

focus

night clubs

illustration : : shahid jaan

# bring on the night: NIGHT CLUBS

ifj looks at nightclubs across the globe and studies the design and dynamic trends that keep this segment vibrant and drive the industry



## defining trends

### Evident in society

since the early 20th century, the 70s disco revolution presented users with experiences which were more than just about music. The switch from live bands to pre-recorded music revolutionized the nightclub industry for the years ahead. Today, large cosmopolitan cities with affluent populations are known for their exclusive boutique nightclubs catering to different segments of society. The experience the space provides is what attracts the crowd. Ar. Kalhan Mattoo, Director, Planet 3 Studios, Mumbai, says, "Every nightclub wants to give their patrons a memorable experience. This is not just the look of the space, it includes things like the music you play and what you serve." While a large part of the clientele comes to these spaces to socialize, or for the music, others see it as a detox to a stressful and tiring day. Still others simply glue themselves to the bar. "I stand by the notion that it is the big things that create the impression, and the little things that create the memories," says Callin Fortis, BigTime Design Studios, Miami.

The youth, who have high expectations with regard to technology, fashion and music are the typical target group for most nightclubs. "The internet has allowed the market the ability to educate themselves in a virtual way that did not exist in the past. Therefore I build in as many changeable elements as I can to keep the design fresh and inspiring, visit after visit," says Callin Fortis. The Zouk Management at Velvet Underground, Singapore believes in renovating and provides a completely new feel to all its outlets once every five years. They say, "This is the third renovation to Velvet Underground since we transformed the space in 1994 from a restaurant to a club."

Local culture also has a huge impact on the design trends of a nightclub. The process is not always as simple as

looking to the mega-clubs of places like Las Vegas and attempting to duplicate a concept or borrow designs. Newer trends demand an absolute application of concept in all areas of the space, including the restrooms. Ar. Kanhai Gandhi, Director, KNS Architects, Mumbai, says, "The trend has more to do with the advancement of lighting and acoustics going hand in hand with the design of a night club. These spaces are more focused towards technology than just the interiors; they are the driving forces of the design. Lighting has become one of the main mediums of design while the rest are just accessories to it." A recent trend evolving world over is the use of videos by VJ's who mix content in a similar manner to DJ's, creating a visual experience that complements the music.

## the technicalities

The design of a nightclub is incomplete without the right lighting and acoustic scheme, which enhances the desirability of the space, creating an attractive and welcoming ambience. "Electrical design, lighting and acoustics are planned in the initial stage of a project. Most light sources are mounted on made-to-measure furniture built-ins in order to provide easily accessible and adjustable intensity and color choices," says Ania Sosin, Interior Designer, SO-IN Sosin Interieurs, Amsterdam. With the availability of several out-of-the-box light and sound systems in the market, customizable options built from scratch, which address the exact requirements of a particular space, are preferred.

An important aspect to the design of nightclubs is the planning of the functional and storage spaces. Devised on basic reasoning and theories, it is essential to account for them. Most people who tackle the design of

nightclubs leave out essentials that have to do with day-to-day operations. The key to this is the collaboration of architects and interior designers with space planners and light and sound consultants. "Consultants have the key role of executing the narrative with the accuracy and integrity of the design. The atmosphere of lighting, video and sound are as important as the features themselves," says Callin Fortis.

Speaking on the duration taken to complete the design of a night club, Phillips Connor, Senior Creative Director, DB&B Pte Ltd, Singapore, says factors such as the design and detail development, custom furniture detailing and material development, procurement and pre-manufacturing usually take up six to twelve months of planning. He adds, "We spend a long time to make sure everything is state-of-the-art, truly original, prototyped, tested and ready to place on the site."

## contemplations on the future

Despite the evident rise in affluence and aspirations, the future of night-life is in a quandary. Regional factors such as drinking age, noise restrictions and curfew have an immense impact on the entertainment industry. Government policies change in accordance with time and situation and over the last five years, Indian regulations dictate that night clubs shut by 1:30 am. Ar. Kanhai Gandhi says, "The current lifestyle and receding deadlines do not allow people adequate time to catch up over a meal and then head to a club. Night clubs and restaurants have meshed together into the growing urban culture of lounges." The large clubs located within luxury hotel brands enjoy lenient oversight and have an edge at the moment. Contrary to what others believe, Charles Doell, Founder, Mr. Important Design, California is excited for the rising hospitality industry India, he says, "India seems to be open for anything new and dazzling, we anticipate exciting and revolutionary projects to come in the near future."



