

MISSBISH



When I moved to Hong Kong over six years ago, I spotted Silvia on the street. You can't miss her. Her perfect, prismatic silver mane paired with her deep, olive skin captured my attention immediately and I found that I saw her everywhere; yoga class, the grocery store, getting coffee, literally everywhere. As fate would have it, she ended up being a student of mine in *yoga* and as I was working on the design of the furniture for my first restaurant, who walks in? Silvia. She is the co-founder of the design firm that custom made all of our iconic pieces. I was so excited and humbled by the universe and all its powers for showing me, once again, that nothing is a coincidence. Sometimes you are drawn to people and I couldn't be more ecstatic that she is someone who has magnetically become part of my life.

You're an Italian living in Hong Kong. Tell us your story.

Yes, almost 7 years ago I came to Hong Kong, looking for new adventure, for life and with a desire to learn different things or in a different way. I never lived in Asia before, so everything was new – and old – at same time.

Tell us about *SAND for Kids*.

SAND for Kids is a company that offers beautiful designs just right for children at work. Children do not play – they work! They need good furniture and objects, and need to be surrounded by

beauty, to learn about proportion, order and beauty, as well as function. This is SAND for Kids, a purposeful company, full of poetic inspiration. The name of the company refers to a peculiar moment in our lives when we are not 'stiff' yet – we are soft, and we can change shape, like sand.

Contemporary furniture and Italy go together like PB & J. How did you discover your talent and passion for industrial design?

I started to attend furniture fairs in Milan when I was 16 years old, quite a long time ago when it was a small, niche event and few companies were showing their beautiful, refined designs. Italy was the capital in the world for refinedness and aesthetic, thanks to great Italian genius, creativity and incredible artisan work.

Design was always in the air; all around me was design and architecture. I chose to have an adventurous life, and the process of design and production, being complex, hard and that requires so many skills, was a challenge in creativity. I did not know I liked being in a factory so much until I started.



“EVERY TIME I DESIGN A PRODUCT FOR CHILDREN, I THINK OF THEIR DREAMS, THEIR POINT OF VIEW AND THEIR LITTLE HANDS.”

Walk us through making a single product.

Every time I design a product for children, I think of their dreams, their point of view and their little hands. It's quite easy for me, as I remember a lot of my thoughts and dreams of when I was a child. I'm also a tiny person and for me, everything it is always too big, too bulky, and too heavy.

I then think about what it may look like for their eyes, and what they will feel comfortable with, combining safety with what I think is the responsibility of the adult to provide to children. I think we have a responsibility to initiate inspiration, to plant a seed and never overwhelm a child with the entire picture.

SAND wardrobe MM1 is the symbol of the starting voyage of life for children. It moves on wheels, it is a *repechage* of the traveling trunk, it is rounded, it is beautifully made, and it is full of inspiration for a child to dream.

Why did you choose to focus on children's furniture?

I think because what I saw was mostly conceived in a very poor way. Children either get over-accessorized in our world, or are surrounded by very cheap things. I found that it was a terrible contradiction in our over complex society.

I decided to do something beautiful with natural materials, to create something just right. I designed with the children in mind from the very beginning – I didn't just scale things down for them. I thought they deserved more. I like small and light objects, I like thinking small and in detail,

and so designing for children came almost naturally.

Where do you find most of your inspiration?

Mostly by observing children, and listening to them. I'm also inspired by my own archive of childhood memories, everything that I find poetic and that initiates the possibility of my mind going somewhere else.

Do you have a mentor?

I think I've had lots of mentors. It is not possible to create this company without the help of many people.

You're an avid yoga practitioner. Has yoga always been a part of your life?

I started when I came to Asia was slowly conquered by it.

**“DO NOT MAKE
ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT
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What does yoga do for you?

It satisfied my incommensurable desire of finding a bridge between mind and body. The beauty is that there are no limits, as there isn't that bridge...only the desire to gap it.

What's the best piece of advice you've received in the past few years?

To love what we do.

What's the hardest lesson you've learned?

To not make assumptions about people.

How do you balance work, kids, yoga and your personal life?

Slowly I've learned that even time can expand. I am a very disciplined person, and I think in advance a lot, so I am good in organizing complex projects. My life is very intense, but it is about what I choose, and what I love. I get up early and I go to sleep early. If I have a date, I have it early in the morning for a coffee, or for a foot massage. I am too tired in the evening.

Is there a secret to staying gorgeous, youthful and full of humour?

Never take yourself too seriously and never think you are important.

3 hidden gems in Hong Kong?

1) Doing yoga on a rooftop in Sheung Wan, in the evening, when the lights of the skyscrapers go on.

2) Iced Chai Tea latte at *teakha*