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SHORTLIST 8 TIPS FOR CHOOSING SOFT FURNISHING

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Living the Dream

Landed homes that tick all the right boxes

Little furniture for little hands

Silvia Marlia doesn't design children's furniture – she designs furniture for children. TEXT REDZMAN RAHMAT

Too often, children's furniture are simply scaled down, miniature versions of adult furniture. Hong Kong-based Italian designer Silvia Marlia knows that this is a problem as adults don't usually think about the abilities of a child. "We need to think small! Tiny hands need tiny proportions and a different perspective of the world," she says.

Silvia's background in education, passion for children and love for contemporary design naturally led to the creation of her SAND collection of kids' furniture. Her designs are targeted at children 3 years old and up, and include furniture like beds, tables and chairs and storage like book carts and toolboxes. "I think of what a child would see when they walk into a room. Everything is new and beautiful from their point of view. When they look at a table, they don't see the tabletop, they look at the table legs. I design chairs and stools that aren't just for sitting –

children can sit on the floor and use them as a table. I try to find the beauty in proportions."

The SAND collection reflects Silvia's respect for a child's intelligence, habits and abilities. From the restrained palette of pastel colours ("Their books and toys are colourful enough") to the attention paid to the tiniest of details ("Children look at little things adults don't pay attention to"), Silvia bases her designs on years of studying how children act and behave. She points out the tables and chairs as examples. "I wanted to use very natural finishes and leave the wood with open pores. Children are very tactile and I want them to feel the texture."

Silvia's designs are so popular that she has been flooded with requests to "upscale" her furniture into adult versions. "Not right now," she says as she brushes away the suggestion. "There's already a lot of beautiful designs for adults... and we have so much to choose from. But there aren't many options for children." She does however, take into account an adult's perspective when she creates her furniture. "I have a responsibility to give the parents something that is meaningful for their children. Personally, I don't believe in things that are super decorative or super cute to the extreme. My philosophy is that a parent should give something simple yet meaningful to their children."

SAND Design is available at OM
www.om-home.com

The SAND collection is tailored to meet the needs of children aged 3 and up



Editor's Picks



MM1 rolling wardrobe, and MM3 low rolling cabinet, prices on enquiry



Toolbox (stackable containers), \$500



Sunrise flatpack bed, \$1,560



Pencil trays, \$200 each

Describe your home.

My apartment in Hong Kong is quite bare, but it has a lot of light, which is what I like. I also have a great view of the trees from my window, which is important in a home. I think it's important to have some contact with nature, and that goes the same for children. Don't have too much plastics or technology in your home!

What would you splurge on for your home?

It's important to have beautiful things in the home but they should have a purpose. For me, it's important to have a beautiful dining table where my family can sit down and have meals together. So I would splurge on a big table and comfortable dining chairs.

What are your influences?

In general, I like contemporary designs and modern designs. But I also have a passion for factory furniture. I like the roughness and industrial aspects of furniture and it shows up in my home and my designs.

