

# WTSHE



## TASTE MAKERS

DION LEE TAKES ON THE WORLD, GIORGIO ARMANI PRIVE, FRED'S, THE LANSDOWNE, RAG & BONE, COACH + TASMANIA: WALKING, WINE AND THE DARK ARTS

Øivind Slaatto had nothing to lose the day he boarded a train to Struer, a small town three hours northwest of Copenhagen. The industrial designer had hit rock bottom. He had no money, no customers, no products on the market. He wore a shirt he had just bought and dragged his mate Dominic Balmforth along for the ride. It turned out to be the best decision he ever made. For that small town is not your average small town in Denmark, but the home of Bang & Olufsen.

“Starting as an independent designer isn’t as fancy as some might think,” he tells WISH. “The conventional way up to my dreams seemed far too long and hazardous, so I decided to aim directly for the best and the best I could imagine at that time was Bang & Olufsen.” Slaatto and Balmforth convinced those at the top of the iconic Danish electronics brand to meet with them, and pitched their ideas for sound products. Balmforth did the business modelling and Slaatto did the designs. After the pitch, the pair didn’t think they had made much of an impression, but they were wrong.

“Fourteen days later they called and

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*“The conventional way up to my dreams seemed far too long and hazardous, so I decided to aim directly for the best.”*

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asked me to submit a proposal for what ended up being the Beoplay A9,” Slaatto recalls. The Beoplay A9 is a wireless speaker system that looks like a piece of furniture or even art. It was launched in 2012. “The days of wanting to hide your bulky black stereo are over,” was the marketing tag of the product.

Slaatto says he enjoyed every aspect of the design process of working with Bang & Olufsen. The only issue was that Slaatto had told them he had a studio with a team. He didn’t. He had a studio but it contained only him. “I got help from family and friends when creating the full size mock-ups of the products,” he says. “My girlfriend made the fabric and my mother even helped cook for my rather unusual studio team. It was my very first design to come into production, and it was a significant success.”

Slaatto embarked on designing a number of other products for different companies after the Beoplay A9 launch, from light shades for Louis Poulsen Lighting to wooden stools in collaboration with fellow Danish designer Signe Hytte. During that period, he noticed how bad the acoustics were in his studio (which by

## MR SPEAKER

A YOUNG DANISH DESIGNER WENT FROM DOWN AND OUT STRAIGHT TO THE TOP.

WORDS MILANDA ROUT



Industrial designer Øivind Slaatto

then was populated by a few more people). The location and light were fabulous but the sound was horrible.

“It was clear that we needed to cover the hard walls with some kind of sound-absorbing material and a geometry that reflects the sound in a way which helps to improve the acoustics,” Slaatto says. “Since I had been working with Bang and Olufsen, I suggested they should offer an ‘auditory indoor climate’ rather than ‘just’ speakers, which they are really good at already. I wanted to not only improve the sound but also the silence.”

At the same time that he was pitching his idea, Slaatto was skiing in the Norwegian mountains and became fascinated with the way the light reflected in the snow and how gentle the sound was in this environment. This was the starting point for the design of what would become the BeoSound Shape. Unlike anything else offered by Bang & Olufsen, it is a series of hexagon-shaped fabric-covered tiles that are wall-mounted and create a wireless speaker system. Each BeoSound Shape includes tiles that are speakers, an amplifier, sound-absorbing acoustic dampers and a smart hub (where all the music gets transmitted). You can have as many of the tiles as you want, starting from as few as six, and they come in a variety of colours to suit different environments (from lounge rooms to hotel lobbies).

“It can be custom-designed and turn high-quality music into an interior art form,” says Slaatto of his product. The BeoSound Shape was launched at the design mecca that is the Milan Salone del Mobile in April this year and has been lauded as a marked departure from the “audiophile looking for a one-chair, no-friends listening



Two arrays of Bang & Olufsen’s BeoSound Shapes – a wireless system of speakers, amplifier, acoustic dampers and smart hub – designed by Slaatto



experience”, according to Bang & Olufsen vice president of brand, design and marketing, Marie Kristine Schmidt. She recommends that those seeking such “immersive high-end sound” seek out other products from their range. “This is really a product for people who want music in the background, who want music as a mood-setter,” she told *Wired* in Milan. “This is far more concerned with lifestyle and interiors than [anything] you have ever seen from Bang & Olufsen before.”

