

# SOPHIE DRIES

"It's absolutely essential for me. Being trained as an architect, I always start by feeling the space. Whether it's historical, newly built, or deeply connected to nature, each project has its own story before I even arrive. I take time to understand what's happened there and what the space is telling me. Then, of course, the client comes into play. Designing someone's home is like creating a portrait—it should look like them, but it's painted by me. So it's a conversation, a co-creation, but one that I shape with my sensibility."





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**Your studio respects the “genius of the place” in its projects. How do you interpret and integrate a location’s essence into your designs?**

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**You work across residential, retail, and hospitality. How does your approach shift depending on the type of space?**

Each type of space comes with its own brief—whether it’s a three-bedroom flat, a shoe boutique, or a gallery. But for me, what remains constant is that flash of intuition at the beginning. It’s quite abstract—sometimes I see a wave of wood, or a particular light quality—and I follow that impulse. Often, that first sketch holds the truth of the project, and the challenge is holding onto that initial spark through all the practical layers—technical issues, budgets, production. That’s the dance of each project, no matter the category.

**What defines your aesthetic, and how has it evolved since founding your studio in 2015?**

Texture is a major obsession of mine. As a child, I wanted to be a chemist, so I’m naturally drawn to processes that involve transformation—materials that melt, fuse, or react. I love paradoxes: a rough, textural material next to a clean, minimalist line. I’m not into overly figurative or decorative elements, and I try to strike a balance between minimalism and something more emotionally expressive. My aim is always timelessness—I want my clients to live with their interiors for many years without feeling the urge to change them.

**How do you balance innovation with tradition when**

**working with exceptional craftsmanship?**

It’s a tricky balance. You want to innovate, but not for the sake of it. You also want to respect tradition without being nostalgic. I work with natural materials, and I always collaborate with skilled craftspeople. Even when I’m experimenting—which I do a lot—it’s rooted in the knowledge of how things are made. Some of my experiments fail, and I’m okay with that. I also listen to my team and my collaborators; I never work alone. It’s like making a film—you need many voices, but also a clear vision.

**Your work spans architecture, interiors, and collectible design. How do these disciplines inform one another in your creative process?**

To me, it’s all about zooming in and out of scale. Architecture gives me the tools to structure and understand space—light, sound, flow. Interiors let me shape function and atmosphere. And collectible design gives me freedom to explore and be more sculptural or abstract. I don’t believe in creating a total look, though. A great interior should feel personal, so I mix vintage, custom, contemporary, and found objects. That’s where the soul of a space comes in.

**You collaborate with both artisans and established brands. How do you choose your collaborators, and what makes a great creative partnership?**

It’s always organic. I never look for collaborators—they come through encounters, shared curiosity, or recommendations. It has to be mutual. Sometimes a curator or gallery introduces me to someone and says, “You two should meet.” I really follow my instinct. A great collaboration is like a good conversation—you build trust, respect each other’s strengths, and create something that neither of you could have done alone.

**Sustainability and material awareness are key in your projects. What are some of the most exciting materials or processes you’re currently exploring?**

Sustainability starts with materials. I only work with natural ones—ceramics, glass, wood, metal, fabric,











stone. But it also means preserving skills, supporting crafts that could otherwise disappear. We often educate clients about the value behind these pieces—the time, the cost, the skill—and encourage them to appreciate and care for them. I'm fascinated by transformation through fire—ceramics, molten glass, burned patterns in wool. There's something alchemical and emotional in that process, almost witchy, and I love it.

**Many of your furniture pieces are showcased in galleries. What excites you most about the intersection of interior design and collectible design?**

It's very complementary. My objects often originate from my interior projects. I wanted to make things that weren't client-driven—just a table or a vase created purely out of creative impulse. Now, some people know me more for my gallery pieces than my interiors, which is ironic. But what's beautiful is when those worlds meet—clients commissioning custom pieces, or someone buying a piece I designed without us ever meeting. It creates a kind of quiet intimacy.

