



41

Index

6	Alea news
11	Metal epoxy
17	When free time & work merge into a proper lifestyle
19	HOK
20	London seen from an urban architect's eye
23	The Italian flair of Clerkenwell
26	Focus on Clerkenwell Design Week
28	Glass
29	A journey into London real estate business
32	Focus on the project: Hence Madrid
34	An Italian illustrator in New York
36	Being a designer in Toronto
39	Alea USA
41	Focus on FirstLook NYC
45	#educational
46	Meeting tables
52	Material girl



Alea's global voices



Kai
Olsen



Kay
Sargent



Alasdair
Mealey



Nicola
Citarella



Stephen
English



Michela
Buttignol



Giuseppe
Avesani



George
Foussias



Francesca
Comelli



Melanie
Maslany



David
Batchelor



Kieron
Bux

A special thanks to our contributors for this volume of Visioni

Editor and design

Elisa Il Grande
Communication + Marketing Department

Website
www.aleaoffice.com

Email
marketing@aleaoffice.com

Welcome to **Visioni**

Visioni is a global magazine from ALEA office with a focus on global voices, news and views from around the world, a celebration of all things design.

In this third edition we tour Europe, Canada and the United States. We visit our showrooms and we chat with the people we met at events we held across the globe.

We also share some news, views and insights into the ALEA world; what's new in materials, finishes and products.

Thank you for joining us and thank you for visiting ALEA Office
www.aleaoffice.com

Aldo Comelli & Rino Carlot
Founders and Owners of Alea SRL.



ALEA news

@ Orgatec 2018 edition, ALEA presents new collections and innovative materials inside a stand full of amazing office furniture applications.

The exhibition space showcases two central freestanding vignettes made with A65 partition wall and several executive and operative configurations.

A65 partition exhibits two different work environments. In the largest booth there is an executive Blade X vignette, while the smaller one hosts a Xylo meeting table. Each booth is freestanding and sealed by a ceiling made of sound-absorbing material. Aluminium profiles hold double glazed glass walls filled - in some areas - by a decorative metal mesh. Sliding doors and smart walls are also shown.



Blade is a collection launched by Alea during Orgatec tradeshow in 2016. This year, the executive version – Blade X - features heat-treated Walnut wood tops with epoxy metal legs and solid wood coverings. The desktop, upgraded with a leather insert, has a trapezoidal shape and a 45° chamfered edge. The desk rests on the side on a fixed cabinet. To complete the set, there is a freestanding Blade credenza with metal feet and matching finishes.

In the adjacent space - within the same vignette - a Blade meeting table with metal leg is placed. Blade – a versatile collection that ranges from executive to operative - is also repeated in two other locations. The first is a combination of two face-to-face operative desks with LED-illuminated partition wall made of an aluminium frame and a decorative metal mesh fill.





The second is a sophisticated executive set consisting of a Caramel leather desk top and legs, paired with a metal bookcase.

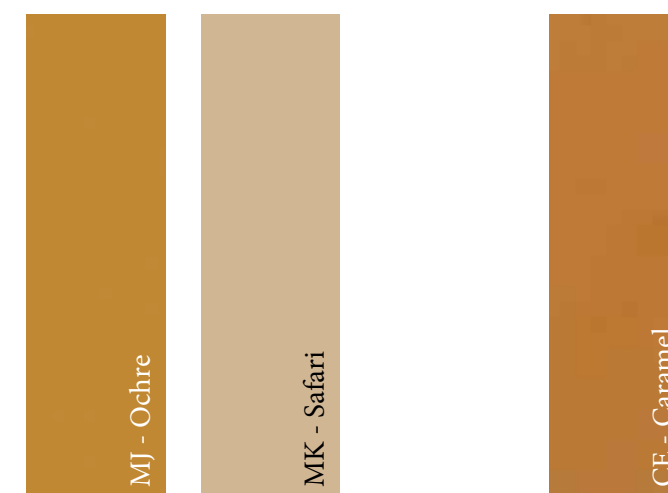
The second A65 vignette houses a square table by Xylo, a new operative collection. The signature features are conical legs in solid ash wood with light oak finish. A metal frame supports a 18 mm thick melamine top with ABS edges. The same collection is presented in two different clusters made with asymmetric worktops and rounded corners. These clusters are divided by walls illuminated by LED light and made with aluminium frame and decorative wire mesh fills.

Alea's best seller Atreo is shown in a new upgraded version, called Atreo Wood; the peculiarity is the solid ash wood with light oak finish leg insert. The desk is 105 cm high and the top has a powered device on it.

Orgatec 2018 is also an opportunity for Alea to officially launch Oasi, the new executive collection that features a duo-material top supported by exclusive 8 mm metal plates epoxy painted. The desk top is 40 mm thick and has a painted aluminium edge all around. It comes with an



Epoxy



Italian melamine

Leather

elegant leather pad that covers an organizer that can be fitted with convenience outlets. On the front, the desk top has a double full height modesty that houses wire management troughs. The top sits on a side cabinet in wood veneer equipped with sliding door, double drawers, a false back for wire management and an upper door.

The set is completed with a rectangular meeting table and an Oasi credenza with the same technical features as the desk.

There are also new accessories such as the Lato lockers - made with Italian melamine shell, feet in painted metal and doors/back available in both wood (Italian melamine - OSB) and metal - and new modular bookcases made of epoxy painted metal and a storage wall with Italian melamine doors.

Absolute novelties are also the Gold - Copper - Nickel Lux - Olive green epoxy finishes as well as the Safari - Ochre Italian Italian melamine.

Orgatec 2018
Alea Office
Hall 9.1
Stand B051/A050



METAL EPOXY

Alea's standard
finishes



- QF - Nickel (Lux)
- EB - White
- EG - Grey
- EI - Ardesia
- ET - Talco
- ES - Cream
- EO - Noisette
- EZ - Bronze
- EU - Gold
- EE - Copper
- ED - Olive green
- EN - Black



Photos:
1 - Nickel, Lux epoxy (QF). Blade X
 “sandwich” leg.
2 - Black, epoxy (EN).
 Archimede “L” shaped leg.
Next page - Copper, epoxy (EE).
 Blade leg.



