

GLAM

QR.....15 BHD.....2 AED.....20
KWD.....2 OMR.....2 SAR.....20



JUNE
2017/GLAM
QATAR'S NO.1 LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

INSIDE
GLAM
INTERIORS
+DESIGN
NOW
MONTHLY

FERRARI
TOP DOWN FURY

COACH

THE
LITTLE
BAG
THAT
COULD



GLAM

JUNE 2017

INTERIORS + DESIGN



GET THE LOOK
IDENTIFY YOUR HOME
DECOR STYLE

PREFABULOUS

ROBBIE ANTOINE

PREFAB(ULOUS)



AS THIS LATEST VENTURE PICKS UP PACE, AVID ART COLLECTOR AND REAL ESTATE MOGUL ROBBIE ANTONIO TALKS ABOUT HOW HIS RANGE OF PREFABRICATED HOMES BRINGS TOGETHER HIS TWO GREATEST PASSIONS.

BY AYSWARYA MURTHY

HOMES YOU CAN BRAG ABOUT

ROBBIE ANTONIO IS THE FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF NEW YORK-BASED ANTONIO DEVELOPMENT, AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PHILIPPINE-BASED CENTURY PROPERTIES.

We suppose art collectors come in all shapes and sizes. But anyone who looks less like one than Robbie Antonio, we are yet to see. The cognitive dissonance is almost too much when you realise this is the man who has been in recent years consistently ranked among the top 10 art collectors in the world. With a private collection peppered with Jeff Coons, Francis Bacon, Willem de Kooning, Andy Warhol and the like, his pursuit of works by modern masters and contemporary artists has

often been described as voracious. He has the air of a man who is about to sprint off mid-sentence, leaving behind just a blur. He scoffs lunch while perched on a bar stool as his gaze constantly darts around the room. Reportedly, Marina Abramovic called him a "volcanic tornado" and created a basement room for him in his \$15 million Rem Koolhaas-designed Manila mansion with a view of a waterfall that would lock him in for 60 minutes and force contemplation.



AFGH - VERTICAL PREFAB HOUSE



“Each pavilion and home is individually branded by its designer’s personal concept of spatial form and social function.”

It was part of his “Obsession” collection of works where he commissioned titans of contemporary art like David Salle, Damien Hirst, Julian Schnabel, Takashi Murakami, David LaChapelle, Marilyn Minter and more to create portraits of himself. Garner what you will from that. But it remains an interesting experiment that the art community embraced, almost a statement in itself. But that is so three-years-ago. “If I come across an artist I like, I might engage them, but I am off to a new thing every year,” he says. He has, to put it prosaically, an interesting image and his latest venture is testament to that.

Property development magnate by day and patron of the arts by night, Antonio brings these two worlds together with Revolution Precrafted, which offers a portfolio of limited edition prefabricated structures – both homes and pavilions – exclusively designed by the world’s most acclaimed architects and designers, including the late Pritzker Prize winner Zaha Hadid, RIBA Gold Medal winner Paulo Mendes da Rocha, Marcel Wanders, Kengo Kuma, Jean Nouvel, Christian de Portzamparc, among others.

Each pavilion and home is individually branded by its designer’s personal concept of spatial form and social function. The result is a diverse and global collection of architecturally innovative, pre-crafted properties which, on average, can be bought for about \$300,000. The house is expected to be ready in at least 90 days, and installing it may take one to two



MARCEL WANDERS - EDEN HOUSE

weeks' time. Furniture and appliances are an add-on. "Imagine you turn the house upside down. Everything that doesn't fall is included," he laughs. But with an expanding network of creatives that includes fashion designers, artists and product designers, technically anything could be on the menu.

Offering the works of over 30 blue-chip architects and designers, Revolution Precrafted's proposition is enticing – a chance to own a living space designed by those whose names you'd generally only associate with million-dollar megastructures. "It started when I was commissioning a pavilion for myself. And then I realised how cool it would be to give more people the opportunity to own these at lower price points. Make these world-class architects relatively accessible." And so the company was born. "A pavilion is a want but a home is a need. Everyone needs a great home and I wanted to engage with the world's best architects," he says. About four years ago, even before the company was created, Antonio set a personal goal to work with at least five Pritzker Prize winners; to date he has worked with 12.

What do these top-tier architects, often creators of one-of-a-kind monoliths, feel about putting their work on the factory line? "For them this is kind of a social gesture, an effort to engage more people intellectually. There is only so much I can do to convince them. The majority have said yes." Some of them say no, he adds. It's difficult to imagine someone saying no Antonio though. After all, he enlisted I.M. Pei to design the Centurion, his luxury condominium towers in New York, and convinced Koolhaas to build his private home, reportedly the architect's



RON ARAD - THE ARMADILLO TEA PAVILION



SOU FUJIMOTO - SLIDING DOOR HOUSE



PHILIP JOHNSON - MODULAR GLASS HOUSE

“The company has commissioned Christian de Portzamparc to create a Reproducible Museum, the first of which will be assembled in the Philippines.”



PHILIP JOHNSON - MODULAR GLASS HOUSE

first residential commission in 15 years.

Designed as a collectible, it's not surprising that most of the company's business has been B2B, supplying developers from South East Asia to North America. In any case, the company has seen booming business. It's not surprising; prefab homes are all the rage now. Christopher Burch, former husband of designer Tory Burch, started Cocoon9 with home-builder Edwin Mahoney in 2010 to sell prefab homes, with prices ranging from \$75,000 to \$225,000. His company, which has a factory in New Jersey, produces three models. The design magazine *Dwell* also offers its own brand of prefab homes starting at \$250 a square foot. Revolution Precrafted, which Antonio says was started with no more than \$10 million (Uli Sigg is reportedly one of the initial investors), did over \$110 million in business since operations began and is now valued at \$256 million, after a \$15.4 million-Series A funding. For Antonio, the business model has everything it needs to become Philippine's first unicorn – it is asset light, global and disruptive.

The company has commissioned Christian de Portzamparc to create a Reproducible Museum, the first of which will be assembled in the Philippines. “I am soon planning to announce this collapsible, mobile museum. It will be a permanent museum dedicated to modern art and it also happens to be mine. There are not enough museums in South East Asia with big names behind them. No major architect has done museums here like in New York, Paris or Doha. And we really need that because it will draw people to the art inside, which is what we want to drive traffic and change culture.” He hasn't yet decided which artists he is going to populate the gallery spaces with or if it would feature pieces from his own formidable collection. Another notable social endeavour in the pipeline is using prefabricated homes for disaster rehabilitation, particularly relevant for the hurricane-prone Philippines.