**When creating a space, how do you ensure it remains timeless while still feeling contemporary?**

There are a few key principles for me. Light comes first—where it enters, how it changes the space. Then comes the layout—symmetry, proportion, volume. These are ancient principles, and they work across eras. I avoid too many patterns; I prefer texture over ornament. Color-wise, I let the client guide me, but always with balance. If there's doubt, it usually means the idea isn't right. I aim to make spaces that don't follow trends but feel right—for as long as they can.

**What's next for your studio? Any upcoming projects or new directions you're particularly excited about?**

We're just completing an art gallery in Japan, which has been a beautiful journey—so connected to craft and detail. I'm also developing a furniture collection with Future Perfect in the U.S., expanding from mirrors into full pieces. And I'm very excited about participating in the Design Biennale in Algeria next year, collaborating with local craftspeople, probably in ceramics. There's a great energy in that part of the world, and I'm looking forward to exploring it more deeply.









# DARREN JETT

"I always begin by listening to the space. What does the space want to be, what is its attitude and point of view? What secrets from its past are waiting to be uncovered again? What does its future hold? And after that we listen to our clients by reading between the lines of what they say and how they live and move throughout the world. How will these new shephards herald this space into the future? How will it affect their moods, their lifestyle and their choices? What are the references we can use from my client's travels, their histories, and their secret desires?"







DARREN

JETT

**Your work is described as atmospheric and narrative-driven. How do you begin crafting a story for a space?**

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**You balance historical touchpoints with a modern lens. Can you share an example of a project where this interplay was particularly striking?**

We have a project nearing completion— a large Tudor estate for a young Indian couple. We poured through their family's past-- where they immigrated from, the temples they prayed in, the rivers, animals, allegories and symbols that were important to their culture. And the house has this, with countless murals detailing their life, and with upholstery covered in saris gifted during special family moments. But it couldn't just be historical, and it couldn't just be Indian. We incorporated how the couple lives today and their modern life. The sari covered upholstery is actually a massive sunken seating pit perfect for entertaining their lively friends. The mural walls cover their kitchen where they cook modern, healthy meals from their vegetable garden next door. And next to the saris are embossed velvet draperies in a Louis XVI pattern around a lacquered bar, referencing their favorite secret hotel in Paris.

**How do you create a sense of timelessness in your interiors, where spaces feel "suspended without time"?**

We create timelessness by being unafraid to reference the past, and by infusing it with radical new ways of living.

**What role do the senses—beyond just sight—play in shaping the environments you design?**

Memory plays the biggest role in my projects. There is a certain nostalgia. Perhaps for a more glamorous and forgotten past, or perhaps for more humble beginnings before time became a commodity. Sometimes that memory can be who that person wanted to be at one point, but life got in the way, and we are now recapturing that spirit for a new world. The memory often comes from travel -- how the sun felt on wet skin after a day spent in the Red Sea, for instance, and what memories that evokes.

**You've designed for luxury hotels, restaurants, and homes. How does your approach shift depending on the type of space?**

I think all my homes take the same approach as hotels and restaurants. Dramatic environments that transport you into a world of your own, where anything might be possible. When designing hotels, we envisioned everything from family reunions to love affairs. The visual volume might be higher in hotels, but we play with the same kit of parts.

**Are there any historical periods or design movements that you keep returning to for inspiration?**

I might start many projects with a base in the 1960s and 1970s...a period of creativity and radical lifestyle shifts. I may then combine that with moments from Art Deco, or the period after during the 1930s and 40s. I will always try to incorporate more ancient histories as well-- whether Roman antiquity, motifs from the Levant, or other touchpoints from my clients' families.

**What is your process for uncovering a client's personal narrative and translating it into an interior space?**

I rarely ask for images because I find most people have a narrow range of visual references in their heads. Instead, I ask for words, as people love to talk about themselves and their dreams for the future and who they are currently. This world building through words is important to my practice. I begin each project with an









extensive questionnaire, and then my potential clients and I go on a "date" to review them. I ask everything from their interests, to their dream hotels, having them walk me through imagined scenarios that play out. It's a bit like a movie script in that way.

