

THE RETAIL observer



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AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

ZEPHYR
& FU-TUNG CHENG
A Partnership
for the Ages

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PARTNERS IN DESIGN: ZEPHYR VENTILATION
PRESIDENT LUKE SIOW AND DESIGNER FU-TUNG
CHENG, FOR WHOM THE CHENG COLLECTION BY
ZEPHYR LINE OF VENTILATION HOODS IS NAMED

ZEPHYR

A Partnership for the Ages

Zephyr Ventilation and
Fu-Tung Cheng look back—
and forward—after a decade
of reimagining kitchens together

WHEN ZEPHYR VENTILATION FIRST TEAMED UP WITH LEGENDARY DESIGNER FU-TUNG CHENG A DECADE AGO, THE TWO SHARED A VISION FOR UNITING TIMELESS ART WITH UNPRECEDENTED POWER TO ELEVATE THE KITCHEN VENT HOOD TO ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN THE HOME. AND WHILE MANY DESIGNER PRODUCTS COME AND GO—THE VICTIMS OF FADS, FASHIONS AND TRENDS—THE CHENG COLLECTION BY ZEPHYR IS NOT ONLY GOING STRONG, BUT CELEBRATING ITS LONGEVITY WITH A SPECIAL LIMITED-EDITION MODEL IN RECOGNITION OF THE PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIP.



LIMITED EDITION VERSION OF THE OKEANITO HOOD
IN ROSE GOLD, IN CELEBRATION OF THE TEN-YEAR
ANNIVERSARY OF THE ZEPHYR/CHENG PARTNERSHIP

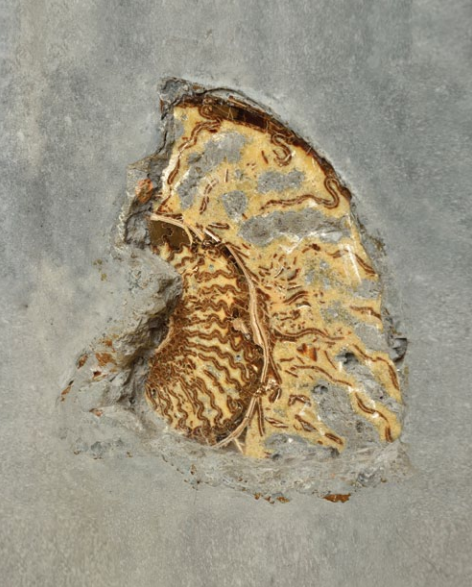
Zephyr and Cheng joined forces in 2004, when Zephyr perceived an enticing gap in the products available to consumers at the time. Cheng—an internationally acclaimed designer, best-selling author and National Kitchen & Bath Association Hall of Fame inductee known for his award-winning home designs and his innovations in concrete—was hand-crafting magnificent one-off ventilation hoods for his clients, with a price tag that was beyond the reach of most consumers. Zephyr—armed with its keen customer insight and proven manufacturing and distribution prowess—realized that a first-ever line of signature designer hoods would create a new focal point in the kitchen. It was the genesis of a partnership and product line that would survive the test of time.

One of the first hoods in the Cheng Collection by Zephyr was the

Okeanito, based upon the hand-made \$15,000 Okean, which Cheng had crafted for one of his clients. Scaled down in both size and price to reach a broader audience, it retains the graceful slow-curve canopy of its predecessor, punctuated by perforated side panels that radiate a gentle ambient light. Other models in the Cheng Collection include the sweeping, professional-style Cache, which cleverly doubles as a storage space for under-cabinet applications; the elegant Trapeze, designed to float above kitchen islands with apparent gravity-defying finesse; and the owner-customizable Padova, which debuted years ahead of the DIY movement, a testament to the farsightedness of the Zephyr/Cheng vision.

“I was impressed by the way that Zephyr could mass produce these creations that would have taken me weeks to craft by hand,

Photos (clockwise from top): 1. The ammonite—a primordial fossilized creature akin to a nautilus—is a signature Cheng element, found here in the concrete island designed for the Zephyr Showroom. 2. The Zephyr San Francisco showroom. 3. One of Cheng’s first concrete countertops, in his kitchen. 4. One of Fu-Tung Cheng’s organic inlays creates an inviting detail and adds originality to each concrete piece he creates. 5. One of Cheng’s first “hybrid” structures, pairing wood & concrete in a harmonious organic synergy 6. The original Okean hood. This Cheng-crafted masterpiece inspired today’s Okeanito ventilation hood, which Zephyr scaled down in both size and price for a broader audience of discriminating homeowners.



ZEPHYR A Partnership for the Ages

OKEANITO



PADOVA



TRAPEZE



CACHE



OKEANITO, PADOVA, TRAPEZE, & CACHE FROM THE CHENG COLLECTION

while retaining the same attention to detail and build quality, and adding in high-tech features like remote control and their new Bloom™ HD LED lights,” notes Cheng. “As we worked together, I would supply the design cues, and Zephyr would incorporate the technology. It all adds up to a powerful synergy that cements our relationship and keeps it vibrant.”

Cheng is quick to point out all that he’s learned from Zephyr over the years, including their ability to anticipate the market, their sense of what’s manufacturable, and their unique ability to make innovative designs compelling not just to consumers, but to sales people on the showroom floor.

In celebration of the decade-long partnership, Zephyr has recently unveiled the Limited Edition Okeanito hood. It retains the model’s classic interplay of sweeping curves and linear forms, along with its delicate rail and perforated metal. But the updated models reimagine this classic in two new finishes and elegant metallic colors that speak to today’s eclectic kitchens: Black Mirror and Rose Gold. “Consumers have become more sophisticated over the years,” observes Cheng. “They understand venting requirements and CFM [cubic feet per minute]. But they also are looking beyond stainless steel, and are expressing themselves in the kinds of imaginative colors that

we’re offering with these new models.”

Zephyr Ventilation President Luke Siow provides his own retrospective on the decade, “These past ten years at Zephyr have been marked by a continual effort to push our boundaries, both aesthetically and technically. On the artistic side, we’ve also teamed with other award-winning designers such as Apple veteran Robert Brunner. On the technical side, we’ve unveiled innovation after innovation, such as our exclusive DCBL Suppression System, which increases venting power while reducing both noise and electrical consumption by 80 percent, which is an unprecedented feat in our industry.”

What, then, does the future hold for the Zephyr/Cheng partnership? “A continued focus on uniting form and function in products that delight and endure,” says Cheng. Siow chimes in, as if completing Cheng’s thought, “At Zephyr, we have always dared to be different. Fu-Tung has shared that world view with us, while never relegating function to form. His designs are as beautiful to behold as they are gratifying to live with. That’s why they’re as fresh and relevant today—and will be in the future—as they were when we first saw them come to life as pencil drawings on his sketch pad. We look forward to continuing this journey together.”

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