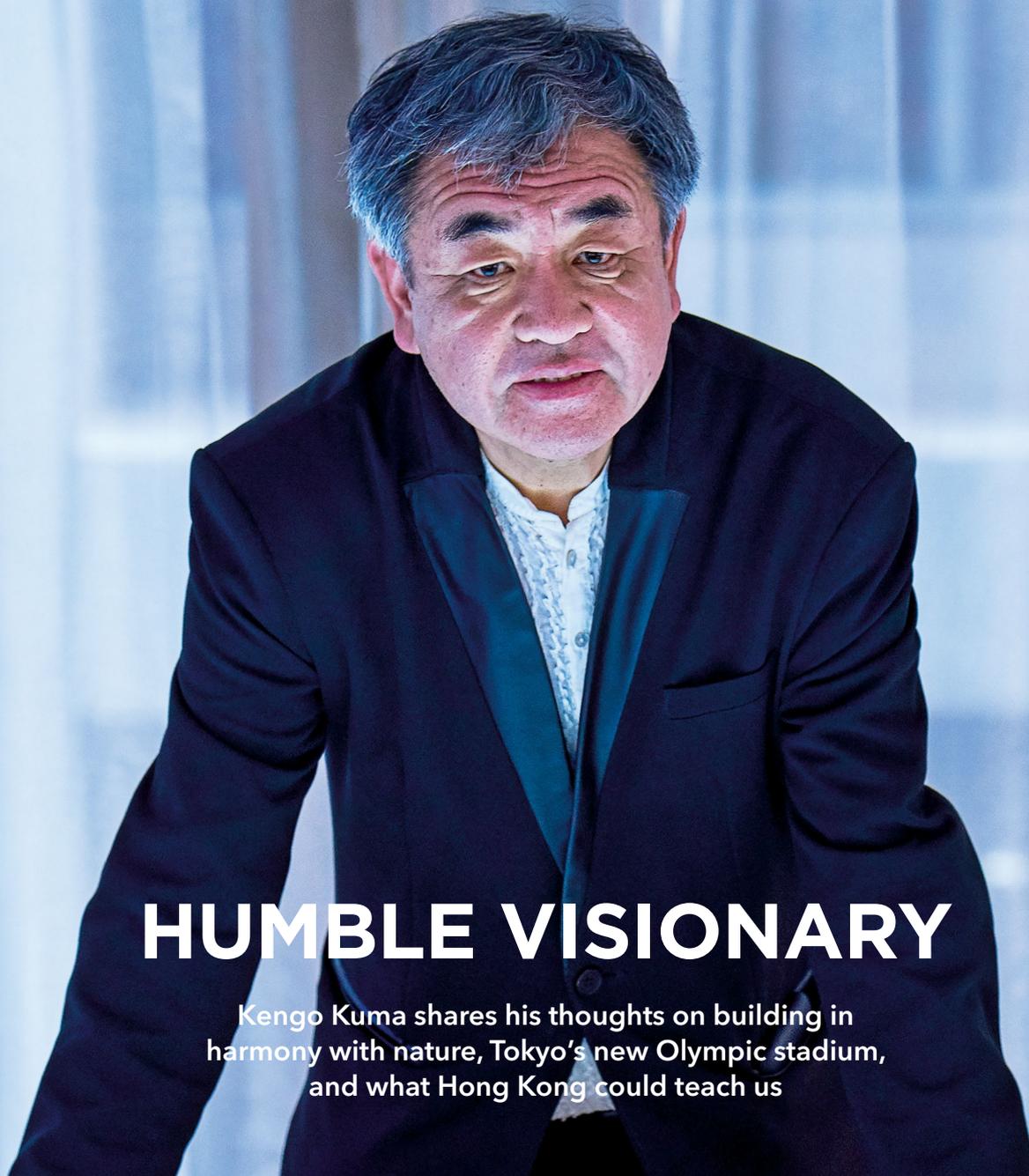


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HUMBLE VISIONARY

Kengo Kuma shares his thoughts on building in harmony with nature, Tokyo's new Olympic stadium, and what Hong Kong could teach us

+ FOCUS: FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It's not all about what's on the plate: restaurant designers are becoming increasingly daring with interiors that draw on some surprising inspirations

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HK\$48
US\$18
€15



Loungin' like a lazy cat

Just like the indolent feline of its name, Lazy Cats celebrates the unique art of doing very little in order to sustain the soul

