

habitus

LIVING IN DESIGN

ISSUE 06 JANUARY - MARCH 2010



9 771836 055007

habitusliving.com

AUD \$12.95
NZ \$13.95
USD \$16.95

06
CDN \$16.95
GBP £8.50
SGD \$10.95

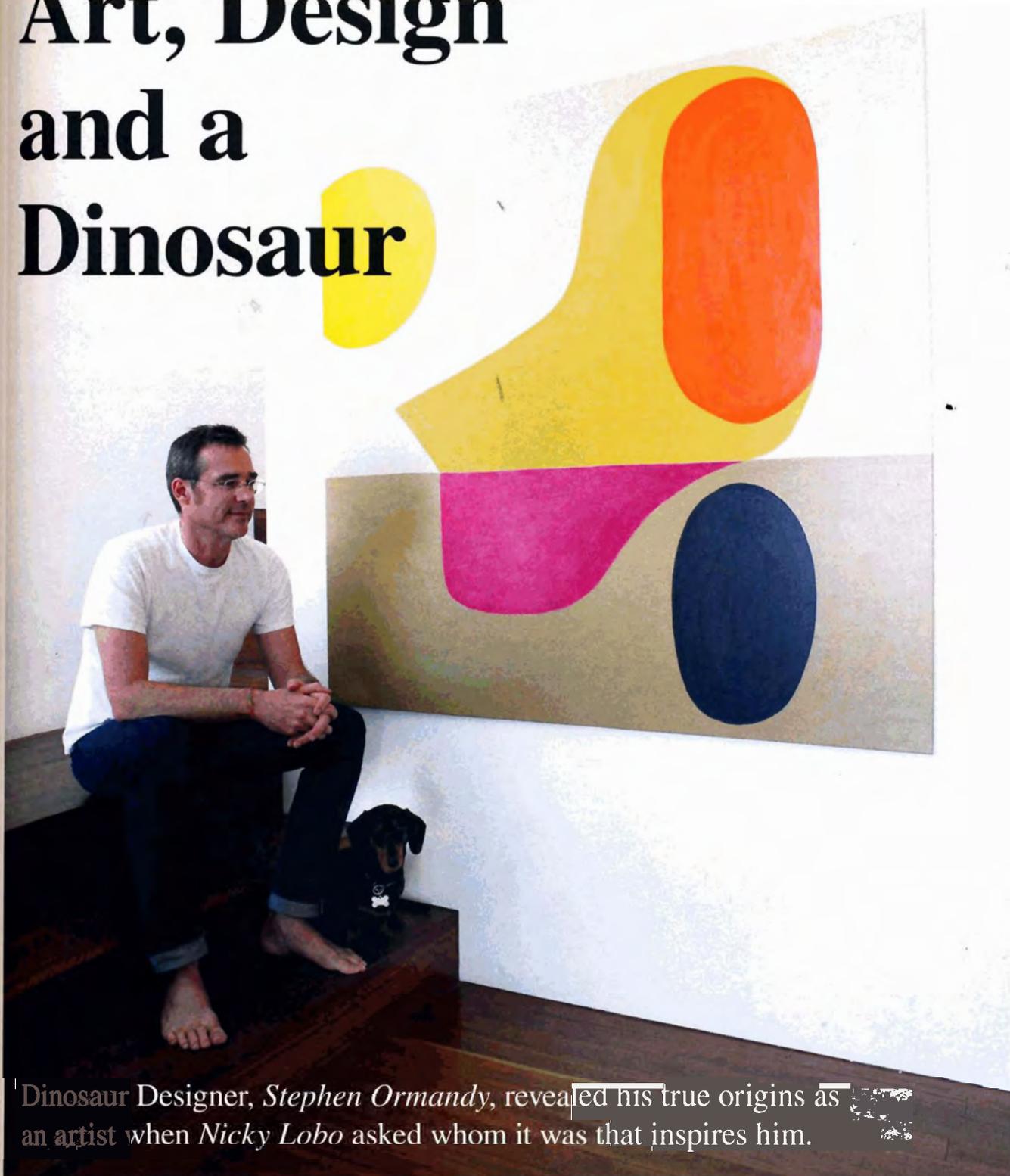
INSPIRATION FOR THE ENTERTAINING SEASON **MALAYSIAN DESIGN MASTER EDRIC ONG**
EXPLORING ABORIGINAL ARTEFACTS **SYDNEY PENTHOUSE RE-INVENTED** FAMILY LIVING
IN THAILAND **SISTER DESIGN ACT** NEW SINGAPORE HOUSE NEW ZEALAND'S **MITCHELL**
STOUT IN TOWN AND **COUNTRY** MELBOURNE SOPHISTICATION INDIA **DOWN UNDER**

