid using concrete and steel. When you look at newer buildings all you see is concrete and steel, and with these, the only thing that you can adjust to make it sustainable is how breatheable you make these materials. Outside the metropolis the usage of wood is very common, like the houses we have in Safranbolu. These houses are going to be even more popular because everybody wants to have a summer house. I believe that breatheable and ecological housing is going to be very trendy in the future.

There's a trend of returning to nature, and understanding its value; but there is also the destruction of it. And the destruction has accelerated these days. People are getting more aware, and i believe that this too will put itself in balance.

**Interior space quality is very important for a sustainable and healthy life, what are some of your favorite natural materials to use?**

Of course it's wood, i dont much prefer plastic materials. In developing countries such as ours, there are somethings that haven't been written in the law yet. So there are three types of flooring, the first one is solid wood, the second is laminated parquet and than there's laminate. You can find laminated flooring at any price. But they're illegal in a lot of countries because it's plastic. It's illegal because it's carcinogenic, and it's not breatheable so it's even worse by making you breathe bad air. It's very important to consider varnishes on children's rooms, because there can never be completely non-toxic paint if it's painted out of a paint gun. These things need to be more common in our country. These things are regulated in Sweden and Norway. What's been taught to us is to use PVC but it's completely carcinogenic... When



you look around the world the Americans insist on wood, while the Northern countries say aluminum or iron. But in our country we are making siding covered houses which basically make you live in a cancer shell. Because we are such an insensible folk we tend to care more about money than our health.

**What do you think will be the interior design trends in 2015 going to be?**

The trends are moving towards nature, better yet returning to it. From cream, beige to dark browns, all earthy colors are returning to interior design... Also in

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design, i try to use it as much as i can, so that i can make your home a favorable house. When we look at new projects in Turkey, sadly we can't find that; but i believe that it's going to start happening more often.

**What are some things that excite you?**

In the last for years, building design. I've always been doing interior design for 15 years and i've been getting excited over some special projects such as a fifteen meter dinner table for Paris Hilton, the world tour throne for Jennifer Lopez and Sting's kitchen and bathroom in his Walker Tower Penthouse in New York. For the last five years I've been getting excited over building design because then you are making something even more permanent. When you design an interior, it's either changed by the owner of the space or the owner changes and the new owner changes the design. But when you design a building, something you made has the potential to



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furniture earth colors, creams and dry browns are returning to fashion.

When designing interiors you need to have two main colors, a third auxiliary color, and a fourth pop of color. If you try to have a fifth color you might mix things up too much; there's a rule, discipline and a script to these things. There was a huge trend in minimalism around ten years ago, we saw a lot of blacks and whites, and then the silver leaves came in, now it's the earthly tones... Contemporary housing is going to be very fashionable soon and from 2015 to 2020 it's going to be the same.

**The recent terminologies of 'smart city', 'smart building', 'smart house' are being used very often. What is your general opinion on Smart Houses?**

I can't really agree on them being smart, i believe these are phony projects being fed to us. An iPad welcoming you to your home, using it to adjust the lights, the heating, even when you're not at home, doesn't

sound practical to me. The main issue is we are trying to adapt to a system we can't handle, there is no electrical current at 220 watts in our country. Because these are such delicate machines, issues start happening in the first week. I've made many smart houses but most of my clients wanted to change the light controls from the touch panel to switches. Without fixing the main issue, i don't really agree on using them, and i don't find them practical.

**We are focusing on bathrooms on our issue. What do you focus on when you are designing a bathroom? What are your criteria and quality based choices on bathroom furniture?**

I like to use things not usually found in bathrooms, it used to be wallpaper, then i started using steam resistant cloth, and lastly textile based wallpapers. I love a ceiling mirror in a bathroom. I think if you are someone who watches a lot of TV, you need to have a bathroom TV as well. I'm on the side of making life easier again, the

most common issue in a bathroom would be steamy mirrors. The easiest way out of this is a heated mirror, this way it won't get steamy.

With furnishing it's completely under the producers control, there's traditional 7 layered varnish that takes 7 days to put on, this way the piece of furniture won't get damaged with water. I choose to work with people who use this technique. In northern countries it's easy to find this kind of furniture producers, but you can find them here as well and you can get quality bathroom furniture.

**And what is the expectation of the clients about bathroom furniture?**

Usually the clients don't expect much, they are mostly okay with everything we do. □

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