

Press Information

Utopian Dream Bathroom Concept

AXOR x Masquespacio: A Mystic Experience Above the Clouds



Schiltach, March 2023. Mixing vibrant colors with unexpected details, Valencia-based design studio Masquespacio creates distinctive interiors that stir the emotions and deliver unique experiences. For its 'Make It yours!' campaign, AXOR invited the studio's founders – Ana Milena Hernández Palacios of Columbia and Christophe Penasse of Belgium – to design a bathroom concept for a unique hotel suite that embodies their vision of personal luxury. The designers' response, titled, 'Utopian Dream', is a high-ceilinged, 20 square-meter space that balances neoclassical and futuristic influences. Conceived as the bathroom of a luxury hotel in a developing metropolis, 'Utopian Dream' reflects the designers' love of travel, transcending the ordinary to present a space of harmony, reflection and wonder. Palacios and Penasse underlined their concept with an array of AXOR products in Polished Black Chrome, including wash basin faucets and a floor-standing bath faucet from the **AXOR Starck** collection, the new **AXOR Suite** basins and bathtub, the new **AXOR ShowerComposition** shower panel, and the **AXOR Universal Rectangular Accessories**, all designed by Philippe Starck. The new **AXOR Drain**, also finished in Polished Black Chrome, serves as a finishing touch to this stunning concept.

For Palacios, a regular visitor of foreign locales, the hotel suite's urban setting triggered a journey of the imagination. "The first thing I did was close my eyes and start to travel," she says. "I traveled to big cities in the world, where you have skyscrapers, and these environments are impacting and really modern." Palacios' vision is

expressed in the use of materials such as sealed concrete, oak and steel, and in the presence of towering lancet windows that reflect the skyscrapers beyond. At the same time, the notion of an emerging metropolis, one that is still in development, freed the designers to experiment with new and unexpected materials such as brushed aluminum and iridescent chrome foil. "The thing is, when you're in a city that is in development, there is not too much like a style appearing," Penasse says, citing Panama City as an example. "It's evolving, it's developing. So, there is, of course, a style, but you're not limited to what you're seeing.... It's much easier to innovate."

Examining the sweeping arches held within the building's architecture, Penasse and Palacios found a perfect stage for the shower area. "You know, when you integrate the arches, it gets more human. Even if it's really futuristic and a bit surreal...it gives maybe a more feminine touch to the space."

Another key element of the design vocabulary is the striking interaction of colors and surfaces. For Masquespacio, it all began with the choice of Polished Black Chrome, one of the exclusive AXOR FinishPlus surfaces. The perfect color match creates a striking unity among the products from the collections and programs **AXOR Starck**, **AXOR ShowerComposition**, **AXOR Drains** and **AXOR Universal Rectangular Accessories**. "We had a clear view on which color the AXOR products would have," says Penasse, "and in our projects, it's important that everything has a balance and we don't just choose something... so we had the color of the taps and said that we needed to start from this."

Equally, the Polished Black Chrome of the fixtures engages in a dynamic interplay with the red reflections of the surrounding city, exaggerated by the iridescent chrome pillars. Concrete floors and brushed aluminum surfaces help provide the balance that Penasse mentions, as do the **AXOR Suite** washbasins and bathtub. Made with white Solid Surface material, the **AXOR Suite** products also feature Polished Black Chrome elements, bringing a personalized touch to their clean and timeless forms.

Masquespacio has conceived a variegated layout for the bathroom, with the **AXOR Suite** bathtub as an organizing element. "The bathtub is a protagonist," Palacios explains. "Every area has a different approach.... For example, where the tap and the sinks are, you have a plain surface. Where you have the shower itself, you have that form that's like an arch. And then you have the center, where we have the bathtub."

Positioned under a domed ceiling and surrounded by water, the bathtub perfectly aligns with the hotel guest that Masquespacio imagined when designing the bathroom. "He's a very decisive guy," says Penasse. "He's very masculine. But he's always positive. Everything is magnificent for him. Everything is possible, and he's open to

everything, so this part of the project really represents this – his openness and positive spirit, his looking to the future and not being afraid of anything.”

Bold but balanced, ‘Utopian Dream’ offers a distinctive, immersive space in which its user can truly detach from the outer world. But how does it fulfill the designers’ conceptions of luxury? “In our work, we always take something from the past, something from the present and something from the future,” says Palacios. „But the space always needs to have something that stands out, that is creative, personalized.” In this case, the products of AXOR perfectly meet these requirements, the designers note, but Penasse adds, „It’s also wellbeing at the end. And quality is important for that. And I think that’s where products like AXOR come in.”

About Masquespacio

Ana Milena Hernández Palacios and Christophe Penasse founded their design consultancy, Masquespacio, in Valencia in 2010. Translated as ‘More than Space’, Masquespacio takes a fresh approach to every project, producing eclectic, colorful interiors that are always unique. In addition to designing spaces for restaurants, hotels and major brands on four continents, Palacios and Penasse create artisanal furniture and objects under their Mas Creations label. They have garnered numerous international awards, including ‘Young Talent of the Year’ from Elle Decoration in 2020.

AXOR conceives and manufactures iconic objects for luxurious bathrooms and kitchens. Developed in collaboration with world-renowned designers—Philippe Starck, Antonio Citterio, Jean-Marie Massaud and Barber Osgerby among them—AXOR products come in a variety of styles. All AXOR faucets, showers and accessories are produced to the highest standards of quality. With an expertise that extends far beyond the products themselves, AXOR inspires and enables architects, interior designers and the design-savvy public. Together with AXOR, they shape water-related spaces that reflect the unique personality of the user. Part of the Hansgrohe Group, AXOR is a forward-thinking brand dedicated to developing distinctive products, manufactured with excellence.



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