explore
habitusliving.com
the design hunt
continues

BREATHING
SPACE
AT HOME



Art, Design and a Dinosaur



Dinosaur Designer, *Stephen Ormandy*, revealed his true origins as an artist when *Nicky Lobo* asked whom it was that inspires him.



After almost 25 years of creating, the trio behind Dinosaur Designs hardly needs an introduction. Their name has become synonymous with contemporary Australian design, and the prolific collection of jewellery and homewares produced since their first experiments with resin in 1986 are testament to their relevance and longevity.

Stephen Ormandy is the intriguing male counterpart to the glamorous duo of Louise Olsen (his partner, with whom he has a child) and Liane Rossler. But he brings a particular element to the group dynamic that is expressed in his individual creative endeavours.

Art has recently returned to the forefront of Stephen's creative psyche. After graduating from art school and due to the growing popularity of Dinosaur Designs, "there was a period of about eight years of not painting," he remembers.

Then, about five years ago while drawing with his daughter, Camille (now 10), he "suddenly realised something was missing". This simple and intuitive act became the "seed" of this return to painting. These crudely cut paper squares he coloured that day hang on the wall of his studio today as mementos of this turning point.

Perhaps this realisation was also inspired by two of Stephen's favourite artists. Introduced

01 One of Stephen's paintings hangs at the entry.

02 A diverse collection of tribal, modern and classic design and art find harmony in Stephen and Louise's home.

03 Tools of the artist's trade.

04 Form and colour are celebrated in every corner.



03



04

to the work of British artist, Victor Pasmore, there was an instant attraction – "I saw his work in an art catalogue for an auction, and the minute I saw these images, I thought – 'Wow, look at that. Who's that? What's going on?' So I went straight down there to the auction and I just had to have them."

The series of five paintings he purchased that very day is hung on the wall across from the dining table, where he and his father-in-law, painter John Olsen, "sit and talk about them for hours," says Stephen.

It is clear that Pasmore originally followed the Impressionist school, before experimenting with abstraction, which he pioneered in Britain (he also had an interest in architecture). Turning the pages of a long-sought-after Pasmore tome, Stephen explains the development in style: "Most people thought he was crazy to do this abstract stuff after his impressionism stuff. But it was so bold. I love that."

Some might say that Stephen's recent re-focusing on his own art practice is just as bold, but it's "all one expression" to him. The move is not exactly out of the blue – he is a trained artist deeply connected to the Olsen creative dynasty, which includes his partner, Louise, her brother, gallery owner Tim and their father, John.

For Stephen, the creative process for his art and his design is quite similar, the difference being that Dinosaur Designs is a planned team event whereas with his own painting, "spontaneity and the unconscious play a large role," he says. Looking at the developing works, echoes of the Dinosaur aesthetic are clearly recognisable and

inspired

stephen ormandy — NSW, australia



05

05 Stephen in his light-filled studio.

06

A work in progress by Stephen.

07

A wall of Stephen's work, including the drawings that mark his return to painting.