**Can you share a project that challenged you in an unexpected way and how you navigated it?**

Every new project is a challenge, in that I am trying constantly to uncover the hidden layers of my clients' desires. And every project might look different, requiring a new source of research.

**How has founding Jett Projects in 2020 shaped your perspective on design and the industry at large?**

Since 2020, I've discovered that the right clients want something unusual and completely bespoke to them. No one wants to walk into their friend's house and see the same sofa or lamp. I've also discovered that the general population values the exact same thing--something special, rare, and dramatic that transports them to a fantasy world. I remember once being concerned that some of my designs were too bold, or too different from what's trending on Instagram. I've since realized the power that has.

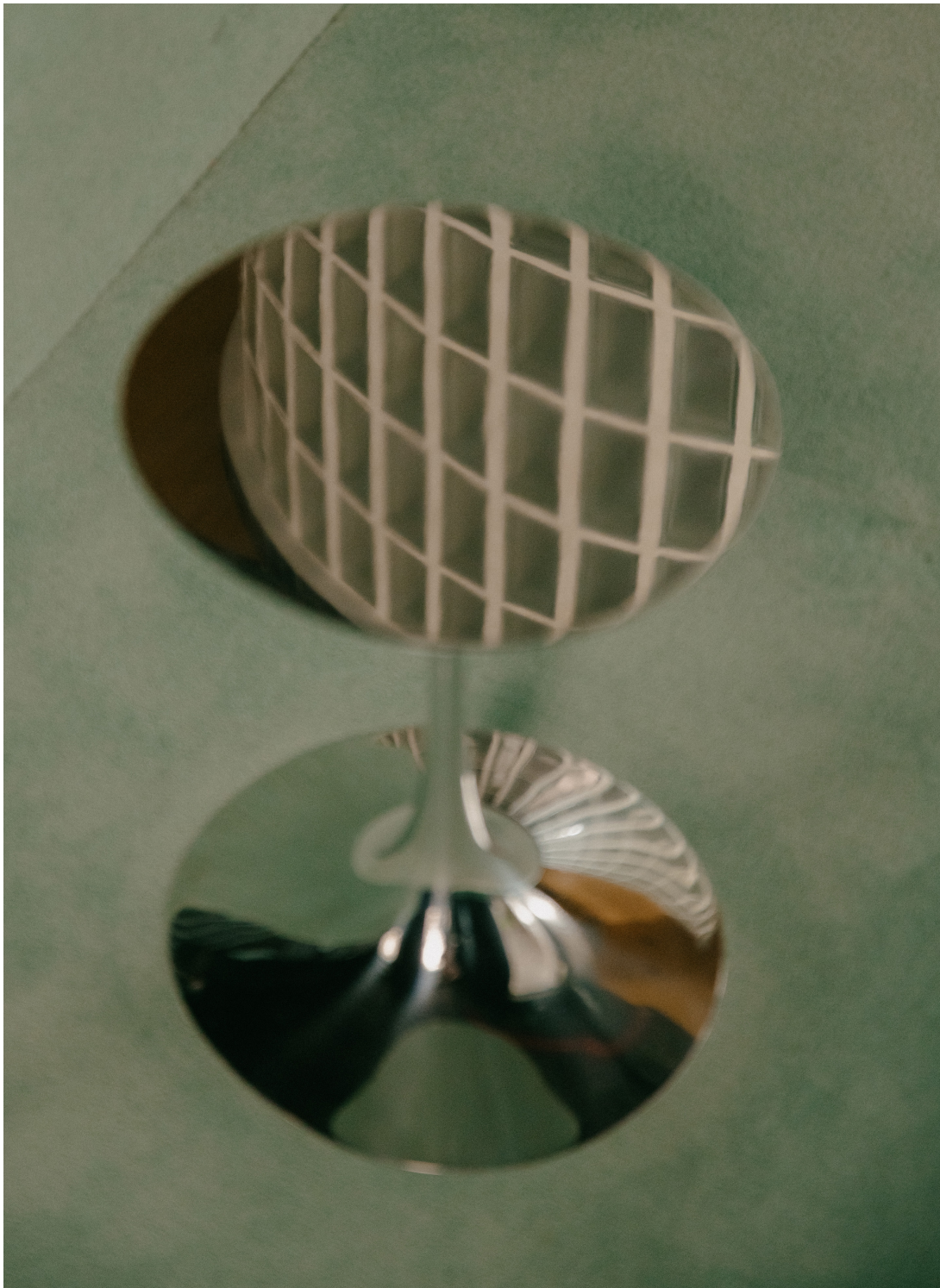
**If you could design a space for any fictional character, past or present, who would it be and what would it look like?**

