

Serenity & simplicity

Hong Kong's Steve Leung notches up another first with his new Inkstone collection for Italian wellness brand Neutra

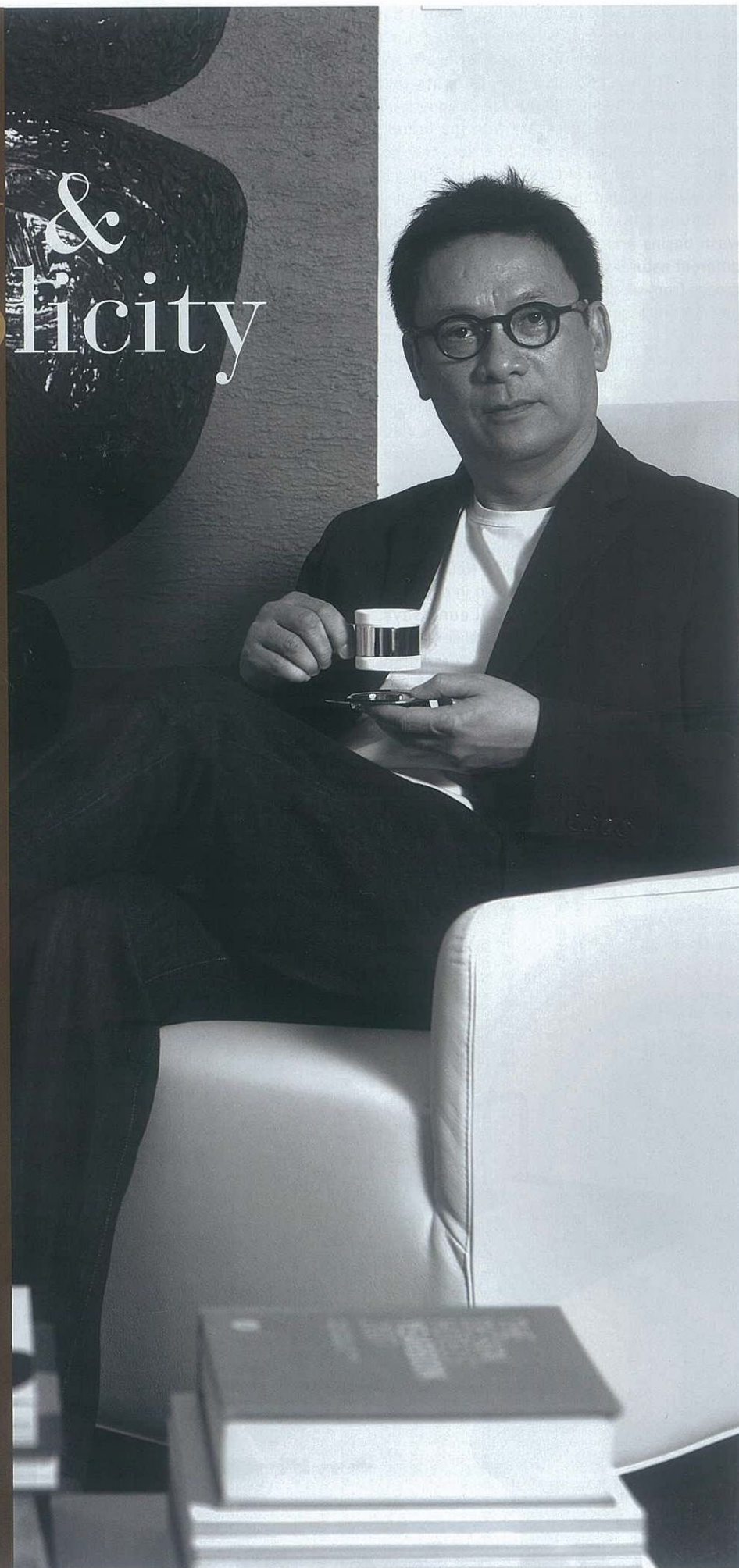
TEXT: SUZANNE MIAO
PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF NEUTRA

Ancient Chinese calligraphy and modern Italian style might seem like worlds apart, but between Hong Kong architect and designer Steve Leung and Italian wellness brand Neutra, they align perfectly in the form of the new Inkstone vanity collection (which is carried in Hong Kong exclusively by Colourliving).

Leung conceived the range based on his interest in the Chinese inkstone, which is used to grind the ink stick traditionally deployed for calligraphy. Considered one of the 'Four Treasures of Study', together with the brush, ink stick and paper, the ink stones come in various shapes and sizes, which is reflected in the items Leung created for Neutra.

"As a Chinese designer, I particularly wanted to add in Chinese elements when I designed my first vanity collection," Leung explains. "We had done some research and were inspired by the various shapes of Chinese ink stones and their long heritage. This collection aims to reveal an understated Asian beauty and wisdom for well-being."