**KNS Architects, Mumbai**

**concept:**  
Spread across 1,800 sq. ft., Ren draws inspiration from its name, which means circle of people. The linear space is divided into two main sections, a 40 feet bar and the dance floor. Three inherited columns on the site are wrapped with glossy steel rings of different width and diameters. The ceiling is designed in two layers with the inner layer painted red-gold while the outer layer is punctured with circles and finished with black-gold. A cluster of steel pipes of different diameters and lengths are hung from the ceiling over the bar area to form a wave pattern flowing over the monolithic granite bar counter.



REN MUMBAI



BANG DUBAI

**Orbit Design, Bangkok**

**concept:**  
The interior at Bang scintillates with a combination of color changing crystals hanging from the ceiling and backlit acrylic diamonds punched through the wall. The bar is Swarovski clad while the flooring is Italian marble. As the aim was to be the best, no expense was spared on the finest fittings-most of which were custom designed.



WAVES BAR THANE

**Planet 3 Studios, Mumbai**

**concept:**  
Adhering to the client's requirement of a schematic character, the space is based on an aquatic theme without the actual use of water. Solid architectural materials depict the various forms of water. The ceiling reflects undulating waves of varying pitch. Painted white, the light scatters from a recessed cove along its periphery. The bar is constructed in solid-surface acrylic with a backdrop of ribbon panels that flow along the wall shaping shelves. Fluid lines find their way into the central seating area in form of under lighting below a frosted glass floor.



MOTIF SILICON VALLEY



**Mr. Important Design, California**

**concept:**  
Motif, a mix of vintage and modern elements, is a combination of avant-garde interiors with cutting edge technological features. Stretched glossy polymer film provides an undulating ceiling of reflective color and pattern at the DJ station. The main element of the space is the installation by Eva Menz, seven thousand pieces of black glass suspended from black and silver chains to form two huge leaf shapes. Bold floral tapestry envelopes the space. Extensive and saturated use of color changing LED lighting transforms the monochrome palette into a polychromatic club experience.



visual credit : : zouk management

# VELVET UNDERGROUND SINGAPORE



## Phillips Connor, Singapore

### concept:

The project brief for Velvet Underground was to transform the space into the most luxurious club using high-tech material and equipment. The walls are covered with a 1/4 inch rubberized acoustic absorbent material while the floor is wood. The high ceiling of the club also acts as a sound absorbent. The space is flanked by paintings from several artists, which in the dark environment of the club, are animated by video mapping with projectors.



visual credit : : roberto d'lara

# ECLIPSE BARCELONA

## Isabel López Vilalta + Asociados, Barcelona

### concept:

Located on the top floor of the W Hotel, Eclipse offers its guests a panoramic view of the city. Reflective materials such as stainless steel sheets and glass are used as wall coverings. Sofas and small white tables sit between the backlit fabric roof and dark flooring. The use of backlit and matte malleable elastic cloth against the bright and rigid stainless steel is considered as the challenging decision for the design of the space.



# ALEGRA DUBAI

## Big Time Design Studios, Miami

### concept:

Capturing the spirit of New York, the city that never sleeps, the concept behind Crowbar was to bring an urban familiarity to the space punctuating the overall ethos of nightclubbing with no boundaries of race, sexual orientation or income. Taking into consideration the building's core function as well as the code and mechanical requirements the space was designed to provide the user with a unified platform. A tunnel pathway connects two distinct rooms and two music formats.



visual credit : : roger dong

# CROBAR NEW YORK



## Mr. Important Design, California

### concept:

The interiors of Alegra are dominated by a high resolution LED screen mounted within a long broken crease in the ceiling plane. The crease is repeated using trapezoidal faceted ceiling and wall planes of beveled black glass. A 20 foot long ribbon of golden graffiti and crystal is suspended over the main bar. Warm tones of gold foil embossed leather and tufted dining ottomans along with the linear LED chandeliers by Il Pezzo Mancante lend a rich and sensual comfort to the interior.



