

Yves Taralon reveals the art of living

By CHEN NAN

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Yves Taralon says one of the best things about being an interior designer is realizing the ideas in his little sketchbook. For his latest project, he added a little fantasy.

The creative director of La Table Hermes is also artistic director of The Marq on Paterson Hill, in Singapore, the world's first apartments entirely decorated by Hermes. It is a project by luxury property developer SC Global Developments.

"When I went to the building, I immediately felt at home, the green gardens, the artworks and privacy," says Taralon, sitting in one of the Singapore apartments. "Then I started with a whole concept for the apartment and narrowed it down to the details of the decor. It required patience, passion and also brought me enjoyment."

Teamed with Michelle Cheong, creative director of the SC Global design team, and working together for the past 18 months, Taralon used a combination of Hermes furniture, furnishing fabrics, wallpapers, carpets, tableware, along with made-to-order leather upholstered items and a choice of artworks.

The building is 1,890-square-meters and contains 66 freehold units, bringing a new meaning to luxury living, says Helene Dubrule, general manager of Hermes Maison.

"Each design detail has been crafted according to Hermes' version of 'art of living,'" she says. "My heritage with Hermes is all told here."

"High-end apartments are for the discerning few," says SC Global Chief Executive Officer Simon Cheong.

The unit, which will not be sold, but rather used as a private hospitality apartment, symbolizes the peak of luxury living.

Even if you didn't know this serene interior designer keeps on absorbing inspiration from different cultures, while adhering to the Hermes tradition, you might guess so from his work.

There are some recreations of iconic furniture by Jean Michel-Frank, including sofas and chairs made from



A living room in The Marq on Paterson Hill, Singapore, features Hermes' interior designs.

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ivory rope natte and calfskin, handmade Appaloosa carpets. Taralon also adopted works by French artist Jean-Luc Favero.

Meanwhile, color is described by Taralon as "the last refuge of individuality in the home".

"With light, color is certainly the most important item in interior design. It's like makeup for a house. A little different color makes the whole design jump up."

Tranquil white, brown and black dominate the sitting

room with some bright yellow sofa covers standing out. Two bedrooms are distinguished by male and female colors, including blue, dark, pink and red.

Taralon also reproduces Asian elements, such as Chinese and Indian handicrafts. He has used them on the walls and carpets in bedrooms. As a lover of expertise and craftsmanship, he feels at home with Hermes and its tradition of bringing men and materials creatively together.

Born in Le Mans, France, Taralon has been working as

an interior designer since 1979 and his first project was to design furniture and ceramics at the Great Palace of Paris.

During the past three decades, he has worked on the renovation of Museum of Orsay, worked on the Art Cafe in Strasbourg, and manufacturing workshops for perfume and champagne.

"His designs are full of emotion, and a series of imaginative, witty details," says Hermes Maison's Dubrule.

In 2005, he joined Hermes Arts de le Table, a new department and an unfamiliar expression of the brand ethos.

One of his best-known design series is the table service, Balcon du Guadalquivir, using bold red to recall the ironwork of Andalusian towns.

"As soon as I think 'plate', I think of what you can put on it and the places where people come together to share the pleasure of a meal," Taralon explains. "I'm passionate about its intended use, like saddlers are about horses or fashion designers about clothes. I want the plate to become a place setting, an heirloom, a means of entertaining, sharing and living."

For the 3.5-meter high ceiling in The Marq's dining room, he teamed with Michelle Cheong and brought in huge blue crystal chandeliers by Cristalleries de Saint-Louis, which glitter brightly above the dining table.

"It appeals to everyone's imagination. Transporting such huge crystal chandeliers from France to Singapore was unusual, but very Hermes," Taralon says.

The apartment, according to Helene Dubrule, "was a unique experience and expresses Hermes high quality values of excellence and craftsmanship in the home universe".

Its products date to 1922 when the house introduced accessory-filled travel luggage to meet the needs of new automobile drivers.

Eighty years later, Hermes has a complete home line, replete with coordinated bed and bath linens, furniture, silverware, crystal and porcelain, office accessories and baby gifts.

"We never replicate our works," Taralon says. "Our designs are not like a dish on the menu, which a customer can order again and again. It has to be exquisite and special for someone."