

build

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STORIES TO BE TOLD

Ralf F. Broekman and Olaf Winkler in conversation with Jaime Hayon on the restaurant La Terraza del Casino in Madrid

Jaime Hayon, could you refer a bit on the main tasks while designing La Terraza del Casino in Madrid? What was your driving force?

La Terraza was a challenging affair and a very interesting process for me. I love gastronomy and as it is one of my passions I immediately loved the idea of making this restaurant. It has a great chef, an outstanding location, it is small, intimate and in my hometown. What could be better? The focus of the project was to maintain original features of the space and incorporate elements in consonance with its style. The restaurant is inside an 1800s glamorous palace and the intention was to be able to continue reflecting the sense of splendor in a modern style. One clear example of this are the large glass windows that were a main trait of the original site. We restored and kept them and in certain areas accentuated their relevance with the use of colored glass, giving a modern touch to an old structure. The selection of checkered floors, use of columns and interior elements as chairs are another clear example of association with past sense of chic.

How did you develop the specific furniture for a place like this, which is combining, as you say, historical as well as current traits of design to generate a functional yet glamorous setting? In order to construct special furniture pieces for the restaurant, we went over (with Paco, the chef) the restaurant's specific needs. One example were the two models of carts for preparation of aperitifs and other dishes made in front of the tables. These carts are in wood with turned details and marble top. Another example are the two furniture pieces made for the private area. They consist of two parts each: An elevated part for storage with the sizes of elements they use such as wine glasses, cutlery, etc.; the bottom part with a





marble top then can be used for serving, etc. Another furniture piece for storage was made for the dining area. Again, all of them are thought to be able to organize and contain elements necessary for the staff. A wine cellar was also made according to the specific needs of storage and visibility as well as a reception desk for computer, telephone, and other necessary equipment. The floors are Bisazza plates or a resin material. Lacquered wood was used for the furniture and doors. A huge, over five meter high wood and blue glass door was designed for the privé area. Great quality marble was used for the bathroom and furniture tops. Ceramic hanging lamps, a gold finished ceramic table lamp for the reception desk and hand made ceramic decorative elements are distributed all throughout the restaurant (such as vases, pots, containers, etc). A very special feature in the privé area are hand painted large scaled plates that were made one by one by myself and hung to the ceiling.

Taking this feature as one example, or considering that you e.g. also work as curator: In how far is the crossing of disciplines – art, architecture, design, discourse... – fundamental for your self-perception as a designer?

I consider myself a creator and in that there is room for all other categories. I don't believe in labels, especially not within the creative world. I like to get my hands into everything that allows me to express myself and to think about themes. It's great to be able to jump from one role to the other. Creativity is not a job; it's a way of life. In whatever work I do as a designer, artist, etc., I usually start from a theme I am interested in. I keep diaries of everything and am constantly drawing; it is always my starting point. I investigate deeply on a theme and then I allow my fantasy to take over. I look at variations, at materials, sizes, fully going into every topic I choose to explore. Everything that interests me is fundamental in my work. Reaching out for many forms of expression helps me create a new language. The appreciation of tradition is also very important in my

work. Keeping an eye on the past reveals much. The other eye on the future is crucial as well. To make the most of the technology we have available is also very important. I think this balance gives us the "right now" we aim to understand. To create is to tell stories. I feel passion for what I do. There are stories to be told and emotions to be shared with the work.

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Jaime Hayon, born in Madrid in 1974, trained as an industrial designer in Madrid and Paris. In 1997, he began working as a researcher in Fabrica, Benetton Group's communication research center in Treviso, Italy. A year later, he was appointed head of the design department, where he oversaw the development of interiors for shops, exhibitions and restaurants as well as books, magazines and logo designs. In 2004, he began his individual career; he works on projects from toys to furniture, crossing in a defined eclectic and individual manner borders between design, art and curatorial work. His work has been shown at London's David Gill Gallery, at the Vitra Design Museum and the Design Museum in London, in Barcelona, Minneapolis, Lisbon, Paris and Cologne. Hayon, currently with a new base in Barcelona, has received numerous international awards. He has collaborated with companies as Bisazza and Swarovski and has worked for clients such as Benetton, Metalarte, Artquitect Edition, Coca-Cola, Danone Group, bd ediciones, Adidas, Palluco, Piper Heidsieck and Camper. One of his most recent projects, the restaurant La Terraza del Casino in Madrid, opened in late 2007.