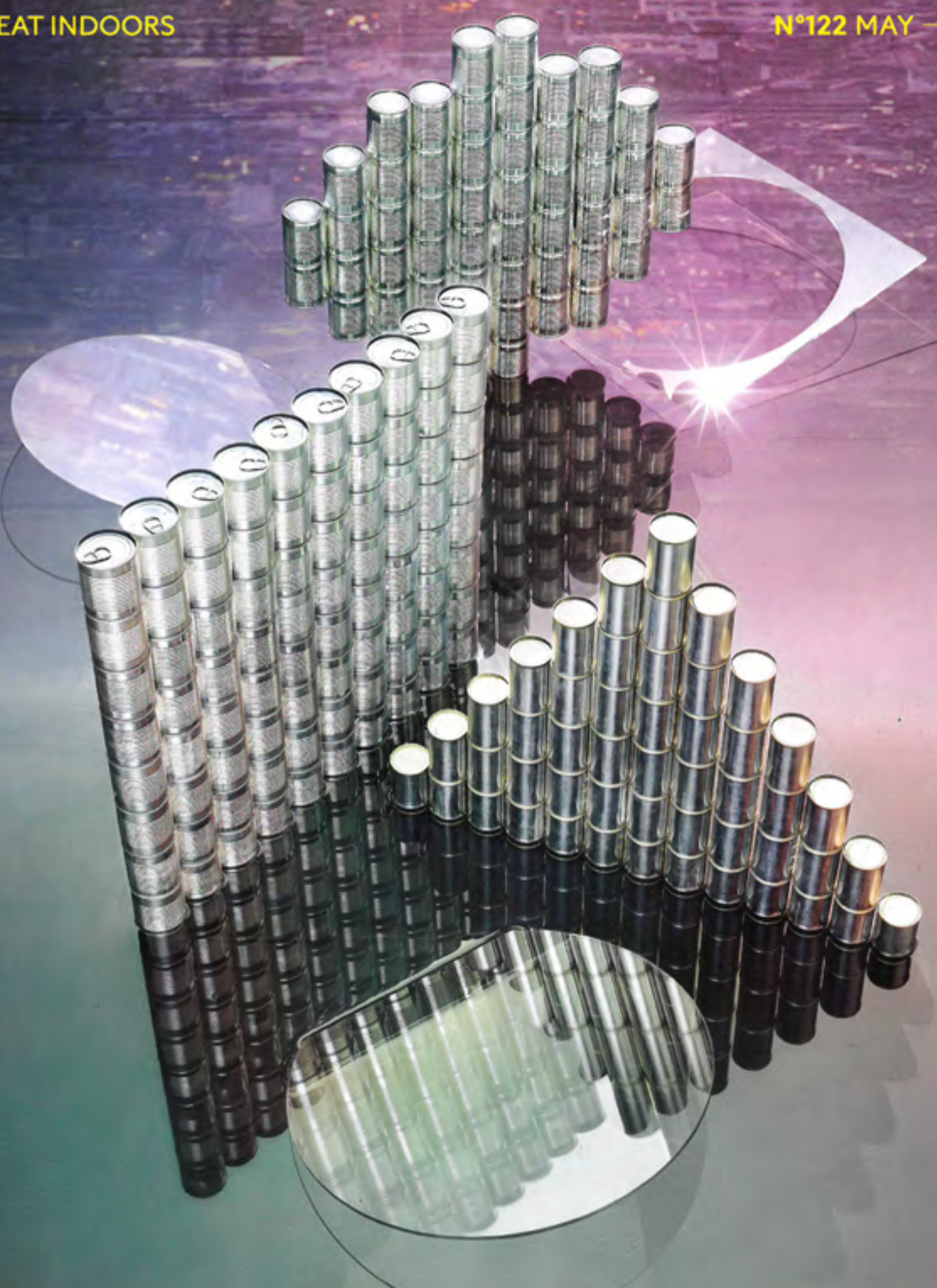


# FRAME

THE GREAT INDOORS

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## Frame Awards 2018

THE WORLD'S BEST INTERIORS



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First presented during AD Intérieurs 2017, Lehanneur's Le Passage mirror is now part of the designer's product collection.



