

# BOUTIQUE design

HOSPITALITY REINVENTED

APRIL 2015



## FORWARD THINKERS

The 10th annual Boutique 18 class forges new paths for creating cutting-edge hospitality spaces

# DESIGN deconstructed

BY CHRISTINA GREEN

## HOLEY ACCENTS

Designer Josh Held creates "a fun, eclectic, vibrant discovery mix-and-match" by perforating a leather headboard wall with brass portals, lined with one-way mirrors that make way for a sneak peek from the wet room behind.

## BRASS DETAILS

Brass vessel sinks and a gleam of heavy metal inlaid to the clean-lined marble and brass vanity.

## GOLD LINING

A black oil tint lends a smoky gray hue to the ceiling's irregular-length oak beams. The trim pattern has been abstracted with gold leaf, which varies in brightness and luster depending on the angle of the light and time of day.

## BRANCHING BRASS

Further reinforcing Held's dream narrative, an asymmetrical custom-crafted brass chandelier branches out overhead.

## AVE, AVE, CAPTAIN

The captain's chair is crafted from oak and brushed aluminum. "The materials and swiping back fit right into our story," says Held.

## RUGGED TRANSITION

A diamond-patterned grout offers a visual transition from the plush California King bed coverings to the wood and stone surfaces throughout the rest of the room.

## PLAYFULLY PERCHED

Chosen for its unique design, the bedside table features a bird-like foot and off-center leg, playing up the room's fantasy vibe.

## WOODN'T KNOW IT

A simulated woodgrain floor provides durability superior to natural wood while complementing the oak ceiling and wall millwork, says Held.

## DREAM DOWNTOWN GUESTHOUSE

NEW YORK

The \$1 million makeover of the GuestHouse atop the Dream Downtown hotel involved creating "the fantasy penthouse of James Bond, Batman and Minnie all in one," says Josh Held, founder and president of the design firm bearing his name. That celebrity-inspired aesthetic saturates the 2,500-sq.-ft. space, including the master bedroom shown here. Adding to the hotel's signature parthole exterior, four headboard portals offer a one-way view from the multi-spray shower behind, while the diamond-patterned bed cover and area rug add a touch of softness to the modern, maximalist space. "The entire GuestHouse was designed around entertaining, and the bedroom and master bath continue the adventure," says Held. 

### PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

OWNER:  Hudson Hotels Management

DESIGNER:  Jones Leather Co., New York

## FLOOR COVERINGS/ MATERIALS

Parcelanosa

PROJECT MANAGER:  Hudson Hotels Management

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:  C&M Special Construction

PURCHASING COMPANY:  Green Dawson

STUDIO VISUALS:  Avenue Productions

BATH FIXTURES:  Elk Forge Inc.

BED COVERINGS:  IHESI

FINISHES:  Elegant Living Corp.

