

DESIGNER INTERVIEW

Jordi Llopis

(Barcelona, 1972)

Jordi Llopis was formed as a designer at the ELISAVA School in Barcelona and at the 'Royal College of Art' in London. Industrial Designer, he has worked as a Design Manager in lighting companies carrying out the direction of new products and corporate identity. He has been collaborating with lighting companies, street furniture and household items for years. 'Lifelight', a lamp created by him in 2003, is part of the permanent collection of the 'Museu del Disseny' of Barcelona, and the 'Clipa'm' lamp was selected in the Delta 2016 Awards.

He currently directs his own design studio called Jordi Llopis Design, in Barcelona, and is co-founder of the editing company Brots. He works developing new designs in the world of lighting and urban elements, as well as designing and producing new collections for Brots. The excuse is to design for oneself on self-request, without prejudices or previous filters, in order to arrive at a very personal, original and coherent product to offer. This is part of the philosophy that to be transmitted by Brots. Jordi Llopis also collaborates as an external teacher at ESDI, Barcelona School of Design and ELISAVA Alumni and is Tutor in the ESdesign Barcelona Master. He has been a jury at the Ei Awards! of ELISAVA in Barcelona, and has collaborated in workshops at the University of Aguascalientes in Mexico and in ELISAVA.

In his collaboration with Alma Light we have developed TRIBECA and FUJI collections, both selected for the ADI/ Delta awards, winning a bronze medal.

Coffee break with Jordi Llopis

How would you define Jordi Llopis with a single sentence?
I try to be a good person.

When and how did you become interested in design?

As a child, I regularly bought a car magazine and tried to keep up to date with news and new designs. At the same time, I began to have interest in some type of real creation when I saw my sister at home drawing with her 'paralex' on an architect-type table. I was then about ten years old. Another influence was the milk bottle of the brand Rania, awarded with a 1967 'Delta de Oro' prize. The bottle was commissioned by my grandfather -the founder of the company Rania-, to the designer Andr Ricard. Over the years, I realized that any object has been thought by someone, and for a very specific reason.

Your work tools are...

It all starts inside my head, where I go around and around things. From there, I begin drawing sketches by hand, to see if those ideas can be actually transformed into something. Then, computer, models or prototypes are the perfect complements to shape up my designs.

What requirements, in terms of personality, training and skills, do you consider necessary to be a good industrial designer? Today, I think it is very interesting to train in many areas, and not only in design. You have to have a perspective on social, sustainability and production matters, and interest in different materials. One must think about the end user and how one's design will affect a specific space. It is essential to have an accumulation of experiences through travel, through meeting different people or the knowledge of cultures. All that gives you a baggage that can be later transmitted to your creations.

How would you define, in three words, your work?

Honesty. Simplicity. Emotion.

Where do you get inspiration, in general, for your ideas? And what is the strangest place where inspiration has come to you? Who inspires you?

Inspiration springs out of curiosity. A weird place? Possibly swimming. Interesting people and places with soul, inspire me.

In the ALMA Light catalog of luminaires, there are several of your designs: the Tribeca and the Fuji collections, whose common denominator is alabaster. What were you inspired by?

Tribeca is inspired by the balloons of the 60's. Fuji arises from the mental photograph I took when passing by, on a train, near Mont Fuji in Japan.



When designing the Tribeca and Fuji collections, how did you start the creative process? How did you come to use alabaster in these designs? How did you get the idea?

It all started when I saw an alabaster installation. I was interested in its capacity to filter light. After that, I looked for someone who could transform an alabaster block into a design. And the rest came on its own...

What do you bring to the market with the Tribeca and Fuji collections?

Alabaster has very interesting lighting properties, with very unique natural effects. This mixture of tradition, craftsmanship and design make the two collections have personality.

What do you see, what do you feel when you have a Tribeca in your hands?

I feel the need to touch the material.

What kind of lighting do you like to create and transmit through Tribeca and Fuji?

The most important thing was to be able to sift the light and create pleasant scenes and spaces.

Is there a specific value that you want to highlight in your designs?

Sobriety.

Throughout your career, your designs have received several awards and recognitions, such as the recent DeltaAwards ADI-FAD precisely for the Tribeca and Fuji collections produced by ALMALight. What do these awards represent to you?

I think awards, nowadays, give you the energy to continue in this complicated world.

Do you take into account aspects related to the future industrial production of your creations? Or do you leave that part entirely in the hands of the companies who will then produce your designs?

It depends on the design. But I think it is essential to start, as soon as possible, developing the design hand in hand with the entrepreneur who will produce the object. Each one makes their own contribution, each one is essential so that a good design can be successful afterwards, in all aspects.

Tell us about your three favorites: a material, a color and a shape.

Wood. Garnet. Square.

When you open a book, a magazine, a catalog, or when you see a shop window or a lighting fair..., what can't you stand to see in a design?

That does not stand together. If it does not 'work', if there is no 'conjunction' among the different elements, it is quickly visible.

What part of your job makes you the happiest?

When I see a first prototype.

What has been the best moment of your working life?

The first design of mine that a company wanted to edit.

Do you have any unspeakable mania when it comes to designing?

I don't think so.

According to you, the design should serve to...

Give function and emotion.

When you don't 'design' what do you do?

I spend time with my children and family.

A place to disconnect...

Sea or mountain.

An artist you admire...

My parents.

A museum you never get tired of going to...

When I was a student in London, I visited the V&A (Victoria and Albert Museum) a lot. Today, possibly the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona, I love both the content and the container.

A material with which you never get tired of working...

A material that I would love to work on much more: timber.

What advice would you give to a young person who wants to study industrial design?

If he or she really wants to study design... Above all, a lot of training about a variety of things. But the most important thing is to have a passion for creation and design, to be very curious. It is not an easy world and it requires patience; and without passion, everything is more complicated.

Are there any interview questions you would ask yourself that we have not asked?

Possibly, but it could be politically incorrect.

