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Interior design with international appeal

Having enjoyed a successful career in interior design in Egypt – and co-founding architecture, interior and furniture design company Eklego Design – Hedayat Islam relocated to London with her family in 2014 and created retail concept Jam Space. Celebrating unique furniture and accessories, each of Jam Space's pieces has a strong story behind it, be it about the designer, the maker or the material itself. Victoria Noakes speaks to Hedayat to discover more about her background and the roots and offering of the business ...

Words: Victoria Noakes



Hedayat Islam

After graduating from the American University in Cairo with a BA in Political Science and a minor in Fine Arts, Hedayat Islam obtained a degree in interior design at the New York School of Interior Design in 1996. On returning to Cairo, she worked as an interior designer for several years, before partnering with Dina El Khachab in 2000 to establish interior and furniture design firm Eklego Design.

Since 2001, the duo has successfully completed over 180 projects across Egypt and the region, in addition to designing and manufacturing their own furniture collection. The business aims to create spaces and products that are simultaneously striking, original and functional, and has received international recognition for the high quality of its products and services.

“When I moved to London with my

family three years ago, the UK market offering intrigued me as I was furnishing my own home. Either I was to buy off the floor, mass-produced furniture or I had to pay a fortune to commission bespoke pieces,” says Hedayat.

“The lack of finding exactly what I needed inspired me to create Jam Space, a one-stop design destination that is within financial reach, and where people can get sound interior design advice and beautiful bespoke furniture.”

Jam Space's offering is made up of a carefully-curated mix of handcrafted furniture, using ethically-sourced wood, plus lighting, fabrics and wallpapers, all of which are hand-picked from around the world. The business aims to



Capitoné sofa



bring narratives into spaces, with every item possessing an original back story, whether it be about the designer, the maker or the material itself.

Bespoke solutions are also available, and the company offers a wide range of glass colours for ceiling pendants, plus many options of size, finish and fabrics for sofas and tables. Wallpapers and fabrics can be matched to a certain colour scheme or even designed from scratch.

“In 2015, we launched our own in-house designed line of fabrics and wallpapers – Ornamental Stories. I have always had a passion for textiles and ornaments, and moving to the UK reignited that, allowing me to translate this into our collections,” Hedayat

explains.

The company has just launched its new fabric and wallpaper collection, Travels, which is now available via the Jam Space website. It is also working in collaboration with Eklego Design on fresh, striking designer furniture packages that will soon be available to purchase.

Hedayat believes that Jam Space sets itself apart by offering a unique perspective and service as well as a wealth of expertise as a result of its extensive work around the globe, citing this as a great advantage.

“According to our clients, the personalised service, ultra-sensitive approach to their needs and the

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Cut-out sofa

“The lack of finding exactly what I needed inspired me to create Jam Space, a one-stop design destination that is within financial reach, and where people can get sound interior design advice and beautiful bespoke furniture”

attention to detail we provide makes us one of a kind. We treat each project or order with the utmost attention and have our eyes on forming a long-term relationship with our clients, rather than just a single transaction,” she states.

Jam Space keeps up with the evolving industry by considering forthcoming trends and market economics, and as a result, is aware of strong competition from Asian markets. The company attempts to offset this by offering unique pieces with bespoke options.

Hedayat emphasises the importance of getting to know every manufacturer and craftsman involved with the product it provides – sitting down face to face with them and designing together – and believes that these relationships are reflected in the company’s pieces.

“Looking ahead, one of the main

challenges we are facing is the uncertainty of the Brexit deal – it means that our international clients more hesitant in terms of investing in their homes. Another challenge for us is that we are relative newcomers in the marketplace, so we need to effectively create a broader awareness of our offering and service, whilst increasing our website’s visibility,” says Hedayat.

Hedayat has ambitious plans for Jam Space’s future, aiming to launch its new furniture packages this month, further expand its fabric and wallpaper collection and reach the ultimate goal of becoming a go-to destination for people remodelling their homes. Hedayat asserts, however, that it is crucial for Jam Space to maintain its personalised approach throughout its journey.

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