ATREO

CRONO

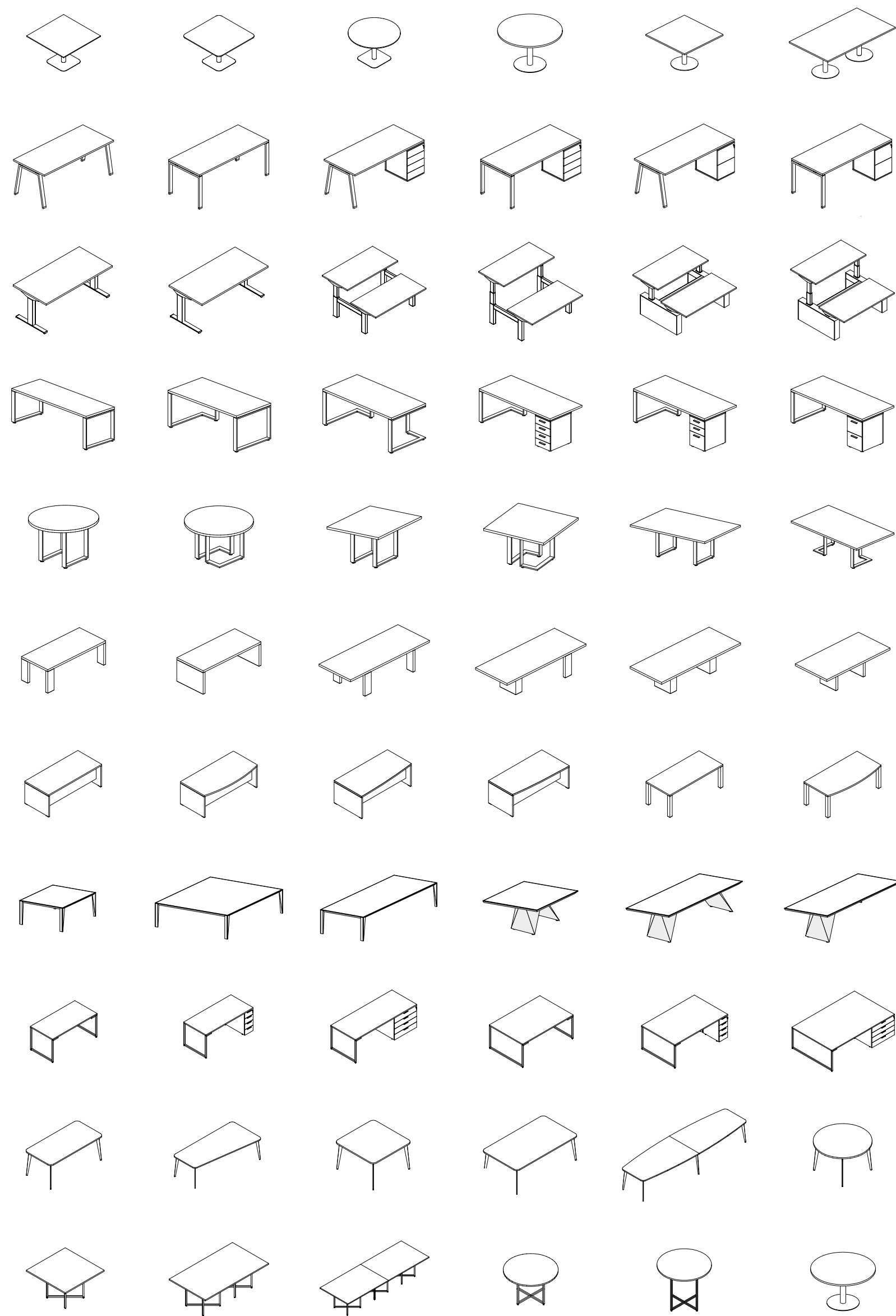
Archimede

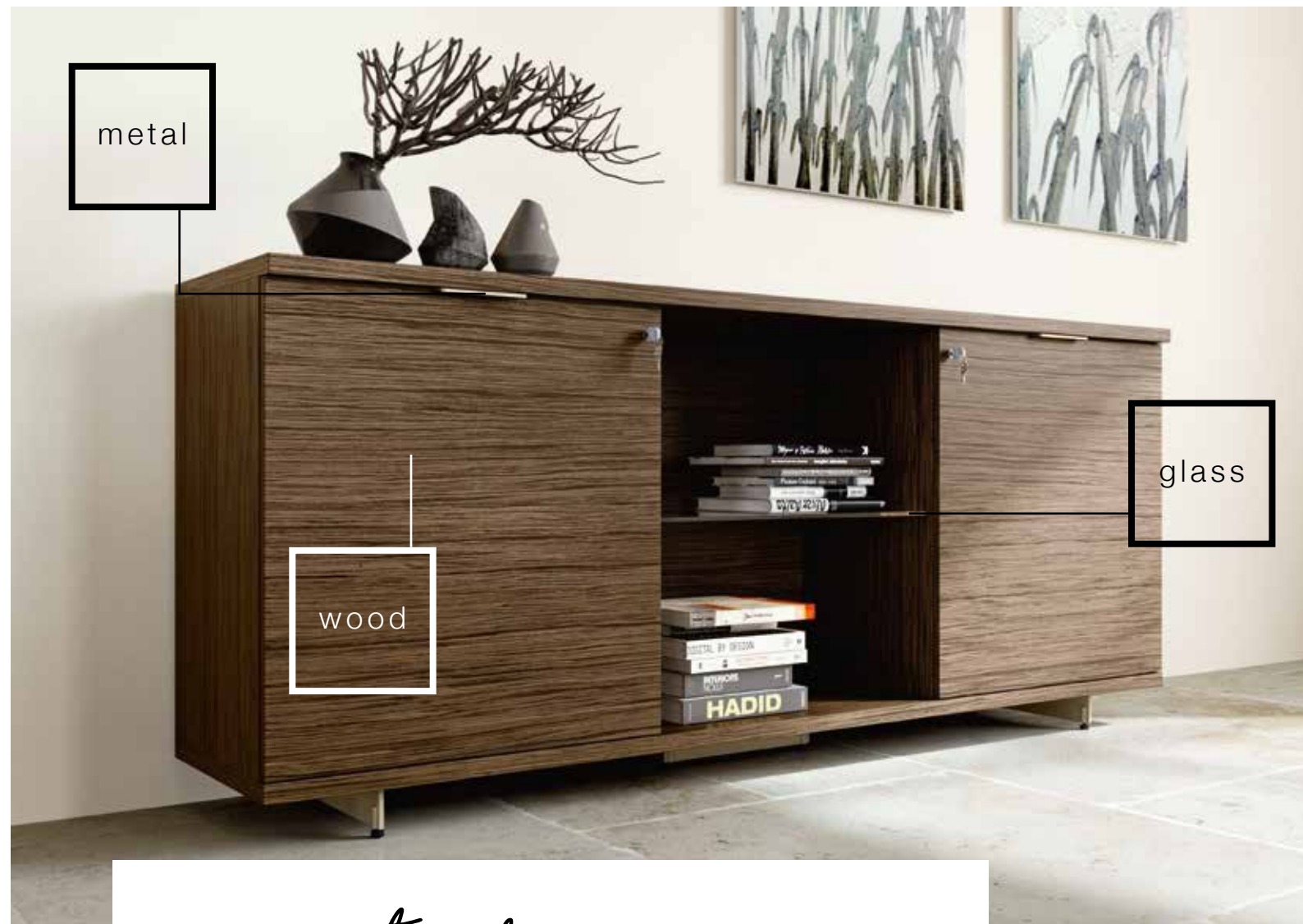
odeon

ERACLE

IBIS

BLADE X





When free time & work merge into a proper lifestyle

As we start to blend work, life, and play and the lines of the traditional workweek begin to blur, the siloed offices of yesterday are no longer applicable. We have been very successful in bringing the office into the home. Most of us have a home workspace and technology is ubiquitous. We have also started bringing our homes into the office. It's not uncommon to find living rooms, dens, or kitchens in offices today. But the traditional office furniture solutions of the past cannot accommodate these changes, while the lighter-scale residential pieces tend to be unfit for commercial use. This has created a new range of space types as well as furniture solutions. In the past, a large percentage of an office environment was dedicated to rows of workstations, which drove a specific procurement strategy.



Kai Olsen is a principal in HOK with over 20 years of experience in the architectural and design community planning and designing corporate and higher education spaces. His expertise ranges from programming and planning to concept development. www.hok.com

“Workspaces today should be designed to support a multitude of activities, providing a plug-and-play-type environment that is flexible and adaptable to future needs.”

concept of MIXED MATERIALS



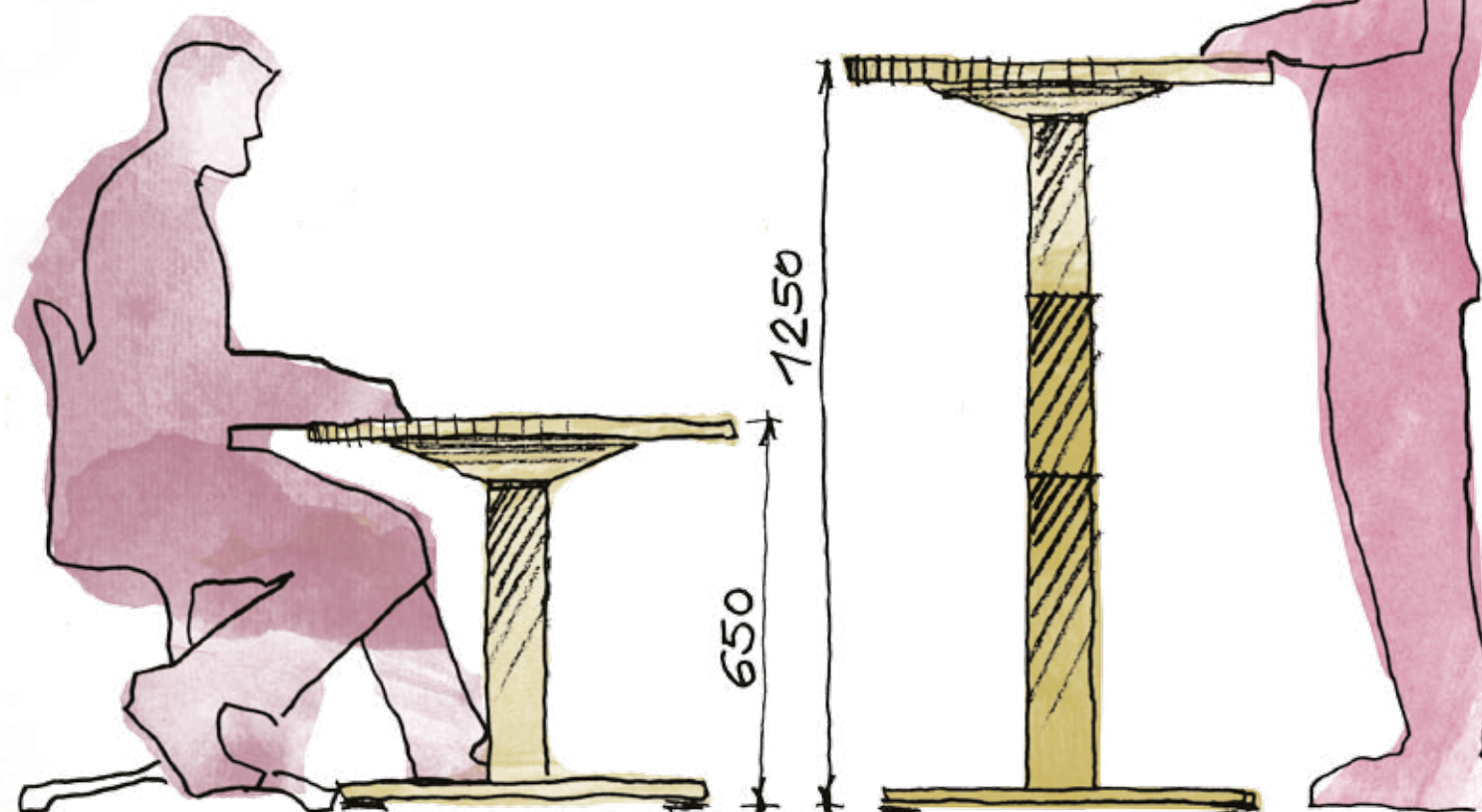
Alea - Atreo Wood



But today, with systems workstations falling out of favor and the rise of ancillary and lounge spaces, the strategy is reversed. When you have a standing-height table or even a seated bench, often the chairs surrounding it are more expensive than the desk unit itself. And no longer are the lounge or gathering areas ancillary spaces. In many recent cases they are the primary focus, taking up a larger percentage of the procurement package. As a result, ancillary is becoming the new primary. We're also seeing a need to create balanced spaces that support work, collective learning, and collaboration. To do so we need a variety of solutions. Workspaces today should be designed to support a

multitude of activities, providing a plug-and-play-type environment that is flexible and adaptable to future needs.

