

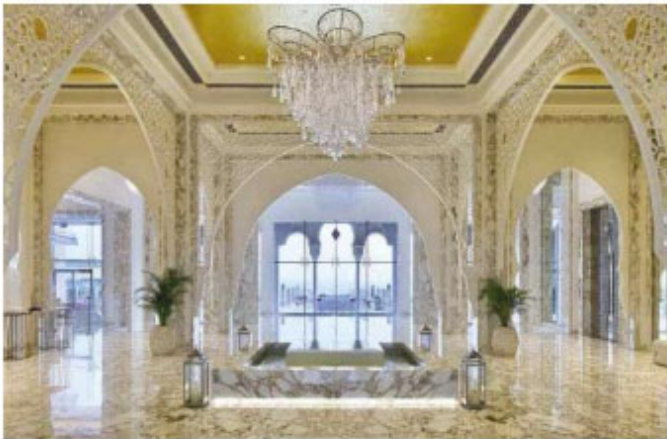
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THE WORLD'S
LEADING
DESIGN
NAMES

2020



CLAIRE CRAIG AND JOEY SAMERA
WA INTERNATIONAL
DESIGN DIRECTOR & ASSOCIATE



“When it comes to interior design, inspiration can be found anywhere and everywhere. Design is not solely about aesthetics, but it is also about functionality, exact measurements, scale and balance.”

WA International is a Dubai based, award-winning interior design studio who specialise in providing intelligent and innovative designs which are tailored to each client's requirements. Established in 1993, WA International's unique designs have allowed them to establish a reputation for being fresh and original in the design industry, as well as a list of enviable clients.

Tell us a little about your background in design (education, experience, etc)

I'm an Architect by profession and an inspirational Head Concept Designer with a demonstrated history of working in the design industry, spanning twenty-eight years creating a wide variety of hospitality projects, both in the MENA region and internationally. I am an exceptionally creative thinker, with an equal level of technical knowledge and experience gained through successfully taking countless projects, from concept through to completion.

My personal style is contemporary and modern with a philosophy of "less is more". A keen awareness of space, an inherent understanding of scale and proportion, and a respect for the principles of design with levitation toward details.
- Joey Samera

I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Studies faculty of Architecture in Canada, I then went on to do a Masters in Architecture in the USA after living in Saudi Arabia and Egypt for a couple of years. I then moved to London where I completed the RIBA part three in architecture. After ten years working in London, I returned to the Middle East, this time to Dubai and have been here since 1996.
- Claire Craig

How would you describe your personal design style?

Creative and minimalist, yet luxurious. - JS

Eclectic elegance. - CC

Where does your design inspiration come from?

When it comes to interior design, inspiration can be found anywhere and everywhere. Design is not solely about aesthetics, but it is also about functionality, exact measurements, scale and balance. This is a rule of thumb that has to be followed for projects to be successful. I'm a visual person, images and shapes often give me the inspiration to my concept. Interesting details is what my eye is naturally drawn to, and I reinterpret them in a timeless approach. - JS

Nature, local architecture and indigenous cultures. - CC

In what direction do you feel that design is moving towards in a general sense?

I have observed a return to some of the classic styles with a modern twist. - JS

I believe design trends have become much more simplistic. Finishes are natural and organic, furniture styles are less fussy, clean lines and elegant proportions always result in a timeless design. - CC

Name five key themes to consider when approaching design in 2020 and beyond.

1. Creating a storyline
2. Fitted to clients' lifestyles
3. Creative use of layers of materials
4. Attention to details and budget
5. Practical designs and sustainability - JS

1. Design concepts with a "sense of place"
2. Source and specify local renewable materials and finishes
3. Support and advocate the use of local industries and artisans
4. Encourage maximum use of natural light in planning
5. Specify energy and water conservation products - CC

If you could offer one piece of advice when it comes to design schemes, what would it be?

Don't be afraid, be bold and believe in yourselves. - JS

How important are The International Hotel & Property Awards?

It is important to be heard and recognised amongst other design professionals. - JS

The International Hotel & Property Awards provide a great opportunity to see your industry colleague's work and present your own. The Award is a valuable acknowledgment of a design company's creative and technical skills. Our clients also appreciate they have chosen an award winning company. The accolade is a further enhancement in our credentials. - CC

What projects are you currently working on?

I am currently working on a couple of five-star hospitality projects with Hyatt International and Hilton Group. - JS

We are presently on site with several luxury hotels and serviced hotel apartments in Dubai and London,

as well as a resort property in Jaipur. We will be putting the finishing touches on three new hotels in Dubai for early 2020, and several refurbishments are also underway. We're also in promising negotiations for exciting new projects in Eastern and Northern Africa. - CC

What are your aims and goals for the next twelve months?

My personal aim in our company is to continue to deliver the best professional design service possible to our clients. - JS

Final thoughts; tell us a little more about yourself and your daily inspirations:

Your most treasured possession?
My family. - JS

Your favourite holiday destination?
Prague and Italy. - JS

Going home to Canada to visit my family. - CC

Your favourite hotel, restaurant & bar?
Nothing specific, anywhere with great service and good interior design. - JS

One & Only, The Palm Dubai and favourite restaurant & bar is Bleu Blanc at The Renaissance Downtown Dubai. - CC

Your favourite book, film & song?
Les Misérables by Victor Hugo, jazz and country music. - JS

I love reading thriller novels, the likes of Lee Childs, Grisham and Dick Francis. As for movies, I enjoy everything from thriller to romantic comedies. My music varies from Carly Simon to Led Zeppelin. - CC

Your favourite food and drink?
Anything organic and healthy. - JS

My favourite food is Chinese. - CC

Your favourite way to spend an afternoon?
Relaxing and reading inspirational books. - JS

Going out for lunch with family and friends. - CC

If you weren't a designer, what would you be?
I can't think of any other profession than being an Interior Designer. - JS

I love shopping for local sculptures, antiques and pottery on my travels, and the idea of my own shop is very appealing. - CC



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PASSIONATE ABOUT DESIGN

*Creating Distinctive Designs
and Memorable Interiors*

Renaissance Hotel, Downtown Dubai

Award-winning WA International continues to create some of the world's finest interiors.

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