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As a child Helen experimented with materials and constructions, sometimes even risking her physical safety. It was as if something triggered an idea that had to be realised by stretching its limitations to the opposite direction. At that time design was just an inner-raw drive, later it was refined by maturity and the influence of various aspects. BlendDesignOffice is a multidisciplinary design and research office based in Athens, Greece, operating in the fields of Architectural identity, interior and lighting design, landscape and sustainable design, color consulting, 3D branding and research, in every phase of the design process from conceptual design to project development and construction.



Tell us a little about your background in design.

My professional training and work experience balance equally among Architectural & Spatial design, Engineering on one side and Urban Sociology and Research on the other, while moving from small scale of interior or Urban furniture design to that of Urban Design for Social Responsibility and Master Planning. My research background in culture and ethnography, as well as quantitative and qualitative research methods, enables our studio to approach every context from a wide perspective, making every location and project an educational, transformative and collective experience that has a strong impact on every stakeholder.

Please describe the highlight of your career to date.

We gradually developed our focus from small scale residential and office projects mainly in Attiki and Athens, to getting commissioned for upper scale and demanding projects that require expertise and know how in the Healthcare, Hospitality and Commercial Sector all over Greece. During the past 8 years we have expanded our business abroad getting involved in the design, research, execution and project management for very demanding commercial and residential projects in Bucharest, UK and Emirates.

What project(s) are you currently working on?

At the moment we are involved in Urban Regeneration and Residential Design in Greece and Bucharest, as well as in Hospitality Design and Wellness. They all focus on sustainability, adaptive re-use and energy efficiency, innovation and resilience. All the projects follow the initiative people-first trying to implement experiential data, material and technology innovation and balancing our relationship with natural and built-environment. The main aim is to create spaces that will contribute to empowering a state of well being in most of the small segments of our daily life.

Tell us a little more about these project(s)

In particular, two luxury residential projects in Varkiza and Voullagmeni incorporate intelligent management of LED lighting with occupancy sensors which adjust the efficiency and intensity of lighting according to the diagrams of natural light and the presence of people in the space. Natural vegetation is chosen, always supported by water supply systems and exploitation of rainwater with hidden tanks for water collection and management. It is a tool that aims to restore the human relationship with the natural environment in order to restore the biorhythms of health and wellbeing.

Please describe the project you are most proud of to date, with reasons why this was a success?

We are very proud of all our projects, but specifically one healthcare project the 'Healing Ribbon' RADIO Actinology Sector for IASO Healthcare has a special place in our heart and marks a stepping stone for us as a design office. Working in a sector that is associated with pain and loss, is difficult and demands special care, knowledge and expertise in many fields-spatial design, psychology, material technology, research and lighting human-centric design.

Where do you find inspiration for your work?

Travel and cultural immersion is my way of re-charging inspiration 'powerpacks'.

How do you relax and find your work/ life balance?

Being a designer is a very transformative and sometimes hard evolution that demands diligence, focus, daily education to remain knowledgeable, efficient and effective in a rapidly

evolving and competitive sector. Working among a great competition of unique projects and design offices, we feel blessed and very proud that our work has received wide and international recognition bearing the credentials of very prestigious and established International Design Competitions. When I say hard I mean that constantly you have to try to find balances, realign, negotiate and keep a healthy distance in order to give the best at work and focus on family as well.

How would you describe your work/design style /ethos?

I was born in Greece but having lived abroad for many years the multi-cultural and educational background of different continents has infused my approach to design and lifestyle in general. Far East and its holistic approach to every living organism, plays a vital role in treating the natural and man-made environment from an organic perspective. This has informed our holistic approach to design and projects alike, and we choose to apply this approach in every phase of the design process, allowing elements from various disciplines to be incorporated in order to achieve the clients' visions and goals without compromising our social mission. From the very beginning of our establishment we embraced an understanding of the enormous impact the building and our surrounding environment has on our life and wellbeing. Every project therefore starts from the axiom 'people first' and by incorporating research informed data, we aim to bring or realign the balance of all the elements that constitute our surrounding environment.

In what direction do you feel that design is moving towards in a general sense?

The positive aspect of the disruptive era we experienced was that people became more aware of their surroundings and their strong impact on their daily balance and wellbeing. Healthy air, lighting and safety have gained an important place in spatial design-whether it involves residential, commercial or hospitality projects.

How is your work evolving?

All of this effort cannot be achieved without studying nature and incorporating the lessons learned so far to inform better design, within a research and relevant contextual framework.

What area(s) of the design sector do you work in for the most part?

All of the sectors, mainly focusing on interior design, lighting design and bespoke furniture design & manufacturing.

What are your aims and goals for the next twelve months and beyond?

To see our current projects materialise and reach the goals we have set to design healthier and resilient environments for more people.

Name five key themes to consider when approaching design in 2023 and beyond.

Biophilia, Organic Materiality, Adaptive Tradition, Cultural Infusion and Innovation.

Which products/services could you not live without when designing?

Materials and colours and the way they interact with the natural and man-made environment.

If you could offer one piece of advice when it comes to design schemes, what would it be?

Design for purpose and experience



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