



“HAUTE COUTURE” & “EFFORTLESSNESS”

INGENIOUS WELL EXECUTED DESIGN, GEORGE KARAM SPEAKS TO US ABOUT WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE HIGH END INTERIORS COME TO LIFE!

Of French background and Lebanese Origin, Georges Karam has managed to put the “Haute” in Haute Couture within the last decade that he’s designed in Bahrain, through his company “GK Designs”. Educated in France and with 15 years of extensive experience in the UK working alongside High profile designers, he developed quite the portfolio, both in furniture and interior design.

Studying and Working simultaneously to support his ambitious education, he can be considered a real self-made man; going on to work with the Grand Mosque of Hassan II designer in Casablanca and other notable projects, as well as opening up his own showroom for exquisite pieces in France. Later he joined the international platform in London, where its melting pot of a clientele brought him to Bahrain.

His keen eye for the finer things in life and his appreciation for the Old values to do right by the rules of Art shines through his meticulous work that strives for excellence.

Where did you go to school for ID?

I studied in France, where I first enrolled in a preparatory school of art, which then opened up the doors for studying in an Ecole Des Beaux-Arts (School of Fine Arts). My mornings were dedicated to my classes and my afternoons to my work. Eventually, when I graduated, the beginning of my career saw me working with some big names in the industry such as Alberto Pinto in Paris and Michel Pinseau on the Grand Mosque of Hassan II in Morocco, where I took on the Office of the King in the Medersa.

What do you qualify as a good classical design?

When you do classical the right way, it’s called French — invoking designs such as Versailles in your home. It’s to be well versed in the arts of classical designs not just from the time of Louis 16th, but further back to the Renaissance! You need to have studied it to know the exact proportions of each element and how they fit in your design.

As an accomplished Interior Designer, what is one advice you would give an ID just starting?

I think the main issue in young designers nowadays is the lack of curiosity they have. Cultivation is an essential aspect of our industry. To be a good designer, you have to be a well-rounded person and be able to understand and discuss many topics. The younger generation doesn’t practice cultivating their knowledge anymore; back in the days, we were all about the cultural activities to enrich ourselves and to use it in our work.

In your work, you use terms like “Haute Couture” & “Effortlessness.” Is that something you hold in high regard in your work?

Yes, absolutely! Our work is haute couture and is in no way banal. Each case is tailored specifically for our client and handled from A to Z, making sure our clients are well taken care of. We provide excellence and nothing less with experience forged throughout the years.

Can you describe your philosophy in a few words?

High-Quality design is when the technique is not noticed at all, only beauty and grace prevails.

Do you think Bahrain has its fair share of diverse interior designers?

People here are now fortunate to have several interior designers based in Bahrain that offer the same caliber of Paris or London. Designers from different fields of the same experience and high-quality education have come and opened up shop here. In my opinion, they should be given more credit for taking such an initiative.

What part do you enjoy most about your work?

The smile on the client's face at the end of the project, it makes it all worth it

What is one project you particularly enjoyed working on? (why)

It was a private villa commissioned to me by a client who allowed my design to fully flourish into the best design it could be.

What are the countries you've drawn inspiration from for your designs?

I'm lucky to have amassed such a multicultural background. If I had to choose, though, it would mainly and mostly be France because that was where I spent my formative

years. However, it was only until I worked in London's international platform that I gained footing and launched worldwide. If it weren't for London, I wouldn't be in Bahrain today.

If you could retire tomorrow, what would you do?

I would own a quaint house on one of the islands in Greece. Me, the Sea, maybe a dog. Or even Paris, but away from the hustle and bustle.

If given a chance to do it all over again, would you choose the same career?

Yes and no. Yes, because being an interior designer is a calling, you don't have a choice in the matter. I'm in love with what I do. At the same time, I'm a self-made man who had to go through many struggles and heartache to get to where I am today. Perhaps if there is to be a do-over, it could be done this time with a little more help than I had the first time around.

Can you name an Interior Designer that you draw inspiration from?

Alberto Pinto. He's become a reference to many designers and students.

What is one Building in the world you consider iconic in terms of ID?

I have a particular love for Jean Nouvel's Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris. I find his technique of Mashrabiya very impressive and the facade working "comme une horloge suisse" we say in french, meaning a mechanism that works with extreme precision. It also has the best view of the Notre Dame of Paris, and if you look at it, its proportions are so awkward, as its entrance for example. He is nothing short of a magician.

What is the best compliment you've ever received?

Thank you. Thank you very much.

What's your favorite book?

I particularly enjoyed The Autobiography of St. Teresa of Avila, which talks about a nun who was under the inquisition and later became a well-known Saint in Europe.

What's your favorite cuisine?

I'm the most comfortable with Italian food, or rather a combination between French and Italian. I actually learned to make a tasty pasta dish myself.

What's a well-spent Friday for you?

Spending a nice relaxing day at the beach with a shisha.

Where do you like to travel?

I love Greece. It's where I keep wanting to visit over and over again. **AH**

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With a common modern twist to both the living & dining area, the colours are marked by decisive lines in a cooler palette.