

the pullman magazine

DESTINATIONS
CREATIONS
IDEAS

N°02

EXTRAORDINARY TRAVELLERS

The changing pace – and faces – of modern travel

LAÏLA MARRAKCHI - Desert Detour

ROCK RECAPTURED - Portfolio by Richard Bellia

Original Fiction by LAWRENCE OSBORNE

PULLMAN IN MOTION

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TAKING MEETINGS TO THE PLAYGROUND

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY MAKES FOR A DULL BOARDROOM. WITH THAT IDEA IN MIND, **MATHIEU LEHANNEUR SET ABOUT DEVELOPING BUSINESS PLAYGROUND BY PULLMAN, NOW AVAILABLE IN SELECTED PULLMAN HOTELS.**

BY **STEPHANIE THEOBALD** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ABACA CORPORATE/DIDIER DELMAS AND DAVID LEDOUX**

For designer Mathieu Lehanneur, pleasure is as important as work when it comes to stimulating creativity. The “business playground” he designed for Pullman hotels is a fresh take on traditional ideas of what a productive meeting room should look like, incorporating a table designed like a poker table, curiosity boxes, and a canopy break area designed to make people feel as if they are sitting under trees. The vibrant new workspace is now premiering at the Pullman London St Pancras before being rolled in a selection of Pullman hotels starting in 2014.

Unlike many designers, Lehanneur says his starting point is always people:

“Design is no longer about making a beautiful chair or a beautiful table; it’s about seeing physically how people live and feel the effects of that object on them.” He reasons that you never see anybody bored at a poker table in a casino (hence the idea behind his Pullman meeting table), while his canopy break concept allows people to gaze up at a projection of gently swaying trees. “I imagined someone saying ‘pew, I’ve escaped!’”

Mathieu Lehanneur, 39, graduated from prestigious Paris design school ENSCI and his work is collected by New York’s Museum of Modern Art. His new project for Pullman began with a question: *how to make people feel*

comfortable in order to make them more creative, while making sure everything remains utterly chic? Just as important was the challenge to come up with something unique, to provide Pullman hotel guests with an experience they would be unable to find anywhere else. The solution now goes by the name of Business Playground by Pullman.



‘The best ideas often come when you’re not even aware you’re working.’

MATHIEU LEHANNEUR

‘The idea is not to forbid people from doing things; it’s to gently try and change the energy.’

MATHIEU LEHANNEUR

What were your inspirations for Business Playground by Pullman?

I closed my eyes and imagined I was someone who had to sit through a three-hour meeting. I saw myself sitting back in a chair, only half listening, secretly checking my Blackberry under the table. I was physically there but mentally I’d left the room. So my first thought was: how can I fully engage that person? But my major inspiration was the Pullman brand itself. Pullman is a name that conjures images of travel, of a connected world... images of work but also of pleasure. One of our intentions was to reinvent the ways of doing business in Pullman hotels – so you wouldn’t find in these places the same things you’d find back in your office. Things would differ from Sao Paulo to Paris or Bangkok.

What’s the thinking behind the leather-edged Pullman Poker Table?

I’ve watched people playing poker in casinos. They’re totally concentrating because they’re gripped by what’s happening. In a poker game, you don’t sit back passively in your chair,

you lean forward with your arms resting on the table because you want to be present. Leaning into a table with the weight on your arms is a small postural thing but it changes your relationship to everyone around you.

Is body language important?

Absolutely. If your body doesn’t get bored in a meeting, you won’t get bored. The more you let your body get into different postures, the more your brain will work. The image you have of yourself and the image you give to others is hugely important during a business meeting, which is often characterised by power struggles. It’s in your interest to feel strong, so I’ve designed this room to make you feel confident – through things like the body language I’m enabling you to express.

A poker table is quite a male idea. Will women enjoy the “business playground” too?

I’ve created a sophisticated room that is neither totally masculine nor totally feminine. I was constantly thinking

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...



about the balance between the very generous and the very structured, the organic and the geometric. The formal geometric table of the Pullman Canopy Break, for instance, is softened by being underneath the projection of trees. The modernity of the room is tempered by designs that are more soulful and more artisanal, like the Asian ceramic stools. The colours of the room – greys, greens, beige – you almost can't identify. All this helps create a calm vibration.

How did you come up with the idea for Pullman Curiosity Boxes?

An intimidating room is stressful and blocks good ideas. So I've created light-filled Pullman Curiosity Boxes. They intrigue people. Today there's a scull, a crow, a globe, a silver pear and books inside the cabinet, but I hope companies will bring objects that tell their own story.