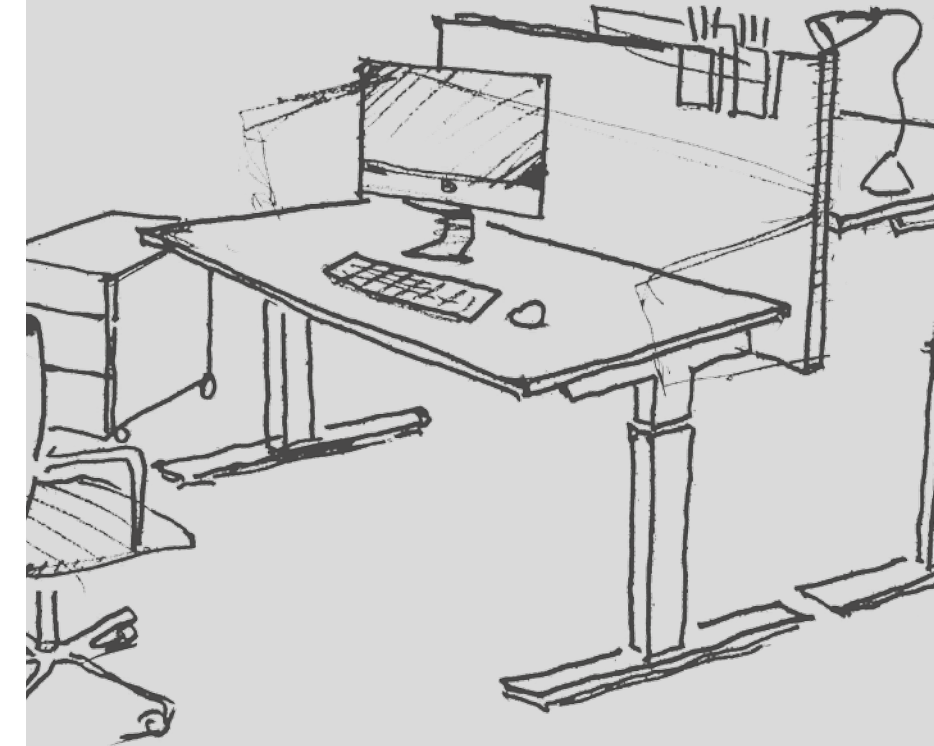
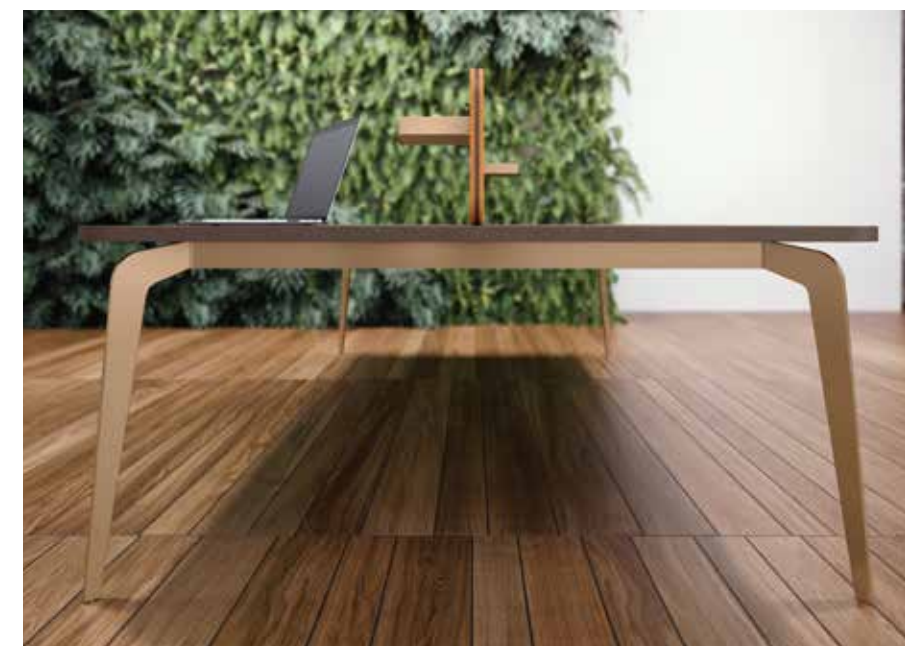
How does this all impact the way we design space? First and foremost, we should consider the human-centric aspects of the space. Large floorplates need to be broken up into smaller, unique zones to humanize their scale and provide a sense of place. Acoustical parameters and strategies need to be reevaluated to make these new, more open spaces effective places to work. Infrastructure needs to be agile



to accommodate the wide range of work styles and settings that continue to change rapidly.

How does this affect the way we design furniture? This new space model requires furniture solutions that are as flexible as the environments they reside in. Styles need to be varied and suited to the ways people work throughout their day. Furniture for group settings should address universal ergonomics and have the ability to be easily reconfigured by the users themselves. Furniture for focused work should give the user a sense of enclosure or privacy while offering acoustical attenuation to decrease distractions. Incorporation of biophilic elements within these settings provides a visual connection with nature.

Going forward? We need to help facilitate work-life-play balance in the workplace. Getting there will require the fusion of residential, corporate, and hospitality environments. This fusion will result in more blending of architectural, interior, and furniture solutions, ultimately creating more holistic solutions.



HOK

"HOK is a global design, architecture, engineering and planning firm. Through a network of 23 offices worldwide, HOK provides design excellence and innovation to create places that enrich people's lives and help clients succeed. HOK brings global expertise in specific building types and services, as well as detailed knowledge of local cultures and construction markets, to each project we undertake. This enables HOK's virtual teams to have no geographic boundaries via our 23 international offices. With over 14 offices throughout the US, HOK has the ability to execute on projects across the US and with over 70 partner firms around the world we can provide similar services internationally. Our proposed approach for our clients is to have a consistent core team that knows and understands how to deliver client projects that meet the functional and programmatic requirements, aesthetics, budget guidelines and standards established consistently while leveraging our regional offices to address local coordination, code compliance, site visits and hands on management."

Kay Sargent Senior Principal and Director of Strategic Accounts
HOK



Photos:
From the top - Blade, Blade X

Left page - Crono

London seen from an urban architect's eye

Meeting Aedas Senior Associate Alasdair Mealey



Alasdair Mealey is Senior Associate for Aedas in London. His experience covers a wide range of sectors - offices, masterplanning, refurbishment, infrastructure, arts and nightlife. He heads up both Digital Practice and Graduate Recruitment at Aedas in London. www.aedas.com

Alea's presence in the UK has allowed us to meet some of the world's most vibrant architecture firms and their associates. Aedas is one of them. We had the pleasure of interviewing Alasdair Mealey who was also an active contributor to the Design Charrette held in Alea's London showroom as part of the Clerkenwell Design Week.

What is your personal view of London from an architectural perspective?

I think it's fantastic, but I'm a born and bred Londoner so I'm probably biased in this respect. London is arguably the most diverse city in the world and its Architecture is an equally diverse mix of great, good, bad and the ugly. I think a big success of London architecture is how the past and present come together. The active reuse and reimagining of older and historic buildings is something the city does extremely well. The respect for historical routes even through new developments creates some amazing residual spaces and whilst some might see this type of preservation as unnecessary, I believe that constraints are always a



good thing for design as they require innovation and creativity to successfully overcome them. Like many cities, London grew from a network of towns and villages, and as you walk through the city you can still feel this today, and the variety in the city's buildings reflects this, from area to area the built environment is distinct.

Would you change anything in London or add anything to it?

For a city that's "urban (street) grid" is generated by the combining of a host of historic towns and villages London is far easier to get around than it should be. This is in part down to the excellent public transport system - bus, tube, tram and train. London is also a great city to walk in, in fact, the car is not the king here. So, in regard to the above, I believe it's not a case of changing something it's making sure that the way Londoner's get about town is continually appraised, with improvements always sort. We need more genuinely affordable housing at all levels. It's a significant problem UK wide but in London it's even more critical. Architects have a big part to play in this, but some fundamental changes are required across the construction industry and in policy (at the highest level). I don't think anyone has come up with a genuine solution to this and I won't pretend I have the answer, but I think at least part of the answer has to be more efficient construction, which is quicker and cheaper, plus ensuring that

“Getting a behind the scenes look at Damien Hirst's studio assemble one of his pill cabinets amongst other things, was an amazing experience”

buildings are more easily adaptable. Whilst it is not appropriate for every project, it is encouraging to see that a modular/volumetric approach to buildings seems to finally have some proper momentum, this will surely help with the efficiency of construction and the future adaptability of buildings.

What is the best or most exciting UK project you have ever worked on in your career? We know you might have more than a favourite one, but which one have you got a better memory of, and why?

