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## AMAZING GRACE

LUCK MAY HAVE HELPED SAN FRANCISCO DESIGNER JIUN HO'S SUCCESS. BUT HIS GRACIOUS NATURE CERTAINLY HASN'T HURT. BY SARAH LYNCH

When Kuala Lumpur's Petronas Towers were named the world's tallest buildings in 1998, they put Malaysia on the design map. They also brought recognition to a Malaysian designer named Jiun Ho. A recent graduate of Chicago's International Academy of Design and Technology, Ho got his first job working on the furniture systems for the towers.

"I was lucky enough to be hired right out of school," says Ho, who introduces every chapter of his career with the words, "I was lucky enough to..." Now, 11 years after that first project, Ho has his own 100-piece furniture collection and a licensing agreement to design for Boyd Lighting (plus another in the works with Kallista, Kohler's bath line). He has also just finished Honolulu's new Hotel Renew.

After working for hospitality design firm Bent Severin in San Francisco, Ho set

off on his own with a single residential client in Taipei. His second lucky break came when that client wanted custom furnishings and asked Ho to draw up some ideas. He delivered 30 watercolor sketches, and the client approved all of them. Through his hospitality experience, Ho had a few manufacturing contacts in Los Angeles. Good fortune stepped in again when word of his designs—modern furniture inspired by his world travels—made its way to

Thomas Lavin, who was just about to open his first multiline showroom at the Pacific Design Center. "I finally found out the name of the person who told Thomas about me," says Ho. "I thank him whenever I see him."

One showroom led to another, and within two years Ho's collection was represented by Sloan Miyasato in San Francisco and Design Atelier in Chicago. Success has

*"I've always been passionate about hotels and travel."*



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Jiun Ho designed the oval table in his office to reference a South African baobab tree; Ho's new lamps for Boyd's Kentfield collection were inspired by a visit to Cambodia; For the Hotel Renew in Honolulu, Ho designed everything from the linens to the lobby's flowers.

led to more opportunities, such as a much-publicized gig as the lead designer of the 2004 New American Home for the NAHB International Builders' Show in Las Vegas. "I've always been passionate about hotels and travel, and I've always searched for a way to combine my passions," says Ho. "I am so happy to have found it." ■