

1. When did you start +ADD (is this how we should refer to your practice?)? Give us a little background on your practice.

I started +ADD in 2010. After receiving my Architecture Degree from Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City in 2001, I collaborated with architectural firms in Mexico City and Paris. In 2007 I moved to New York to study at Columbia University GSAPP, where I obtained my Master of Science in Advanced Architectural Design. The idea of opening my own practice had been in my mind for quite a while, I was still working for a practice here in New York, and it was only then and there that I felt the moment was right to start on my own. New York offered the adequate set of resources, creativity and dynamism to start my own professional practice. +ADD's mission is to provide a variety of services that range from furniture design, to renovations and interior design. My ideology is to provide accurate and creative solutions to my clients, my design concepts strive to adapt to client's special way of life, needs and personalities, always making me discover new approaches toward design.

2. Why did you/do you choose to work in New York?

Working in New York was more of a combination between good timing and good luck rather than a choice. I came to New York to do my graduate studies at Columbia University. New York City unveiled as a series of encounters with people who wanted to "do" things, whether it was design related or a personal realization. I have a theory about New York City – we all come here with a dream -from the busboy to the investment banker - we all want to realize our dream, (whatever that means for each individual) accumulating an extraordinary amount of energy. We live in a *city of dreams*, where all that power is channeled to produce things. People are always excited and open to new and fresh talents. The city lives in constant change, reinventing itself every day. I was fortunate enough to be surrounded by young entrepreneurs eager to open a new restaurant. They wanted the atmosphere to echo the sophistication of contemporary Mexico, and they believed I was the right person due to my ties to Mexico DF and New York. One project led to the other, from commercial to residential. My clients have been one of the best surprises and encounters I've had in New York City.

3. Why do you like working on your own?

I like the independence and freedom of it. The feeling that you are creating something with a client makes you feel satisfaction and plenitude. You achieve a deep level of intimacy with the projects, where every single problem becomes a challenge to design and develop new solutions. I like to be part of a project from its inception to its conclusion: from finding clients, developing a concept together, designing, to building and finishing.

4. What current projects are you working on? (Note: the magazine comes out in April)

I am currently working on the interior design of a 1,500 sq ft high-end residential project in Chelsea. This is a very exciting project in the sense that I am dealing with a space that hasn't been refurbished in 50+ years. The intent is to keep the right amount of original elements and blend them with equally powerful contemporary solutions. This results in a space that not only portrays our times, but also respects and appreciates the history of a pre-war building. We are under construction and expect completion by summer 2011.

+ADD is also working in the interior design for a second commercial space for my former clients from Hecho en Dumbo. We are designing a cantina next to the restaurant that was completed in March 2010. The cantina's aesthetics and choice of materials create a dramatic contrast with HED. The atmosphere transfers you into a traditional Mexico City cantina, but there are hints and hidden messages pointing to the fact that after all we are in New York City.

+ADD keeps working intensively with LED-*Laboratorio Experimental a Distancia* (Long Distance Experimental Lab). I formed the Lab with a friend from college who lives in Mexico City. The genesis of LED is the realization that solutions to architectural problems can be found across disciplines, places, people, and time. With a solid base in Mexico and New York the Lab takes advantage of all the different tools of communication to intensify exchange of information, ideas, solutions, and new ways of expression that can be transmitted or diffused in a more efficient way. Four people from different disciplines, different countries, located in different cities, and with different backgrounds develop a project as a group. Depending on the type of project and level of knowledge needed, each intervention counts with the collaboration of different professionals. We strive to expand and become a community of architects, urban planners, artists, scientists and more that would change in order to enrich the growth and richness of its proposals.

5. How do you think someone would describe your style?

I am still not sure...but rather than a style I like to think I have different types of clients and that has to be noticed in each single project. I've always believed we create a product based on the collaboration with the client. A style develops through years of constant search and practice.

6. What are you looking most forward to in 2011 (professionally and otherwise)?

2011 will be a very intense year for +ADD regarding structure and development of the company. It will continue a strong learning process from each and every single component - projects, clients, social dynamics and finances. Striving for a strong positioning and marketing that will develop into new, exciting and challenging projects.

7. What is your dream project? (A hospital, a museum, a brothel, a McMansion, etc?)

A house. I like the intimacy that develops when you design a space that will be occupied for the most private and personal moments of someone's life. A house is the mere reflection of the inhabitant's personality and the shape of his or her dreams and desires. Depending on its location, budget, schedule and client - the interior and exterior spaces begin to have a very interesting dialogue that makes every case unique.

8. Who do you admire and/or who would you most like to meet? (dead or alive)

Mies Van der Rohe for many reasons. The first one is perspective, as someone whose work can be researched, studied and appreciated from his early years as the Bauhaus director to his late years erecting skyscrapers in America. His practice was based on comprehensive design, contributing to the romantic image of the Architect but also merging craftsmanship and industrialization to develop a new type of architecture that was avant-garde to its epoch but that remains contemporary in many aspects. He was a visionary with an extreme attention to detail, getting involved in every single design component whether it was a structural element or a piece of furniture.

9. What is your biggest architecture and/or design pet peeve?

Time. Being a young firm and a one-woman show operation, time is always a nuisance.

10. What are your keywords for 2011?

Persistence and patience in the process and good humor!!!

11. If you hadn't become an architect, what would you be?

An artist or musician.

Thanks!

Laura González Fierro