The minimal decoration, simple form and elegant details of the collection "fully demonstrate the profound Chinese culture", he adds. Inkstone reveals a unity of Chinese heritage and ancient wellness wisdom through the use of rock stone in a modern, minimalist style. The whole collection expresses Leung's philosophy of minimalism and Neutra's dedication to natural stone beauty. "We felt that Neutra's style was very much in line with Steve's - minimalist and stylish, with simple forms and shapes," says Neutra owner Benedetta Arnaboldi. "It was also an opportunity for us to match Asian tradition with western culture... he is the first Asian designer we have worked with."



So far, in addition to Leung, Neutra has collaborated with four other designers – Luca Martorano, Elia Nedkov, Nespoli E Novara and Matteo Thun – and also maintains its own inhouse design team. The outside designers will collaborate where necessary with the brand's technical department as well, to ensure that not only are their creative visions realised accurately, but that they can be realised at all.

Leung's Inkstone range comprises four wash basins and a bathtub, available in nine different natural stones. The production process ranges from six weeks for the bathtub – which is hewn from a single piece of stone – to four weeks for the sinks. Through the form, presentation, style and way of handling brushes, ink, ink stones and paper, calligraphy conveys moral integrity, character, emotions, aesthetics and culture. Leung has interpreted this via a carefully considered adaption of colour, shape and texture. "It is important to have a story; Neutra – founded in 1880 – has a story. All our collections have a story," says the brand's export manager, Etienne Marelli.

"About one or two years ago, Neutra came to me and asked if I was interested in designing a vanity collection for them," Leung says. "Neutra is very special. They specialise in using natural stone materials to manufacture vanity

collections and have collaborated with western designers of different nationalities... I felt it was an interesting challenge, that it might be a good thing to be the first Asian designer to collaborate with them."

Leung's 'moment of inspiration' was not so much a 'moment' but something which evolved naturally over time, he says: "I found that I was kind of proficient in designing this project and I didn't need much time," he explains. "As I wanted to create a collection with Chinese flair, I deliberately did some related research and was inspired by the diversity and rich cultural background of ink stones."

While there are no current plans to expand the range with further items, Leung says he remains happily open to the idea. As an interior designer, moving into the creation of actual furniture/décor/vanity items came about more by happenstance than because he felt there was a gap in the market. "Honestly speaking, I had not planned to make a foray into product design when I designed my first furniture collection, i-chi... That said, I have always been interested in product design, and that I didn't need to restrict myself to interior design only. That's why I am happy to collaborate with different companies and create different products. These experiences bring me a lot of inspiration and contentment."



This page Steve Leung's Inkstone range for Neutra comprises four different sinks and a bathtub Facing page The Inkstone bathtub is hewn from a single piece of rock



恬靜簡約

香港著名室內設計師梁志天，首次設計浴室潔具便是為意大利品牌 Neutra 設計最新 Inkstone 系列

撰文：SUZANNE MAO
攝影：BENEUTRA 提供

中國古代書法以及意大利現代風格看來風馬牛不相及，但香港建築及設計師梁志天 (Steve)，將兩種特色展現在意大利浴室潔具品牌 Neutra 的產品上，令它們以完全一致的形式，融合傳統與現代的元素，創造出最新的 Inkstone 系列 (現於香港 ColourLiving 獨家發售)。

Steve 中國的墨硯情有獨鍾，墨硯是傳統用來研墨棒作書法的工具。有「文房四寶」之稱的墨硯、毛筆、墨和紙，當中 Steve 以墨硯的各種形狀和大小，反映在 Neutra 的系列設計上。

「身為一位中國設計師，我特別想加入中國的元素在首個衛浴設計中。」他解釋。「在準備製作前，我們不斷研究有關中國墨硯的歷史，當中得到不少啟發。而這個系列的目的就是要體會及展現出中國的美及智慧。」

以精簡的裝飾、簡單的形狀及優雅的細節充分體現「中國文化的博大精深」，他補充說。透過運用現代簡約風格的岩石，硯石揭示了一種統一的中國傳統文化及古老的精湛智慧。「整個系列溫暖地表達出 Steve 對於極簡主義的理念，以及 Neutra 致力於採用天然石材。」我們認為 Neutra 的產品是與 Steve 的風格是一致的。極簡約及時尚，取材簡單的形式及形狀。」Neutra 的 Benedetta Arnboldi 說。「這是一個難得的機會，讓我們將亞洲傳統與西方文化兩者結合，而 Steve 是第一個與我們合作的亞洲設計師。」

直到目前，Neutra 除了與 Steve 合作以外，亦曾經與四位設計師合作過，包括 Luca Martorano, Elia Nedkov, Nespoli E Novara 及 Matteo Thun，還有 Neutra 的自家設計團隊。而外來的設計師會與 Neutra 的技術部門溝通合作，確保不僅致於設計師的創作視野，亦要保持平衡能夠活用於生活上。