Ziggy Stardust. A time-traveling fashion-forward alien from outer space who landed in 1970s London? Who later -by proxy- married Iman? What could be more perfect?























# RUDY GUÉNAIRE

"As a restaurateur, what I wanted was to create places that made an impression on people. This was my first experience, I was super young, and I don't think I totally succeeded, even if PNY was a great success. In any case, that's the quest I'm pursuing with the studio. To create beautiful places that make a lasting impression!"











RUDY

GUÉNAIRE

**From restaurateur to designer, how did your journey lead to founding Night Flight?**

*En tant que restaurateur, ce que je voulais c'était créer des lieux qui marquent les gens. C'était ma première expérience et je ne pense pas y être totalement arrivé même si PNY a été une belle réussite. En tout cas, c'est cette quête que je poursuis avec mon studio. Créer des beaux lieux, qui marquent et qui durent!*

As a restaurateur, what I wanted was to create places that made an impression on people. This was my first experience, I was super young, and I don't think I totally succeeded, even if PNY was a great success. In any case, that's the quest I'm pursuing with the studio. To create beautiful places that make a lasting impression!

**Your agency's name references Night Flight by Saint-Exupéry. How does the novel's spirit resonate with your approach to design?**

*Saint-Exupéry est l'un des écrivains les plus profonds et en même temps l'un des plus abordables du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. J'aime cette dichotomie. Sonder les profondeurs mais rester léger, simple. Aussi, je crois que la philosophie et la poésie m'inspirent plus que les références esthétiques plus directes. C'est grâce à la philosophie et à la poésie qu'une courbe, une couleur ou la lumière me mettent dans un état second.*

Saint-Exupéry is one of the most profound and, at the same time, one of the most accessible writers of the 20th century. I like this dichotomy. Probing the depths but keeping it light and simple. I also believe that philosophy and poetry inspire me more than more direct aesthetic references. It's thanks to philosophy and poetry that a curve, a color or light puts me in a second state.

**You create personal and intimate spaces. What elements make a space feel truly alive?**

*J'aime quand les lieux racontent quelque chose. Il n'y a rien de pire qu'un espace où l'on sent bien qu'aucune âme sur terre n'a pris le temps, a vraiment passé quelques nuits blanches sur les idées et les détails. Et puis évidemment, la lumière. La lumière c'est le sacré qui s'immisce dans le quotidien. Malheureusement, l'accès à la lumière devient de plus en plus un luxe.*

I love it when places tell a story. There's nothing worse than a space where you can feel that no soul on earth has taken the time, really spent a few sleepless nights on the ideas and details.

And then, of course, there's the light. Light is the sacred that intrudes into everyday life. Unfortunately, access to light is becoming more and more of a luxury.