I am going to cheat a bit here and mention two projects. I'm lucky to have worked on many interesting and exciting projects over the years so choosing a favourite isn't easy. The two I'm going to mention are the White Cube Art Gallery in Bermondsey and Ministry of Sound. White Cube was a very ambitious project to turn an old warehouse into Europe's largest commercial Art Gallery. The gallery needed to be open to coincide with a major Art event in London, Aedas (then RHWL) were brought in as executive architects to work directly with the client, project manager and main contractor to ensure the project was completed on time. I spent four months based on site, dealing with day to problem-solving, resolving details and issues as and when they arose on site. I gained a great rapport with the contractor and there was a real camaraderie on site as everyone mucked in to get the building complete and open on time (which it was). To make it even more interesting in the final few weeks contemporary art from around the world started arriving to be installed, getting a behind the

scenes look at Damien Hirst's studio assemble one of his pill cabinets amongst other things, was an amazing experience, making an already challenging and exciting project even more memorable.

Ministry of Sound was a great project, the world-famous nightclub was exploring relocating to a new development adjacent to its current site. We were tasked with creating a new headquarters concept design for the iconic brand including both the club and office space (at the time Ministry of Sound was also the world's largest independent record label). Purpose designed nightclubs are a rare occurrence in the UK and the challenge of preserving the club's reputation as having the 'best sound' of any nightclub in the world, along with increasing its capacity and designing in greater functionality, and flexibility for it to be used for a wider variety of events, was not an easy brief to tackle. The new club was also to be relocated under a 30+ storey residential tower which made things especially interesting (acoustics, crowd management etc.). I spent a good few nights on site exploring how all aspects of the club worked, easily some of the most enjoyable site visits I've experienced. Sadly, the project was never realised, but a fantastic experience nonetheless.

Photos:

Left page- 2 Stockport Exchange, Image courtesy of Aedas. Client: Muse Developments & Stockport Council

Current page - One New Bailey, Image courtesy of Aedas. Client: English Cities Fund





Photo:

New Bailey MSCP, Image courtesy of Infinite 3D Photography. Client: English Cities Fund

The Italian flair of Clerkenwell

*Home to Alea's
showroom in London*

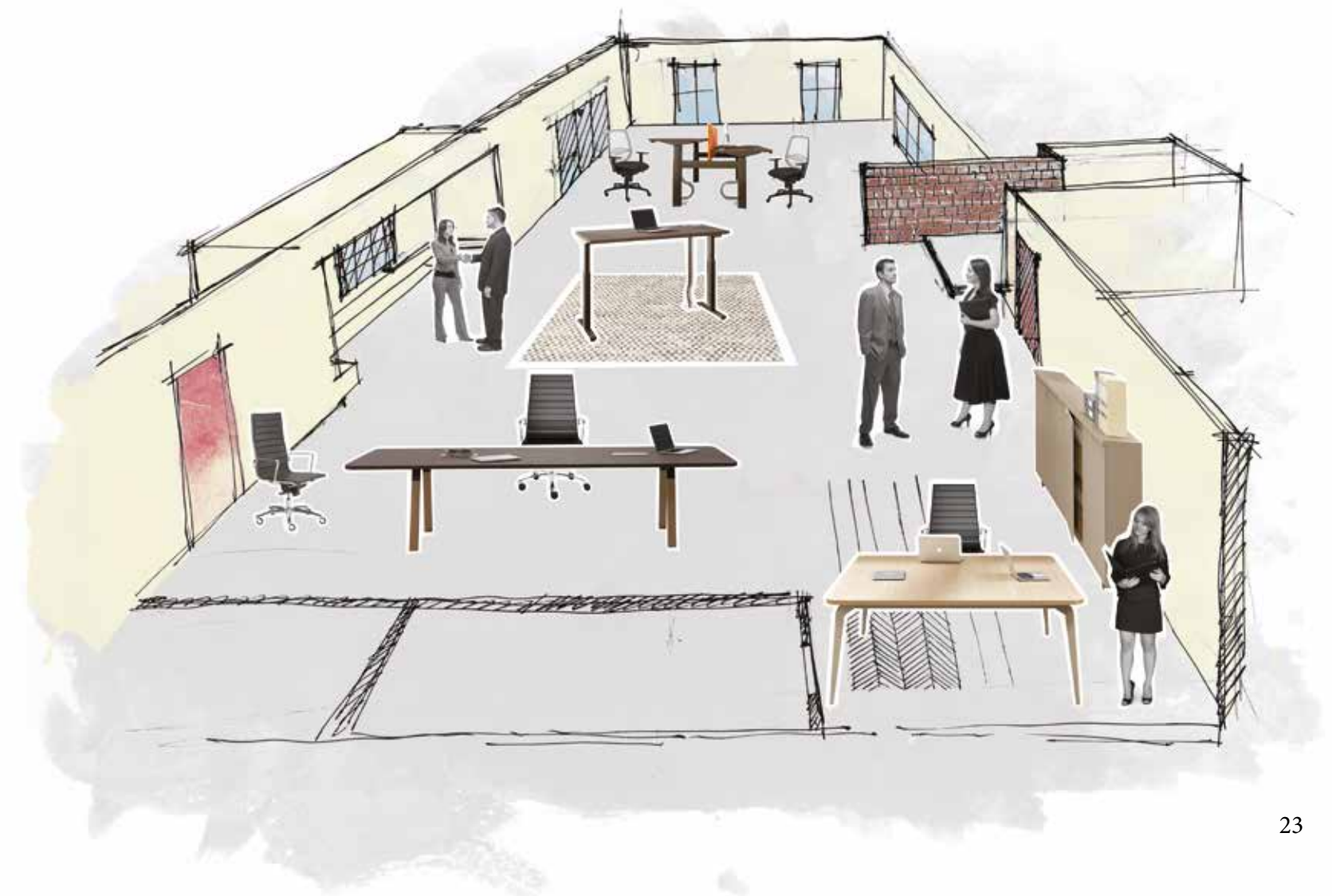


Nicola Citarella graduated in comparative studies (foreign languages) in 2006 and has worked in sales since then. He progressed his career in the office furniture industry and he was proud to join the Alea family in 2017.
www.aleaoffice.com

It is such a great experience to walk around Clerkenwell and find out this area is much more familiar and welcoming than you may expect. Loads of Italian families migrated either to Soho or Clerkenwell to make a living and brought some of their best skills with them, such as pipe organ crafting, plaster bust selling, tailoring and, obviously, baking and food catering. All of that certainly identifies Clerkenwell as the “Little Italy” of the English capital. This is a heritage the new generations should not forget about and should be rather proud of.

Right here in the industrial heartland of London, once centre for distilleries, breweries, printing facilities as well as jewellery, watchmaking and diamond cutting, Clerkenwell is now home to leading architectural practices, design agencies and office furniture showrooms.

The first office furniture firms, either local or international, started opening showrooms on the two major arteries, St John's Street and Clerkenwell Road, crossing each other and splitting Clerkenwell into 4 major blocks. However, in the last 10 years the area has started





Having become the design hub of London, every year in May Clerkenwell is home to the now popular Clerkenwell Design Week, where all the furniture showrooms and design agencies are opening their doors to thousands of representatives from either the A&D community or the Trade, as well as students, who are hungry to learn about new trends and inspiring solutions that the industry now offers.

Alea were officially and proudly part of such a vibrant and productive event. CDW was a great occasion to also present some of our latest product ranges such as Atreo Wood, the new Crono sit-to-stand system and the stylish Blade, as well as A65, our innovative and seamless wall partitioning system which is making the UK A&D community excited. We hope this is just the beginning of a marvellous and successful story for us in the UK furniture and interiors market, always keeping an eye on the familiarity, passion and hospitality that the Italian heritage has embraced this area with for centuries.



Photos:
Alea Showroom, London



“Having become the design hub of London, every year in May Clerkenwell is home to the now popular Clerkenwell Design Week”

expanding towards Barbican, Old St., Shoreditch and towards Farringdon Road and Exmouth Market on the other end.

In early 2018, Alea Office were proud to announce their landing in Clerkenwell, the undisputed design hub of London. Thursday 22nd March was a great chance for Alea to launch their new showroom and open their doors to the A&D community. Both our space and furniture were very well received, and our terraces overlooking the City, Saint Paul and the recently built skyscrapers in South Bank, just left our guests mesmerised.





Focus on Clerkenwell Design Week

by Alasdair Mealey

Clerkenwell Design Week seems to be growing every year, this makes it harder to get around and see everything that's on. CDW has a relaxed feel and this makes it a very good event for exposing some of the more junior members of staff to networking and a chance for them to meet others in the design community.

Any event that celebrates design is a positive thing. Clerkenwell Design Week is great at showcasing designs and bringing people in the A&D community together.

CDW's focus is often more on the interior design side of things, but that's understandable given that so many of the furniture companies sponsor the events and put an enormous amount of time and effort into making the week a success.

Compared to a lot of architecture and design events, CDW is very public facing. Any event that gives people outside of the A&D community a better insight can only be of great benefit to the industry. I remember the first year we held the Aedas "Design Charrette" a gentleman walked in off the street and started making a model of a reception desk! That wouldn't happen at the average design show/expo.

Probably, one way to improve CDW would be hosting more events where there is actually the opportunity to design (just like the Aedas Design Charrette). Aligning a few more open ideas competitions (there could be multiple briefs) with CDW and then displaying the winning entries in a prominent location during the week would likely draw a lot of additional positive attention to the event.

Talking about the Design Charrette, the one we held in Alea showroom this year was a massive success.

