

Up Close & Personal

CHRISTINA LUK

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**MAKING HER
OWN LUK**

BY Juli Pisano

Driven by her passion to create thoughtful and timeless designs through collaboration with clients and creatives, the founder and principal of Lukstudio Design by Christina Luk sees no mountain too high, no river too wide, and in doing so, she has made her own luck in life.

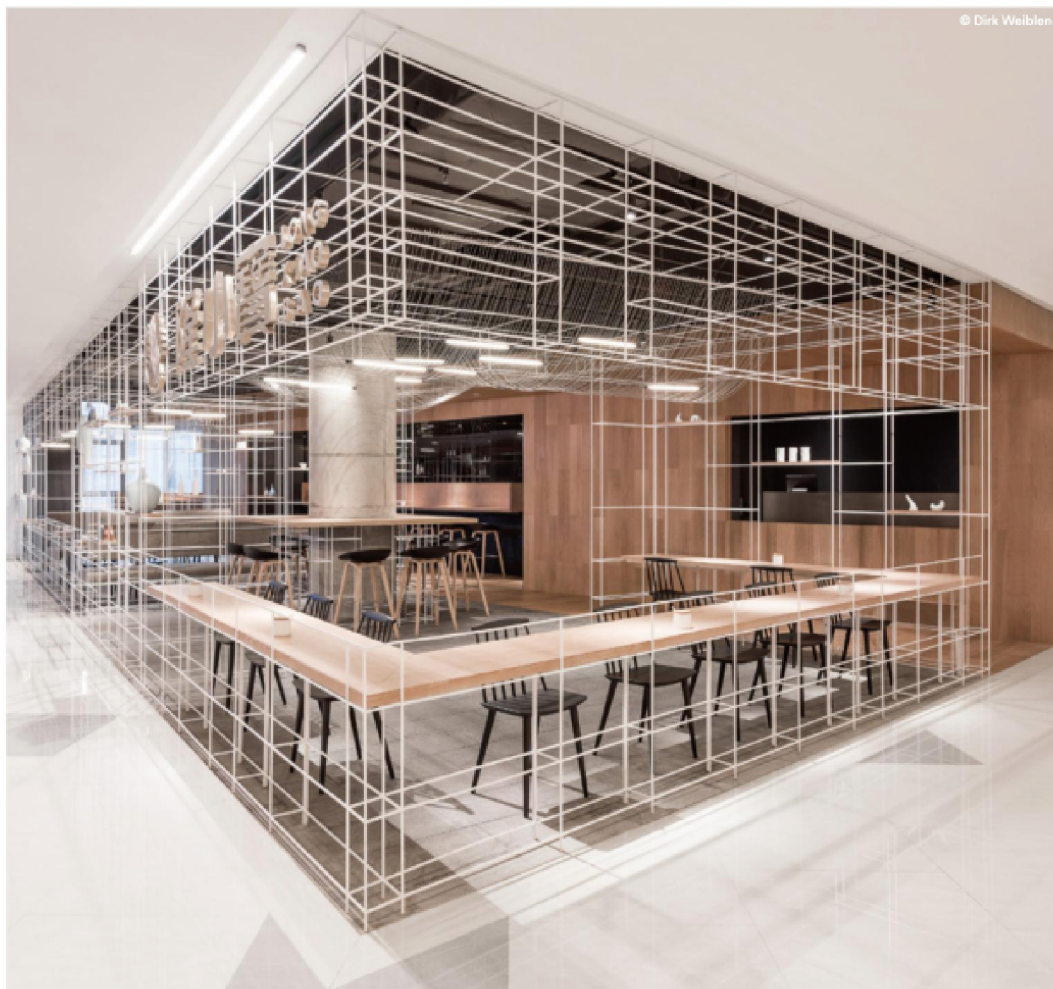
We caught up with her through the efficiency of Web tools as she sat on a balcony in Stockholm, overlooking a waterfront. Sun was up, spring nature was blooming all around, birds were chirping and she was, and I quote her, “as serene as I could ever be.”



THE FOLDED ARCADE, DESIGNED BY LUK STUDIO

THE FOLDED ARCADE, DESIGNED BY LUK STUDIO





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DINING BETWEEN LINES / LUKSTUDIO EXPLORES THE LIGHTNESS OF THE NOODLE RACK DESIGN AT ITS FIRST SHANGHAI LOCATION



DINING BETWEEN LINES

THE ROAD TAKEN

Prior to starting her own Shanghai-based design practice, Christina Luk was trained in Toronto, at Diamond Schmitt Architects and B+H Architects. Her career started expanded and diversified when she transferred to the B+H Shanghai office. She then sharpened her skills further at world-renowned design firm Neri and Hu Design and Research Office.

BEAUTY IN COLORS

Christina has always been attracted to beauty and cherishes the memories of attending drawing classes every weekend as a young girl growing up in Hong Kong, China back in the '80s. "When I was 6, I thought and dreamt of being a painter someday."

CRAFTY IN THE KITCHEN

What was the last thing Christina made with her own hands, we dare to ask? "Does making yoghurt from scratch count?", she counters back. "Otherwise, I was sketching a contemporary residence in a Stockholm suburb yesterday with pencils on a notebook. I remember more of the soothing sound the pencils made than the actual sketches I drew, really!"



