

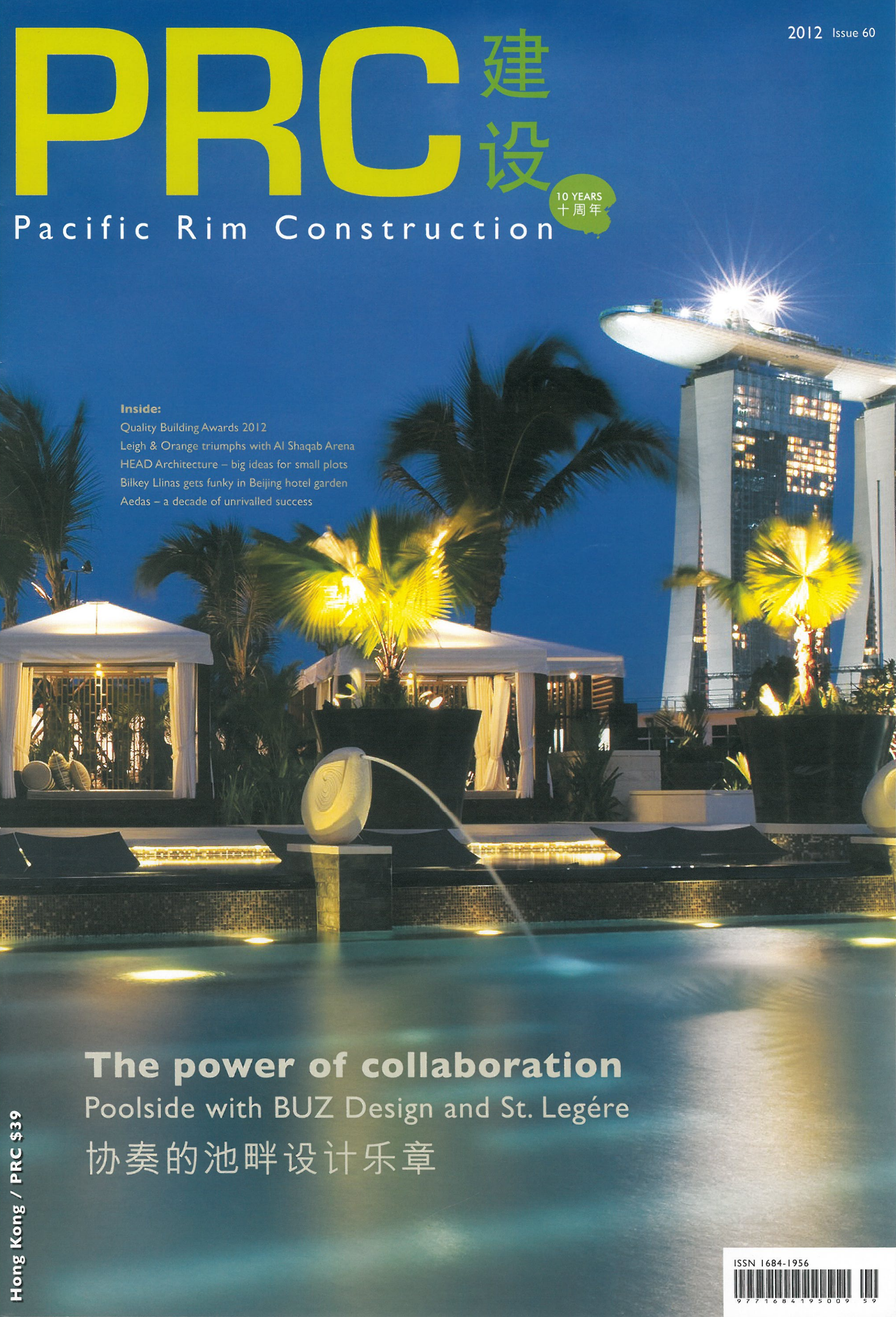
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The power of collaboration
 Poolside with BUZ Design and St. Legère
 协奏的池畔设计乐章

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J Lee Rofkind and Dennis Selinger met roughly 15 years ago working on the Hyatt in Hangzhou (Rofkind as Design Director for Hyatt International and Selinger as landscape architect). Both designers agree that they hit it off immediately with shared design sensibilities and over time have become good business friends and office partners.

