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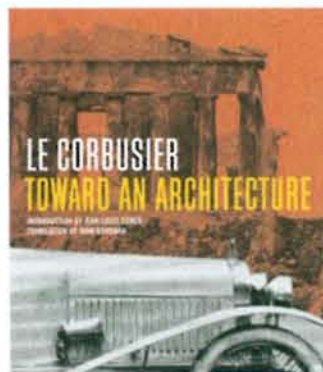
MY CULTURAL LIFE
ANDRÉ FU

We ask a tastemaker what they are reading, watching, listening to and downloading

Acclaimed Hong Kong-born architect and designer André Fu set up his practice AFSO in 2000. He has since designed The Upper House hotel in Hong Kong, Singapore's The Fullerton Bay Hotel and the bar GÖNG at London's Shangri-La Hotel in The Shard. He recently set up eponymous lifestyle brand André Fu Living (@a.f.s.o.; afso.net).

My favourite piece of music is *Gabriel's Oboe* written by Ennio Morricone and played by cellist Yo-Yo Ma. It has a sense of melancholy yet is filled with the conviction to confront life's challenges. **The book that's influenced me the most** is *Toward an Architecture* by Le Corbusier (right; Frances Lincoln, £30). It's a collection of essays that deliver a distinctive vision of architecture's role in shaping society. According to Le Corbusier, when one project incorporates several buildings, these should reflect a series of experiences. Making sure the visitor appreciates the buildings as a whole is a basic requirement of good architecture. Unfortunately, this idea is often forgotten today. **My favourite quote** is 'If one felt successful, there'd be so little incentive to be successful,' by Alain de Botton. I'm driven to challenge myself and this quote reminds me to strive to do better.

I've always been mesmerised by the canvases of Mark Rothko (right) for their ability to communicate a strong spatial sense and depth. I also admire the work of husband-and-wife artists Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne. I like the whimsical flair of their handcrafted sculptures and furniture. Their work seamlessly fuses art and functionality.



The last exhibition I visited was Ai Weiwei's solo show at the recently renovated Helsinki Art Museum, Finland, in the city's 1930s Tennispalatsi (Tennis Palace). It featured a previously

unseen new work, 'White House' (below left), which consists of a traditional building from China's Qing empire and is a critique of the country's urbanisation. **If I had a free day in London**, I would go to Borough Market and visit Wright Brothers Oyster & Porter House for an authentic fish soup and dressed crab. Its dining space and oyster bar feel truly intimate. I'd also visit the bookshop Maison Assouline on Piccadilly to

explore its new publications, then I'd go for a drink at the Fumoir bar in Claridge's hotel – a quintessentially London experience for me.

I have two favourite destinations in the world.

I enjoy visiting Sorrento, Italy; in particular, the intriguing Parco dei Principi hotel (left) designed by Giò Ponti in 1961.

Set on a cliff, it's a unique celebration of the ocean where everything from the bespoke furniture to the blue-and-white tiles were meticulously considered, creating a total 1960s vintage feel. I also love Aix-en-Provence in France – particularly the extraordinary vineyard Château la Coste (top and second from top) for its vision in

fusing the worlds of wine, art and architecture. It features installations by Tracey Emin and Richard Serra alongside architectural gems by Jean Nouvel and Tadao Ando.

I'm a technophile. Social media has triggered the design community to chase instant recognition. While it's good that this has made design more accessible, it's also important to remember the endurance needed to create things that possess a timeless quality.