

RULES OF STYLE

**NOÉ
DUCHAUFOUR-
LAWRANCE**

Function comes first, think sustainable and stay true to your style – the renowned French interior designer shares his rules for easy elegance.

Words by Florent Gilles.



As an internationally acclaimed maker of objects and places, Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance knows how to navigate between form and function. His design aesthetic is famed for offering a new take on naturalism – think Art Nouveau remixed for future generations. His most influential home piece of decoration, for French home design brand Ligne Roset is the Roseau vase. The object mimics the shape of a budding plant and has been the brand's longest lasting success to date, re-issued every season for a decade.



The Folia collection Duchaufour-Lawrance designed for Saint-Louis, Europe's oldest crystal house, in 2017

The son of two artists, Duchaufour-Lawrance studied metal sculpture in Paris's renowned École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués, from which he graduated in the late 1990s before joining the furniture design department at the École des Arts Décoratifs. 'I wanted to make furniture the minute I learned about star designers Ron Arad and Philippe Starck as a kid, from looking at catalogues,' he says. Since then, the 43-year-old has garnered international attention for his various designs, which landed him awards from the likes of *Wallpaper*, *GQ* and *Elle*.

His big break came under the form of a call from London entrepreneur Mourad Mazouz, who was looking for a young designer to ensure sufficient wow-factor to his multi-roomed new venture called Sketch. Today, the extravagant Mayfair establishment remains one of the most Instagrammed places in London. 'Sketch happened as quite a surprise,' he remembers. 'I found myself enrolled in the project with quite a few other designers to imagine the architectural concept.' His most glorious piece in the project: 'The toilets, which looked like egg-shaped pods and made people talk,' he recalls.

There seems to be a contrast between the man's outlandish, critically acclaimed body of work and his quiet approach to dressing. Much like your typical designer, Duchaufour-Lawrance favours clothes that don't scream, punctuated by the inevitable and stylish glasses handmade by one of Paris's oldest frame artisans. 'They are guaranteed for life!' he insists. The Frenchman gives us a lesson in sustainable elegance and simplicity.



Rules Of Style

Function comes first

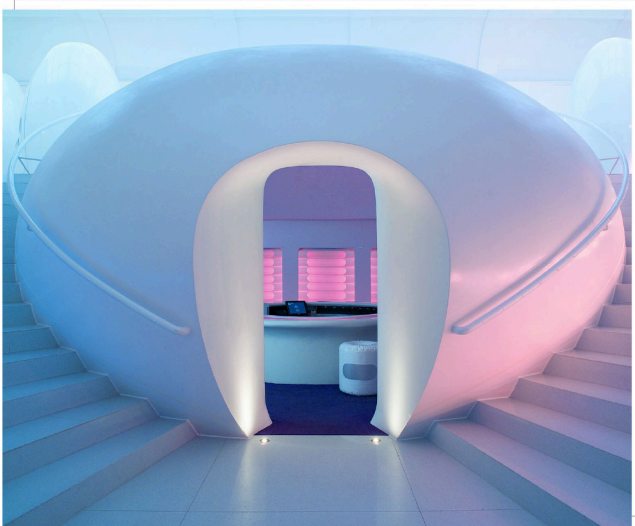
‘Much like objects, I feel clothes must respond to a need rather than creating one. I only buy clothes when I need them.’

Mother Nature needs our love

‘I was born in Brittany and I need to live near the sea, which fuels mind and creative process. That’s why I share my time between France and Lisbon. I have a soft spot for nautical style, the colour blue and denim.’

We must fight against waste

‘When designing, I aim for the lasting ethical materials and do a lot of research to that purpose. I am very interested in labels which also have an ethical approach to their production cycle.’



The coatroom and bar at Sketch, London

Caring is sharing

‘As a clothes shopper, I often try to give away the pieces that I get bored with over time. A great pair of denim can be passed on to others, like heritage furniture to your loved ones.’

Most things get old and that’s beautiful

‘In design, a metal or wooden piece gets more character as it ages. I like the idea that to some extent, the same phenomenon extends to clothes. I’ve had the same jeans from Acne Studios for many years, they get even better with age. Recently I’ve been into seeking out more sustainable denim.’

With time comes clarity

‘We all need a couple of rusty, experimenting ways of dressing up. It took me a while to be fully aware of what I like to wear. I’ve been connected with a couple of brands for a few years now, Ami Alexandre Mattiussi, Acne Studios and Common Projects, which I wear every day, and I feel settled.’

People are more relaxed under the sun

‘People in Lisbon don’t have such a strict dress code as in Paris, for example, which I find liberating – especially since that’s where I work on most of my

design. In Lisbon, I wear sneakers more easily... and obviously fewer boots and leather jackets than in Paris.'

Resist the temptation of fashion for fashion's sake

'I have yet to collaborate with a fashion house, although I have had many luxury clients. I wouldn't want to diversify just for the sake of fashion if the project is not right. I am saving myself for a project that will really stimulate my creative sense, rather than just a simple commission.'

Avant-garde is great for those who can own it

'Some of my friends in New York – who own the buzzy food concept Ghetto Gastro – swear by cool street-luxe labels like Off-White or darker aesthetics such as Rick Owens, and I'm quite in awe of how great it looks on them. But I think it's important to stick with what feels sincere for you.'



The Borghese sofa and table designed for La Chance