It was the third year Aedas had organised a Charrette as part of Clerkenwell Design Week and we had the best turn out to date. It helped significantly that Alea (and Luxy) committed to the process early and thus we were able to get the invitations out in good time which always contributes to better attendance. The more compact venue also created a better atmosphere. Every participant was very positive and complimentary about the experience. Many even mentioned they were already looking forward to next year.

The average age of participants was below 30, often younger architects and designers don't get the opportunity to lead design exercises in practice, so the opportunity to do just that, even for a brief amount of time, was thus met with much enthusiasm.

It was also great to see other disciplines in the construction industry participating (Engineers, QS, Sustainability Consultants) in the charrette. It would be great to see an even wider range of disciplines at the event next year. The location was absolutely inspiring for all the

participants. At Alea's showroom, the quality and robustness of the designs are very obvious throughout the selection on show. The good thing about Alea's showroom is it places the products in a setting that is very similar to how they would actually sit in a high percentage of the office space in central London. This gives one a much better impression of how the products would actually be used, their aesthetics and functionality.

I would like to end this article by thanking Nicola Citarella (of Alea) and Nicolò Zambotto (of Luxy) for their enthusiastic support of the Aedas Design Charrette and for providing a great venue and fantastic prizes. A big thank you must also go to Chiara Beltrame, Aedas' Business Development and Communications Manager who put a considerable amount of time and effort into organising the event.

We at Aedas are looking forward to partnering with Alea to hold an even bigger and better Design Charrette in the near future.

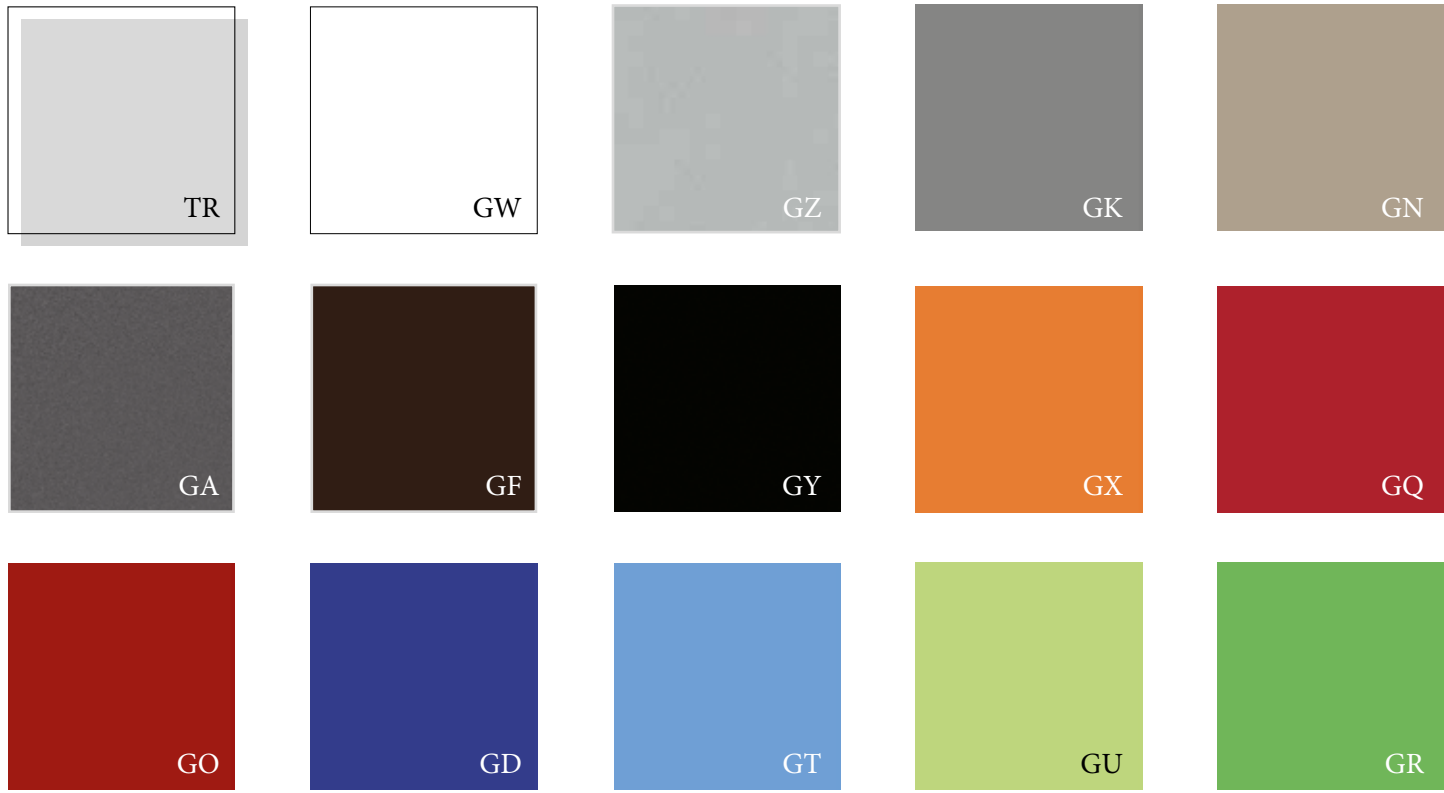
Photos:
Design Charrette at Alea Showroom, London





GLASS

Alea's standard options
for table tops



TR - Transparent, GW - White, GZ - Silver, GK - Dark grey, GN - Noisette, GA - Ardesia, GF - Mocha, GY - Black, GX - Orange, GQ - Red "F", GO - Ruby, GD - Indigo, GT - Blue, GU - Green, GR - Lime green.
All our back painted glass finishes are available also with an anti-fingerprint option (NFG code).

A journey into London real estate business

A chat with Stephen English



Stephen English's career in real estate started when he was only 18 years old. In 2009 he established HBC which now works with some major household names including Houzz, Saab, DueDil, Telent, WABCO and Alea.
www.hbcrealestate.co.uk

Stephen English specialises in an area the has given him unrivalled early access to premises, which benefits his clients, amongst whom are Alea for their fabulous new Clerkenwell Showroom.

How did you come to choose property as a career?

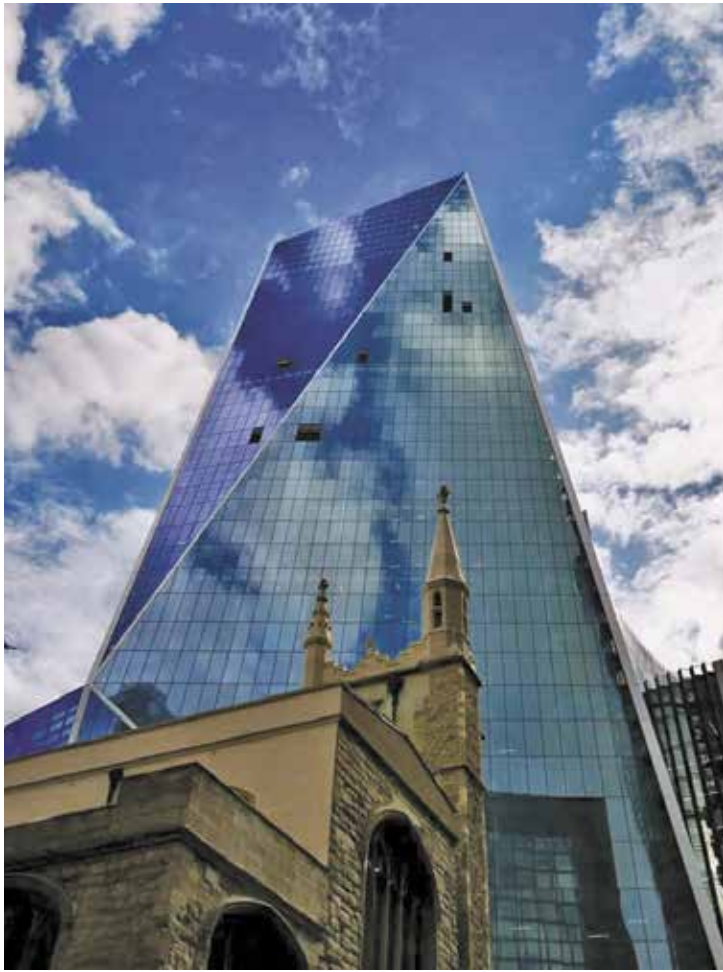
As ever with these things, property chose me! A cousin of mine was studying Land Economics and the subjects studied were numerous, including architecture, economics, property law, statistics and the variety appealed. Perhaps more importantly it was a 'cognate' degree and practically guaranteed a job at the end of it. I commenced a three year course at what is now Westminster University and started my career with a little known Central London practice called Vigers in 1980. Two years later I passed my Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors exams to become an Associate, and the die was cast!

The variety of work and people I have met over the course of my career has been staggering and I have never regretted my decision at age 18. Property has become my hobby as well as my career and remains a source of endless fascination. I can happily discuss the merits of VVT air cooling as opposed to chilled beams without considering myself strange in any way!

How does your service vary with the typical property market operation?

I and a colleague established what is now HBC in early 2009. We both came from large corporate property advisers and were concerned at spending so much time doing non-core activities so joined up to bring our respective client bases under one banner. I had always worked for the occupier of commercial offices, and was one of the first Chartered Surveyors to make this a speciality. Most practices worked for landlords with just a small department to assist the tenant. I saw a niche in the market to act solely for the tenant, and it proved so successful that I continue to do so to this day. HBC works with some major household names including Houzz, Saab, DueDil, Telent, WABCO and of course Alea who we were proud to represent in their recent move to new offices in Clerkenwell.