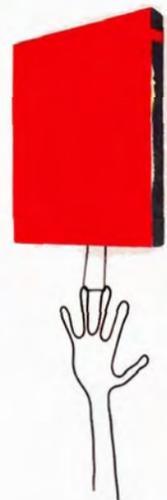
he admits that his own art and Dinosaur Designs work "inform each other."

Finnish designer and artist, Tapio Wirkkala, is a similar character in terms of crossing creative boundaries – in fact Stephen sees him as "an older version of where I'm headed." His works range from exclusive glass sculptures in galleries to industrial concepts with a significant commercial run, such as the Finlandia vodka bottle, Itala's Ultima Thule glass range, and the Finnish currency, the markka banknote (in use until the changeover to the Euro in 2001). In all Wirkkala's works, Stephen says, there is a particular aesthetic – "like that Aboriginal concept of songlines, the handing on of tradition, those threads that join the dots."

Stephen enjoys the way that Wirkkala "took his sculptural sensibility to the everyday", an approach that also characterises Dinosaur Designs. Stephen sees people as being like bowerbirds, that industrious and selective Australian native species that search for bits of blue to decorate their home. "We as a human culture have an interest in things aesthetically pleasing to us, in putting things together. Of course, a salad bowl has to hold salad, but if it can also look sculptural and beautiful, why not?"

Stephen has a refreshing take on Australia's design culture. "I think it's pretty dynamic here. We're lucky that modern Australia doesn't have a massive cultural cloud looming over the top of us. It's liberating – there's a certain freedom. Imagine the pressure of being an object designer in, say, Scandinavia."

This optimism permeates all that Stephen does and he has an organic approach to creativity and life. He searches out inspiration relentlessly, this eternal hunt a joyful sacrament of the soul – "There are all sorts of new discoveries ahead, whole new worlds. That never stops."



06

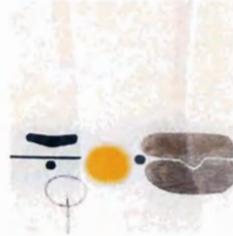


07

This *optimism* permeates all that Stephen does and he has an organic approach to creativity and life. He searches out *inspiration* relentlessly, this *eternal hunt* a joyful sacrament of the soul.

“ There are all sorts of new *discoveries* ahead, whole new worlds.
That *never stops*.”

—
STEPHEN



His simplified abstracted aesthetic is one thing. But it is his ethos, an unashamed enthusiasm for design and for life, that are the songlines of this particular bowerbird.

Tim Olsen Gallery is showing an exhibition of Stephen Ormandy's work from February 2010. The new Dinosaur Designs Moon range is launching in Winter, 2010.

Dinosaur Designs. dinosaurdesigns.com.au

06
The dining table faces a series by Pasmore.
09
Sculptures by Tapio Wirkkala in Stephen and Louise's home.

10
The Garden of Eden – Blue Symphony, 1981, Victor Pasmore.



09

TAPIO WIRKKALA
Tapio Wirkkala gained international recognition in the years following the Second World War. Born in Finland 1915, he worked across the disciplines of design, art, graphics

and sculpture, often inspired by nature. Over his lifetime, he created a prolific amount of artworks and products, many of them expressing his own craftsmanship and a deep and natural

understanding of materials and forms, from everyday items to intricate glassworks. Wirkkala's creations are part of many prestigious design collections around the world.

VICTOR PASMORE
Born in 1908, Victor Pasmore became interested in painting, especially French Impressionism and British watercolours. Elected a member of the London Artists'

Association in 1933, he then founded an art school and devoted his time to painting and teaching. In 1947 he began to experiment in purely abstract form based on cubist collages and geometric

figures. He continued to be actively involved in art education until his death in Malta in 1988 and is still recognised as one of the most influential abstract artists in Britain.



10



Tres Tintas Wallpaper Mil Caras by Javier Mariscal

www.funkis.com +612 93650573 office@funkis.com

funkis SWEDISH FORMS
www.funkis.com