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HOTEL DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT & ARCHITECTURE

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EAST HAMBURG

JORDAN MOZER'S
AMORPHOUS MASTERPIECE

MARCEL WANDERS

THE DON OF DUTCH
DESIGN ON HOTELS

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HOTEL DESIGN EVENT

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EAST HAMBURG



East's Oriental leanings come as no surprise given Hamburg's historical links as a trading port, but the West gets a look-in too.

ABOVE: Architect Jordan Mozer's design scheme uses signature amorphous forms through

It comes as no surprise to discover that a hotel called East should have a bias towards the Orient. The Yakshi's Bar and the Asian Lounge give the game away. But there is much more to the "philosophy" of this privately owned enterprise that comprises a large entertainment area at the front with guest rooms stuck on the rear. In keeping with Hamburg's strong traditions as a key Hanseatic trading port - its harbour is the second largest

in Europe after Rotterdam - the hotel reflects much more the union of West and East. As architect Jordan Mozer puts it, "the meeting between man and nature is seen on one. Eastern hand as a harmonious, flowing sense of movement or chi. Whilst on the other Western hand, the view is much more a Krieg (battle), a collision, as man attempts to dominate nature. I have used natural forms to encapsulate these relationships".

Working from the basis of the

building's original function, an iron foundry, led Mozer to start with that fairly raw of raw materials - pig iron. This is most easily cast in rounded forms and was the genesis for the signature aluminium basins used in guest rooms but also in public facilities, giving the latter a sense of style and belonging rather than just being an afterthought. Chicago based Mozer has long been associated with the amorphous. As exemplified by the rounded, curvaceous forms of his bright



white fibreglass furniture for the Royal Hotel in Miami's South Beach or the cuddly curves of his favourite doodle, that of his pet pig, Clementine. The futuristic white bar stools at Yakshi's bar with their hyperbolic parabola backs (ie. shaped like a saddle or potato crisp) have actually been culled from another of Mozer's projects, the now defunct Nectar Bar at the Bellagio in Las Vegas. Pretty much all other fixtures and fittings, including antler-shaped wine bottle holders and the hand-blown glass lamps are new commissions from Mozer specifically for the hotel.

A sense of flowing movement is apparent throughout the property,

most obviously in the vast, 12-metre high restaurant space that first greets the guest. Tall columns of sculptured plaster rise like tranquil curls of smoke from a lazy fire; walls are three dimensional wanderings curving this way and that, linking the sunken basement restaurant with the bars above. Whilst in the guest rooms the shell-like, cast aluminium basins sit on top of resin washstands, carved like wind blown stone. More curves in the oversized bed headboards that mock wingback chairs and invites the bed to be used as a deep sofa, whilst also doubling as a desk. The sauna on the decked, rooftop relaxation area is a sweep of orange and yellow mosaic



ABOVE: The vast 12 metre high restaurant with its curved billowing walls
LEFT: Mozer's futuristic white bar stools, previously used at the Bellagio's Nectar bar in Las Vegas, have now been redeployed at East's Yakshi bar

bands. The sauna's wooden interior is a Mozer one-off - wooden battens curving up off the floor, rolling over seating and into the ceiling, tapered to make it around the bends. The restaurant area becomes the place to party - a multi-functional space. After dinner, tables can be cleared and the DJ can work the "new" dancefloor from one of the cave-like cut-outs in the walls of the overlooking Colours Bar and unashamedly-labelled Smlimoff Lounge. For those in need of a bit more acoustic and personal privacy, shelter can be found in the exposed brick alcoves of the original foundry cellars. In the summer, the scene will spill out through tall French doors, onto the

branded courtyard, Dedon Island. The stone and timber decking is kitted out with Dedon's high quality, extruded polythene, rattan-alike outdoor furniture. Mozer was inspired by the gardens of Mies van der Rohe and Lloyd Wright for this indoor / outdoor area that effectively separates the guestrooms from the entertainment area.

There are Eastern influences. The four guest room floors are not only named and coloured after ginger, cinnamon, jasmine and mandarin but also scented with the appropriate fragrance. On the other hand, some of the decorative artwork shows more of the cooperation between east and



ABOVE: Antler shapes and forms are a dominant theme, as seen here in the Colours bar. RIGHT: The restaurant is a multi-functional space, with tables removed to leave an empty dancefloor space after dinner

west. Just as Christians would not use an image of Christ decoratively, nor would Buddhists and Mozer has taken just the stylised lockets of Buddha hair, cast them in resin and put them on display. In a more Western way, forms inspired by images of atoms, only seen by electron microscope, have been realised in a similar decorative way. The external façade of the hotel has a Disneyesque feel to it, being a new construction to replicate the original, as it was not possible to match up

the pre-existing bricks. The façade was constructed of panels, prefabricated off site to save time, allowing work to progress during the cold of winter. Above the entrance is an architectural glass structure that spans the old foundry and provides space for various meeting rooms and offices. There is also a residential element to the whole redevelopment of the foundry, located just off the infamous but relatively tame Reeperbahn. Architecturally there a numerous

developments in the Mozer "style" when considering both the scale and materials used to realise East and certainly plenty of surprises to greet guest, not the least of which are the under heated guestroom carpets. What is more, there is no question that the entertainment and food and beverage side of things will be well handled by a management team that has strong background in this field. Their first attempt at hotel management has got off to a promising start.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

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77 rooms
East
Asian Lounge, Dedon Island,
Yakshi's Bar, Colours Lounge and
Sminoff Lounge