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INSIGHT SCHOOL OF INTERIOR DESIGN – UNLEASH YOUR INNER DESIGNER

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With its infectious entrepreneurial spirit and can-do attitude, Hong Kong is without doubt the place to master a new skill, embark on a change in career or simply add another string to your bow. If you have always fancied yourself as a feng shui master or have an eye for soft furnishings, then why not consider turning your hobby into a fruitful career? Whether you want to take advantage of Hong Kong's booming interior design industry or are simply a curious amateur looking to make the most of your home, the newly-opened **Insight School of Interior Design** offers a wide range of courses to help you meet your aspirational desires. Under the direction of founder Eve Mercier, the school prides itself on being the only interiors school in Hong Kong to offer both content-based theory taught by inspirational tutors and practical creative training to help students hone their skills and prepare them for the realities of life as an interior designer in Asia.

Insight School Of Interior Design offers a variety of courses including vocational short courses, eight-week courses and a one-year intensive professional diploma (which begin in September 2014). Many of the courses feature sessions from top international visiting lecturers working for renowned brands such as Cartier or Hermes. Insight's short course curriculum covers many of the basics for interior design, spanning lighting, sustainable design, textile for interiors and design heritage – which takes an in-depth look on Eastern design and Hong Kong's own design identity, and is taught by visiting mentor, G.O.D's owner Douglas Young.



Taking part in the **Designing for Small Spaces one-day short course**, I joined Eve Mercier and four students in the school's temporary space located within Chai Wan's industrial district. Once I had navigated my way around the dusty warehouses and enormous lifts to find the studio, I was instantly taken in by the high ceilings, streams of natural sunlight pouring in through the floor-to-ceiling windows and eye-catching décor – it was a perfect place to feel inspired and productive!

After brief introductions all-round, it was time for Eve to power up the projector for part one of our course – the theory. As a History of Art graduate, I felt at home studying masters of small space such as Hong Kong's Gary Cheung, and the thinking behind their methods. Naturally, the course was tailored to the small interiors of Hong Kong and Japan, but it was also wonderful to see examples from further afield, including one project Eve had successfully completed in London.

