

MY PLACE



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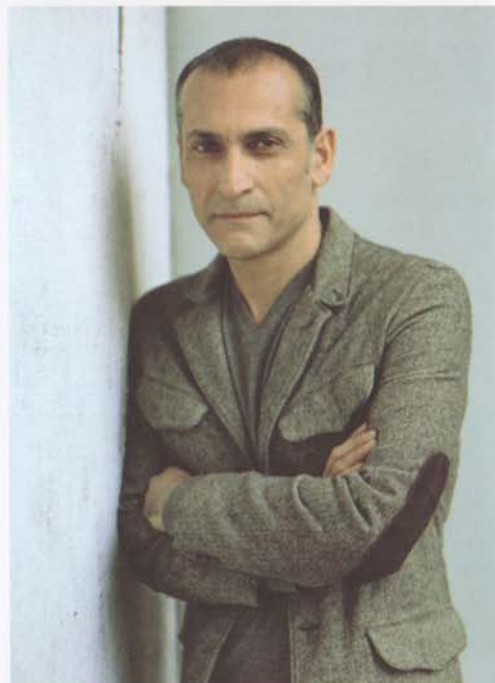
RETRO REDUX

*Seventies looks
get a shot of chic
this season*



FASHION | STYLE | NEWS

TEXT *Joyce Lau*



BASIC INSTINCT

CUT THE CLUTTER

Keep things simple with minimalist style for maximal taste, says designer Heidar Sadeki

Heidar Sadeki, a New York-based designer and architect who grew up in pre-revolutionary Iran, is still influenced by his childhood in Shiraz, the gracious city that lent its name to the famous wine. "It was an environment that was very intellectual, both inside and outside my family," he says. "We were interested in art, music, theatre – and I was infatuated with cinema. I remember my grandmother gave me one dollar for every poem I memorised – that would have been in Persian."

He moved to New York at the age of 17, initially to study cinema and to work in the film industry. But he found his real calling at Princeton University's small, prestigious architecture department, where he met his business partner, Clarissa Richardson. The Richardson Sadeki firm, founded in 1999, now has

offices in New York and Miami, with branches in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Sadeki's background is obvious in his works. His interiors may be modern and minimalist – but they are also luxurious, and punctuated by the sensuous textures and colours of the East. He gives his spaces a cinematic sweep and drama that reflect his early love of film.

Richardson Sadeki is currently working with Swire on a few projects, including Phase I of the Brickell City Centre, a multimillion-dollar complex in Miami with luxury residences. Closer to home is Swire's 30-storey Taikoo Place Apartments (TPA) in Hong Kong's Quarry Bay district.

A highlight is the lobby chandelier, which is definitely not the usual crystal-encrusted wedding-cake feature seen all over Hong Kong. Richardson Sadeki

commissioned almost 400 pieces of hand-blown glass from the Czech Republic. The raw materials weighed 3.5 tons and were positioned on the ceiling by Sadeki himself. The result – amid the lobby's dark grey backdrop – is like an ocean of softly glowing sea anemones undulating and floating overhead.

TPA has two spas, Fuse and Steep. The latter is a "mini spa" for only two people, inspired by Sadeki's early memories of a hammam, sometimes known as a Turkish bath. Spas are a Richardson Sadeki speciality. Its first client in the 1990s was New York's then-tiny Bliss Spa. A more recent, major achievement was the

Clockwise from top left: Interior decor in Taikoo Place Apartments; TPA lobby chandelier; Heidar Sadeki

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sprawling 15,000-square-foot Bathhouse spa at Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas, where the firm created sleek black-slate-clad interiors.

Sadeki is aware that in Hong Kong having that kind of space to play with is rare. He lived here from 2009 to 2010, and admits that property was “far more expensive” than even New York City. His advice for people living in a compact, urban environment is to keep things simple, and to use a few details to create a sense of beauty and escape.

“If there is an item you have not touched in a year, put it in storage. Get rid of the clutter,” he says, adding that he could only think if he had “clean white walls.”

He also warns against the temptation of constantly shopping for extraneous objects in a materialistic city like Hong Kong.

“Do not overspend. It you have three nice pillows, don’t buy another. Keep only the most essential things you need,” he says. “If I have 3,000 objects and photos of my ex-dog – well, I can’t think. The most important thing is to achieve a sort of

spatial silence. That is what we do.”

Sadeki looks for his own inspiration outside of work. In New York, he loves browsing through bookstores. In Hong Kong, he pokes around small stores and galleries – in fact, his firm has just commissioned local illustrator Sindy Lau to create the artwork for TPA.

“My real advice is to not just look at design or architecture journals, but to look at artwork,” he says. “Read art books, look at art, and learn from the spaces you see in that art.”

Finishing touches



FOR THE BEDROOM

“Try this bedside lamp made of paper, which comes in two sizes. HAY’s bedside drinking bottles and glasses are also both functional and decorative.”
HAY (Lane Crawford Home)

FOR THE DINING TABLE

“Simple and elegant, the playful brushstrokes on this tea set remind me of modernist paintings.”
Vista Alegre (Lane Crawford Home)

FOR THE LIVING ROOM

“These porcelain coasters, playing cards, pillows and throw will bring an accent of colour to your home.”
Jonathan Adler (Lane Crawford Home)