

INSPIRATION FOR TRAVELLERS

# BOLD



*Chasing the SUN*



# AGENDA

WHERE OUR WANDERLUST IS TAKING US NEXT

## A SENSE OF PLACE

Known for their eye-catching installations, art studio moss&lam has been creating art pieces of all shapes and sizes for some of the world's most luxurious properties  
By **PAUL GALLANT**





Hotel guests, especially at upscale properties, have grown more aware of design and art. "With the ability to create images, everyone's an artist nowadays, which is fantastic. But meaning and context are important." Being open to expectations – even if it is for the purpose of upending them – allows Moss to set aside any constraints that confine the studio to a "house style." The firm's recent work for Moxy, a new Millennial-focused brand by Marriott, has a brasher, edgier sensibility. "It represents a real 180, which was fun for us, since our personal aesthetic is so different."

The idea of luxury also remains elusive. "Is it shiny, is it gold? Or is it quiet and subtle? Is it a luxury of materials or is it a luxury of the beauty of the concept? Sophisticated clients may not want something ostentatious."

Other recent projects include a restaurant mural carved in plaster, with the theme of a whimsical seaside village, for the Four Seasons Kuwait, and a deep, giant-scale colour gradation (describing moss&lam's sculptural work in words can be a challenge) for Viceroy Palm Jumeirah Dubai (which has since be declared a FIVE Palm Jumeirah Dubai).

[lasalcobasnapavalley.com](http://lasalcobasnapavalley.com); [mossandlam.com](http://mossandlam.com)



So, in some ways, their work on the new Las Alcobas in California's Napa Valley was a departure. "We were called in to create the art collection for the hotel," says principal and creative director Deborah Moss (co-founder Edward Lam passed away in 2013). "That was really fascinating for us because of our background as artists. It was getting into something we personally care about."

Though you'll often find moss&lam in lively, urban milieus, their work at Las Alcobas, a 68-room resort property in wine country that just opened this summer, reflects a more pastoral, more relaxed aesthetic. "This wasn't to create an effect. A lot of the more public pieces are something people walk by, or spend five minutes with. This work is in the guest rooms, where people might be spending an evening looking at it more intimately. We wanted to imagine this collection was collected by the owner Sam [Samuel Leizorek, founder, owner and CEO of the Las Alcobas Hotel group]. What are Sam's interests? Travel. Nature. What are the interests of the guests? The landscape. Relaxation."

Returning guests like to be rewarded by art that seems to change along with them and their perspectives. So, clouds that look like a bottle of wine. A horse with mane aflutter. Vegetation bathed in opaque light. "There's a dreamy quality because when you're on holidays, you may be more open to that kind of experience. Strange things can happen," says Moss.



**PREVIOUS PAGE:** Hard at work in moss&lam's Toronto studio. **THIS PAGE** **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Art for Las Alcobas in Napa Valley; art for Marriott's new Moxy brand; in the studio; an interior at Las Alcobas.

**T**oronto art studio moss&lam have a long-standing reputation for the grand gesture: the Canadian-flag ceiling made of paddles for Canada House at the 2016 Rio Olympics, the etching of a jungle-inspired city at Restaurant Clement New York's Peninsula Hotel, the undulating Wave Wall at the Blue Fin restaurant at W Hotel in New York. Regularly teaming with Toronto design firm Yabu Pushelberg, their work is often large-scale and attention-getting.