It is the perfect intersection of form and function for Slaatto, and that is something he strives to achieve in all his design work. “I never think about whether what I do is art or not,” he says. “My focus is just to do my best, no matter what I do, searching for obvious and honest design solutions.”

Slaatto has come a long way since he took that train to Struer. But perhaps he should have had more confidence on that particular day, given his background. After all, Slaatto played the tuba and studied music before going to design school, and who better than a musician to dream up products for one of the most famous audio companies in the world?

“I was raised in a family of musicians where there were no screens – not even a television. When we were bored my siblings and I would play football, play our instruments, draw or invent stuff,” he says. “My older brother played cello, my younger brother was drumming or digging a tunnel in the garden to China (he didn’t finish it). I focused on playing my tuba, inventing airplanes, rubber guns and an eternity machine (I haven’t finished it either) ... today I only play design.” **W**

## TOUCH OF THE RITZ

Melbourne is a long way from Paris but for a few weeks this month it won’t seem as far. French fashion house Chanel is bringing its ready-to-wear collection from its recent Metiers d’Art show – inspired by the Paris Ritz – to the Marais boutique in Melbourne for a pop-up installation.

It is the first time a collection will be shown outside the luxury brand’s stores in Australia and it will run from June 15 to July 9 at Marais on Bourke Street – complete with an opening night party. The 2016-17 Metiers d’Art show, *Paris Cosmopolite*, drew on links between the iconic hotel and Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel. The designer lived there from the 1920s until her death in 1971. There is now a dedicated Chanel suite in the Ritz, which reopened last year after four years of renovation.

WORDS: MILANDA ROUNT



## LUXURY ON THE LINKS

SCOTLAND'S GRANDEST HOTEL AND SPORTING ESTATE CONTINUES ITS TRADITION OF ELEGANT LEISURE.



**G**leneagles has been Scotland's playground of luxury and outdoor leisure for almost 100 years. The grand Perthshire retreat was conceived by Donald Matheson, general manager of the Caledonian Railway Company, in 1910. World War I intervened and the hotel did not open until 1924, but Gleneagles' golfing reputation was already building: Matheson had employed champion golfer James Braid to design two courses, the King's and Queen's, which opened in 1919.

Now owned by Sharan Pasricha's Ennismore, the property has undergone a multi-million-pound refurbishment that employed acclaimed UK design firms including David Collins Studio, Timorous Beasties, Macaulay Sinclair and Goddard Littlefair as well as Ennismore's own in-house design studio. The hotel has 232 luxury

guestrooms and suites, including the opulent 170sqm Royal Lochnagar Suite and the two-storey Blue Tower Suite. The country-house décor has been chosen for comfort, warmth and elegance without formality.

Numerous places to eat and drink include the two-Michelin-starred Andrew Fairlie restaurant; fine dining at Strathearn; the scarlet-themed Century Bar, with its collection of old and rare whiskies; and the Dormy Clubhouse for post-round drinks.

And to the main event: the property now has three championship golf courses including the King's and Queen's and the Jack Nicklaus-designed PGA Centenary Course, host venue for the 2014 Ryder Cup. Other activities include falconry, horse-riding, clay pigeon and game shooting, archery, ferret racing and fly fishing.



## HARBOURSIDE RESORT

Open barely a month, the Kerry Hotel Hong Kong is the city's first "urban resort" and its fourth property by the Shangri-La group. Designed by Andre Fu (the Upper House) the property sits on the Kowloon waterfront in Hung Hom Bay, moments from Tsim Sha Tsui and an easy ferry, metro or limo ride to the rest of Hong Kong's attractions. The resort has 546 rooms and suites including a 294sqm Presidential Suite. More than half the rooms have views of Victoria Harbour and the futuristic island skyline, seen through floor-to-ceiling windows, with décor in warm, neutral shades and the signature Kerry blue and grey. Under executive chef Matthew Bennink, four restaurants and a terrace bar offer a range of cuisines and styles – including "interactive cooking stations" at Big Bay Café and contemporary Chinese at Hung Tong.



