



Earlier this month, the Interior Design Show celebrated 25 years of the latest and most innovative ideas in Canadian and international interior design.



Prefab "tiny homes," such as this elegant model by The Backcountry Hut Company, were a special feature at the show.



Designer (and exhibitor) Jessica Cinnamon, having some good clean fun in the Fleurco booth.

'OH, WHAT A FEELING,' HAVING FUN AT IDS '24

MARTHA UNIACKE BREEN
Special to Postmedia Network

Over the past 25 years, the Toronto Interior Design Show has morphed from its roots as a high-concept showplace of local design to a kind of mid-to-high-end home show.

But it's also a place for design lovers to check in on what's new and notable, to get advice and attend talks on a wide range of design-related subjects, and to shop for everything from appliances to flooring.

And in contrast to the pandemic-induced ennui that dampened the last few annual editions, this year IDS returned to its traditional home in the North hall of the MTCC with a new feeling of high spirits and optimism.

Sustainability was a recurring theme, as not merely an aspiration but an increasingly essential way of conducting business and life. (After

all, the home renovation industry is a major source of waste.)

Style Garage's airy glass and steel "conservatory," featuring a carrot-coloured velour sofa made entirely of PET from recycled water bottles and nestled among a jungle of tropical potted plants, was designed to be entirely zero waste.

There were also no less than four complete tiny homes at the show — a hot concept ever since the city relaxed its bylaws on laneway and backyard accommodations.

Most of them were collected in a section near the front called Modern Prefab: Arcana's Arhome featured a full-height glass wall for enjoying a great view, while smaller homes by Backcountry Hut Company and CABN could be adapted for use as a backyard studio or perhaps a tiny pied à terre in the woods.

But our personal favourite was the barely 225-sq. ft. Blokk (larger sizes are also available), located some dis-

tance away in the Future Neighbourhood feature exhibit.

Unlike some of the others, this one was a completely self-contained home, with a comfortable sofa, pull-down Murphy bed and full kitchen and bath; it even has well-designed storage.

Designer/founder Noam Hazan explained that the Blokk can be assembled easily by the user — it's not that much more complicated than the average IKEA dresser — and requires little more than a good foundation, a building permit and access to services.

As always, the show featured major exhibits from the biggest names in the industry, with lots of demos and crave-worthy products.

LG's booth featured celebrity chefs Mark McEwen and Nick Liu whipping up gourmet edibles on a sleek induction cooktop, while the company's recently unveiled transparent OLED TV flashed images on the wall behind.

Miele partnered with Caesarstone and Toronto designer Michael London to showcase a quartet of kitchens featuring new introductions like the new Obsidian Black finish. Cosentino, Living Lighting, House of Rohl and many others also had eye-catching booths.

But as always, often the most interesting exhibits belong to the smaller artisans who line the outer walls of the show floor. This is where you'll find truly original work you're unlikely to see anywhere else.

This year, some of the more novel entries included handmade wood mobiles and delicate, stylized stag heads in walnut and oak from ModernistWood; colourful handmade rugs by textile artist Mark Krebs; and Kitchener-based artisans OCH's translucent vases and lamps, made with extruded liquid clay and a 3D printer, forming intricate patterns by manipulating the natural tendency of the material to sag as it dries.

As Montauk's exuberant display of wallpaper, upholstery and carpeting all in the same vibrant tropical parrots-and-palm-fronds motif demonstrated, a sense of fun returned to IDS for 2024.

The show's message seemed to be that it's okay to get rid of all those safe neutrals at last (recycling everything responsibly, of course), and kick some colour back into our lives, or at least, our homes.



Montauk's playful exhibit blending upholstery, wallpaper, and carpeting all in the same vibrant tropical pattern, became a popular spot to sit and regroup.