

habitus®

kitchen & bathroom special

#60

Habitus
Six
Collectables
One / Kitchen
Bathroom

The creative
minds shaping
our world

Christopher Boots

Greg Natale

Arent & Pyke

SJB

Kennedy Nolan

Kitchen & Bathroom Guest

Editor Sarah-Jane Pyke

Megarchitects

Techne

Birdblack

Sally Caroline

Mim Design

Studio Prineas

William Burton Leopardi

Luke Moloney

Sophie Travers



JUNE | 2024 - SEPTEMBER | 2024

AUD\$17.95 | NZ\$17.95 | SGD\$13.95

habitusliving.com

Curiosity over ideology

TEXT ALEESHA CALLAHAN | PHOTOGRAPHY VARIOUS

In the design world, Christopher Boots is not just a name – he's a provocateur with a creative approach as dynamic as the design pieces he crafts.







OPENER LEFT

Nepenthes, image courtesy
Christopher Boots Studio.

OPENER RIGHT

Christopher Boots.
Portrait photography
John Tsiavis.

OPPOSITE

Christopher Boots at
the Christopher Boots
Studio with pink quartz.
Photography
Guy Lavoipierre.

RIGHT

Cartier Flagship
Store, Stalactite by
Christopher Boots Studio.
Photography Nic Gossage.



Visiting the studio of Melbourne-based industrial designer Christopher Boots is like stepping into one of his intricate lighting pieces. There is a sense of order, tempered with an innate organic sensibility. Wherever the eye lands, disparate inspirations are scattered, as Boots himself describes: “The studio is littered with half experiments and ideas”.

Founded very deliberately on 11 November 2011, or 11-11-11 for the numerologically inclined, Christopher Boots the brand has now grown to a team of 30, which also includes representation in the United States. The design team of four is complemented with engineers, technicians and onsite manufacturing in Fitzroy.

Looking around the studio it's easy to draw the lines of reference from Boots' own fascinations to the finished products. The most obvious is, of course, crystals and natural minerals, varying sizes of which are never too far from reach around his office. “I found my first crystal on a beach when I was seven or eight years old; a big, rough chunk of quartz. I was always collecting little sticks and bits, carrying them around in my pockets. I still Bowerbird stuff all the time, that's always been my thing,” he shares on the impulse to archive and accumulate.

In much the same manner, Boots now also collects inspirations and obsessions, jumping from one idea to the next with an insatiable curiosity – from Penrose triangles to the surrealist fashion of Schiaparelli, or admiring the monolithic ceramic work of New York artist Peter Lane.

Central to his personal philosophy, which has been transmuted into the core of the brand, is the belief that creativity thrives in collaborative environments. “It's about the work and the people,” he emphasises, highlighting the importance of connections and shared experiences in the creative process.

While the studio is no longer being run from a spare bedroom, the designer acknowledges that a key part of his role is ensuring the design brief is clear. He notes that this is a response to the natural shifts that have happened as the team has grown. “The bigger you get as a group of people, the more you need systems to be able to make it work, it can't be so ad hoc anymore.”

Even though there is a distinct quality that defines the output of the studio, Boots cultivates a culture of innovation and resilience, where failures are seen as stepping stones to success. Encouraging the process more than the output,





Looking around the studio it's easy to draw the lines of reference from Boots' own fascinations to the finished products.

“happy accidents” expound the importance of taking risks and learning from experimentation. “I think it’s really important for a creative hive environment like here to create a safe space where it’s OK to fail on stuff,” says Boots, adding, “You know, the slow kind of progression towards something and you don’t know what it’s going to be.”

It has been through testing ideas that the team developed the latest collection CRUX, which explores metal casting, 3D printing and glass. Exhibited in Milan, Italy, for Salone del Mobile, the new range embodies the approach of the studio in its iterative nature and investigation of materiality.

The evolution of CRUX marks a new direction for the studio, one grounded in the core tenet of exploration. “A real hallmark in the studio has been in minerals and metals. And now the freedom we can get with the casting process is just amazing,” he shares.

Prototypes and working examples sit front and centre in the design team’s office, alongside a collection of glass objects that Boots has been Bowerbirding for decades. These odds and ends – Murano glass bowls and solid glass ashtrays

acquired in Europe or from vintage stores – have served as a constant reference throughout the evolution of the new range.

So often business success is driven by constantly spitting out more and more, which makes Boots’ slow meditations stand as a beacon of thoughtful design. Unsurprisingly he’s an advocate for the value of letting “ideas marinate” and evolve naturally.

When reflecting on his process over the years, there is pause. “Sometimes my approach can be really theoretical but when you deal with products, you need to deal with its materialism. For instance, glass is reflective and it’s see-through, leather is soft; and these considerations are really crucial to the process.”

‘Environment shapes behaviour’ is an affirmation repeated around the studio. With this as a guiding light, the environment of the Christopher Boots studio is shaped by a palpable energy. But perhaps Boots sums up his philosophy better than anyone. “The common thread is really experimentation.”

■ Christopher Boots | christopherboots.com

PREVIOUS Ritz Carlton, bespoke feature light by Christopher Boots Studio. Photography Peter Bennetts.

OPPOSITE Nepenthes by Christopher Boots Studio. Photography Christine Francis.

