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# INTERIOR BY DESIGN ARIA DESIGN

By Daniel T. Krause • Photographs Courtesy of ARIA Design

Arianna Noppenberger在意大利土生土長，擁有法律及人力資源碩士學位，其後於米蘭的歐洲設計學院，攻讀個人醉心的設計科目。1990年畢業後，她到加州旅遊，當時南加州的高級住宅設計市道正好如日中天。Arianna的設計富有跨時代的典雅文化及克制的簡約特色，令她在南加州太平洋沿海地區聲名大噪，在2002年創辦ARIA設計公司後，事業發展更蒸蒸日上。我坐在ARIA設計公司內，享受著一個典型的清朗早晨，俯瞰著Laguna海灘寧靜的咖啡角及古董店；一面聆聽時而像藝術館館長的解說，時而像浪漫愛情電影的旁白，由Arianna娓娓道出她穿梭意大利與加州的心路歷程，細談工作以及愛情的迂迴道路。

DK: 你最初為何會來到美國

AN: 我最初來這兒，是希望一睹全世界最先進的建築及室內設計，我與女朋友決定從三藩市駕車，一直南下至聖地牙哥。

DK: 後來為什麼會留在Laguna海灘呢

AN: 我的女朋友有一個表親住在該處，讓我們可以逗留數天。這地方與別不同，使我深深著迷，居民亦來自多元文化背景。雖然我來自大城市波隆納，但在這個小市鎮卻感覺親切舒適。

我亦是在此地結識我的丈夫Horst。當時我應邀參加一個派對，為一所仍在建築的住宅而舉辦。我的丈夫是一位建築師，我們首次見面是在層層疊疊的木材工地上，他伸出手來扶我攀越寧亂不平的地段，就在剎那間我們便一見鍾情！這根本不是我的個性！我從來是個務實的人，但那刻卻彷彿完全忘我。

DK: 這是一個留下來的最佳原因！

AN: 我並沒有立即留下來。兩天後我返回意大利，因為假期已完結，我亦要繼續自己的生活，但最終，我仍是追隨心靈的聲音回到加州。

DK: 那麼你回來後是否立即開始夥拍丈夫一同工作

AN: 我回來主要是看看大家是否真正適合對方，後來卻變成在他的工作室工作。我們兩人的語言不通，所以說話不多，但卻在沒有言語的世界裡相愛。之後，我開始學習英文，呎吋等的系統，同時要學習這裡的建築業，我從他身上獲得很多知識。

DK: ARIA設計公司又是如何成立的

AN: 我覺得時機成熟，是追求真我的時候，加上我已建立了一個顧客的網絡，從商業角度而言是創業的良機。此外，我們既組織了家庭，相處亦非常融洽，成立公司是正確的方向，我亦很高興當時作出了這個決定。

DK: 你覺得自己與其他設計師的手法有何不同

AN: 在進行每項計劃前，我都會以空間設計師的身份入手，而非裝飾師。首先，我會分析房間的間格是否恰當，因為我的背景是建築及室內設計，所以我不會只注重挑選優質的布料及合襯的顏色。而且單靠昂貴的傢俱及布料未必一定能營造成功的室內設計。其實，徹底而根本的考慮才最為重要。因此我會先觀察空間，了解是否有地方可以改善。要不要拆掉牆壁，擴闊空間。我深信，除非從空間建築做起，否則很難達到理想效果。也因這緣故，我主要參與的工作都是從基層功夫開始。

DK: 哪些事物會影響你的工作

AN: 我經常接觸歐洲的設計，特別是出自意大利人手筆的。我亦會返回家鄉尋找靈感及發掘新的產品。我來自傳統的背景，過去修讀的都是古典學派，但我的設計卻很前衛。每次我重返歐洲都會領略到新的啟迪。通常在歐洲流行的新意念，於兩三年後便會抵達美國。近年越來越多的設計師，也開發這方面的資源。

DK: 亞洲地區有否帶來任何影響

AN: 絕對有。世紀前他們表現得微不足道，但如今已變得非常進取。他們的眼光獨到、空間平和寧靜，毫無疑問這都是沿於亞洲。中國是最蓬勃的發展中

國家，已成為建築及室內設計的實驗室。

DK: 你對風水有何看法

AN: 我承認自己對此認識不多。風水在歐洲並不存在，我也是在移居加州後才開始接觸。優秀出眾的建築似乎都與中國有關，當中蘊含著一種不可思議的兆觀學問。我亦很好奇，希望能深入了解古今的中華文化。我與丈夫正計劃未來到亞洲旅遊，相信有助我學習風水！

DK: 你曾負責一些非凡的豪華工程，是否要接觸一些異常尊貴的客戶

AN: 是，但恕我不能公開他們的名字。他們是我相熟的顧客，經常找我幫忙令我非常忙碌，我對他們亦忠心謹慎，所以我的網站只登載了我一半曾負責的工程，因我不能向外公開，亦不能拍照存檔，但工作本身則樂趣無窮！