CASEGOODS:  Andrew Broome

WINDOW:  Elk Forge International

MIRROR:  Brooklyn Brass

SEATING:  Restoration Hardware

TABLES:  Urban Modernism

WALL COVERINGS:  Art

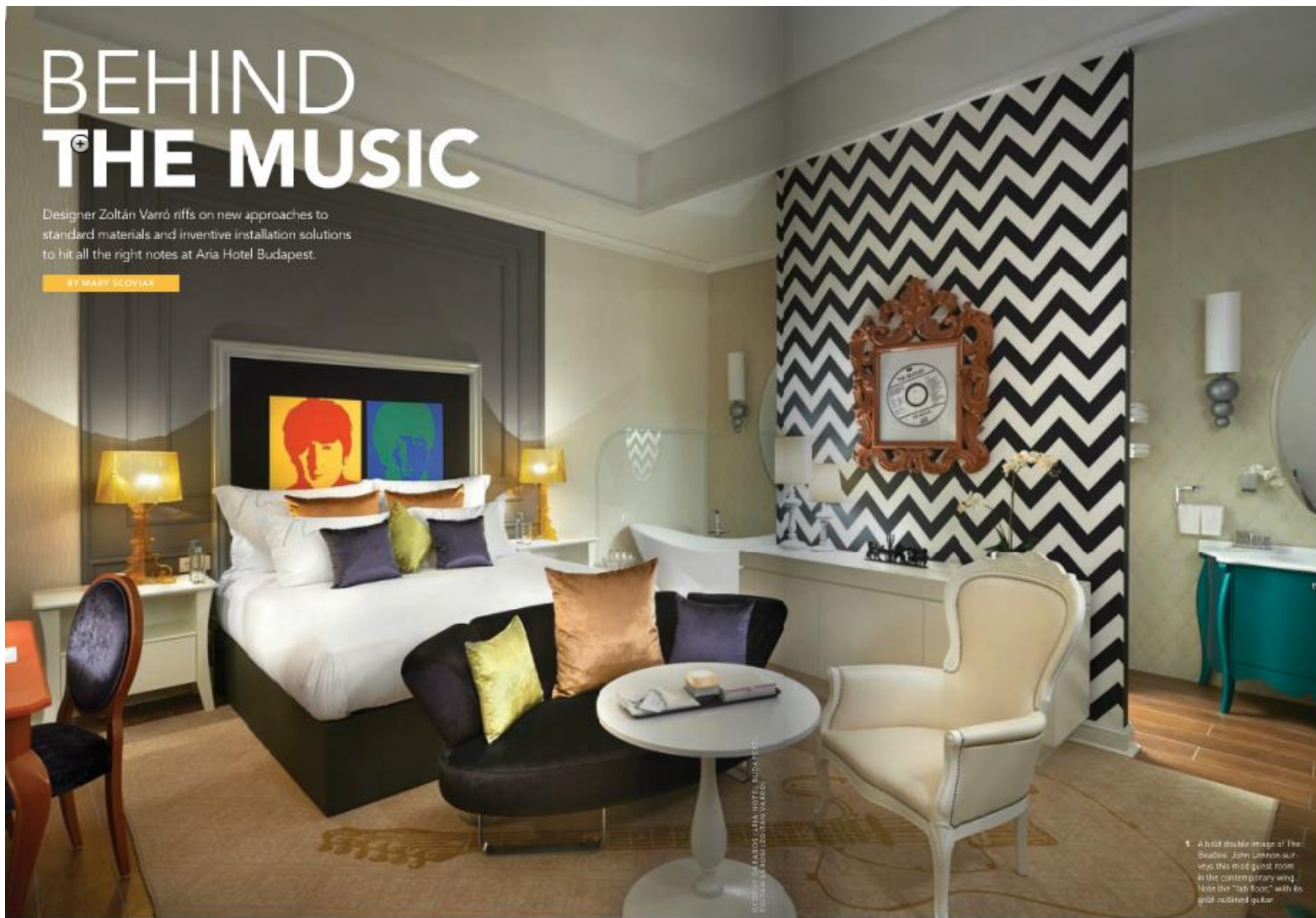
MATERIALS:  New Jersey Tile and Stone

WALLCOVERINGS:  Elk Forge Inc.

# BEHIND THE MUSIC

Designer Zoltán Varró riffs on new approaches to standard materials and inventive installation solutions to hit all the right notes at Aria Hotel Budapest.

BY MARY SCOVAK



STYLING: ZOLTÁN VARRÓ; ART: ANDREA BUDAPEST; FURNITURE: ZOLTÁN VARRÓ

1 A bold double image of The Beatles' John Lennon survives this mid-guest room in the contemporary wing. Note the "flat foot" with its gold-colored guitar.



ZOLTÁN VARRÓ  
VARRÓ DESIGN



HENRY KALLAN  
LIBRARY HOTEL COLLECTION

**WITHIN WEEKS** of its March opening, Aria Hotel Budapest was already a chart topper. Images of the stylized piano-key walkway that winds through the public spaces before scaling the atrium's wall and guest room artwork featuring legendary hit-makers from Franz Liszt to John Lennon were popping up in design and travel news, blogs and social media posts around the world.

But as inventive as this music-meets-manse concept is, it's the process of converting an abandoned shell into a glittering five-star boutique—the creative sourcing, the tweaks on expected materials and the R&D approach to execution—that makes this 48-room luxe hotel sing.

As designers worldwide know, conversions are getting more complex and more difficult technically as the low-hanging fruit disappears in city centers. The repurposing of this circa 1870 building proves the point. Its previous tenant's (a bank headquarters) efforts to modernize it effectively erased many of the architectural features that once made it beautiful. They decamped, and left behind a neighborhood eyesore.

"What we acquired was a completely non-functional, three-story box with no elevator, a



## PROJECT PARTICIPANTS:

**PROJECT**  
Aria Hotel Budapest

**OWNER**  
Rene Kallan, Liberty Hotel Collection

**OPERATOR**  
IK Hotels

**DESIGN**  
Verré Design

**FURNISHING**  
Alexander Rott and Robert Isac

**ART**  
Jozef Bizina Loviscater

**BATH FIXTURES**  
Crista Frattini

**BATH FIXTURES**  
Sant'Ar

**BATH FIXTURES**  
QNYK

**CONCRETE**  
Molten F

**CONCRETE**  
J&B Art

**GLASS**  
Marazzi

**GLASS**  
Porcelanosa (Spa)

**FLOORCOVERINGS AND MATERIALS**  
Marazzi (Music Garden)  
Porcelanosa (Spa)

**LIGHTING**  
Patino

**WALLCOVERINGS AND MATERIALS**  
J&B Artistic

**ARCHITECT**  
Oronco Galzeroni, Terezi Es, Szilárd László KFT, Budapest

**ARTIST**  
Zoltán Soler

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**  
LakiTH

to reveal the music superstar behind the glass. Most people think the artists' caricatures are permanently situated in the room where we put them, but the lockset design means the Musical Legends can actually move from one room to another. It's very delicate work that requires time from several staff members, but for an extra charge music lovers can opt with a Legend service to personalize their experience.

Materials are the linchpin that unifies centuries of musical references, the marriage of modern and historical touches and the private home/aspirational castle vibe that define the Aria brand. Rich baroque fabrics get an update with geometric quilting. Mosaic tiles take their turn center stage in a silhouetted mural of a jazz band that plays over the pool.

Glass continues the impact of the central dome, sometimes in the form of crystals or small glass accent beads, at other times as an attention-getting stained glass washstand. Mirrors used in unconventional ways change the architectural landscape. "To visually connect the Music Garden with the Teatro Aria [the hotel's performance venue], we designed mirrors exactly the same size as the three sections of double doors at the theater entrance. The symmetry makes it seem that the Music Garden continues behind the doors," the designer says.

It's early yet, but, based on reviews already in, Kallan and Verré have a bit on their hands. "We set out to create a completely original travel experience, offering not only luxury and refinement, but also fun and whimsy," says Kallan. "Based on our bookings and all the press, I'd say we did that. It's been a wonderful collaboration with Zoltán. He understood my vision from day one."

6 Moody blues and lighting that reflects and refracts from the ceiling's billowing covers to the mirrored shadowboxes on the wall lend a romantic, twilight ambience to Salcher's bar and lounge.

7 Designer Zoltán Varré worked closely with a mosaic manufacturer to capture the energy of a jazz band in this mural beside the pool.

