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Enrico Fratesi of Copenhagen's award-winning GamFratesi design studio

Form and Fairytale

In the curious land of Enrico Fratesi's imaginative interiors, fancy rooms free and inspiration is found in unexpected places

心懷童真

——訪著名家具設計師Enrico Fratesi

做為一名家居設計師，Enrico Fratesi的作品總是充滿了童話世界般的奇思妙想。

Chinese Text by Rui Chen English Text by Kate Missine Images courtesy of GamFratesi

「甲蟲座椅」(Beetle Chair) 正用四條纖細有力的腿支撐起線條流暢的身體，邀請你在上面入座；牆壁上一處看似簡潔的裝飾，其實裏面另有玄機，隱藏著一處百寶閣；一個大大的半圓型蓋子包裹住了書桌，像是叢林中雨後鑽出地面的蘑菇。這不是愛麗絲夢遊中的仙境，而是設計師Enrico Fratesi的作品。

對於Enrico來說，將童話世界變成現實像是一件順理成章的事情。他和他的工作夥伴Stine Gam整日遊走在木材、金屬、塑料等材質中，構建著他們心中的生活。一個個椅子、桌子、梯子甚至掃把，在他們的眼中都應該煥發出與其通常樣貌不盡相同的別樣魅力。當《品味》雜誌在位於溫哥華的LivingSpace家具店內見到Enrico時，他正在參加家具製造商Porro九十年慶的「Cabinet of Curiosities」特別活動，並送上了「9Ø」這件匠心獨具的作品。我們很高興的和他談起了他的作品、設計理念和他對生活本身的許多看法。

「我一直覺得畫畫是件非常有意思的事情，創作起來非常自由。」Enrico出生在藝術氛圍濃厚的意大利，他最初的理想是成為一名建築設計師。「建築設計和我想做的事情很接近，但我更傾向於設計一些（模型和實物）比例是1:1的東西，我想去探索所有的事物，理解所有的事物。」Enrico的想法讓他開始更加關注身邊的物品，揣摩它們的外形和功能性，這使他一步步走入了家具設計領域。

Enrico說自己並非是在一個藝術或是設計氣息濃厚的家庭中長大，但幸運的是，他在成長過程中依然有機會接觸到精緻的手工藝製品。「不

In Enrico Fratesi's world, a beetle rests its smooth shell on four spindly legs, inviting you to take a seat; a simple shape on the wall hides a treasure box; and a cozy bubble wraps a workspace, while a mythical cat lounges lazily on a sideboard, casting its soft glow over the room.

If you're thinking you've just stumbled down a rabbit hole and right into a Lewis Carroll novel, you may be surprised to learn that Fratesi's quirky creations are rooted not between the rustling pages of children's books, but in the very real media of woods, metals, and plastics. Together with partner Stine Gam, with whom he shares work, life, and a young son, Fratesi breathes life into chairs, tables, even ladders and brooms, that are as unabashedly pragmatic and traditional as they are steeped in twinkling whimsy. In decidedly modern forms, the designer embeds stories that belie his spirit while keeping true to his craft, his vision, and his sense of self.

Taste of Life caught up with him at LivingSpace in Vancouver, where he was celebrating the 90th anniversary of manufacturer Porro with a contribution to their "Cabinet of Curiosities." GamFratesi created "9Ø," a gorgeously crafted circular box whose locking top is just one of the secrets it's designed to hold.

"I always found it interesting to draw, to create in any way," says Italian-born Fratesi, who first

「家具會影響到你的行為，傳遞出信息。」

——Enrico Fratesi

是因為（我的父母）喜歡華麗的生活，他們就是喜歡品質好的家具。」家中這些經典的手工藝打造的家具，成為了Enrico在設計領域的啟蒙老師。最終，他這種來自意大利久遠歷史的傳承，與Stine源自挪威的納維亞極簡實用主義融合到了一處，結果便是我們現在看到的這些設計感十足，又能自然融入生活的家具作品。

「這些（家具）不僅僅是一張圖紙，它一直存在於你的生活中。」Enrico說到：「家具會影響到你的行為，傳遞出信息。」出於這種理念，Enrico常會在自己的設計中加入一些人文情懷。例如：以日本三行俳句詩命名的「Haiku沙發」、「寓言書桌」（Allegory desk）。還有各類獨特簡潔的形狀和妙趣橫生的掛在牆上的「Nubo書桌」，以及以朋友可愛貓咪為靈感設計的「Cheshire檯燈」。

