Canadian designs shine brightly at IDS 2016



MELISSA DAVIS THE INCOME RENOVATOR

ast month, I spent the better part of a week wandering around the aisles of the annual Interior Design Show. (Jan. 14 to 17, Metro Convention Centre). What began 18 years ago as a modest, industry trade show has now morphed into THE place for designers, decorators, architects, builders and homeowners to gather together and see the latest and greatest available for the home.

This is a formidable show with a very discerning audience. One day of the short four-day show, Friday, is open to the trade only.

This translates into a quality experience - polished and imaginative products are on display as expert staff are ready to answer probing inquiries about their work.

One of the display areas called Studio North — highlights emerging designers who display their products with pride while showing a willingness to receive peer feedback. It's this mix of discussion, creation and consumerism that I think is the secret sauce that keeps us creative types coming back year after year.

That said, I've not been shy in my lack of enthusiasm for the pastel pink and blue hues that are the official Pantone colour(s) of the year for 2016. Some trends just don't need following!

I'm happy to report my cool blue heart did warm up to rosy pink after seeing how perfectly many of the booths added touches of the rose pink. My trend snobbery is lifting.

Here's a roundup of my top picks from this year's show, with a made-in-Canada bonus. Take that falling loonie!

1. The Junction Sectional by Style Garage. This versatile, modular series of club-style lounge seating is made in Canada by local craftsmen and is available in a wide variety of our fabrics and leathers. Anything that can go from a cool living space to bed-like movie watching has my vote. Note the pink Canadian themed cushions.

www.stylegarage.com

2. Avani by AYA Kitchens. Avani is a highly curated, strictly modern, custom-made kitchen collection featuring clean lines, warm textures, movement and fine hidden details. It competes directly with Europe's best brands but made in Canada. This year's booth, a full kitchen, was designed by Diego Burdi of renowned duo Burdifelek and it was simply spectacular.

www.avanikitchens.com

3. 1925Workbench. The husband and wife team of Rock and My Le create and build furniture, doors, and barn door hardware. Their passion is infectious and the true authenticity of their work offers that much sought after character that mass-market design sadly lacks. Their booth this year with perfect pink doors was a show favourite, for sure. www.1925workbench.com

4. Imbue Light by Wood Anchor. Created with a single piece of 1/8" oak veneer, and custom forged aluminum, this chandelier had any and all stopping to first admire its beauty, then to marvel at the skill required to create it. This small Manitoba custom shop is doing everything right.

www.woodanchor.com

5. Ikon sink by Blanco. The only apron front natural granite composite sink available in the market, this new addition to Blanco's Silgranit collection

has designers doing a happy dance. It combines up to 80% of natural granite with a premium, acrylic-resin formula that provides beauty, unsurpassed hardness, strength and durability. Silgranit sinks are non-porous, heat-, scratch-, chip- and stain-resistant and come in seven neutral nonfading colours. This German pioneer continues to revolu-

tionize the modest, kitchen sink. Since it's also manufactured right here in the GTA, I'm letting them slip in for my all- Canadian roundup.

www.blancocanada.com

- Melissa Davis is a celebrity designer well-known for her appearances and creative work on several HGTV programs. Visit her at www.melissadavis.com.



The '1925 Workbench' is 'barn door' hardware that is rich in character and style.



Made in Canada by local craftsmen, the junction sectional by Style Garage offers modular, club-style lounge seating.



Avani by Aya Kitchens is a highly curated, strictly modern, custommade kitchen collection featuring clean lines and warm textures.



Created with a single piece of 1/8-inch oak veneer and custom forged aluminum, the Imbue Light from Wood Anchor was a show-stopper.



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