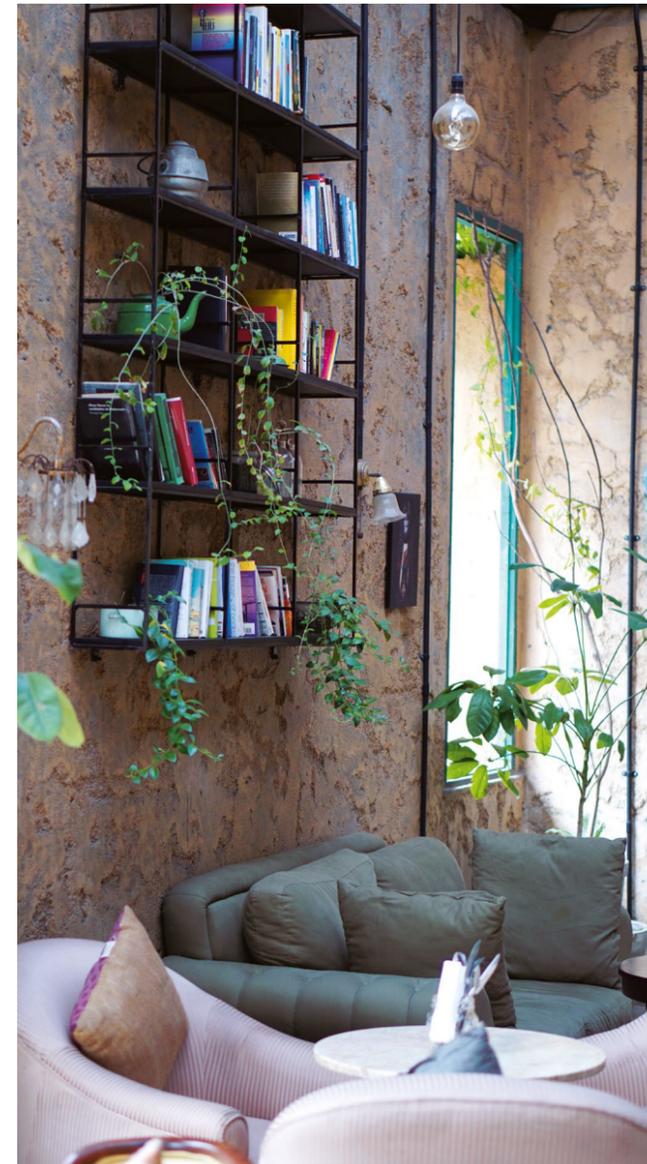
TEXT:
Anika Ventura
PHOTOGRAPHY:
Courtesy of Lazy Cats

Step through a black iron gate, pass the portrait of a regal-looking lion, and head up to a second floor filled with light and the distant buzz of the streetside, and you'll wonder just how long Lazy Cats has been around. The answer is since November 2016; yet the presence of pre-loved furniture, washed-out walls and industrial elements makes for a 'just right' play between old and new.

"We found this abandoned space with a broken roof, plants growing out of the floors and walls, and the sun coming through the broken shingles and bamboo mats," recalls one of the cafe owners, designer and architect Alexis Dornier. "It was a very romantic setting – a perfect set design – for a place that could be inside and outside at the same time."

Lazy Cats is on the main road of Ubud in Bali, Indonesia, close to popular spots such as the Ubud Temple and Museum Antonio Blanco. Well known as Bali's centre for arts and culture, you'll find traditional woodcrafters, silversmiths and painters; coupled with a progressive scene of bamboo architecture and enterprising collaborations between locals and expats.

The second floor of Lazy Cats is an expansive, mixed-use area, described by Dornier as "an extended living room"



From left
The overall design at Lazy Cats is unashamedly romantic, creating a place that is both inside and outside at the same time • Lazy Cats is filled with classic furniture found in an old shut-down hotel supply store • On the second floor is an open kitchen, bar and bookshelves • Classic wooden coffee tables and marble-top tables with pastel pink legs add to the charm of Lazy Cats

Dornier, who hails from Germany, runs Lazy Cats with Indonesian artist and writer Tatjana. “She manages the place, curates the menu and all activity,” he says. “She is the soul of the place.”

Dornier arrived in Bali about four years ago and immediately fell in love with it and its people. There is a rich building culture and an appreciation for the beautiful in general, he muses. “It’s the perfect place to experiment and try creating stuff.”

Experiment they did. Lazy Cats was “driven by the idea to create an old salon, overgrown and forgotten, maybe from a different time and place. For this we scouted old classic furniture found in an old shut-down hotel supply store.”

The cafe has three main sections. As you enter the street-level foyer, a vintage lamp with exposed wiring hangs from a washed-out mustard ceiling, left as found in order to “do as little as possible to keep the remarkable patina of the space”, explains the owner.

The second floor is an expansive, mixed-use area. It includes an open kitchen, bar, bookshelves and what is described by Dornier as “an extended living room”. It’s here where you can set yourself down amid single armchairs and floppy couches, beside classic wooden coffee tables and marble top tables with pastel pink legs.

These are accented with greenery, animal portraits, and statement pieces such as a huge vintage mirror. Daytime allows for the appreciation of light streaming in through the roof’s rickety bamboo blinds. “We added lighting and sealed the roof with glass, keeping the skylight created by the deterioration,” Dornier explains. Come nightfall, overhead Edison lamps create a warm glow, reinforcing the team’s efforts to be romantic yet subdued.

“Sometimes it is a challenge to do nothing when everything is already there... you might ruin something beautiful for the sake of creating something new – luckily, we worked with what we had,” he adds. “Everybody [contributed] their ideas and inspiration, and it is still an ongoing process where we do changes and add more details on the go.”

The final touch is the balcony. “The big window towards the road is like the screen of a movie theatre,” Dornier muses. “On it you find 100 per cent Bali – Asian roof silhouettes, trees, gardens, mountains, and the lively sounds of Ubud.”

As to what’s being served on the table, the menu is rooted in “simplicity, clarity, and transparency.” Dornier says he wants Lazy Cats to be more than just a great coffee and food spot: “We want to show art, host theme nights, parties, brunches, gatherings. We want all of this to happen organically, because the focus lies on hanging out, not worrying.”

The concept of ‘lazy’ rings true beyond their name. It’s in the T-shirts they sell (‘lazy raw vegan, lazy ecstatic dancer’), their uncomplicated menu, and how they’ve left some things from the original setting unchanged.

“Being lazy does not mean doing nothing. It means dedicating time to yourself, without the need to be productive,” says Dornier. “Nowadays everything is about productivity – the rush, the sightseeing, the achieving. Even when we are on vacation, it goes on: yoga, meditation, cleansing. It is really an art to do nothing without becoming restless and agitated. Give yourself time to live a little.”

Such is the way of the lazy cat. ●