

5 Minutes with Vertti Kivi

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What direction do you feel design is moving towards in general terms?

Our hunger for new experiences and constant change sets new standards and challenges for interior design. In public multifunctional spaces, where functions vary according to the time of the day, for example, the design has to be strong and flexible at the same time and even adaptable to different mood changes.

It is quite a challenge for a designer; you don't get through with styling only anymore. (On the positive side there is a lot of potential, too.) In our office we have developed a special Space Alive concept to solve these new demands in the most creative and effective way.

Name five key themes to consider when approaching design in 2016 and beyond.

1. Flexibility
2. Playfulness
3. Play of light and shadow
4. Be Eclectic: play with different styles in an elegant way
5. 3D-printing

Any key trends that we should be aware of?

We've noticed that flexibility, which has always been key issue in yacht design, is in great demand nowadays in all kinds of environments from hotel interiors to work spaces. Interiors must adapt to different needs in different times of the day and situations. The needs regarding both functions and moods vary. Our Space Alive concept will serve these needs systematically, allowing us to adjust the character and ambience of the space to the needs of different situations during the day. The concept was utilized also in the award winning Finnair's A350 interiors.

What projects are you currently working on?

We are currently designing interiors of Tallink Megastar shuttle which will be introduced on Helsinki-Tallinn route in

2017. Our company was invited to bring in fresh entertainment ideas and design its restaurant and public areas. To entertain its 2800 passengers during the two hour journey we decided to design several different types of experience islands that suit the needs of different kind of customer groups and ease the navigation on board. Special attention was paid to the smooth customer flow. The lounges can be easily modified to suit the needs of the groups of different sizes.

We have just completed designing Hilton Tallinn Park hotel in Tallinn which is the first foothold of the Hilton hotel chain in the Baltic countries. It's been a huge project. The hotel building of 26,500 square metres and accommodates 220 rooms of different categories, along with 4 restaurants, a spa, gym and conference centre. Our company is responsible for the interior design of the whole building.

Last year's major project was cabin design for Finnair A350 Airbus which won at The International Yacht & Aviation Awards in the Commercial Aviation: Economy/ Business Class category. Apart from the new cabin interiors, we also designed the interiors of Finnair's Schengen and non-Schengen lounges at the Helsinki-Vantaa Airport in order to give a unified Finnair customer experience.

If you could offer one piece of advice when it comes to design schemes, what would it be?

Dream big, aim high and stick to your initial vision despite the numerous compromises that are part of the design process! The role of the designer is to make sure that the end user gets the experience she or he deserves. At the end it is worth the trouble and benefits the business of the client.

A designer's work is so diverse. How do you manage to hold down a career and a life?

Family comes first but they know that design is part of my life. It is hard to imagine life without work and design challenges. I love them both.

What are your aims and goals for the next twelve months?

Successful projects like Finnair and Hilton give you so much energy and hunger for new great design challenges. We have so many ideas and are constantly looking for partners to join us for the next crazy design adventure either in the sea, air or land. The bigger the better.

So, a little bit about you:

The car you drive?

Mini Cooper & BMW X5

Your favourite place to travel to in the world?

Bora Bora, Tahiti. Our over-water bungalow was great!

Your favourite hotel/ restaurant/ bar?

Mandarin Oriental by Patricia Urquiola, Barcelona.

The place that gives you the most energy?

New York and Stockholm

And the place that enables you to totally relax?

As a practitioner of yoga and mindfulness the physical place doesn't really matter to me any more...

Your favourite food and drink?

When in the air I always crave a Bloody Mary for unknown reasons (never on the ground). When it comes to food I favour Thai, Italian and Japanese.

Anything else interesting?

I love new challenges and world with constant change. It creates new opportunities.



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