另一件令人意想不到的作品是坐墊一樣，鋪在地上的「Fraga咖啡桌」。Enrico說自己做為一位父親，經常從兒子那裏獲得不一樣的視角，因為孩子的眼睛最為純真，沒有任何先入為主的觀念。「孩子們對事物的理解和對生活空間的體驗是完全沒有定式的。」

而為了不斷創作出精彩的作品，Enrico自己也願意保持這種孩子般的好奇和探索精神。「我很幸運，能有這麼大的自由度來做我自己想做的事情。」在說起自己的孩子時，Enrico又想起了他年輕時所得到的來自父母的支持。儘管他們很擔心自己的兒子在競爭激烈的設計行業很難取得一席之地，但他們還是選擇了無條件地支持Enrico的選擇。「我的父母曾經很難理解這個工作，不過，他們現在很為我驕傲。他們看到我在這其中做的很開心，這對他們來說是最重要的，而不是我是否取得了成功。」

如今，GamFratesi工作室在不到十年的時間裏，已經取得了超過三十個頂級現代設計獎項或提名，其中包括Elle Decor的最佳年輕設計師獎、Finn Juhl獎

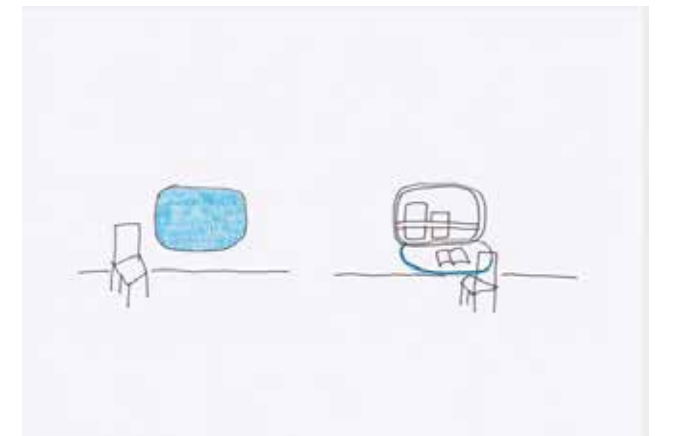
set out as an architect. “Architecture was close to what I wanted to do, but I was fascinated by the 1:1 scale; I wanted to open everything, understand everything.” Seeking to explore the interplay of form and function, he turned to furniture design; a natural progression from his student days in an architecture office.

Though not hailing from a family of designers, Fratesi was no stranger to finely crafted products growing up, “not because [my parents] wanted to be fancy, but because they wanted good furniture.” The appreciation for quality and material, together with cultural heritage, have shaped the designer’s artistic vision: his creative pieces fuse the concept-based Italian design philosophy with Gam’s functional Scandinavian minimalism, wrapped in a generous dose of imagination.

“It’s never just a drawing; it’s all in the process,” he describes. “The product can affect your behaviour, communicate a message.” Some are literary metaphors, such as the compact Haiku sofa or Allegory desk; others, whimsical treatments of simple-looking shapes — the playful Nubo wall shelf that opens into a compact personal desk, or the Cheshire lamp, a reference to Carroll’s friendly feline.

Another impromptu idea was the Fraga, an unexpected union of a pouf and coffee table. Being a parent, says Fratesi, has also taught him to see things differently: through a child’s wondrous wide-eyed gaze, with no preconceived notions, “totally free in the interpretation of things and in the behavior and experience of the space.”

Spontaneity, I learn, is a recurrent theme for Fratesi,



陳列在大理石柱子上玻璃盒內的牛排，Emad說這個想法靈感來自於Tiffany珠寶店。在他眼中，品質完美的牛排如寶石般閃耀奪目。

Above: Nubo, a simple cloud-blue fabric shape, opens to a surprise of a shelf inside. Exclusively available at LivingSpace in Vancouver. **Right:** The designers’ ideas, straight out of their imagination. **Below:** GamFratesi’s special contribution to Porro’s ‘Cabinet of Curiosities,’ the 9Ø hides the most treasured of keepsakes in a one-of-a-kind wooden box.