As specialists working only for tenants, landlords like to make contact with us all of the time to advise about their new offices coming to the market. This information comes to us without any effort on our part. This is our USP and we like to think puts us one step ahead of the market. Our competitors work for



“No other World City is so compact, and the pressure on commercial space is therefore intense.”

landlords principally, and as a result other landlords are loath to reveal too much early information.

Does the London property market have particular challenges?

London is a World City and sits in the middle of the time-zones actually quite small. You can walk from Marble Arch at the western edge of the Central Business District, to The Tower of London at the eastern end, in under one hour. By Underground it's 15 minutes. No other World City is so compact, and the pressure on commercial space is therefore intense. St Paul's Cathedral height restrictions means tower blocks have not been permitted and provided the space demanded, although these restrictions are being relaxed in parts of The City of London itself (as opposed to London generally). Occupiers look at the combination of the rent, Business Rates service charges with some consternation. £100 per sq ft per annum costs are typical with some parts of London more than double that.

Has the market changed over the last 30+ years?

It is an expensive City so occupiers look to make their space as efficient as possible. Agile working, regarded by many as a way to cram more people into ever smaller spaces ten years ago, is now the watchword. And resulting from this examination into flexibility, the design of offices has changed dramatically, and all to the good. Pool tables and break out areas were regarded as useless spaces ten years ago, perhaps to be taken over as a business expanded. Now they are regarded as necessities to attract higher caliber staff. This balance between making use of all available space whilst creating open and dynamic working environments is one of the biggest challenges facing the London market currently. With much older stock, originally built to be occupied in a conventional manner, landlords are making considerable efforts to modernize their buildings, to find ways to incorporate roof spaces as dedicated terraces (Your own offices are a great example of this with some of the best terracing in London!)



What is the most unusual brief for a property you have undertaken (or not)

In a 35 year career there have been some most unusual searches and lease enquiries. The smallest deal I have done is 25 sq m for an underwriting office close to Lloyds of London. The largest has to be a 25,000 sq m storage unit with 30m ceiling heights. The volume was extraordinary, capable of accommodating two Boeing 747's! Then there was the acquisition of a boat on The River Thames for a marketing business, and a wine bar in The City of London. The majority of our instructions are to find offices as that is what we are good at. This takes us into all parts of London and we see some amazing spaces as a result. Is there a building I haven't been inside in London? Well, yes, but there aren't many!

Photos:

From the top - Bishopsgate, Alphabeta Finsbury Square

Previous page - Bishopsgate





Material: Italian melamine
Colour: White
Code: MN



Material: Epoxy
Colour: White
Code: EB



Material: Solid wood
Colour: Light oak
Code: LC



FOCUS ON THE PROJECT: HENCE MADRID

Hence is a fashion company established in Spain which produces and sells clothes balancing what looks good with green manufacturing. The sustainable philosophy of the brand can be seen in the use of recycled and natural materials in their new offices and store in Madrid. In order to enhance their organic concept, Destudio architects chose Alea to provide benches, desks and high tables from Atreo Wood collection.

Dealer: Destudio
Designer: Destudio
Product: Atreo Wood
Location: Madrid, Spain



Illustration:
Sketch for Spectrumnews.org

An Italian illustrator in New York

My creativity
in continuous
transformation



Michela Buttignol is a New York-based designer. Her schooling includes a BFA in illustration at IED Milano and an intensive studies program in graphic design at Parsons, The New School of Design, in New York.
www.michelabuttignol.com

Michela's technological prowess has enabled her to branch across a variety of channels. In 2011, she left Italy and moved to New York to become a freelance graphic designer and illustrator. Since then she has worked for The New York Times, The Boston Globe, BuzzFeed, Maxus, Now What, Weber Shandwick, and The Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) of New York. Between 2011 and 2017 Michela's work has been recognized and awarded by the Society Of Illustrators, America Illustration and Creative Quarterly.

Can you tell us a little about yourself and how you started your passion for illustration?

I knew I wanted to be a designer since I was in kindergarten. Teachers were giving us prepared drawings to colour and it upset me a lot! I wanted to make my own drawings! I definitely pursued my dream: after attending artistic studies in high school, I graduated from the European Institute of Design in Milan and later studied graphic design at Parsons in New York City. After a few years working in the design field, I moved from Italy, my country of origin, to New York City. Since I moved to the United States, I have had the opportunity to work as an editorial illustrator for several publications including The New York Times, The Boston Globe, Nautilus Magazine and Buzz Feed.

You moved to Milan because of the university and then you started your own business there. How did it all begin? Tell us something about Cromazoo.

Shortly after receiving my master in Motion Design and Animation, I realized that in order for me to understand what kind of designer I wanted to be, I needed to explore the industry as much as possible and build my skill set. That required time and dedication, something you definitely can't do if you sit in a full-time job 8 hours or more per day. At the time I was lucky enough to meet other young designers who had similar ideas and together we launched a multidisciplinary studio, that we called Cromazoo, where I spent almost five years.

And then what happened? How did you change your life and moved to New York City?

“Of course, I let the city inspire me and push me to be a better designer”

I visited New York City and fell in love with the city and the guy that not-too-shortly after that became my husband.

As you can imagine, moving to New York changed not only my personal life but drastically influenced my professional world.

For obvious reasons, I had to start over and so I decided, once again, to focus on my personal style and to better address it to the American market. Of course, I let the city inspire me and push me to be a better designer.

How has your work transformed since you live in the US?

The biggest transformation was the complete shift to digital. After many years of using traditional media and exploring a lot of different tools from engraving to collage, I finally translated all my crafting knowledge to the computer. I was already using the tablet a lot and Photoshop was already important in my work, but once I started getting assignments from magazines and newspapers with very tight deadlines, the shift was drastic. Coming from the traditional world, I consider the computer a tool that allows me to work quickly, but I still adore my pencil and brushes and use them to experiment whenever I can.

Can you tell us what your career plan is for the future?

At the moment I work full time as lead designer for a startup where I am mainly in charge of pattern design and surfaces. I still work as freelance illustrator, but the plan is to keep going and possibly create my own pattern business in the next future. Overall I



just want to keep loving what I do and be a better designer, just like the first day I moved to New York City.

What do you like and dislike about living New York? Do you miss Italy?

The commute. I don't like the subway! I also hate Time Square, try to avoid it as much as I can! I miss Italy a lot, I miss my friends every day and the life I built there for 30 years. Some people are not replaceable.

Finally, tell us how you get inspired.

Most of my inspirations come from loving different forms of art and artists. Movies and music inspire me as well and I love how once the inspiration loop begins, it can flow and take you to places you were definitely not aware of.

Illustrations:

Left Page - Annuities Seen as the Better Choice - Editorial Illustration for Plansponsor

From the top - "The Daek Flood Riese", cover illustration for The New York Times Book Review - "Portrait of a Lady"

Being a designer in Toronto

the Canadian cultural melting-pot



With an academic background in architecture and a 20-year career in interior design, George Foussias is also a design director, contributing to the strategic design conversation and project development for Quadrangle Architects in Toronto. www.quadrangle.ca

George Foussias' role carries the responsibilities of an interior design lead, in developing his own projects, collaborating with various teams and promoting the design growth of Quadrangle studio. In addition, his task list extends into the integration of the harmonious conjectures of architecture and design. With a number of international interior design awards, George has gained a deep knowledge in a very broad range of interiors including condominiums, hospitality, entertainment, food and beverage, corporate office and government facilities. He has an extensive knowledge of construction and engineering along with his architectural background. This creates a strong, conscious understanding of how to conceptualise a design and successfully guide it through all the development phases to produce

“coming back to Toronto feels like the journey never ends,”

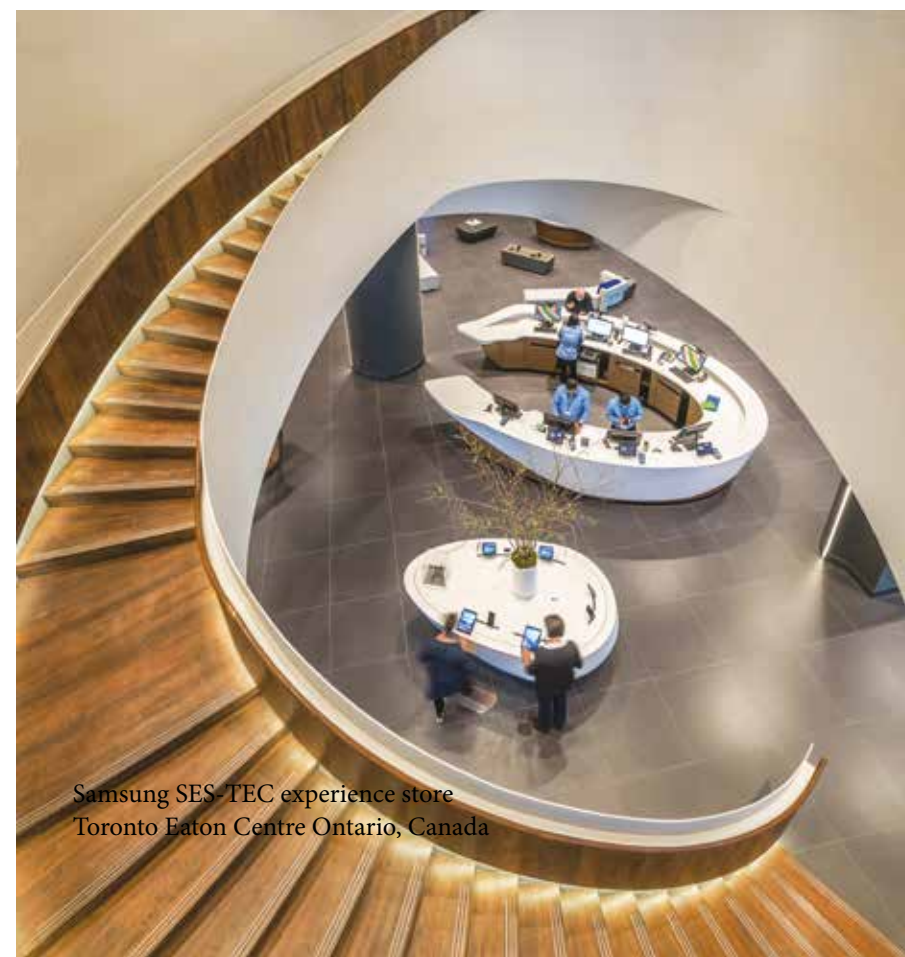
a completed result that can satisfy timelines, budgets, aesthetic values, client intent and brand context.