OFFICE AROUND A TREE / A FUSION OF NATURE AND WORKSPACE / THE L-SHAPED GLAZED ADDITION BEAUTIFULLY INCORPORATES THE MAJESTIC WINTERSWEET TREE AND THE INVITING OUTDOOR COURTYARD, SEAMLESSLY BLENDING NATURE INTO THE HEART OF THE WORKING LIVES.

A LITTLE ABOUT HERSELF

One day in Stockholm, the other in Hong Kong where her parents live, Christina Luk enjoys life in the fast lane, with permanent offices overlooking a hectic elevated highway in downtown Shanghai. On her nightstand at home, or in hotels for that matter, lies books, earplugs and her cell phone... charging. Go figure!

What does she own in bulk? "Little black dresses, practical tote bags and flat sandals in all shades," she answers. Speaking of shades and color palettes, Christina has an inkling for dressing up in neutral tones like white, black, navy and beige but goes for as many natural materials as possible such as wood, stone, clay, and more when making architectural and interior element choices.

STUDY WITH HONORS

The backstory goes as follows. After finishing her A-Levels in England, Christina attended an Art and Design Foundation Course at the Middlesex University. "My teacher Valerie told me that I had a talent in 3D design and encouraged me to think about space and perspective."

JULY 1, 1997

When the handover of Hong Kong from the United Kingdom to the People's Republic of China happened on July 1, 1997, her family immigrated to Toronto, Canada, and Christina was faced with three choices in applying for university degrees.

OFFICE AROUND A TREE





OFFICE AROUND A TREE / OFFICE IN A LI-LONG – WITHIN THE HISTORIC CHARM OF A LATE 19TH CENTURY SHANGHAI LANEHOUSE, THE PROJECT BREATHES NEW LIFE INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THE SLEEK AND MINIMALIST ENTRANCE SEAMLESSLY BLENDS CONTEMPORARY DESIGN WITH THE ESSENCE OF TIME, ADDING A CAPTIVATING LAYER TO THIS CHERISHED ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY

Behind door number 1: Fine Arts at York University. Door number 2: Interior Design at Ryerson University. And door 3: Architecture at University of Toronto. Turns out, both Architecture and Christina chose each other. Back then, even Christina didn't know much about what she was getting into.

FIVE STARS

Practicing her craft with passion ever since, she has been blessed with the fortune of designing for new local brands who crave for bold design. Innovative projects like "the Noodle Rack" and the "Assembled Market" got Lukstudio its reputation for injecting new energy into existing typologies. These days, Christina and her talented team are also busy working with global brands such as Nikon and NIO.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

"Getting to improve the quality of a place and hopefully give the occupants a better connection with their environment, others and themselves is truly addictive. I also love how architecture gives me a context to discover the world and connect with all walks of life."

MISTAKE-MADE PERFECTION

"I like the idea that each mistake is an opportunity to learn and improve instead of a reason to beat oneself up. The irony though is that many of the architects and designers I respect the most are often those perfectionists who seem to never be content with their project's outcome."

LASTING QUALITY

For the past 10 years, Lukstudio Design has built up a portfolio in mostly commercial projects like stores or restaurants and is starting to have opportunities to design boutique guesthouses from ground up. It involves planning, architecture, interior design and soft furnishing specification. There are also a couple of high-end residences in the works. "It does make me happy that our team gets to work on projects that last through better quality."

A HOLISTIC APPROACH

Lukstudio Design is a multidisciplinary design studio that believes in "change in possible." Their methodology focuses on maximizing site potentials to create human-centric experiences. Striking a delicate balance between art and functionality, refining each concept with materiality and lighting, the team intends to create maximum effect with minimum intervention.

Each project is tailored to reflect a genuine understanding of the client and brand, respond to the context of the site, draw inspiration from culture, and speak to the history of the space. The result? Designs that are meticulously sensitive and curated with innovation.

URBAN ESCAPE

"Shanghai is a very convenient city to live and work in. It's full of opportunities, bursting with flavors and its West Bund is a Mecca of cultural venues and events. That being said, like many urbanites, I enjoy getting out of the city as much as living in it." And so, a break, a breather, a road trip does the trick. Especially when Smile by Nat King Cole comes up on the radio!



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THE INTERSTICES



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THE INTERSTICES / LUKSTUDIO INTRODUCES AN ARRAY OF LIGHT ON THE WALL TO ECHO THE OVERALL SPATIAL CONCEPT – THE INTERSTICES. WITH MIRROR LINING THE ENDS OF THE ROOM, THE RHYTHMIC ORDER APPEARS TO PROGRESS INTO INFINITY

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE SELF

When asked whom she'd like to spend a fantasy date with, Christina dares to go spiritual on us and candidly answers something profoundly beautiful in our opinion. "I would like to meet myself in past and future lives, to understand what my current life and what our universe is all about." She goes on to cite Dr. Brian L. Weiss' book called *Many Lives, Many Master* that inspired her not to take things too seriously in life. A fascinating book to add to our summer reads.

"I remind myself often that it is more important to be kind in life than to be right. I recently learned that it reads "His Work Lives" on Swedish architect Erik Gunnar Asplund's grave. I find it quite simple and so powerful. If it could read "She has done more good than harm" on mine, I would die happy."