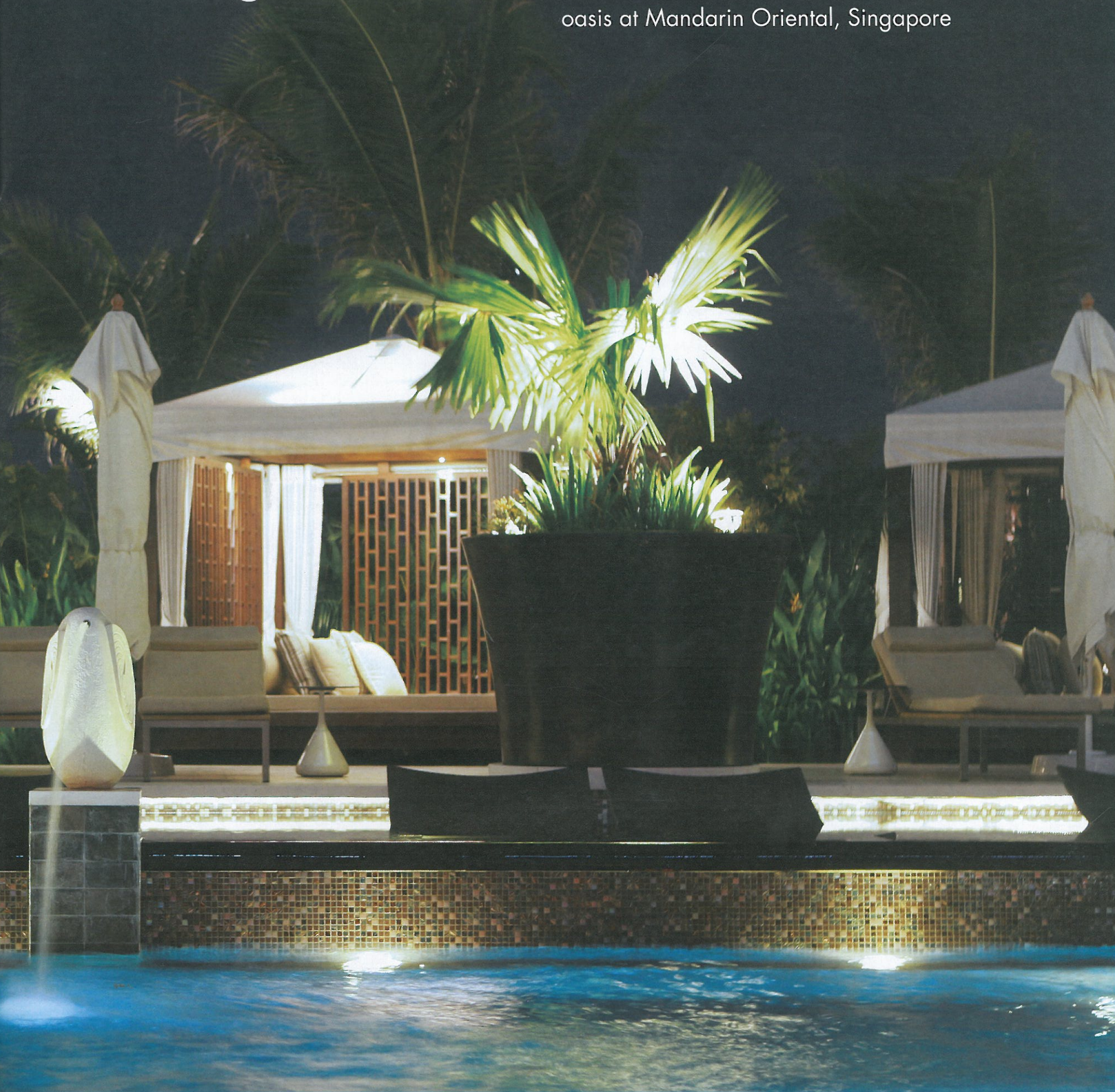
J Lee Rofkind is Founder and Creative Director of BUZ Design Consultants Ltd. BUZ Design is a creative design firm with international experience working primarily on hotel and resort interiors. Dennis Selinger is the Founder and Director of St. Legère Design International Ltd., established to create the highest quality in landscape architectural services. Their companies, BUZ Design and St. Legère share the 7th floor of a harbour facing office building in Hong Kong's Western District.

