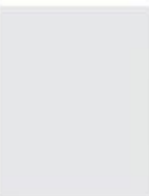
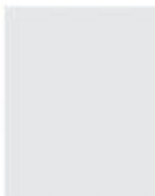


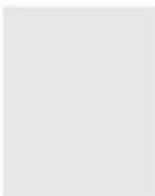
INTERLINKING POLITICS, DIPLOMACY, BUSINESS
FINANCE, ART & CULTURAL DIPLOMACY



**H.E. ALEXANDER
TOKOVININ**
Ambassador of
Russian Federation



**MICHÈLE
CONINSX**
President of
EUROJUST



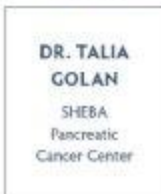
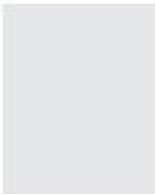
**H.E. DR.
HO-JEN TSENG**
Ambassador
Taipei
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Office



**H.I.H. THE HEIR,
TSESAREVICH
AND GRAND
DUKE GEORGE
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**YONA
FRIEDMAN**
Architect
Thinker
Philosopher



**DR. TALIA
GOLAN**
SHEBA
Pancreatic
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**DR. NOEL K.
TSHIANI
MUADIAMVITA**



INTERVIEW WITH SYBILLE DE MARGERIE INTERIOR ARCHITECT

Ms. de Margerie, you started your successful company in 1989, developed a new company identity in 2016 active in Paris, Florence and Dubai.

What was your first assignment?

As a member of the Taittinger family, a name already synonymous with prestigious hotels and champagne, I had the opportunity to put my interior architect bachelor into practice working for the family owned Concorde hotel group. Very soon, in 1989 I launched my own company, previously named SM Design, which specialized in designing interiors for hotels, casinos and restaurants in France and abroad. I worked with leading companies such as LVMH group (Hotel Cheval Blanc in Courchevel, France), Mandarin Oriental Group, Accor (Sofitel Legend), Park Hyatt, and private investors for hotels projects and residences all around the world.

What did you learn from it?

I had the privilege of growing up in the particular atmosphere of the most beautiful hotels in Paris which emphasize the utmost importance to traditions, the finest service and *savoir-faire*. Those circumstances allowed me to learn certain codes and experience luxury from the inside. When I chose to become an interior designer, I recalled the sense of wonder I had felt so early in life and set out to recreate it. My goal is to achieve a perfect blend of tradition, innovation and creativity. I see my work as a sensual quest for comfort, and the pleasure of the finest quality in the smallest detail.

Was it a difficult road to success?

Success is what our clients make it, and our references speak for themselves. That path to excellence is not an easy one but the most rewarding. The main difficulty our studio faces is to adapt each project to a specific environment, to local regulations, and always create new ambiances. Whether it be a listed building like the Old Cataract, in Aswan, Egypt, a new hotel development in Morocco, a boutique hotel like the Norman in Tel-Aviv, a villa in Moscow, a mountain chalet or resort in Oman.



Sybille de Margerie

Some interior designers impose their identity on a place, and in doing so reduce the identity of their client to basically invisible. My approach is more open. I look for creative solutions that exactly match my client's identity and their global image in the world.

From my point of view, reinventing oneself is the main challenge in interior design.

What would you advice young starters? Especially young woman creatives and entrepreneurs?

The key philosophy I would suggest to someone aspiring to become a designer is to show great humbleness and to focus on the client's or final customer's needs.

With a job based on creativity, the entrepreneurial side is too often laid aside or simply minimized. Parallel to my training as interior architect, I pursued law graduate studies at a master level. In dealing with international projects and managing large staff, I am very thankful to this double



Royal Atlantis Residences Dubai

background. It forged my ability to be committed to results and of course business oriented. Of course, whether woman or man ...each should be prepared to develop a strong capacity of work !

Do you believe that interior design can enhance peoples lives? How?

I see my work as a sensual quest for comfort, and the pleasure of the finest quality in the smallest detail. Quest for comfort has always been part of our design philosophy: "Being creative with simplicity – Modernizing the traditional – Making technology attractive, and colors elegant – Designing for harmony and comfort".

Design cannot compromise comfort.

In my mind, a luxury hotel or residence must spark emotions; it must elicit what I would call a vibration that will touch the heart of its guests.

My approach is inspired by the identity of the place, the location and the local culture. Therefore, each project is unique. I intend to create a setting that will bring emotions and has a connection with the local culture.

Where do you draw your inspiration from?

Travelling, as I do most of the year for my projects, is a great source of inspiration.

Having a studio in Florence, in the heart of Renaissance architecture, represents a prime and exceptional inspiring environment. Art exhibitions is another refreshing way of keeping a creative mind-set.

Being curious, open-minded, listening to ideas brought by my team, are other keys.

What's your favourite artwork and why?

I love Matisse, oriental painters, Anish Kapoor. I appreciate the audacity of combinations, the marriage of the classic with the contemporary, the alliance of harmony and emotion and the purity of lines.

What's your favourite personal interior design project and why?

Cheval Blanc in Courchevel and Mandarin Oriental Paris are both and equally my favourite works.

Cheval Blanc for the bold vision we developed, creating a mountain palace, far from the traditional "chalet" designs. A project, thanks to Bernard Arnault's confidence, that we yearly redesign with the same search for innovation and sophistication.

Mandarin Oriental Paris for its timeless luxury, and the fashion and arty influences that inspired the creative process.



Private Residence in London

Do you collaborate with artists or designers?

Each project represents a fantastic opportunity to close collaborations with artists, designers and craftsmen. This approach definitely injects character and charisma to a hotel or private residence.

We thus imagine and create bespoke designs which give an unexpected and immaterial dimension to the interiors, giving priority to local artists or designers. Hence in Amsterdam, we associated students of the highly recognized Design Academy of Eindhoven who created unique pieces for Sofitel Legend –The Grand. Works by the Dutch Droog Design group have also been incorporated into the interior design. For Mandarin Oriental Paris I wanted this luxury hotel to have its own distinctive feel, one which transpires in its haute-couture style. This was translated into collaboration with leading names in art and fashion, such as Ali Mahdavi, Nathalie Decoster, who designed Air, a sculpture in the Lobby, Ateliers Lesage for their amazing embroideries; Marcello Lo Guidice, Jean-Baptiste Huynh, Gérard Roveri, Thierry Bisch. Inside the rooms I picked up Man Ray, the acclaimed American photographer who made Paris his home in the 1930s with a reproduction on velvet of his famed photograph, The Kiss.

In Dubai, for the Royal Atlantis residences, a complex of 230 luxury apartments, I entrusted five female artists: Céline Alexandre with her gilded unique textile creations. Annie Trussart, an embroidery expert. Helen Amy Murray who hand sculptured textiles and leather. Anne Corbière, a metal weaver, and Isabelle Poupinel who reinterprets exquisite porcelain in contemporary lights. Their mastery of craftsmanship illustrate my motto that luxury is in the details as well as in the language of texture and colors. My taste for noble materials, mixed with my sense of detail led me to develop my own furniture and lighting collections. And to sign partnerships with French craftsman Pouenat and Italian tap manufacturer Zucchetti.

What is your dream project?

As architect of a particular *art de vivre* that blends tradition and creativity in a characteristically French luxury I design dreamy palaces, boutique hotels, casinos, spas, mountain chalets, "hotels particuliers", resorts, villas, furniture, lighting, carpets collection ... There is still one achievement that I dream of: to design the interiors of a yacht!