**How do you define modernity in your projects, and how do you reinterpret it in your work?**

*Je crois qu'on est moderne quand on apporte quelque chose. Pas lorsqu'on utilise les matériaux et les idées de l'époque du moment.*

*J'ai toujours aimé l'idée que Frank Lloyd Wright, que j'admire énormément, était extrêmement moderne tout en étant profondément conservateur et presque passéiste.*

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**You draw inspiration from poet-architects, craftsmanship, and cinema. Can you share a film or architectural work that profoundly shaped your aesthetic?**

*J'adore un petit projet peu connu de John Lautner, un des plus grands architectes modernistes américains. C'est la Pearlman Cabin. Pour un couple de musiciens, il a dessiné une cabane en pleine forêt. La maison est en hauteur et la façade est faite de vitrages dont les montants sont les arbres coupés sur place. C'est d'une simplicité et d'une beauté inouïe.*

*Il n'y a pas de bons projets sans de bons clients.*

I love a little-known project by John Lautner, one of America's greatest modernist architects. It's called the Pearlman Cabin. For a musician couple, he designed a cabin in the middle of the forest. The house is high up, and the facade is made of glass, the uprights of which are trees cut down on the spot. It's incredibly simple and beautiful.

Great architecture is impossible without a great client.



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**Having designed your own restaurants, how does your experience as a restaurateur influence your approach to hospitality design?**

*En restauration on cherche à faire voyager le client. Pour réussir un restaurant il est souvent juste d'être très narratif. On ne cherche pas juste l'effet, juste des matières, on doit raconter une histoire. J'aime l'idée de continuer cette démarche, seulement les histoires sont plus subtiles, plus complexes, plus profondes.*

The restaurant business is all about taking the customer on a journey. To make a restaurant a success, it's often just a matter of telling a story. We're not just looking for effect, just materials, we have to tell a story. I like the idea of continuing this approach, only the stories are more subtle, more complex, deeper.

**Craftsmanship plays a key role in your projects. What materials or techniques are you particularly drawn to right now?**

*J'aime le travail du bois. J'ai vécu 5 mois seuls dans les forêts américaines. Il y a une puissance et une douceur dans le bois qu'aucun autre matériau peut véhiculer.*

I love woodworking. I spent 5 months alone in the American forests. There's a power and softness in wood that no other material can convey.

**Your projects blend storytelling with design. How do you begin crafting the narrative of a space?**

*Quand c'est un espace commercial, c'est relativement facile, je m'accroche à la marque. J'ai étudié à HEC, dans une très bonne école de commerce française, je comprends bien les marques et j'aime ça. Quand c'est un projet résidentiel, je m'accroche au lieu, il n'y a de vérité que dans le vernaculaire. Et puis, je deviens un psy pendant quelques temps. J'adore ça.*

When it's a commercial space, it's relatively easy, I hang on to the brand. I studied at HEC, in a very good French business school, so I understand brands and I like them. When it's a residential project, I cling to the place; there's only truth in the vernacular. And then I become a shrink for a while. I love that.

**How do you balance creative freedom with the practical needs of a hospitality or residential project?**

*Les réglementations deviennent de plus en plus importantes en plus d'être bêtes. J'ai bien peur qu'on finisse dans un monde rempli de grès cérame et de panneaux oberflex. C'est d'une tristesse sans nom mais il faut tenir.*

Regulations are not only getting more and more important, they're also getting dumber. I'm afraid we'll end up in a world full of porcelain stoneware and oberflex panels. It's a sad state of affairs, but we've got

to hang in there.

**What's next for Night Flight? Are there any dream projects or new directions you're excited to explore?**

*On a des beaux projets en cours. C'est long l'architecture, il faut savoir être endurant. J'adorerais dessiné un hôtel ou une maison en pleine nature. Et à vrai dire, dès qu'un nouveau projet arrive, j'en tombe tout de suite amoureux. J'ai le cœur facile!*

We've got some great projects on the go. Architecture takes a long time, you have to have stamina. I'd love to design a hotel or a house in the middle of nowhere. And to tell the truth, as soon as a new project comes along, I immediately fall in love with it. I have an easy heart!