Recently, on behalf of their respective businesses, Rofkind and Selinger began work on a vast renovation of the pool facilities at Singapore's Mandarin Oriental Hotel. After being commissioned on this project, Rofkind felt that the expertise of St. Legère combined with her own firm would be a perfect consultant partnership for this project. Rofkind explains, "Typically, my work ends at the door and his begins. I am inside; he is outside. We would talk about such things as the paving matching the flooring and what is the view from the lobby. However, for this project our collaboration extended through every aspect of the design."

Upon assessment of the original plans and site inspection of the hotel's outdoor space, one finds a highly generic, rectangular pool design. When the hotel was originally built,

Meeting of minds.

The power of collaboration produces poolside oasis at Mandarin Oriental, Singapore



the developers understood the need to have a pool on the property. However, given the standard rectangular pool design, it seems the pool was included as a necessity rather than as an opportunity to create a destination. Selinger expounds, "They originally had a standard rectangular pool and funky free-form planters. It wasn't much. You really couldn't use this space for functions: corporate parties, wedding parties or banquets. There wasn't value as a venue to market. It was dated and not well planned. It was a sad space."

The concept for the new pool was to create a modern, sophisticated recreational space that would be enhanced for typical daily use, in addition to providing a distinctive venue for special large functions (up to 300 pax). In keeping with their ideals and history, both designers were dedicated to creating a fresh modern design for this space and not follow

the generic Balinese style endemic in Asia. When closely examining the overarching flaws of the original pool design, the designers felt that changing the tile or selecting new chairs would not drastically improve the pool. The space needed a complete overhaul.

An initial challenge was the shape of the pool; the shape was generic and lacklustre and located on a roof over movie theatres. In order to combat the awkward pool shape and structural challenges; Rofkind and Selinger came up with some unique solutions. The team decided to build platforms at different heights or levels, thus creating naturally divided spaces and various points of interest. They were then able to use planting that appeared to be a part of the environment rather than standard raised planters. Perhaps the most stunning improvement was made by reducing the pool depth (and decreasing the weight

on the roof) and raising the overall pool deck height which allowed the creation of a wet deck and waterfalls. This created the illusion of a much larger and interestingly shaped pool. Found on the wet deck are a number of barely submerged lounge chairs, which are very popular in the hot Singapore sun. Additionally, the design team changed the placement of the pool steps and the depth in a variety of areas to make the pool more functionally organized for bathers and lap swimmers.

The team added cabanas, service bar and space for an outside lounge. In true luxurious style, all cabanas have cooling fans and call buttons for staff, as well as power, iPod and data outlets for use of electronic devices. An extra large cabana was designed to function as a living area or as a semi-private dining room overlooking the pool. Another shaded lounge area was created near the existing restaurant, with stunning views of the city for pre dinner cocktails or simple lounging. A porcelain tile was carefully selected for its qualities as both non-slick and stain resistant. Dark purple and silver glass mosaics were used to line the pool, which surprisingly reflect back in a deep turquoise colour.

Finally, the design required lane markers on the bottom of the pool as hotel patrons often use it for lap swimming. Instead of painting the standard, campus-style stripes on the bottom of the pool, the design team instead used LED-lit, dotted lines that are both interesting and functional.