# VANITY LAS VEGAS



## Mr. Important Design, California

### concept:

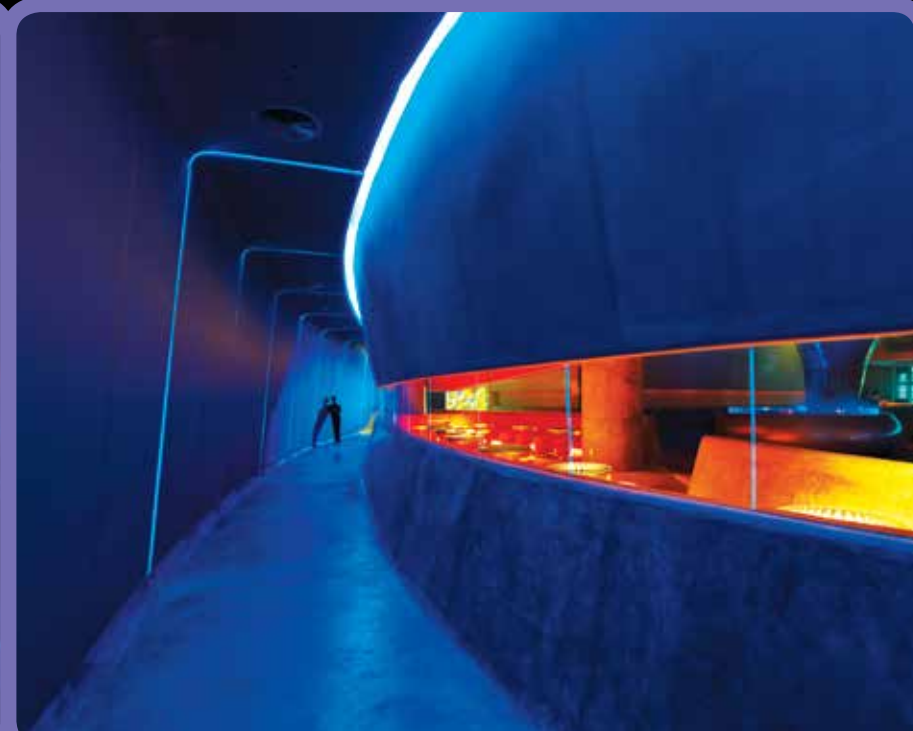
The concept of Vanity is derived from the fantasies and richness of a jewel box. Glinty faceted forms against soft cut velvets, deep satins and rich tapestries with tones of bronze and gold metallic, antique mirrors, rubbed brass and black chrome define the space. The wow factor of the space is a computer controlled bi-morphic chandelier composed of 20,000 programmable LEDs and 20,000 crystals. It rises out of a glass floor, bursts up 20 feet and then spreads over the entire expanse of the dance floor, covering an area of 1,200 sq. ft. Gleaming textures and honeycombed surfaces wander throughout the space.

## Orbit Design, Bangkok

### concept:

The design brief is derived and inspired from sound, the wavelength of sound to the human inner ear and principles of hearing. The form of the space is defined by curved walls, seating pods and the stalactite and stalagmite concept of wall treatments. In-situ polished concrete was extensively used. A simple color palette of concrete, black, amber and electric blue define the visual experience of the space. Intimacy was managed through the treatment of existing columns by creating tree like fabric membrane forms and wrapped figure eight shaped floating seating pods.

# SOUND CLUB PHUKET



visual credit : sue c sidzina

# BUBBLE CHARLOTTE

## Big Time Design Studios, Miami

### concept:

Though the concept at Bubble revolves around Champagne, the client wanted a night club culture while maintaining a little older and sophisticated crowd. The exterior space represents a champagne bottle where the entrance has a wall designed in curvilinear shape representing the barrel of grapes. The interior is designed based on the experience of the champagne. Large light boxes house images of vintage Barbie dolls that identify the glamorous nature of the concept.



# SPIFFY CLUB POLAND

## SO-IN Sosin Interieurs, Amsterdam

### concept:

The idea behind the design of Spiffy Club was the mobility and flexibility of the interior to adjust to different occasions. The dark interior corners have been designed to make them bright, quiet and private to talk. A fragment of the original concrete wall was left untouched to add an industrial character.





### Orbit Design, Bangkok

**concept:**

The key brief behind the design of Allure was the need to maintain strong brand integrity, yet develop it to match the local demands. The vast sail-shaped translucent Barrisol rises from behind the main DJ station and envelops the dance floor. The main floor is broken into manageable spaces by seating pods and the angular bar. Pink gold leaf and distinctive bronze cladding adds a level of glamour to the height of the space.

# ALLURE ABU DHABI

# B BAR MIAMI

### Big Time Design Studios, Miami

**concept:**

Representing a space that is nostalgic yet modern, B Bar brings together the historic art of the cocktail carried with modern flair while maintaining the authentic tradition of a delicate swizzle. A cocoon of dark red hues, shades of lavender and deep purple, the space has a reflective black ceiling which gives an illusion of being adrift. Hand-cut Parisian crystal lamps adds an ethereal golden glow.

visual credit : morris moreno

