

> Life&Style

Creativity comes first

International designer Danny Fang shares his views on the Matryoshka chairs he designed for Kian Contract

Design has the power to inspire. That is the belief of Dutch designer Danny Fang who recently undertook a special assignment for local firm Kian Contract Sdn Bhd.

A graduate from the Design Academy in Eindhoven, a city in the south of the Netherlands, this 32-year-old whose mother is Dutch and father is from the Caribbean islands has long harboured the desire to "make beautiful, inspiring things."

Soon after he left the academy in 1998, Fang ventured to Africa where he made crafts at trade fairs, followed by a stint with the Dutch Association of Applied Scientific Research.

Thereafter, he worked for six years with world-famous design house Marcel Wanders Studio as its senior designer in charge of the product department.

A self-confessed people-watcher, Fang says people

are at the centre of his inspirations and that he is constantly fascinated with the way people respond to things.

That led this "passionate and impatient" person to quit his job in January last year "because what I was doing didn't satisfy me any-

more" and move to Hong Kong to set up his own studio.

"My new goal is to support the great production strength in Asia ... with my Western way of thinking and

designing, I think I can really make a difference here," he says.

A beneficiary of his presence is Kian Contract, a local furniture company that commissioned him to design a set of outdoor and indoor chairs.

Inspired by the stackable Russian nested Matryoshka dolls (also known as Babushka dolls), the way the smaller pieces can be placed inside the

larger ones led Fang to create a chair design that is fun, yet highly functional.

Because a set of Matryoshka chairs comprising "a papa chair, mama chair and a pair of children's chairs" are made from recyclable extruded polyethylene fibre and welded aluminium

frames, they are also environmentally friendly, easy-to-maintain and light, weighing just 22kg in total.

"In this collaboration with Kian, I found a great opportunity to design products using modern materials, resulting in appealing and durable furniture," says Fang, whose studio also focuses on combining electronics with interior and lifestyle items to produce creations that "excel in beauty and intelligence".

From his chance encounter with Kian Contract's James Ng that gave rise to "something smart, something sexy and something nobody else has done before", Fang went on to design many other furniture pieces, some of which were displayed at the Malaysian International Furniture Fair held in Kuala Lumpur recently.

Ask this food and fun-loving designer for advice to give

aspirants who want to enjoy similar success and he says: "Good design is defined by a solid concept and a proper articulation of that idea.

"I come from a place where there are over 35 political parties. Every one in the country has something to say.

"This creates a culture where creativity can prosper ... there, we teach our children to ask questions more than to follow rules."

It is the environment, he adds, that stimulates conceptual thinking.

For now, however, Fang is happy basking in the knowledge that his Matryoshka chair has been able to strike right at the heart of an international design language, appreciated by Malaysians as well.



Fang's aspiration has always been to make "beautiful, inspiring things".



Fang's design won the Best Outdoor Furniture Award and Gold Award for Furniture Excellence at the recent Malaysian International Furniture Fair.



The stackable Matryoshka chairs was created specially for Kian Contract.

For more details, call Kian Contract at 03-4042 3026




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