In societies where purchasing power converges with modern marketing practices, there are valuable lessons to learn from this project's success. The restaurant adjacent to the newly designed pool deck was originally in the plans to be renovated. However, on account of the increased traffic from the pool remodelling, restaurant revenues have doubled, thus developers have decided to postpone the renovation.

Additionally, one could imagine the continuously changing process by which hotels are chosen, and subsequently booked. This process, once an activity of keeping a mental database of past stays and verbal recommendations, is now organized and presents us with more options than ever before. It is not surprising to know that over 50 per cent of hotel reservations are made online; a number that is sure to be far greater in the near future. More than ever the consumer has options; they have carefully organized, graded, scored, reviewed and photographed options. Unlike years past, a consumer who is debating hotel options is likely to view photos of the property before making their booking. In this way, well-landscaped pools and exquisitely designed outside areas play an essential role in online marketing campaigns.

Selinger explains, "More and more, developers are realizing the power of these outdoor spaces to create new revenue streams. Developers are realizing how important landscape and interior is to a project's overall success. A lot of it is subconscious; it is the feeling you get when you come in."

It is interesting to note that The Mandarin Oriental Singapore is next door to another luxury hotel. The new Mandarin pool can be viewed from a number of the other hotel's guestrooms. Recently, an unnamed pop star was staying in the other hotel and viewed the Mandarin Oriental Pool from her window. Mistaking the pool for a part of her hotel's property, she asked the concierge for directions to the deck. After being shown a different pool, she was disappointed and asked if she could kindly enjoy the one she had seen from

her window; he obliged, as did the Mandarin Oriental, arrangements were made and all was well. However, next time the singer came to Singapore, rumour has it that she stayed in the Mandarin Oriental.

When meeting with J Lee Rofkind and Dennis Selinger it is immediately apparent that they collaborate very well together. There is ease in their relationship that is uncommonly seen in business partnerships. When hiring their respective firms, as partners, you are getting more than two elite level design firms. Rather, you are hiring a ready built relationship, which increases the power of decision-making, efficiency and the enjoyment of your business relationship. Sure, many businesses have preferred vendors and subcontractors they can use to supplement their particular expertise. However, those relationships are often forced; many times there are communication lags, money lost to middlemen and uncomfortable disputes. The relationship between Rofkind and Selinger is somewhat different; this relationship is real and honest.

When asked what the essence of their company and personal design philosophy were, even their responses mirror one another:

Rofkind says, "We have no two projects that are exactly alike and that is why every project demands a unique design. We take everything into account: local culture, market, image and company branding, budget and sustainability."

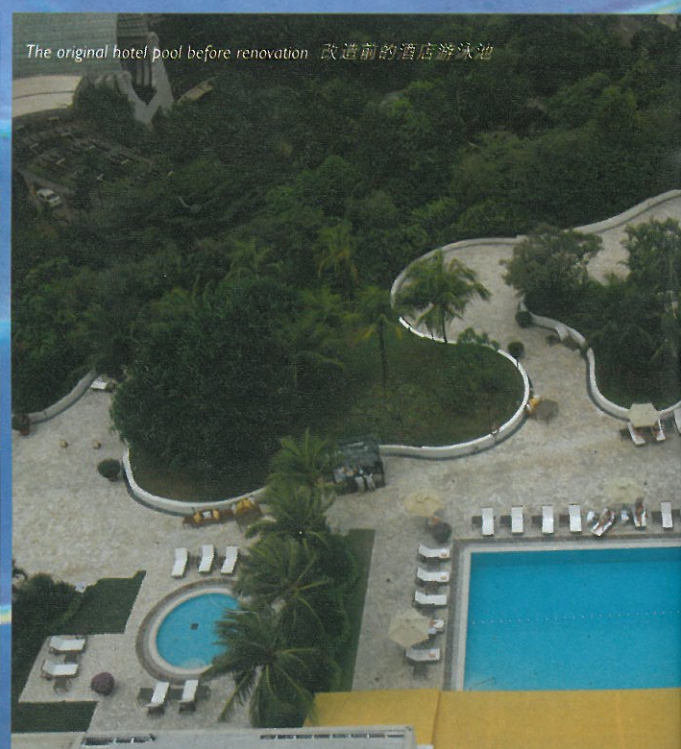
Selinger echoes that sentiment, "For me it is the level of detail and the quality; it is not just a quick wash of design that we pull out of a drawer to use on your project. It is about taking the time to consider all aspects of the project and creating a unique design."