DK: 與意大利相比，你在本地的工作有何不同

AN: 能在加州工作是我的福氣。這裡的人對新事物非常開放，容許我實踐試驗創新的概念。但在意大利，我們則要與傳統角力。在這兒有一些富豪喜愛購置文物樓房，但意大利人則著重傳統抗拒改變，故此若你要觸動任何當地的歷史建築，要經過多重官僚審批。所以我沒有成為一位建築師，選擇攻讀室內設計。意大利人的創作其實是在尊重傳統的框架內，力求破繭更新。因此，在這裡工作肯定容易得多。

DK: 如果要用一兩句說話來形容你的風格，你會怎樣描述

AN: 不斷求變、簡約、克制、幽雅，格調超脫自然。我喜歡在全屋內，貫徹有限量地運用物料。我相信這些指引能建造一個平和協調的內飾。



Arianna Noppenberger was born and raised in Italy. She graduated college with a master's degree in law and human resources, but later went on to study her true passion at the Istituto Europeo di Design in Milan. After graduating again in 1990, she traveled to California, and Southern California's high end residential design has been the better for it. Defined by a cultural tradition of timeless elegance and restrained simplicity, her work has spread throughout the Pacific coast of Southern California, gaining speed since she founded ARIA Design in 2002. I spent a typically beautiful morning in ARIA Design's office overlooking the quiet coffee shops and boutiques of Laguna Beach. Sounding sometimes like the curator of an established art gallery, sometimes like the narrator of a romantic movie, Arianna told me about the path that led her to love, to work, back to Italy, and of course back again to California.

DK: What initially brought you to the U.S.?

AN: I came to see the most progressive architecture and interior designing in the world. I was visiting with my girlfriend and we decided to start driving from San Francisco down to San Diego.

DK: And how did you end up in Laguna Beach?

AN: My girlfriend has a cousin here so we could spend a couple days. I fell in love with the place. It was unique. There's a very eclectic group of people. I felt comfortable in this small town even though I was coming from a larger city, Bologna.

And it's where I met my husband Horst. I was invited to a party for a house that was under construction. My husband was the architect. We literally met on the job site between piles of lumber. He reached for my hand to help me through the rough terrain and it was love at first sight! Which is not me! Usually I'm very grounded, but I was truly swept away in that moment.

DK: That's a good reason to stay!

AN: I didn't stay though. I went back to Italy two days later. My vacation was over. I had to get back to my life there. But eventually I followed my heart back to California.

DK: And then once you came back you ended up working with your husband?

AN: I came back to see if we were compatible and ended up working in his studio. We didn't speak the same language. We didn't communicate much so we fell in love without words. I started learning English, feet, and inches. I had to learn how we build here. I learned a lot from him.

DK: And what was it that led you to found ARIA Design?







AN: It was time for me to find my own voice. I'd built up my own clientele, so it was good from a business standpoint. We live together, we have a family together, and we collaborate so I think it was a good move and I'm very happy that I did it.

DK: How is your approach different from that of other designers?

AN: I approach each project as a spatial designer rather than a decorator. First I have to see if the room is right. My background is in architecture and interior designing so it's not just that I pick a nice fabric and pick a nice color. Expensive furniture and fabric alone doesn't create a successful interior. I think the approach should be much more radical. That's why I first look at the space. Can it be improved? Do we need to take down walls, open space? I don't believe you can do a great job unless you really start by manipulating the space architecturally. That's why I'm involved mainly in projects that start from scratch.

DK: What influences impact your work?

AN: I'm consistently exposed to European design, particularly Italian. I return home to find inspiration and discover new products. I have a traditional background, having pursued classical studies in the past, but my design is progressive. Every time I go I get inspired. And usually two or three years later, whatever new things come out in Europe, they land here. I see more and more designers tapping into that resource.

DK: Any influences working their way over from Asia as well?

AN: Absolutely. They are very progressive since centuries ago in their minimalism, their clean eye, calm soothing spaces. That is absolutely coming from there. No doubt about it. China being a fast developing country is becoming a 'laboratory' for architecture and design.

DK: What do you think of feng shui?

AN: I have to say I'm ignorant of it. In Europe it's really not there. I got contact with it moving here to California. It sounds like the most beautiful architectural things are going on in China. It's incredibly forward thinking. I'm really curious and I'd like to know the old Chinese culture and the new. My husband and I have plans to travel to Asia in the near future. That will motivate me to learn feng shui!

DK: You've done a number of high profile projects. Do you have high profile clientele to go along with those?

AN: Yes, which I can't mention. They're repetitive clients who keep me very busy, and I'm very faithful and discreet. My website is missing at least half the projects I've done. I can't show them. I can't take pictures, but I had fun doing the work!

DK: How is it different doing what you do here vs. Italy?

AN: I'm so blessed to work here. People here are very open to the new. This allows me to really experiment and reinvent the wheel every time. In Italy we have to deal with so much tradition. There are very wealthy people here who love to own unique homes. In Italy we have to deal with so much tradition and resistance to change. There's too much bureaucracy when you want to touch a historical building. That's why I studied interior designing and didn't become an architect. A lot of Italian creativity comes from being locked into having to respect the tradition and at the same time trying to come up with something new. So definitely easier working here.

DK: If you were to describe your style in one or two lines, what might you say?

AN: Constantly evolving, minimal, restrained, elegant, and sophisticated, earthy tones. I like to carry a limited amount of materials throughout the house. I believe these guidelines lead to peaceful, balanced interiors.

