

[Interiors]

Rachel Meek looks at the most daring, dazzling and innovative interior designs recently on show around the world

Light and Colour

Light fantastic

TWENTY THOUSAND STRIPS of black and white fabric were used to construct wonderWALL at the Colombo Shopping Mall in Lisbon, Portugal, in September 2014. The temporary exhibition space by LIKEarchitects was designed to house *The Pool*, an interactive art installation by Jen Lewin.

The suspended structure eradicates the need for an entrance, having 'a fully permeable façade' that spreads the point of entry along the entire periphery of the cylindrical gallery. The brief was to present the public with an immersive space that brings awareness to the act of stepping into the unknown. The concentric circles of *The Pool* react to the steps of visitors, which trigger a change in the colour of the radiating light.

The sizeable circle stretched for fourteen metres in diameter, white fronds formed a dome within, while black strands separated the inner sanctum from the mall outside. Hovering above the floor, an unbroken line of light seeped from within, intriguing passers-by to investigate. From the balconies above, the exposed woven surface of the ceiling was revealed. Inside, the multiple moving elements surrounded and contained the artwork, reflecting the ever-changing coloured light that emanated from a stepping-stone platform, and illuminating the whole space.

www.likearchitects.net
www.jenlewinstudio.com

Legally upcycled

DISCARDED DESSO CARPETS are dyed red by young Dutch design duo rENs. The Re-vive collaboration, presented at Milan Design Week 2014, upcycles unwanted flooring into desirable design in variegated rouge.

A series of twenty-three dip-dyed, customised rugs were commissioned by the Dutch Government Buildings Agency. These adorn the walls of the informal meeting spaces at the Public Prosecution Services Rotterdam (the Openbaar Ministerie, known as 'OM Rotterdam'). Concern is the architects' practice responsible for overseeing the entirely new, purpose-built space. It aimed to champion natural light and to create an inspiring and 'future-proof' interior.

The wall-mounted works by rENs introduce a splash of gradated colour to the otherwise neutral, minimal environment. The texture softens the straight lines and hard surfaces. The manual dyeing process is almost tangible, introducing a comforting warmth and familiarity to the smartly uniform air.

www.madebyrens.nl



Long rug in short time

LATE IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR, Joshua Bridie at design firm Gensler approached interior designer Vicki Simon with a challenge: to design, make and fit a forty-four-foot-long, custom rug for the lobby of Salesforce, a San Francisco tech company, by 1 February 2015.

With the usual turnaround for a bespoke Vicki Simon rug being four to six months, and the holiday season fast approaching, something unusual was called for. The concept of 'connection' was mentioned, as was the company's corporate colour of blue. But it was while in conversation with her dye-house that a light-bulb moment occurred for Simon. The idea bypassed the need for dyeing new yarn, recycled existing stock and presented an opportunity for spur-of-the-moment creative freedom too.

Simon proposed her intentions to Bridie: to use her archive of dyed samples and remnants from previous projects, all stored locally in her San Francisco studio. It would mean weaving a story in colour, 'tufting a line until the colour runs out, then tufting the next...' The enthusiasm and motivation for the high-end 'rag rug' caught on.

The order of yarns was planned out in eight-foot sections once a week. Tufting happened seven days a week. The resulting carpet is unique. Bridie describes it as the 'jewellery' of the space, connecting the seating area and fitting in the Salesforce lobby 'like a comfortable shoe'.

www.vickisimon.com



Suite success

ONE OF MILAN'S most prestigious luxury hotels, Excelsior Hotel Gallia, is to reopen soon. The jewel of Belle Epoch sophistication first opened its doors to the Italian elite in 1932. Recently it has undergone a complete renovation by the Milanese designer Marco Piva, and Secret du Luxe supplied the rugs.

Roya Sahrai of Secret du Luxe is accustomed to creating special Belle Epoch carpet designs. Having lived in Milan since 2001, she is attracted to classical European Art Nouveau, which she has merged with minimal Italian geometrical style. 2015 marks the twentieth anniversary of her company, and finds her perfectly positioned to conjure up the dramatic Deco carpets required for three of the most sumptuous and extravagant suites.

The *Gabin Revisited* carpet reinvents the earlier *Gabin-2010* with stunning results. This is one of seventy-eight carpets in seven designs by the firm, scattered throughout suites that feature a private Pagoda Spa, dedicated terraces, a kitchenette finished with Limoges porcelain and French crystal, bespoke furniture by Studio Piva, and a diplomatic entrance. Secret du Luxe carpets have found their perfect home.

www.secretduluxe.com