St. Legère is on the cutting edge of creative design solutions in the industry of Landscape Architecture, Theme Designing and Site Planning. With a list of completed landmark projects and 25 years of field experience, Selinger enlists the "design studio" method, where each project is afforded the attention and consideration required to ensure a high level of design quality. St. Legère is proud to have worked on Wynn Resort in Macau, the Ayana Resort and Spa in Bali, the new Four Seasons Hotel and Residences in Pudong, Shanghai, as well as a large number of luxury hotel and residential projects within Hong Kong and throughout Asia.

Also, a very personalized design firm; BUZ Design has been delivering the highest quality custom designs to the hotel industry globally for over ten years.

Rofkind feels that a design needs to be "creative and timeless". By mixing those themes with a consistent dedication to luxury, BUZ has been creating unique designs for a wide variety of projects. She believes the ultimate design solution is the result of listening to the needs of the client and solving the problems with an open and inquisitive mind. Some of BUZ Designs' recent trademark projects include the recent restoration of the Ritz-Carlton Montreal, Mandarin Oriental Pudong (opening 2013), Mandarin Oriental Geneva, Shenzhen Peninsula Sheraton Resort and Nankun Crosswaters Ecolodge.

For more information on BUZ Design Consultants please visit: www.buzdesign.biz
For more information on St. Legère Design Intl. please visit: www.stlegere.com



The original hotel pool before renovation 改造前的酒店游泳池





灵感协奏曲

合作的力量，令新加坡
文华东方的池畔闪烁光芒！

大约15年前，J Lee Rofkind 女士与 Dennis Selinger 先生在杭州的凯悦酒店共事时认识，当时 Rofkind 是凯悦国际的设计总监，而 Selinger 则是园林建筑师。两位设计师均觉得大家在设计理念上一拍即合，随著时间过去，他们不单只成为了生意上的朋友，继而亦成为了合作夥伴。

Rofkind 女士是 BUZ Design Consultants Ltd. 的创办人兼创意总监，BUZ 是一间创意设计公司，在酒店和度假胜地的室内设计范畴上，拥有国际性的丰富经验。而 Selinger 先生则创办了盛林景观设计国际有限公司 (St. Legère Design International Ltd.) 并兼任总监一职，专门营造优质的园林景观。两家合作无间的公司，自然亦一起分享办公空间，那是在港岛西区一间位于七楼并可眺望海景的优美办公室。

最近 Rofkind 和 Selinger 的公司，一起获得了新加坡文华东方酒店的大型泳池设施翻新工程，大家均觉得结合两家公司的力量，将会是这个项目最完美的顾问合作关系。Rofkind 解释：「基本上我的工作是在门内完成，而他则是从门外展开；我主室内，他主室外。我们会讨论地板铺设是否相衬、从大堂看出的景观如何等事情。但在这个工程中，我们的合作却延展至设计的各个方面。」

根据原有酒店户外空间的平面图进行评估，你会发现那是一个普通的长方形泳池设计。当年兴建酒店的时候，发展商明白物业需要泳池，但是如此一个标准的设计，使它看起来只是一个满足基本需要的设施，而不是一个可以营造有利条件的环境。Selinger 补充说：「原先那里有一个标准的长方形泳池，和随意生长的植物盆栽，但为数不多。但作为一个活动场所，如果不能充分利用其空间作为其他活动的场地，如企业派对、婚礼或晚宴，那它就没有太大的市场价值；另外，它的陈旧和欠缺规划，令人没有留下愉快的感觉。」