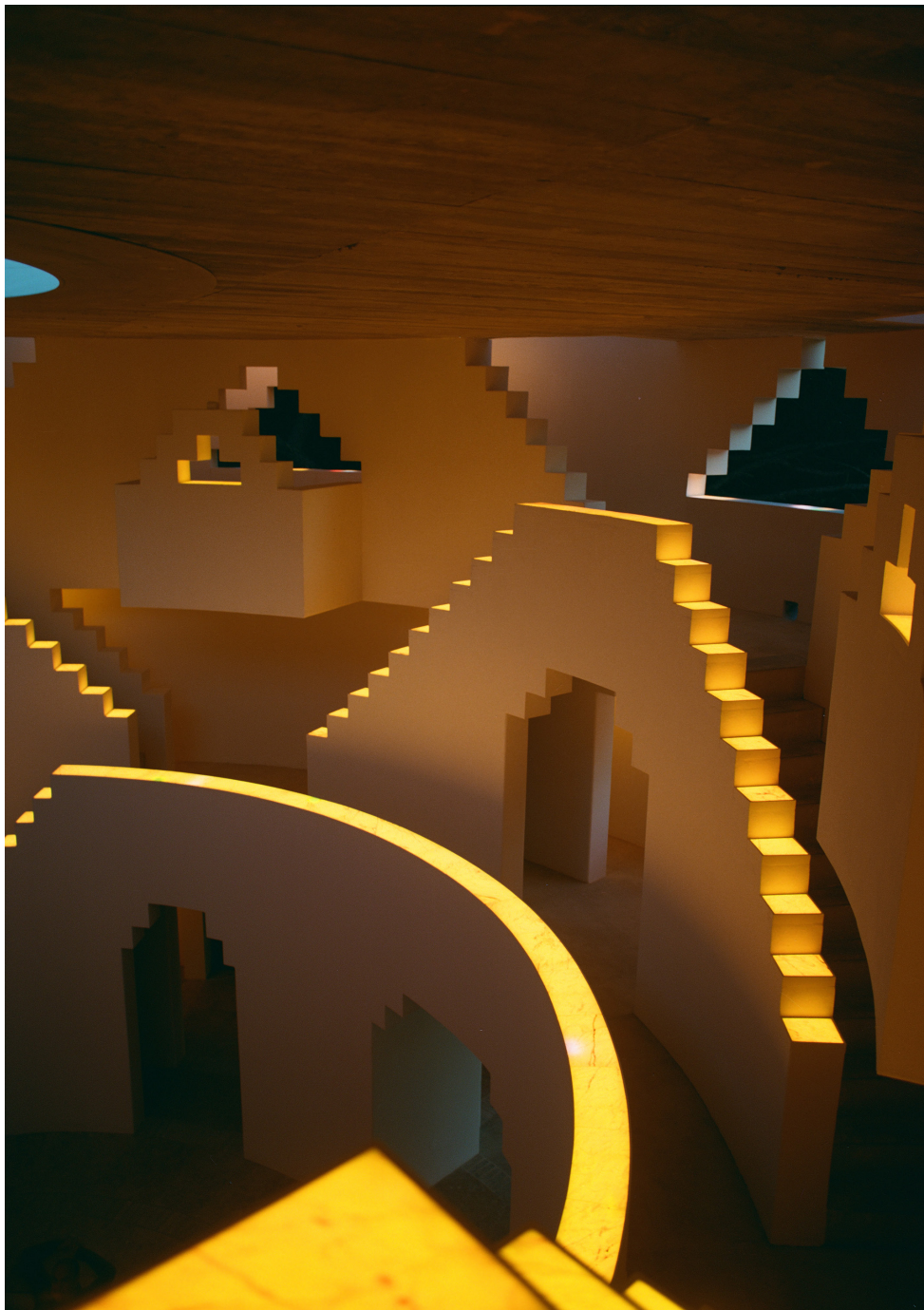


# TAREK SHAMA

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TAREK

**How did your early experiences in Egypt shape your architectural vision?**

Growing up in Egypt, I was constantly surrounded by monuments and a history so much larger than life that it fueled my imagination from a very young age. At the same time, I witnessed my parents building houses, which gave me an early understanding of the act of making and the importance of construction, not just concept.