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— Enrico Fratesi

金，還得到機會參與Mindcraft15國際設計展。這些經歷正讓Enrico和他的作品越來越被全世界所熟知。

即便在設計界獲得了巨大的成功，Enrico對於工作的熱忱和大膽創新的精神從未改變。「每次都是全新的開始，你不得從錯誤中不斷學習。」Enrico形容自己的設計之路如同一個企業家創業的過程。「但從另一個方面來說，你又有這種表達自己和自己思想的自由，做自己，這對我來說非常重要。甚麼都是既有趣又複雜，我就是喜歡這樣。」

像所有的成功人士一樣，平衡事業和家庭的關係對Enrico來說也是個挑戰，好在這方面他一直做的很成功。「在遇到困難時，你可以依靠這樣一個能完全理解你的人。當一切順利時，你又會很高興和家人一起分享其中的快樂，很高興你的成功能為他們帶來快樂。你需要找到一個自己的平衡點，這沒有現成的公式。」

為了保持作品的高水準和獨特性，GamFratesi工作室的設計都是重質不重量。談起當下的設計趨勢，Enrico表示自己可不是這方面的行家。「我們嘗試從不去關注甚麼趨勢，就是通過設計來表達我們的價值觀和個性。在真實地表達我們自己和工藝、真材實料、簡潔之間取得平衡是非常重要的。最終，這些都會關乎生產線終端的用戶的生活。」

「每次我們獲得一個獎項，都感到很榮幸。這讓我們知道自己作品的品質是受到肯定的，人們會使用它，享受它。這對於我個人來說是最高的獎勵。」對於未來的計劃，Enrico還是保持了他一貫的自由做派。「也許我說不出那具體會是甚麼。但可以肯定的是，我一定會做一些有意思的挑戰，拿出令人意想不到的作品。」

his free-spirited attitude backed by unconditional family support. “I was privileged to have a lot of freedom in what I wanted to do,” he says, recalling attending a talent fair with his parents when he was young and their concerns about the challenges of the competitive design field. “They thought it was complicated. But now they are proud of what I do; they see that I'm happy and that is the most important thing for them, not my position in society.”

Today, GamFratesi may be the pinnacle of contemporary design, with over thirty awards and nominations in less than ten years of existence, including the coveted Elle Decor Best Young Designer award, a Finn Juhl Prize, and the opportunity to curate the international Mindcraft15 design exhibition. Through it all, Fratesi's sense of adventure and enthusiasm for his work remain unchanged.

“You have to start from scratch, you have to learn from your mistakes,” he says of his path as an entrepreneur. “But on the other hand, you have the freedom to express yourself and your mentality, to be yourself, and that's very important for me. Everything is interesting and complicated, and I love it that way.”

One of Fratesi's daily challenges is juggling career and family, which for him are happily intertwined. “In a difficult moment, you can count on someone who totally understands you,” he says of his professional and family union with Gam, which he calls “a privilege...” “And when everything is going well, it's so beautiful to



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Above: Pouf or coffee table? Hard and soft meet in the Fraga in ingenious fusion. Right: The Rewrite desk creates a cozy workspace cocoon, an oasis to escape to in this forever “on,” forever connected world. Both available exclusively at LivingSpace in Vancouver.



enjoy it together, to bring home the joy of your success.” Nevertheless, he says the task is not always easy. “You need to find your own balance,” he states, mentioning they have even explored the theme in their Balance design exhibition. “There is no recipe.”

To preserve their creations' one-of-a-kind nature, GamFratesi limits collaborations and expansion in favour of a smaller, more personal scale, and a focus on product rather than distribution numbers. Asking about design trends, I'm told they're not on the radar. “We try to never look at trends, but to express our values and personality through design. It's very important to be honest to ourselves and find the

balance between our philosophy, the craft, honesty of materials, and simplicity.” According to Fratesi, their furniture is meant for living, not showrooms; ultimately, it's all about the person on the other end of the production line.

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As for the future, Fratesi embraces a vision as unpredictable as his designs. “I may not be able to say now what it'll be, but for sure there'll be something unexpected that'll make an interesting challenge.”