I've designed this room to make you feel confident – through things like the body language I'm enabling you to express

MATHIEU LEHANNEUR

Tell us a secret.

The underneath of the Pullman Poker Table is entirely in leather. You can't see it but you'll gradually feel the sensation with your hands and knees. For me, such discretion is real luxury, which is rare in hotels today.

Do you think we are becoming a more playful culture?

Of course. Tech culture has changed the world. Start-ups are often young people with small teams who aren't interested in old sorts of hierarchies and oppressive architectural structures. At the same time I didn't want to take the Silicon Valley approach of being totally playful because that wouldn't work with more conventional companies.

Will business meeting rooms change in the 21st century?

It's vital they do! If I'm hiring a hotel room for a meeting, I don't want exactly the same atmosphere I'd get in my own office. I want a richer experience. Most good hotels have big meeting rooms with luxurious materials, but the reason people will come to the Pullman is that they'll know the ideas their staff come up with here will be better than the ideas they'd come up with back home.

Will people still sneak a peak of their BlackBerry under the table?

Of course they will – but it will happen less! The idea is not to forbid people from doing things; it's to gently try and change the energy.

Business Playground by Pullman

It means :

- easily accessible dining and culinary offerings that can be easily "customised" for every moment and every taste,
- Tea Deli by Pullman in partnership with Dammann Frères®, and Nespresso®,
- a dedicated welcomer available all the way for a flawless service,
- each Business Playground boardroom equipped with a Pullman Toolbox containing notepads, writing instruments for a flawless meeting,
- and also free broadband Wi-Fi as well as tactile digital controller, audio equipment and high technology lighting, Samsung® screen LED HD 75'.

For more information, visit Pullman on the Web:

pullmanhotels.com/business-playground

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TIME FOR BUSINESS

BY LE CLUB ACCORHOTELS

This package features made-to-measure services for getting the job done, and 500 bonus points for members of Le Club Accorhotels loyalty program. Includes secure and unlimited Internet access, an ironing service and breakfast buffet.

TIME FOR LOVE

BY PULLMAN

This offer is all about the romance. It's designed for two people with a prime place on their schedule for enjoying each other's company. They get a bottle of champagne in the room upon arrival, a little gift (flowers, sweets...), breakfast served daily in the room or in the hotel's restaurant, and late checkout.



TIME FOR FAMILY

BY PULLMAN

Travelling with children should be as easy as possible, and they should enjoy the stay every bit as much as their parents do. This offer allows the kids to stay for half-price in a second room, and they get a free breakfast buffet in the restaurant. With late checkout as a bonus.



DELICIOUS ESCAPE

BY PULLMAN

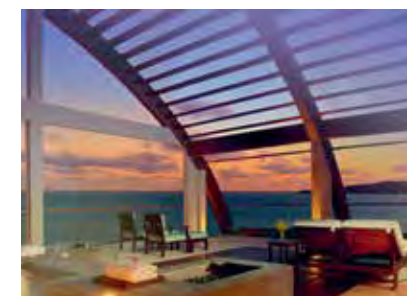
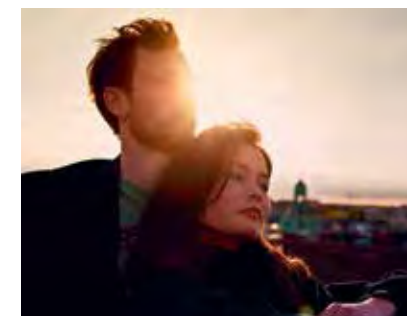
Pullman hotels and resorts bring something new to the table. Delicious Escape by Pullman is a flavour-filled journey that includes a 10% discount for stays of 2 nights or more, as well as breakfast buffet, direct discount on drinks in the bar or in the hotel's restaurant and late checkout (upon availability).



GREAT ESCAPE

BY PULLMAN

This offer is designed for people travelling alone, as a couple, or with the whole family. It's about making time for new discoveries and meeting new people. With breakfast buffet served in the restaurant (at a preferential rate) and free accommodation and breakfast for 1 child under 12.



7 NIGHTS FOR 5

BY PULLMAN

Need a bit more time to get to know a place? That's the idea behind this special deal. Stay five nights in a Pullman hotel or resort and then stay an additional two nights for free. Includes breakfast buffet and a discount on drinks in the bar or in the hotel's restaurant. With access to the hotel's sports programs and leisure activities.