## NEW ENGLAND GRANDEUR

Three refurbished historic properties on Rhode Island in the heart of New England comprise the Ocean House Collection. Ocean House on the bluffs of Watch Hill, built in 1869, looks out over a private beach to the Atlantic. With 49 rooms and 23 private residences, a spa and indoor lap pool, the hotel is in an elegant early American/British colonial style, themed in summer yellow, blue, turquoise and cream. Watch Hill Inn is the oldest original structure in the village, built in 1845 and listed on the National Historical Landmark register. It comprises 21 suites in a more contemporary style. The Weekapaug Inn, with 31 rooms and suites in the classic Cape Cod style, offers a range of dining options, private beach access and activities including sailing on Quonochontaug Pond.



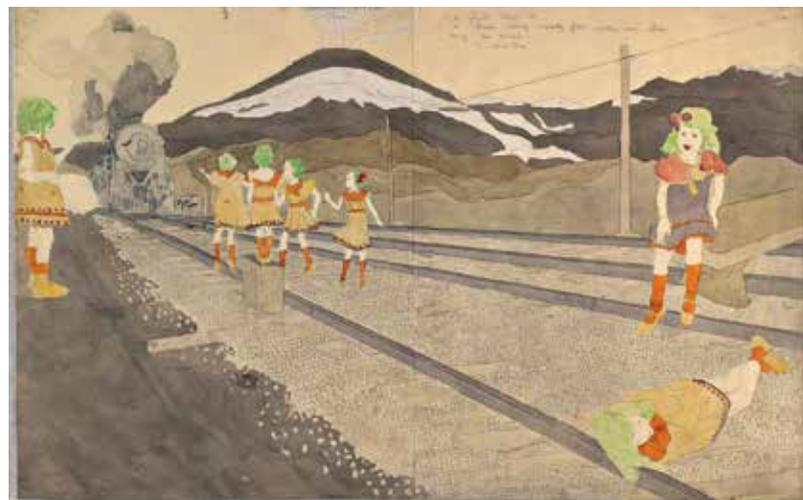
**Music: Einstürzende Neubauten, Mogwai, Pussy Riot, Ulver and more**  
 Berlin pioneers of industrial sound Einstürzende Neubauten (pictured), Scottish art rockers Mogwai and Norwegian experimental collective Ulver head the international musical bill. In another Australian exclusive, Russian feminist punk band Pussy Riot will appear for a Q&A at the screening of Evgeny Mitta's documentary *Act and Punishment* about their two years' imprisonment for singing an anti-Putin protest song in a cathedral.



RON RAINBOW

### AND THE REST ...

*Welcome Stranger* is a moving art party going "behind the closed doors of private societies, reclaimed venues, hotel rooms and sacred spaces, and into an intimate, travelling, temporary community of late-night live music, optional sports and non-optional art". *Crossing* is a church-crawl from Launceston to Hobart, with pipe organ and theremin performances and installations of sound, light and olfactory art. Dark Mofo Films this year takes inspiration from Rowan Woods' grim classic *The Boys*. And don't forget the annual Ogoh Ogoh demon parade and burning, Winter Feast and Nude Solstice Swim. These are just a few of Dark Mofo's penumbral pleasures. More: [darkmofo.net.au](http://darkmofo.net.au)



### THE MUSEUM OF EVERYTHING

**Museum of Old and New Art, June 11-April 2018**

For a 10-month stint MONA will house a collection from "the world's first wandering institution for the untrained, unintentional, undiscovered and unclassifiable artists" from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to now. Launched in 2009, the Museum of Everything is a British non-profit dedicated to practitioners working outside the academic and commercial walls of Big Art. Pictured is an illustration by Henry Darger, born in 1892 in Chicago – a devoutly religious recluse who worked in a hospital, he left a typescript of a novel called *In the Realms of the Unreal*, with hundreds of watercolours that range from tranquilly fantastical to horrifying. Other artists include a Romanian satirist, an Alabama entrepreneur, a Ghanaian sign painter, a German hermit, a French gun-runner, and an Iranian mechanic. The launch, on June 10, will feature "art, fire, feasting and music".