How is it being a designer in Toronto?

Our profession has been continuously changing over my 20-year career here; I find our roles are becoming more diverse, frequently switching hats between being an architect, interior designer, engineer, brand developer, marketer, product designer and as always, cheerleader to both my teams and clients. The best evolution in my profession, I believe, is the broader scope of work we do these days: we do not only design Interior spaces, but establish brands, develop marketing strategies and assist our clients into manifesting complete experiences for their end user. I find this very exciting and transitional.

Does the city get you inspired?

I am lucky to be living in the most multicultural City in the world and I don't mean that lightly. In fact, out of all places I have travelled to, coming back to Toronto feels like the journey never ends. I can have a dozen different ethnic cuisines within the stretch of a single city block and I hang out with friends from all over the world, walking together without prejudice, restraint or even a second look by anyone. This exposure to all cultures has benefited me more than anything else.



Samsung SES-TEC experience store
Toronto Eaton Centre Ontario, Canada



I love travelling and living in Toronto has opened my eyes to the entire planet before even getting on a plane!

Tell us about your creative process.

Our office values collaboration it is not merely a script we preach, it is a process we execute every day. Our environment is inclusive, and my favourite line in and out the office is "the best idea wins".

We value and pursue teamwork when we design while making sure there is plenty of room for individuality and for our creatives to stretch their wings. We have a number of processes we have developed over the years which are always refining: we institute "charrettes" where a group comes at the beginning of a project and as a group has an idea we build the discussion. The great thing about coming unprepared for this is that no one comes with established ideas, we all add to each other's thoughts and in the end, it all comes



out as a group effort that everyone contributed to. We also have more formal occasions such as our Design Review Panel, consisting of a selected team which includes our Design Directors and Design Principles who come together once a month to review certain projects and measure our output against our company brand and level of excellence.

What do you like the most about your job?

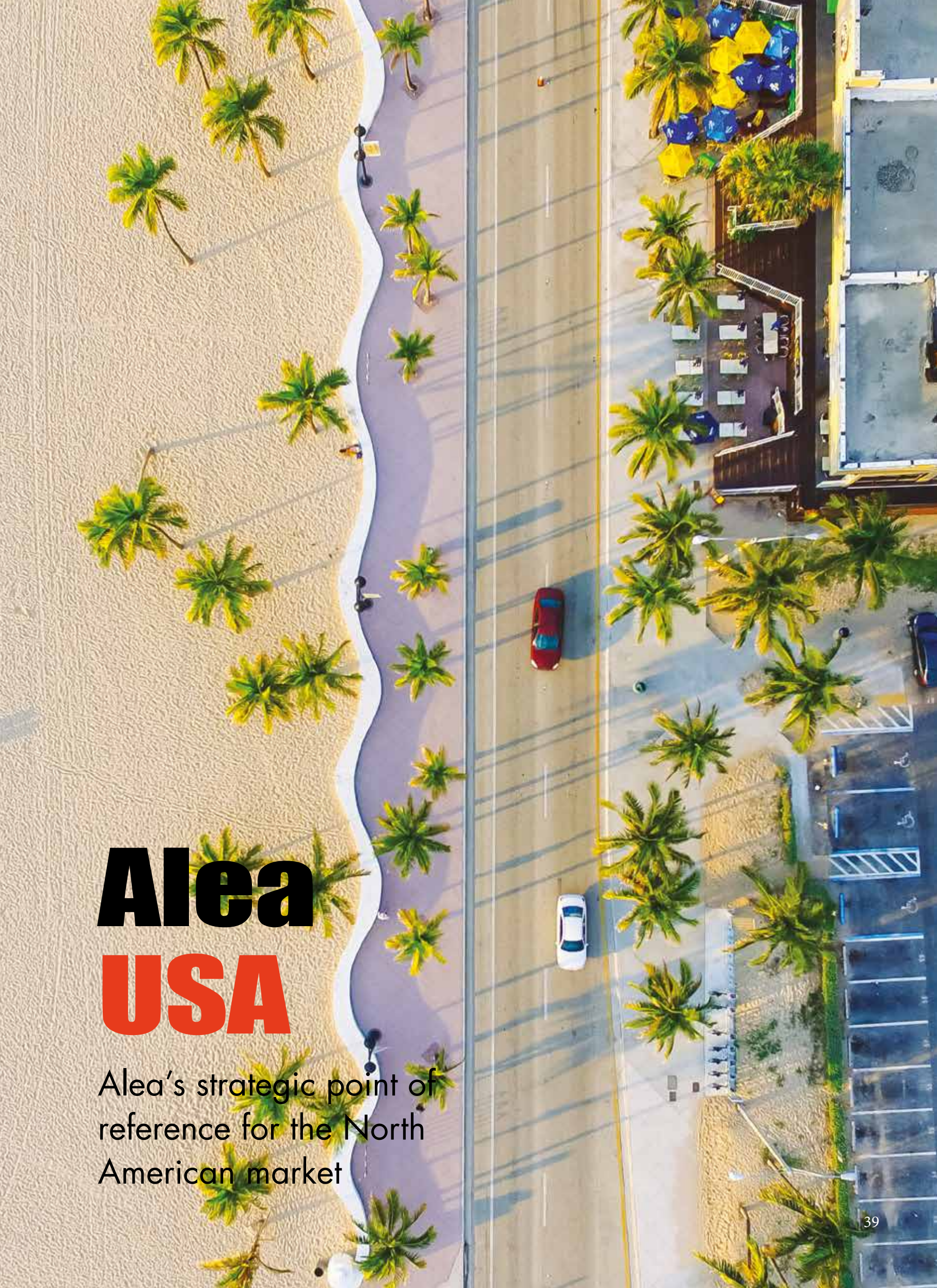
The most exciting part of my job is the variety of clients, industry and projects we develop. Having worked on workplaces, hospitality, food and beverage, retail and residential sectors, I never get bored!

How do you manage to connect the several elements of a project like engineering, architecture and interior design values?

We are an Architectural office and we do a lot of work combining the three disciplines. The majority of our projects are performed by the architectural and interior studios. Consequently, we are involved from the beginning of the process, influencing it on all levels. My personal Architectural schooling trained me through a robust knowledge of sciences involving the study of these three subjects which I believe are tightly related one with the other.

Photos:
Previous page, from the top - Gallery Square condominium Markham Ontario, Canada - Due West Retail store Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Current page - Samsung SES-TEC experience store Toronto Eaton Centre



Alea USA

Alea's strategic point of reference for the North American market



Francesca Comelli is Alea USA president since 2007. With 15 years experience Francesca is now based in Miami where she manages Alea USA corporate office. www.alea-usa.com

Alea USA operates in the market through its main corporate office located in Miami. Why Miami? Well, we all know it is largely known for its beaches, palms and sunny days but there is actually more beyond this. Miami is a strategic geographic market point, connection between North and South, but also a place where you can experience art and architecture directly in the streets without the need of entering into a proper art gallery. In fact Alea's offices are in Midtown, strategically located between Wynwood and the Design District, where people can walk among the most interesting design, fashion showrooms and modern sculptures. What you breathe here is a lively atmosphere where the environment makes the difference.

In North America we cooperate with the most prestigious design firms in the USA, like Gensler, Lehman Smith McLeish and HOK. Alea extensive knowledge of both design and

manufacturing processes enhances its expertise in transforming complex designs into real projects. Our detailed plans, isometrics and renderings show how our products are blended to achieve our client projects specification. We still compete with all the

“design & attention to the details, quality of our materials, flexibility to adapt to new designs and last but not least price point,”

major American manufacturers and excel among them for design & attention to the details, quality of our materials, flexibility to adapt to new designs and last but not least price point.

In 2018 Alea has launched for the first time in North America A65, a sleek partition system, all made in Italy, that has been very well received by the A&D community for its clean design, moderate price and versatility. Thanks to this new product, Alea has been able to further spread its presence introducing as well the office furniture collections.

