

MARK PARKER

SURFACE

ISSUE 127
APRIL 2016

THE BUSINESS ISSUE



UP AND COMING **Alison Chi**

Every product that crosses Alison Chi's desk has a story. As the managing director of Tzelan, Chi finds aesthetic inspiration around the world, then matches the design to the ideal manufacturing company. The inspiration behind Tzelan's Cookie Jar, for example, came from an antique crystal jar Chi found in Buenos Aires; she then enlisted a family-owned Czech crystal company to fabricate it en masse. Tzelan's original designs, combined with found objects like the Cookie Jar, come together to create a brand both eclectic and international. Chi was born for the job: Her father is Tony Chi, principal of Tonychi and Associates, a venerable design studio specializing in hospitality. But it's Chi's mother, Tammy Chou, who is the inspiration for the brand (Tzelan is Chou's Chinese name). Chi speaks of her mother with pride. "[As vice president of product development] she is less on the forefront of the Tonychi side, but she's probably the one in the studio who has the most inherent sense of style," says Chi. "The brand was named after her because we wanted to take her sense of style and package it into little pieces that people could take home." What unites Tzelan's disparate product line is Chi's desire to curate a lifestyle for her clientele. She focuses on the beauty in more mundane moments—like the stillness in washing your hands or coming home alone—and fabricates a product to enhance that everyday experience. Because if you knew your catch-all dish was inspired by a 19th-century silversmith, you might just smile when you drop in your keys. —**Chloe Foussianes**



New Aging

Live smarter now to live better forever
By Matthias Hollwich with Bruce Mau Design



BOOK **New Aging**

We're doing it all wrong. According to German architect Matthias Hollwich, Western society isn't aging correctly. In his book *New Aging* (Penguin Random House), Hollwich collaborates with Bruce Mau Design and illustrator Robert Samuel Hanson to create a colorful, simplified, and punchy guide to growing older better. Disturbed by how Americans in particular treat the senior portion of the population (think: nursing homes, which really aren't anything like homes at all), Hollwich calls for a revolution. Distilling his past seven years of research on aging down to just over 80 tips, he insists we need to embrace growing old, be social, and make our homes our castles. Despite how simple these ideas may seem, they're strong enough to be the foundation of an architectural prototype his firm, Hollwich Kushner, is designing around the philosophy of "new aging." A building conducive to the lifestyle of new aging is highly flexible, intergenerational, and well-designed. It evolves with its inhabitants, morphing to accommodate life's different stages. By shaping both the philosophy of new aging and the architectural response to it, Hollwich seeks to change our relationship with architecture and community. Maybe growing old doesn't have to be so bad after all. —**Lily Wan**