**What was the most valuable lesson you learned from working with Zaha Hadid and David Chipperfield?**

From both Zaha and David, I learned that you must be able to do everything yourself, even the most tedious tasks, so that later, you not only understand how things are made but also what you are asking of your team. I also learned grit and perseverance—pushing boundaries, thinking outside the box, and embracing the challenge is part of the craft.

**Your work balances tradition and innovation, how do you navigate this intersection?**

For me, tradition often lies in the materials—stone, wood, metal—while innovation comes in how they are used or combined. I like to play with the juxtaposition: sometimes using traditional techniques with contemporary forms, and other times introducing new methods to reinterpret classic details.

**Can you share insights into your creative process when designing a boutique versus a residential or cultural space?**

It always starts with a spark—an idea, sometimes just a detail—that grows as the project develops. The brief, the location, and the client are essential components; every project is a dialogue between these three, and it's through this conversation that the narrative takes shape.

**Geometry plays a key role in your work. What draws you to geometric forms?**

I am drawn to geometry because it brings order and balance, creating a sense of harmony. Geometry helps me define proportions and rhythms, which I believe are at the core of making a space feel right, whether consciously or subconsciously.

**How do you approach material selection in your projects?**

SHAMA

Materiality is crucial, and I always begin by researching what is locally available—it roots the project in its place. From there, anything that comes from elsewhere must tie into the story and serve a clear purpose, not just be decorative.

**Your designs often highlight craftsmanship, how do you ensure artisanal techniques remain relevant in contemporary architecture?**

Craft is timeless because it is inherently human, and what is human rarely becomes obsolete. I make sure to create opportunities for artisans to showcase their skills and push their craft forward—it keeps it alive and relevant, while also enriching the project far beyond what machines can replicate.

**How does your Egyptian heritage influence your work today?**

My Egyptian heritage is always present, but it is not my only influence. I am proud of coming from a place where layers of civilizations have left their mark, and this richness often surfaces in my work, sometimes consciously, sometimes instinctively.

**What emotions or experiences do you aim to evoke through your spaces?**

Each project is different, but serenity is often a common thread—I want people to feel at ease. More importantly, I hope to spark curiosity, the desire to look closer and understand the space, its details, and its story.

**You've worked on projects from Melides to Luxor, how do different cultural and geographical contexts affect your designs?**

The context is everything—it is the anchor of the project. Understanding the local conditions, materials, and ways of life brings variety to the work and ensures that each project belongs to its place.

**What has been the most challenging project you've worked on, and how did you overcome its complexities?**

One of the most complex projects was \*Yalla Nile\*, a boat, which was a completely new typology for me. The timeline was extremely tight, but in the end, the creative freedom I was given helped me navigate the technical challenges and deliver something unique.

**Could you share details about an upcoming project that excites you?**







I can't share everything just yet, but I am currently working on a house in Amsterdam that is very exciting. The client came without preconceived ideas, which has led to a very open and collaborative process where we are exploring local crafts and materials in unexpected ways.

**How do you balance aesthetic beauty with functional practicality in your designs?**

Logic is key—function comes first. A house or a shop has to work, whereas a folly might not. Once the function is in place, beauty can emerge through proportions, geometry, and attention to detail.

**What role does sustainability play in your architectural vision?**

Sustainability, for me, is about building things that will last. I prefer natural materials and traditional techniques because they age gracefully, keep craftsmen employed, and avoid the pitfalls of industrial, short-lived solutions.

**How do you see the role of technology evolving in architecture and design?**

Technology is an incredible tool—it helps us visualize, prototype, and sometimes even fabricate—but it will never replace human imagination. The challenge is to embrace it without losing the human touch that gives architecture its soul.

**What advice would you give to young architects trying to carve their own path in the industry?**

Be passionate, work hard, and persevere. Architecture is demanding, but if you love it, it will reward you in ways you cannot imagine.

**Any future projects or long-term goals?**

It feels presumptuous to state goals too boldly, but one dream is to create a center where craftsmen from different trades can come together and collaborate. I have often found that the magic happens at the intersection of different crafts, yet this is also where bottlenecks occur—I'd love to help unlock that potential.