### SLEEPING BEAUTY

**Theatre Royal, June 10-11**

Ottorino Respighi reimagined the classic fairytale in 1922, composing a chamber opera, *La bella dormiente nel bosco*, especially for one of Italy's leading puppet theatre companies of the time, Vittorio Podrecca's I Piccoli – they performed it for 20 years with worldwide success. In this Victorian Opera/Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra production directed by Nancy Black and conducted by Phoebe Briggs, Respighi's haunting, romantic score is brought to life by a team headed by young Melbourne puppet designer Joe Blanck (*Walking With Dinosaurs*).



### DARK PARK

**Macquarie Point  
 June 9-11, 15-18**

The open-air night gallery of light, sound and installation art is back. This year it includes *Hello Darkness*, an exhibition of new multimedia works by Bulgari Award-winning artist Daniel Boyd that reinterpret European images of Australian history. Terrapin Theatre invites the public to join in with *Infinite Corpse*, inspired by surrealist drawing game *Exquisite Corpse*. And in *iy\_project136.1Hz*, laser beams create a floating structure resonating at the "Om" frequency.



## DOWN TO THE SPLIT-SECONDS

THE NAVITIMER RATTRAPANTE BODES GOOD THINGS FROM BREITLING UNDER ITS NEW OWNERSHIP.

Last year rumours swirled that Breitling, one of the few remaining large, family-owned Swiss watch brands, was for sale. Those rumours were confirmed in April when it was announced that former owner and CEO, Théodore Schneider, had sold an 80 per cent stake to investment group CVC Capital Partners. And while it's too early to tell whether Breitling's new owners will take the aviation-oriented brand to new heights, its latest models, released prior to the takeover, didn't give any indication of reining in the throttle.

Take the Navitimer Rattrapante. At first glance this 45mm watch – available either in steel or in this particularly luxe limited edition red gold version – looks much like other Navitimer models, largely thanks to

the instantly recognisable layout of the dial and that iconic slide rule bezel. But it's what's below the surface that sets this Navitimer apart: the brand new Caliber B03, Breitling's first in-house split-seconds chronograph. This is one very impressive movement. Split-seconds – or rattrapante – chronographs are uncommon, and regarded as one of the most challenging complications to develop and implement. This specialised timekeeper allows the wearer to time two separate events simultaneously via the central red and gold chronograph hands. A particularly nice design touch is that the "Flying B" logo has been split across the two chronograph hands, appearing as a cohesive whole only when both hands are in sync. RRP \$54,380



## BRING BACK THE TWO-TONE

One of the defining trends in contemporary watchmaking is "heritage", and one of the most successful examples is Tudor's Black Bay, a retro-inspired dive watch that turns five this year. Though released in a range of colours and sizes, it seems the design still has the ability to surprise, because the Black Bay S&G (steel & gold) is the last version we would have expected.

Perhaps we shouldn't have been quite so blindsided – after all, two-tone and yellow gold have been quietly rehabilitating themselves, now that several decades separate them from the worst excesses of 80s fashion. And Tudor has been very smart in the execution. The gold – capped on the bracelet and crown, solid on the bezel and end links – is brushed, giving it a more casual look than a highly polished finish. The high contrast between the gold and the black dial with its gilt printing is striking in the best possible way, and details like the "snowflake" hour hand and rivet-style bracelet add an old-world charm. It's also the first time Tudor has added a date window to the model. There's an option with an aged leather strap, and all versions come with an impeccable woven fabric strap in olive green. RRP \$5990



## TIME WALK WITH ME

The TimeWalker has long been one of the staples of Montblanc's collection of fine watchmaking, and this year the collection was given a radical makeover. The stylish lines of this everyday wearer have gained an aggressive, sporty edge, as the collection takes inspiration from the world of motorsports. The Chronograph UTC, with its black DLC treated case, ceramic bezel, vibrant red highlights and a sporty perforated rubber strap, is a particularly striking model. It's also an exceptionally practical one, offering chronograph and second time zone functions to the equation. RRP \$7460

## THE SOUND OF SPEED

LAMBORGHINI'S AVENTADOR S IS A BEAST OF A CAR WITH MORE MACHISMO THAN MANNERS.