新泳池的设计概念是要打造一个现代感和精致的悠闲空间，可日常使用之余，更可以提供与众不同的场地，举行容纳最多300名宾客参与的大型活动。为了保留它们的形象和歷史，两位设计师专门为这个空间营造了一个新颖的设计，而不是跟从在亚洲流行常见的巴厘风格。他们对原有的设计进行了仔细研究，认为如果只是更换地砖或者椅子，并不可能为泳池带来明显的改善，他们觉得这个空间需要一次彻底的改革。

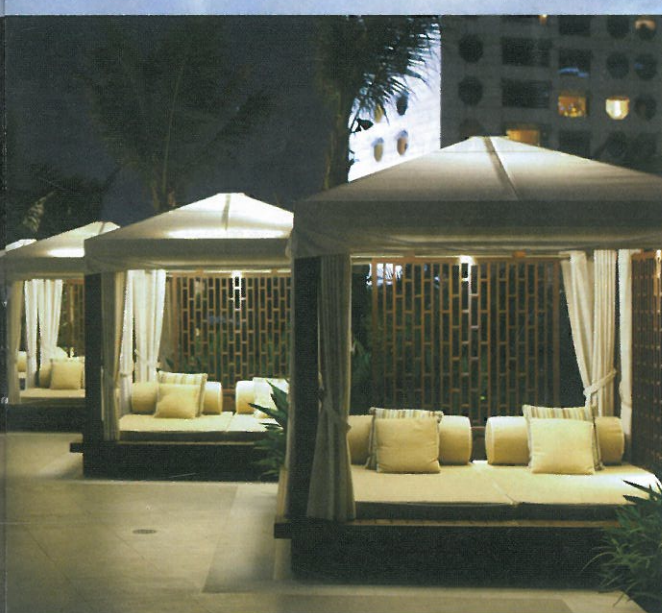
第一个挑战就是泳池的形状，原来的形状普通、单调乏味，而且位于电影院的屋顶上。为了解决这个棘手的结构问题，Rofkind 与 Selinger 构思了一些独特的解决办法。设计团队决定在不同的高度或水平上建造平台，从而打造自然分隔的空间以及不同的有趣点子。这样他们就可以将植物融入环境当中，而不是标准的种植盆栽。也许最令人惊叹的改善是减少水池深度（以减少屋顶的荷载），再加上将整体泳池平台提高，以便营造池畔及瀑布。这样便制造了一个使泳池看来更大的视觉效果，以及趣味性的泳池形状。在池畔可以找到一些浸泡在浅水中的躺椅，在新加坡这种炎热天气中，那是非常流行的。另外，设计团队调整了泳池楼梯的位置，以及不同区域的深度，使泳池在功能上对游泳者及嬉水者更有针对性。

设计团队加建了凉亭、服务吧和户外休憩空间。真正豪华风格的是：所有凉亭配备了风扇和呼叫服务员的按钮，以及设备电源、iPod 和数据上网点。其中一个特大凉亭可以用作起居，又或是可俯瞰泳池的半私人饭厅。另一个在遮荫下的休息室就建造在现有餐厅旁，可以让人一边享受晚饭前的鸡尾酒或简单地闲逛休息，一边欣赏城市美景。他们仔细地挑选优质的瓷砖，既要防滑又要具有抗污性。深紫色及银色的玻璃马赛克遍布泳池边缘，出人意料之外地反射出幽雅的深青绿色。

最后，设计要求在泳池底部画上泳道线，因为酒店顾客会用来来回游圈。为了取代标准校园风格的池底条纹，设计团队决定使用 LED 灯，勾画出来的虚线既有趣又实用。

在如今消费力与现代市场营销手法融合的社会中，我们可以从项目的成功，上了宝贵的一课。毗邻新泳池的餐厅原先也在翻新的计划之内，但是因为泳池重建后人流增加，餐厅的营业额增加了一倍，因此发展商决定押后计划。

