

# interior design TODAY

BRITAIN'S OLDEST MAGAZINE FOR PROFESSIONAL INTERIOR DESIGNERS JANUARY 2017



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My Icon

## MY ICON

**DARA HUANG, DH LIBERTY, REVEALS HER DESIGN ICON**

Design Haus Liberty, founded by Dara Huang, is an award-winning London-based, energetic and forward thinking design studio with the creativity, expertise, and experience to deliver engaging and cutting-edge architecture and interiors.

**WHO IS YOUR DESIGN ICON?**  
Peter Zumthor.

**WHAT IS HE MOST FAMOUS FOR?**  
Creating beautiful architecture that is about materiality, light and a play of emotions.

**WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN PETER ZUMTHOR'S AS YOUR 'ICON'?**  
Zumthor is an icon for sticking to his principles, creating breathtaking work and not letting trends sway his work. I don't think he was questioning the polemic or wild about urbanism he was just doing his work, which felt like architecture as an art form using elements of nature. He uses the Earth's materials such as mud and stone as his building blocks, he uses the sun to create the most dramatic effects with lights, the wind as a passive way to ventilate the building. He is Swiss so historically that culture isn't keen on artificiality, it's very much about the perfection of craftsmanship. Zumthor's buildings are always extremely powerful when you walk in, and quite visceral engaging all five senses.

**HOW HAS ZUMTHOR'S WORK BEEN RECEIVED DURING HIS CAREER?**  
I would say that his career was, is, and always will be at an all-time high. The fact that he never focused on career highs and stayed out of the spotlight made it seem even more timeless. His lack of hubris gives him the ability to focus on the art of architecture, which is reflected in the honesty of materials and how people felt when they interacted with it.

**WHICH PROJECTS FROM YOUR OWN PORTFOLIO DEMONSTRATE A NOD TO ZUMTHOR'S WORK?**  
I allude to the carving of monolithic space and how he uses natural light. For the penthouse at South Bank Tower, I wanted the space to feel powerful and the emphasis to be on the curve so we made a double volume space and designed bespoke curved concrete panels with rebar holes engraved in them going all the way around the interior perimeter- including the kitchen joinery doors. The master bedroom wall is constructed of rammed earth mixed with resin so you still get the rough air pockets creating interesting textures next to very smooth brushed metals. There is definitely the play of materials, light and raw nature in this project.

**IF YOU COULD BE REMEMBERED FOR ONE ELEMENT OF YOUR DESIGN, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**  
I hope our work is remembered for the ambiance you experience in our designs. Whether it's architecture, interiors or DH Liberty LUX products, there should be a take away that is more than just beauty.

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