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***Designers should be free to tackle any project type regardless of their experience.***

Yoshie Takeo is an innovative designer based in Hong Kong. We explore what makes her one of LUX Magazine's Ones to Watch for 2018: The Most Innovative Designers.

Yoshie Takeo's design journey began when she was studying Environmental design at Hong Kong Polytechnic University in Hong Kong. Driven to deepen her knowledge of interior architecture, Yoshie pursued her Master's in Interior Architecture & Design at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Graduating at the top of her class, Yoshie quickly gained recognition taking first place in the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute Mobile competition. Yoshie's winning concept was adopted benefiting the Autism community in Philadelphia becoming the first mobile autism unit to provide testing and diagnosis for under-served communities. The project was widely reported in The Philadelphia Tribune, Metro Newspaper, and The Triangle (Drexel University Newspaper).

Additionally, Yoshie was also awarded the "Best of thesis" within the MS IAD program at Drexel; the project won the International Design Award for "Emerging Interior Designer of the Year-student." The award recognizes those who have demonstrated devotion to elevating the art of interior design. Yoshie's work has been published in the IDA Book of Designs, and distributed to museum bookstores nationwide along with promotion in newsletters and on the IDA website.

The thesis project marked Yoshie's capstone of the MS Interior Architecture & Design program, but also showed her exemplary design. Yoshie's thesis investigation explores the neural plasticity of the human brain. Yoshie discovered that creativity was a result of the neural network allowing our ideas to wander freely, collide and find new connections. The idea that this neural network can be nurtured and enriched through exercising our plastic brain is expressed in a new model of institution- the Neuro-Creativity Center. This solution embraces the fundamental neuroplasticity of our human brains. The Center bridges the gap between creativity and neuroscience in an innovative and dynamic built environment. The goal is to have diverse groups of people challenged via a vast array of creative outlets balanced with areas of meditative respite- all housed in a space designed to transform its inhabitants on a sub-conscious, neural level and to ultimately be a vehicle for their personal and creative brain expanding journey. Yoshie successfully communicated her research, developing an unconventional and unique solution recognized by jurors and faculty.

Fundamentally, Yoshie's Thesis project serves as her benchmark of excellence. Possessing a strong work ethic, personal drive and passion towards developing creative solution -Yoshie's work surpasses expectation with sophistication and flair.

Her approach to design is creative and inventive without succumbing to the trends of the times.

Since finishing her studies, Yoshie has worked in both Hong Kong and the United States based projects involving: hospitality, residential and commercial spaces. Also, she earned the LEED AP ID+C credential after completing her masters.

Drawing on her vast experience, Yoshie transcends conformity, creating designs that inspire others. In her philosophy on design, Yoshie believes that, "there should be no boundaries or restrictions when design is expressed at an elevated level. One should be daring and unafraid to challenge existing connotations in order to break away from what seems impossible. It is like art, where creativity, personal style and aesthetics can be expressed. Through her designs, she hopes to create solutions that are beautifully functional and yet emotionally thought provoking".

Each project is a new opportunity to experiment and push the client's comfort zone. When one has a vision and passionately believes, then anything becomes possible. A recent office project involved clients that were afraid to step out of the traditional office mindset- but yet they wanted to transform the office into a complete open office design. Having close interaction with the client, Yoshie created an office that delighted the clients with positive feedback. By slowly shifting the client's traditional ideas on office design, the end users were ecstatic with the outcome not only because of the unconventional design approach, but by doing so under fast track scheduling and difficult budget constraints. Yoshie's first professional office project is a testament to her ability to create beautiful works using her hospitality experience.

Ultimately, the design industry pushes interior designers to narrow themselves to such categories as hospitality, residential or commercial spaces and work years to gain experience in that focus. Interior design should not be thought of as separate fields, but instead as a whole. Designers should be free to tackle any project type regardless of their experience. Experience can make a designer more skillful, but not necessarily a better designer. Possessing an individual voice and vision is what people will notice. No matter how big or small - if a design is compelling, people will take the time to observe. Unsatisfied with being categorized, Yoshie Takeo tackles each project with a unique perspective and solution. Unafraid to try something new, Yoshie strives to be a trailblazer. Yoshie wishes to create works that nobody has thought of and thus set the standard. Yoshie believes designers have the power to conjure up anything and that very creation has the ability to impact society and people's lifestyle in positive ways. This can only be done through thoughtful and innovative designs, which underlie all of Yoshie Takeo's projects.