此外，大家细想消费者是如何选择酒店，然后再去预订房间，这个不停转变的过程，都是每位消费者曾经留下来的记忆及感受，现在这个过程经过组织，相比以前可以有更多的选择。毫不令人感到意外的是，超过50%以上的酒店预约都在网上进行，而这个数字在将来





会变得更高。消费者有的不止是选择，他们仔细地组织、分级、评分、评论和拍下酒店的照片来分享。相比过去，消费者现在于预约前会先浏览它们的图片作出选择，因此，一个完善规划的园林泳池和精心设计的户外环境，在网上营销计划中发挥了重要作用。

Selinger 解释：「发展商意识到这些户外空间所带来新收入的能力，也了解到园林和室内设计对整个项目成功的重要性。这些很多都是潜意识的，是你踏进这里时的第一感觉。」

有趣的是，新加坡文华东方酒店旁边是另一间豪华酒店，那酒店的房客可以看见新的文华泳池。最近，某明星就入住该酒店，并从自己房中窗户看见文华东方的泳池，她误以为那是属于该酒店，于是问礼宾部前往泳池的方向。当然，她知道泳池不属于该酒店时感到了失望，并要求能否使用文华东方酒店的新泳池。该酒店职员和文华东方都不得不答应，并安排一切。所以，当该明星下次来访新加坡时，传闻就入住文华东方酒店。

与 Rofkind 和 Selinger 见面的时候，可以立即感受到他们之间的合作非常融洽。他们相处之间的轻松自在，是在生意夥伴关系中难以看到的。当聘用他们的公司作为合作夥伴，你所得到的远多于两家精英设计公司水准。理所当然地，雇用了一对现成的合作夥伴，大大提高了决策力、效率和享受流畅的合作关系。确实，有很多公司都选择供应商和分销商来提供该方面的专业，但是有时强行凑合关系，很多时会出现沟通问题、或中间人渔人得利，还有令人不满的纠纷。而 Rofkind 与 Selinger 之间的关系则与别不同，因为他们是基于真诚合作之上。

当问到他们公司的本质和个人设计理念，他们的回应都像镜子倒影般一致：

Rofkind 说：「我们从没有两个完全一样的项目，这就是为什么每一个项目都要求一个独特的设计。我们考虑所有因素：当地文化、市场、形象和公司产品、预算和可持续性。」

Selinger 与有共鸣：「对我来说，这是讲求细节和质素的水平；这不是我们在自己抽屉取出就用在项目上的速绘设计，这是关于要拿出时间来考虑项目的所有方面，以及创作一个全新设计。」

由 Dennis Selinger 带领的 St. Legère 为园林建筑、主题设计和场地规划所做的创意设计专案均是行内顶尖级数。带著一连串已完成的地标工程名单和25年的实地经验，Selinger 采用了「设计工作室」方法，让每一个项目都有所需的关注和考虑，来确保最高水平的设计质素。跟他们公司合作的项目有澳门的永利渡假村、巴厘岛的艾安娜温泉度假酒店、上海浦东的新四季酒店，还有很多位于亚洲和香港的豪华酒店及住宅项目，一一令他引以自豪。

至于 BUZ Design，这间非常个人化的设计公司，一直为全球酒店业带来优质的设计超过10年光景。创意总监 Lee Rofkind 认为设计须是「创新和永恒」。透过为奢华行业灵活地混合使用以上两个主题，公司已经为各式各样的项目创作出别出心裁的设计。她相信最好的设计方案会是抱著开放和好奇的心态，并细心聆听客户的需要。BUZ 最近的地标项目 - 包括新近翻新的蒙特利尔丽思卡尔顿酒店、将于在2013年开幕的浦东文华东方酒店、日内瓦文华东方酒店、神州半岛喜来登渡假酒店和南昆山的十字水生态渡假村。



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