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Presenter of HD Expo, a hospitality design event



Joyce Wang

Principal, Joyce Wang Studio

Joyce Wang recalls her first encounter with the power of design. Riding an escalator up through the innards of Hong Kong's bold HSBC Building by Sir Norman Foster, Wang says "it was incredible how big I felt in that space and how important it made me feel." When her mom told her that architects were behind these modern marvels, Wang thought to herself, "I want to be one of those."

It's an origin story that has been integral to her rise in the design world. In fact, after earning her architecture degree from MIT, she found herself at Foster's London office. That brief but pivotal stint engendered an interest in interiors. "I found myself detailing staircase packages, luggage belts in airports, yearning to work with materials. I thought, 'I want to play with color, I want to look at different textures.'"

But it was an understanding of the power of narrative, more than anything else, that stuck with Wang as she began building her own practice after completing a graduate degree at the Royal College of



A sexy reinterpretation of Big Apple industrialism defines the spa at the Equinox Hotel New York



A light and dark palette and high ceilings create a subdued vibe in Equinox Hotel's fitness lounge



Rich textures, raw finishes, and vibrant colors reference Peruvian landscapes at Ichu restaurant in Hong Kong



In London's Arts Club, Oscuro Lounge at Kyubi restaurant pairs midcentury flair with the opulence of the Meiji period



Mott 32 is crafted to reflect Singapore's distinct colonial influence and lush greenery



Contemporary materials and traditional finishes are juxtaposed in the penthouse suite at the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park

Photos by LIT MA and courtesy of JOYCE WANG STUDIO

Art. In less than 10 years, she's opened offices in London and Hong Kong, and counts her design of Mott 32 in Hong Kong as her big break. There, she transformed a dark, subterranean space into a restaurant that marries British colonialism and Chinese imperialism with Western influences for a scheme that unveils unexpected moments. The project put her on the map, catching the attention of brands like Equinox, with whom she most recently spearheaded the design of the spa and fitness club at its debut hotel project in New York's Hudson Yards mega-development. High ceilings, natural light, and views of Thomas Heatherwick's Vessel sculpture place it as "the most prized area of the building," she says. Next up: she is working on various hotel

renovations in London, Melbourne, and San Francisco, plus a members club in Japan and a restaurant in Hong Kong.

Born in Hawaii, Wang grew up in Hong Kong and traveled with her family extensively as a young girl. The experiences eased her decision to move to London and, later, to Los Angeles, for her first independent gig. That project, an update of the 60 rooms that surround the famed David Hockney pool at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, instilled in her a respect for context. "You have to be curious about a place and derive a material palette to tell a story that's authentic to it," she says. "It's like Pygmalion, where you're chipping away marble to reveal this beautiful girl, who's always been there. When you hit that right chord, you just know."