# Side *to* Side



# Something as simple as crossing the Seine holds significance in the daily life of MATHIEU LEHANNEUR.

Words  
ANNA SANSON

Portraits  
ANTOINE DOYEN

**MATHIEU LEHANNEUR:** I rise at 7 a.m. and wake up my 12-year-old son and eight-year-old daughter. It's the loveliest thing to do, and I make sure they have a nice start to the day. I prepare breakfast for them but have only coffee myself. About 15 minutes after getting up, I consult my e-mails to see what's in store for the day. Then I take my daughter from our home in Montparnasse to her school in Saint-Germain-des-Prés by motorcycle before going to work. Crossing the Seine from the Left to the Right Bank – something that tourists get all dreamy about – is also enjoyable for Parisians. For me, the river is a symbolic border between my private and professional lives.

## 8:20 a.m.

I arrive at my studio [a centrally located Haussmann-style building] and spend nearly all morning sitting at my desk, pacing around like a caged lion or relaxing on the sofa with my eyes shut. Closing my eyes helps me to imagine the dimensions, temperature and softness of a project.

My team has a studio above mine; both spaces are 110 m<sup>2</sup>. Mornings are calm moments that offer time to reflect on the technical, creative and conceptual aspects of the 25 to 35 assignments I'm usually working on. I spend five to ten minutes on each project, injecting it with a seed or a vitamin to make it grow. I get the impression that I work like chess player Garry Kasparov, moving pieces around. It never feels laborious, though, and I never have a blank sheet of paper in front of me. When I return to a project the next day, things develop more quickly and the game continues. I draw by hand with a pencil, as I find it much faster than using a computer.

## 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Two days out of three, I end up not having lunch. I always think *later, later, later* – while the hours fly by. Sometimes I don't eat until the evening. If I'm really hungry, I go downstairs and buy a sandwich. By early afternoon I've had enough solitude – any more and I'd go crazy. I head upstairs to see my nine employees, taking a seat at each workstation

to review their progress. When I gesticulate to indicate something about a project, I often hear *Stop!* – at which point someone will measure the dimensions between my hands. Members of the staff have been working for me from one to six years. It takes time for them to get to know me and to interpret my gestures, which are a form of sign language.

## 3 p.m.

Yesterday we looked at samples of materials for the Air France first-class lounge at Charles de Gaulle Airport. I'm designing a bar in the middle of the lounge, and we're determining the final details. At four o'clock we had a meeting about the second prototype of the foldable electric bicycle we're making with Voltitude. [Lehanneur is a partner at the Swiss company.] The product is due to be launched in early 2019. It's very technical, with 180 individual pieces to design. Unlike most bicycles, where 80 per cent of the design is standard, we're treating ours like a luxury Swiss watch, creating each component to be long-lasting and beautiful. I'm also working on the refurbishment of the Grand Palais in Paris. It will be one of the sites for the 2024 Olympic Games, so the project needs to be ready in time.

## 5 p.m.

I'm more likely to take phone calls in the afternoon, but luckily my studio manager handles most of the communication. Meet-

ings with clients often take place in my studio; if not, I hop on my motorcycle. I travel a lot. Recently I went to Brazil to discuss interior-design projects; to New York, where I designed the Maison Kitsuné store; and to Shenzhen in China, which is home to telecom company Huawei – I'm the brand's artistic director. When I'm in Paris, I try to spend as much time as possible at my studio.

## 8:00-8:30 p.m.

I leave the office. I might go to the opening of an exhibition or out for dinner, but otherwise I'll cross the Seine and head home. I'm not much of a socialite; I concentrate better when I'm alone. I don't cook – I'm completely rubbish in the kitchen. Every week I buy several art and architecture books, as well as some old titles. In the evening, I open publications that arrived that day and peruse them, nourishing myself for the next day. Evenings also give me a chance to talk with clients in the US or Brazil, and to spend precious moments with my wife.

## Midnight-12:30 a.m.

I go to bed and fall asleep immediately. Right now I'm happy and satisfied, because I'm doing what I want and have the freedom to work on many projects of different scales. ●

Lehanneur's bar for the Air France first-class lounge at Charles de Gaulle Airport will open this summer  
[mathieulehanneur.fr](http://mathieulehanneur.fr)

