BOUTIQUE design

FALL 2020

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ATTENTION TO DETAIL

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Joe Cheng, Founder, CCD/Cheng Chung Design

CHECKING IN

SAMANTHA DRUMMOND ENVISIONS SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST ICONIC LUXURY RESORTS

By Meghan Dwyer



Ambitious thinking, often leading to mighty partnerships, has helped make Australia native Samantha Drummond, founder and managing partner at Habitus Design Group (the firm has locations in Hong Kong, Singapore, Denmark, and the Philippines), a force behind glamorous properties like the Marina Bay Sands in Singapore, Solaire Resort & Casino in Manila (shown), and Sands Cotai Central in Macau.

How did you develop an interest in resort design? I had already been based in Asia for a number of years, working on large residential and commercial developments in China, when Las Vegas Sands, owner of Marina Bay Sands, came to the region. I was one of their first appointments and, as the design director, my eyes were opened to the possibilities and exciting challenges of large-scale hospitality projects. They are the perfect combination of creative and commercial. I soon came to realize that nothing was impossible and everything was achievable.

What is unique about your design approach? An innate fearlessness. Our clients are understandably demanding and it has become second nature to exceed their expectations. As a designer, I also love to collaborate with other leading architectural and design firms, the world's great chefs, and internationally acclaimed artists. I am lucky our clients have the brand recognition and budget that have allowed us to engage them. While we are inspired by large spaces, we also expend huge effort on the details. Our resorts are in effect multiple projects within a single development.

What are you working on now? We are creating the first 5-star resort north of Manila in collaboration with [the international architectural firm] Aedas. This will include 800 hotel rooms, a luxury retail offering over several floors that flows around a huge atrium, a casino, and many restaurants including a sky bar and rooftop terrace with a pool. By contrast, we are also working with a major developer in Northern Europe, conceptualizing ideas for new F&B destinations. BD

PHOTOS: HABITUS DESIGN GROUP