Photos:
Miami Design District and Wynwood



Focus on FirstLook NYC

by Francesca Comelli

On Wednesday 18th July 2018, for the second year in a row, Alea has joined First Look, the annual post-NeoCon 4-hour event at the New York Design Center (NYDC) with its flagship showroom, located on the 15th floor. Unlike NeoCon, First Look is about fitting contract furnishings into the New York City context of the market, not all across America. It is typically attended by the A&D community and the most important dealers in town. Approximately 1,300 professionals have visited the showrooms enjoying food, drinks and fun activities while discovering new products offering among the exhibitors. Alea in particular, has taken the opportunity to introduce to the USA market the new collections BLADE and XYLO and a whole new division with the A65 design driven partition system. Products were well received by the crowd confirming the positive reputation of Alea.

Photos:
Current and next page - Alea NYC showroom by Salvatore Corso





In today's fast pace world, it is a good idea to remind ourselves; The design process starts at the point of not knowing a solution. At this point you can explore all possibilities. The process is rigorous and success will come when you know you have gone beyond what you knew. Observation, question, analyze, build, and allow the process to take you to discovery. Maintaining integrity and a clear intention is essential for good design.

Carol Nowak, designer, artist, educator, mentor, researcher with a life time of experience.



Italo



Atlante



Italo



Atreo

#educational



Atreo



Meeting tables

gathering
brain storming
keep in touch
lounge areas



Blade X.
Top + leg covers: Smoke grey oak, wood veneer - RG
Structure: Grey, epoxy - EG



Blade.
Top: Light oak, Italian melamine - MC
Structure: Noisette, epoxy - EO



Xylo.
Top: White, Italian melamine - MN
Structure: Light oak, solid wood - LC



Crono.
Top: Grey oak, Italian melamine - ME
Structure: Black, epoxy - EN



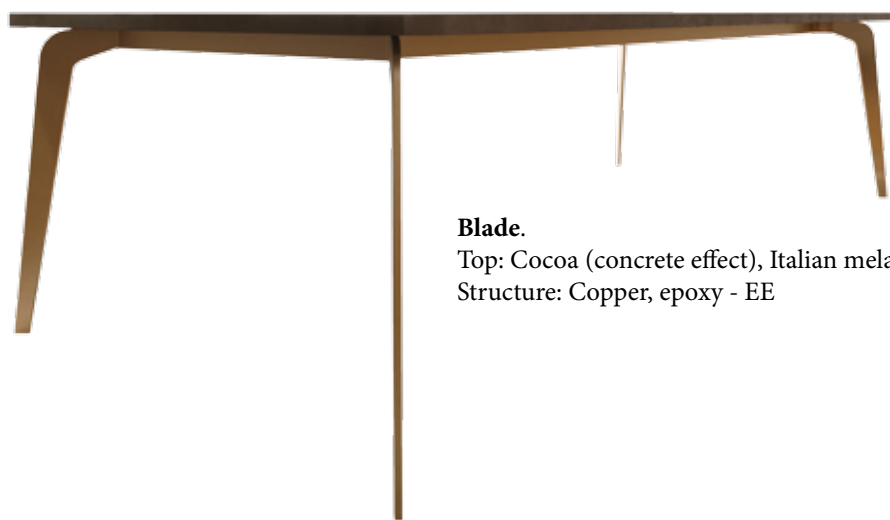
Archimede.
Top: Light oak, wood veneer - RC
Structure: Stainless steel - CR



Atreo Wood.
Top: Cocoa (concrete effect), Italian melamine - MZ
Structure: Bronze, epoxy - EZ
Legs: Light oak, solid wood - LC



Blade X.
Top + leg covers: Dark oak, wood veneer - RM
Structure: Nickel, Lux epoxy - QF



Blade.
Top: Cocoa (concrete effect), Italian melamine - MZ
Structure: Copper, epoxy - EE



Titano.
Top: Silver ebony, wood veneer - SL
Structure: Stainless steel - CR



Titano.
Top: Silver ebony, wood veneer - SL
Legs: Silver ebony, wood veneer - SL



Zefiro.
Top: White, backpainted glass - GW
Structure: Aluminium brill - BR



Odeon.
Top: White, backpainted glass - GW + Aluminium edge
Structure: White, epoxy - EB



Titano.
Top: Brown, leather - CM + edge in Makassar ebony, wood veneer - AK
Structure: Stainless steel - CR



Atreo Wood.
Top: Noisette, Italian melamine - MI
Structure: Noisette, epoxy - EO
Legs: Light oak, solid wood - LC



Archimede.
Top: White, Italian melamine - MN
Structure: White, epoxy - EB



Blade X.
Top + leg covers: Light oak, wood veneer - RC
Structure: Black, epoxy - EN



Ibis.
Top: Brown, leather - CM
Structure: Bronze, epoxy - EZ



Titano.
Top: Makassar ebony, wood veneer - AK
Legs: Makassar ebony, wood veneer - AK



Atreo.
Top: Rippled effect white, Italian melamine - MB
Structure: Ardesia, epoxy - EI



Eracle.
Top: Basalt, porcelain tiles - JB + Aluminium edge
Structure: Anodised aluminium - AL



Ibis.
Top: Grey oak, Italian melamine - ME
Structure: Ardesia, epoxy - EI



Atreo Wood.
Top: Talco, Italian melamine - MT
Structure: Talco, epoxy - ET
Legs: Light oak, solid wood - LC



Eracle.
Top: Corten, porcelain tiles - JR
Structure: Anodised aluminium - AL



Archimede.
Top: White, Italian melamine - MN
Structure: Ardesia, epoxy - EI



Atreo.
Top: Grey oak, Italian melamine - ME
Structure: Ardesia, epoxy - EI



Atreo.
Top: Noisette, Italian melamine - MI
Structure: Noisette, epoxy - EO

MATERIAL GIRL

The process of seeking



After a decade in high-tech apparel design, Melanie Maslany changed direction to create Elements of Aura, a metaphysical wellness brand inspired by a personal thirst for growth and adventure. www.elementsofaura.com

I created my first product at 5 years old. Plucking every single rose petal in the garden, I collected them in a bucket, filled it with water, and mashed them with my bare hands. It was my first product – Rose Perfume. I sold every single mismatched jelly jar to all the ladies in the neighborhood. Hyper-locally sourced, organic, handmade, female-run business. I didn't have these marketing terms back then, but I was 5 and I had dimples. I learned to create for my audience.

“I tasked myself with mastering one new skill each year and planting seeds for an adventurous future.”

For 11 years, I worked for a rogue division at adidas tasked with designing ultra-functional apparel embedded with electronics. We began as a start-up and were fully absorbed by the multinational corporation within just 3 years. My group was responsible for developing next-level technology in

training apparel for consumers as well as teams in nearly every major sport in the US and Europe. As a design engineer, I was able to travel the globe with my curious eyes, brainstorm with brilliant minds and bring lots of wild ideas to life. However, fulfillment is a personal and mercurial emotion. I learned that no matter how incredibly cool my job was, I had an undeniable need to connect with the universe in a deeper way.

I tasked myself with mastering one new skill each year and planting seeds for an adventurous future. I studied Permaculture Design in a rainforest in Costa Rica. I completed 200 hours of Yoga Teacher Training in Bali, Indonesia, in a shala surrounded by expansive rice fields. I bought a large plot of undeveloped land in my favorite country, Nicaragua. I joined a female tribal dance group and danced around fires wearing the fiercest face paint while banging a hand drum. I took breath work and women's studies courses, attended lunar phase workshops and earned crystal therapy certifications with teachers who wrote the rules on their individual fields, literally. But the biggest shift happened when I read “Body of Work” by Pamela Slim. I learned that the fulfillment I was seeking was simply the process of seeking.

My metaphysical wellness brand, Elements of Aura, was born from this seat of discovery. Having opened myself up to learning all that I could absorb, I answered a universal call to leave the corporate world and concentrate all my various experiences into making beautiful, functional products that create space for connecting to oneself, and to the greater spider web of cosmic connection that links us all together.



As a company, Elements of Aura operates like a series of discoveries which turn into product, or potentially not. It's boundless and completely freeing. We experience and experiment with what interests us in the moment, and expand from there with extensive product research, market analysis, rapid prototyping, and small batch production. Developing product this way is remarkably fluid; being able to share my learnings in creative ways presses my “fulfilled” button daily. On our cutting table at the moment are prototypes of a meditation mask featuring a crystal nestled into the third eye. On the white board is a rough timeline for a Law of Attraction (Abundance) workshop I plan on co-leading. But one of the most exciting is a beauty product line inspired by hyper-local, fresh botanicals sourced and sold at our urban farm.

My prior expertise in plucking rose petals has come full circle - and that's what this business is all about.

Products can be found at Anthropologie and online elementsofaura.com

Photos:
Marc Pikolski/ Elements of Aura



100% made in Italy

GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS AND SHOWROOM : Via Col de Rust, 19 - 33070 Sarone (PN) - Italia : Tel ++39 0434 777 333 : aleaoffice.com - info@aleaoffice.com
NORTH AMERICAN HEADQUARTERS : Midtown 2, 3449 NE 1st Avenue L-32, Miami, FL 33137 - USA : Tel ++1 305 470 1200 : alea-usa.com - info@alea-usa.com
NEW YORK SHOWROOM : New York Design Center, 200 Lexington Ave Suite #1509, New York, NY 10016 - USA
ALEA UK OFFICE AND SHOWROOM : 50-54 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1M 5PS -: aleaoffice.co.uk - ukoffice@aleaoffice.com



Communication + Marketing Department