There's simply no way this car can be legal. Sure, it's perfectly fine to put a car on our streets that can go from zero to 300km/h in 24 seconds, potentially collapsing the lungs, and bowels, of its driver, but I'm pretty sure there are laws about how much noise a road-going vehicle is allowed to make.

And it simply can't be this much, because a Lamborghini Aventador S at full whack sounds like a thunderstorm taking place inside a volcano.

Push its vast V12 up through the gears and the cabin fills with a cacophonous crackle of pure evil, but back off the throttle and it gets even sillier, producing what sounds like a number of failed rocket launches.

To the casual observer, all this noise probably seems ostentatiously unnecessary and more than a little showy, and it does seem bonkers that Lamborghini put an all-new exhaust system into this S (it stands for "Something that is better") version of the Aventador to make it even louder, even though the original car was already turned up to 11.

But the fact is the noise adds a lot to the car's core functionality, which is the ability to make you feel like you're doing something incredibly risky, brave and potentially fatal. Jumping out of a plane is the only thing I've experienced that provides similar levels of both testosterone and adrenaline. It's a bit like a fight-or-flight response, because you constantly feel like you're fighting – against the sheer size and weight of the car, the g-forces attempting to pulverise your joints and soft tissues, and your quite sensible fear – and you also feel like you might actually take flight at any moment.

The noise just adds another layer of intimidation to what is clearly designed to be a madly macho experience.

Other super cars, modern ones, aren't like the Aventador S. They are lighter, sharper and easier to drive – Lamborghini's own smaller V10 Huracan makes a far more pleasant companion – but there's something wonderfully old school about this old-tech, non-turbocharged mega-dinosaur of a vehicle.

Anyone who's piloted the poster-car of many men's youth, the Lamborghini Countach, will tell you that it was equal parts frightening and awful to drive, but also unforgettable, and the Aventador proudly carries that DNA, as well as a few styling touches (the new car is also supposed to look a bit like a

metal shark, a cobra and a space shuttle, say its excitable designers).

This latest mega-Lamborghini does contain technological upgrades, of course, like a button hilariously marked EGO (yes, in capital letters), which allows you to individually adjust some 24 settings for the car's suspension, performance and steering feel.

And a new rear-wheel steering system, which cleverly turns the rear wheels the opposite way to the fronts at low speeds, to give you some chance of surviving a visit to a multi-storey car park, and then the same direction as the fronts at high speeds, for better cornering grip.

It also gets an all-new seven-speed ISR (Independent Shifting Rods) gearbox, which is supposed to make it less spine-strainingly lurchy when you shift cogs with its almost razor-sharp paddles. Sadly, or charmingly if you're an Aventador fan, it hasn't worked, and gear changes are still like being body-slammed by a pro wrestler.

The greedy engineers have also somehow squeezed an extra 30kW out of the 6.5-litre V12, giving it a whopping 544kW at a screaming 8400rpm, plus



Styled to look like a shark-cobra-space shuttle hybrid, the Aventador S feels a bit more like a charging rhinoceros.

690Nm. All that extra power makes no difference to the 0-to-100km/h time, which stays at a handy 2.9 seconds; there's only so much even its new, specially designed Pirelli tyres can do to get all that mumbo to the ground.

Stupidly fast in a straight line – far too fast for public roads, frankly, and almost too quick for a racetrack as well, as we found out at a soddenly scary Phillip Island – the Aventador S does become something of a challenge around corners.

You can feel its computers sharing torque between all four wheels, and attempting to find you grip, but there's only so much that can be done to defy physics. This is a huge car, as wide as a Toyota LandCruiser and 4.8m long, and a heavy one at 1575kg, and you are entirely aware of that mass when you try to push it around at speed.

Again, this is all part of the experience, though, because it just adds to the genuine terror you feel, the double-time thumping of your heart, and the complete absence of moisture in your mouth.

Obviously, the Aventador S is the kind of car that will only appeal to a particular sort of human being; a risk-taker, a show-off, a fearlessly wealthy captain of industry who's happy to spend \$788,914 on a car that just might kill him. And someone who's quite happy to get booked for breaking every drive-by noise law in the country. **W**