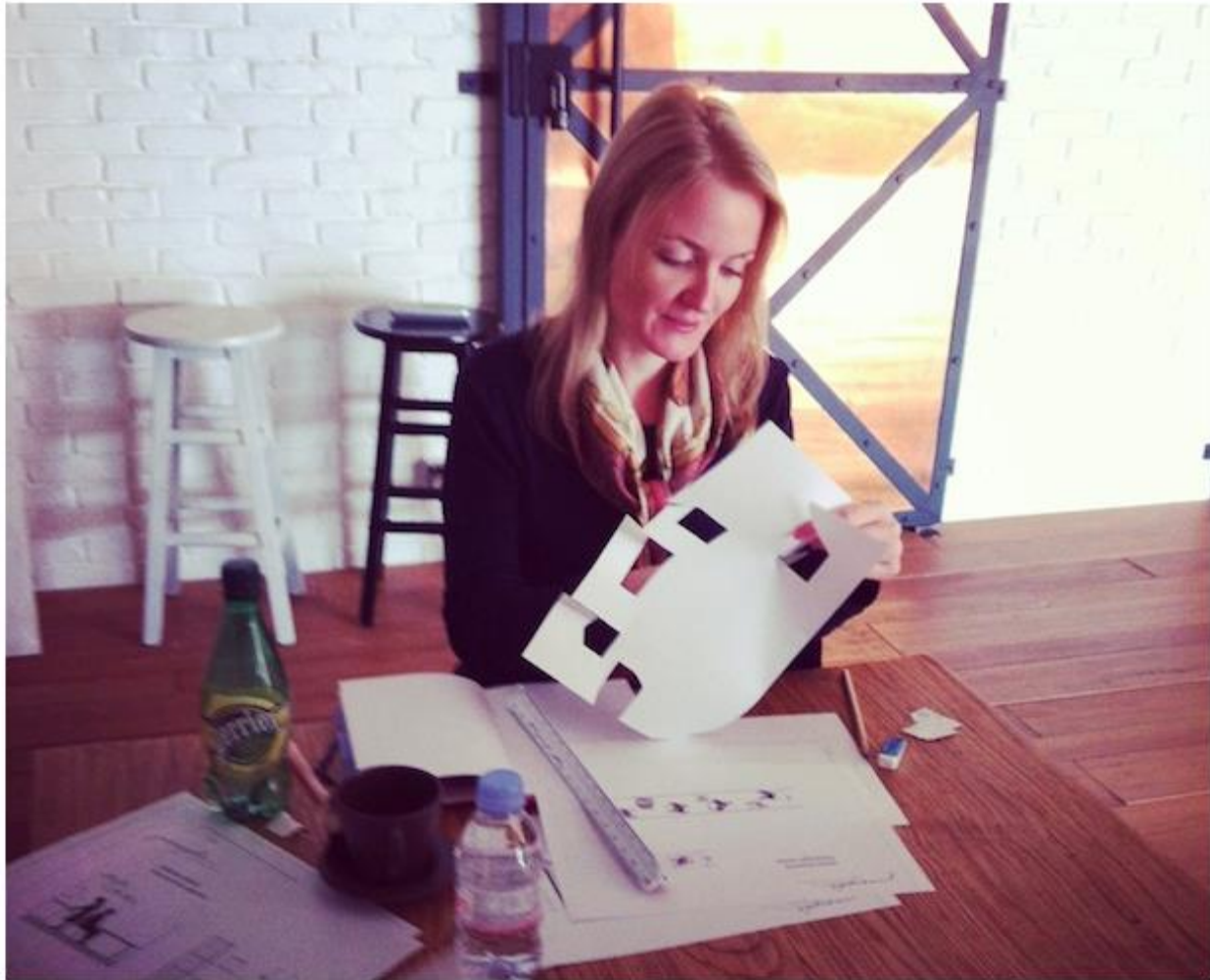


Throughout the theory session, Eve showed us how to put preparation into practice and offered top tips for creating the illusion of space. Want to increase the natural light in a room? Insert a skylight or consider glass flooring. Want to create storage? Make clever use of the disused space in the staircase. Want to make a bathroom appear bigger? Use one material and colour throughout. In most cases, however, these skills will not be applied to our own tastes but to those of your all-important clients! Eve had plenty of wise words to impart on this front from how to approach clients and manage their expectations, to dealing with bolshy architects and builders.



After two hours of small space enlightenment, it was time for a well-deserved lunch and tour of the new Insight School of Interior Design premises. Situated on the top floor of a neighbouring industrial building in Chai Wan, the spacious new school houses two classrooms, a library, a light studio, a pantry (*where you can enjoy lunch with a harbour view!*) and an IT room. Plus, with wall-to-wall windows to enjoy the rooftop views of Chai Wan, who wouldn't find these classrooms inspiring?!

Feeling refreshed and ready for part two, it was time for us to get our scissors and pencils out for the practical. Our mission? To design our own small space apartment within the constraints of 40 square metres – including a kitchen, bedroom, dining room and desk. It sounds simple enough... but when you take into account interior design golden rules, such as ensuring sufficient space between the sofa and coffee table (40cm minimum) or the proximity of bathroom to the dining room (*because no one likes peeing when they know others can hear!*), we had our work cut out for us!



At the end of our task, it was fascinating to see the results. The good news was that we had all passed the test and no two apartments were designed the same – pretty impressive after only a day's learning! With our newfound knowledge, we left inspired and ready to transform small spaces... but that wasn't before we recited the interior design mantra: always carry a tape measure with you!

The Designing For Smaller Spaces short course costs \$1990; see more information about other short courses [here](#)

One-year diploma applicants must present a portfolio (those without one will need to take part in a 'creative challenge'); a written application and recommendation letters are also required and successful applicants will be invited to interview. The course features 100 hours' worth of internship experience to help open doors for employment. To contact Eve directly, email info@insightschoolhk.com.