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MAISON&OBJET

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FRANKLIN AZZI
DESIGNER OF THE YEAR
MAISON&OBJET PARIS - SEPTEMBER 2020

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For each session, Maison&Objet rewards the most striking signatures of international design and decoration through the selection of the Designer of the Year. In September 2020, Maison&Objet honors the talent of Paris-based architect Franklin Azzi.

FRANKLIN AZZI

Maison&Objet's Designer of the Year Franklin Azzi is a man with multiple and disparate influences, from architect Claude Parent and artist Donald Judd to pianist Glenn Gould and psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. He also avows a passion for American novels and loud rock music.

The Paris-based architect brings a similar diversity to his work, with projects encompassing everything from urban planning to interior design.

His best-known is probably the metamorphosis of a stretch of expressway directly on the Left Bank of the Seine into a 2.5km-long pedestrian promenade. His firm is also part of the Nouvelle AOM collective (along with ChartierDalix and Hardel Le Bihan Architectes) selected to transform Paris's iconic Tour Montparnasse skyscraper and the district around it.

Born in 1975, Azzi graduated from Paris's Ecole spéciale d'architecture, where one of his teachers, the philosopher Paul Virilio, made a lasting impression. "He was a catalyst for many things", he recounts. "He not only influenced the way I work today but taught me really how to see". He also studied at the Glasgow School of Art, where he firmly embraced its cross-disciplinary education. "I liked going from one class on industrial car design to another on fashion textiles", relates Azzi.

He founded his own agency in 2006, which now employs a staff of 50 housed in a former warehouse at the heart of Paris's 2nd arrondissement. He considers himself to be an "architect-technician" and professes to not having a signature style. "For me, each project is totally different", he insists. He also firmly believes that a beautiful building is not simply an aesthetically pleasing one. "It's one that brings happiness to those who use it".

« His projects encompass everything from urban planning to interior design »

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Isabel Marant Store
Los Angeles, CA (US)
© Isabel Marant



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Deskopolitan
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CONTENT(S)

HIS WORK

In his own work, he resolutely avoids conjuring up an immediate “wow” effect. Instead, he aims to construct buildings that are ageless and will stand the test of time. Many of his projects to date have involved rehabilitating existing structures.

They have included the transformation of a postal sorting office in Lille into a cultural venue, the creation of the Nantes Fine Arts School in a former storehouse, and the crafting of the Beaupassage-Grenelle lifestyle and housing complex in Paris’s 7th arrondissement. With each, his approach was the same: “to respect the past while celebrating the future”.

Among Azzi’s other commissions have been fashion boutiques for Christophe Lemaire, Isabel Marant, Lacoste and the LVMH group; a door handle for the Italian hardware manufacturer PBA; and the Holiday Café in Paris. Currently on the drawing board are a Mama Shelter hotel in Dubai, a multipurpose building on the Champs-Élysées, a temporary structure that will house a restaurant and bar on the roof of the Galeries Lafayette department store on Boulevard Haussmann; and boutiques in New York and Shanghai for the Chinese fashion brand EP Yaying.

He also regularly undertakes assignments related to the world of work, whether they be the Workstation and Dock en Seine office buildings in the Paris suburbs or the Deskopolitan Voltaire co-working project in the east of the city, which incorporates among other things a gym, kindergarden, restaurant, barber's shop, rooftop vegetable garden, and nine room hotel over 6,000m2. "We live in a time where things need to be more versatile and adaptable", he asserts.

Montparnasse Project
Offices, Hotel, Retails, panoramic
greenhouse
©NOUVELLE AOM / IDA +



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Jeromee Dreyfuss Store in
London
© Alexandre Tabaste
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MAISON&OBJET 2020

At Maison&Objet this September, Azzi will share his expertise via a 300m2 temporary exhibition on the theme of the workspace throughout the ages. As he notes, “I don’t see how we can imagine the future without analyzing the past”. He will present his vision in a scenic, immersive presentation that will largely consist of images and films.

The space itself will be largely mounted using structural elements recycled from previous editions of the fair. “I don’t want our installation to simply end up lying in boxes afterwards”, he explains.

An essential element in his own headquarters is the presence of contemporary art. He regularly accompanies artists in the creation of their works. Such was the case with Tatiana Trouvé’s monumental Desire lines sculpture, installed in New York’s Central Park in 2015. He also organizes one or two exhibitions a year in his offices, with a focus on promoting emerging and confirmed artists, such as Victoire Thierrée, Thomas Mailaender and Sebastien Stumpf. “For me, it’s important to support them”, says Azzi. “They have a freedom to interpret our society and offer a vision that is both fresh and modern”.



Fine Arts School Nantes (France)
© Luc Boegly

« I don't see how we can imagine the future without analyzing the past »

ABOUT MAISON&OBJET

For 25 years, Maison&Objet has led and brought together the international design, home decor and lifestyle community. The trademark of Maison&Objet? Its unique ability to generate connections, accelerate business both during tradeshow and on its digital platform, but also its unique talent to highlight trends that will make the heart of the home decor planet beat.

Revealing talents, offering opportunities and inspiration online and offline, stimulating the development of companies, here is the mission of Maison&Objet.

Through two yearly tradeshow reserved to professionals, Maison&Objet Paris - and Paris Design Week, a public event in September that gathers all the creative energies of designers and brands altogether in the City of Lights, Maison&Objet is the essential platform for companies and designers who want to thrive in the home decor industry.

Maison&Objet and more, or MOM, enables buyers and brands to continue their conversations all year round, launch collections and create connections beyond physical meetings. More than 30,000 products are available, with new products launched weekly and news on the latest design trends to stimulate the market's activities.

On Maison-objet.com replay the talks captured at the show, get inspired with Behind the Scenes exclusives, and stay up to date with the latest trends of the industry.

On social networks, conversations are enriched daily by an active community of 1M followers on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Xing, and WeChat.

MAISON&OBJET PARIS

2 SHOWS YEARLY

3 000 BRANDS

80 000 VISITORS

PARIS DESIGN WEEK

200 VENUES

10 DAYS

5 NEIGHBORHOODS

MOM

5 000 BRANDS

30 000 PRODUCTS

180 000 PROFESSIONALS

All press info on www.maison-objet.com/en/paris Press section

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MOPRESS2020

Exhibitors press kits available here

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