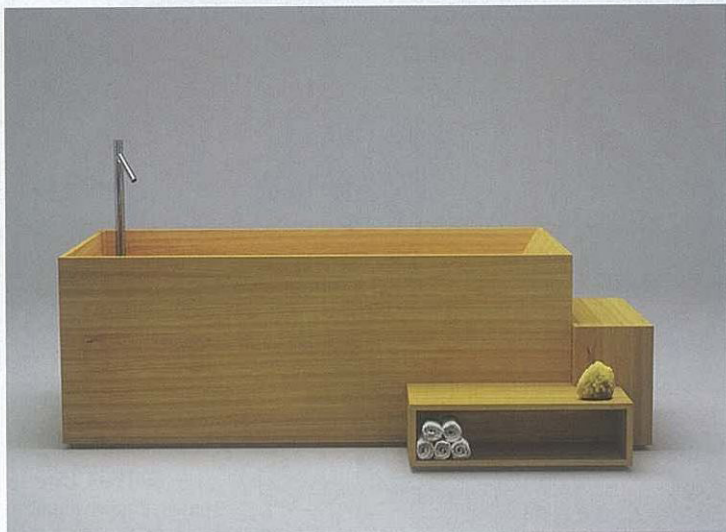
Inkstone 浴室潔具的其中一個系列是四個洗手盆配以浴缸的組合，以九種不同的天然寶石所造成。浴缸由一塊塊的石頭鑿成的過程大約需時四週，以至完成整個生產過程大約六週。透過形狀、表現形式、風格以及處理毛筆、墨、墨硯及紙，書法是一門藝術去傳達出作品的道德操守、性格、情感、美學和文化的力量及視覺上對於美的享受。Steve 仔細地解釋運用顏色、形狀和紋理對於設計師是非常重要的。「擁有一個故事是十分重要的，Neutra 成立於 80 年有一個故事；同樣我們所有的藏品都有一個故事。」出口部經理 Etienne Marelli 說道。

Steve 說：「在一兩年前的時候，Neutra 問我有沒有興趣為他們設計衛浴系列。」Neutra 是很特別的品牌，它專門運用天然的石材去製造衛浴系列，而且與西方不同國籍的設計師合作：我覺得這挑戰挺有趣的，這也是個好消息吧，因為這次是 Neutra 首次與亞洲設計師合作。」

Steve 的「靈感時刻」不只是一瞬間的「時刻」，而是隨著時間而演進。他說：「我發現自己不需要太多的時間去構想這個設計。」他解釋：「我想創作有關中國風格的作品，因此特意研究相關的資料，當中亦被豐富的文化色彩及差異，啟發到我對於浴室設計的靈感。」

直到目前 Steve 沒有大長遠去計劃下一步，對於自己這個想法，他反而感到開心。作為一個室內設計師，Steve 認為能夠成功發展至設計家具、裝飾品、浴室產品是偶然的事情，始終講求創意與市場生存之間還有一定的差距。「老實說，當我設計首個傢具系列時，沒有刻意宣揚揚去；而一直以來我對產品設計也感到興趣，所以無必要侷限自己只在室內設計之中。我感到非常榮幸能夠與不同的公司合作，創作出不同的產品，這些經歷帶給我許多靈感及滿足。」E

Bathroom Product 浴室產品



Company 得獎者: Bisazza Bagno by Designlink
Project 得獎作品: The Nendo Collection
Project leader 項目總監: Oki Sato

In the past, Japanese bathrooms were a place for communication, with families bathing together and public baths common until a few decades ago. The Nendo Collection envisions the bathing environment as private and functional, but with a sense of 'gathering'. The objective was to create a strong singular impression by assembling various elements of a bathroom suite as though they were 'all in the bath together'.

在過去的日本，一家人會齊聚浴室邊沐浴邊聊天，而直至數十年前公眾浴場還很盛行。The Nendo Collection把沐浴環境想成是實用的私人空間，卻帶有「共聚」的意味，旨在透過拼湊浴室的不同元素，跟配件「一同沐浴」，營造出強烈獨特的感覺。



Company 得獎者: Neutra
Project 得獎作品: Inkstone
Project leader 項目總監: Steve Leung

Inspired by precious Chinese ink stones, one of the four treasures of study in China, the Inkstone vanity collection pays homage to the ink stone and Chinese calligraphy by adapting colour, shape and texture. Sophisticated millstone craftsmanship, minimal decoration, earthy hues, a simple form, elegant details and careful proportions fully capture the essence of the art of calligraphy.

梁志天設計師事務所設計的Inkstone潔具系列，靈感源自中國文房四寶之一的墨硯，透過其色調、形狀及質感向墨硯及中國書法致敬。精湛的石磨工藝配合簡約的修飾，泥褐色調配簡單形狀，加上典雅細節及細膩比例，充分捕捉書法藝術的精髓。

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