

NEW HOMES+ CONDOS

DON'T FORGET FALL PREP
Bye bye summer, hello winter! E4



Winner of the Industrial Design - Bathroom Product Award at the 2020 Grands Prix du Design, the Mood soaking tub adds function to relaxation with a side rim storage shelf that blends into the tub and infuses a spa-like feel into home bathrooms. - ALL PHOTOS: ADRIEN WILLIAM, COURTESY OF V2COM



Wetstyle headquarters in Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville's industrial ecopark.

Wetstyle offers design-driven, environmentally friendly bath fixtures and furnishings

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Special to Postmedia Network

Before Wetstyle opened its new corporate headquarters in the Saint-Bruno industrial ecopark in May, the environmentally friendly bath fixtures and furnishings manufacturer was operating out of a sales office on St-Jacques St., in Old Montreal, and a factory in Beloeil; both of which it was quickly growing out of.

"Though we loved it there, we ran out of space and needed a new

home," says Wetstyle's president Mark Wolinsky.

"We decided to merge the showroom with the factory because it's more efficient and allows our customer service team and salespeople to show visitors the products and how they're manufactured first-hand."

The state-of-the-art facility that was designed by Atelier Moderno — and awarded the best showroom design prize by the Grands Prix du Design in 2020 for its 11,600 sq. ft. showroom — was built for expand-



The freestanding Deco vanity was inspired by Art Deco and features flowing, rounded curves.

ed production capabilities, a suite of corporate offices, design lab, training facility and showroom.

The showroom is filled with intimate spaces that highlight individual products in separate vignettes, while the training facility provides an interactive space for visitors to learn about the factory, in addition to the various processes used to create its design-driven, contemporary bathtubs, sinks, shower bases and furnishings.

One such process is the fabrication of Wetmar Bio, a material Wet-

style pioneered that is the industry's first recipe for soy and mineral stone, used in the manufacturing of composite bath fixtures such as bathtubs, sinks and shower trays.

"Most bath fixtures made of acrylic contain petroleum-based additives and years ago, in 2012 when Wetstyle was first working on the material, there were issues with lead paint in products being imported from overseas as well," explains Wolinsky. That led the Canadian company to develop the eco-friendly material, which was

the recipient of a Good Design award for green innovation.

"So we started working on a formulation that replaced those additives with a vegetable-based extract, which is a by-product of soy. That by-product is mixed with other binding agents and 50 per cent mineral stone and poured into a mold where it cures before being taken out, sanded, polished, and water tested."

The material is stronger, retains

Wetstyle

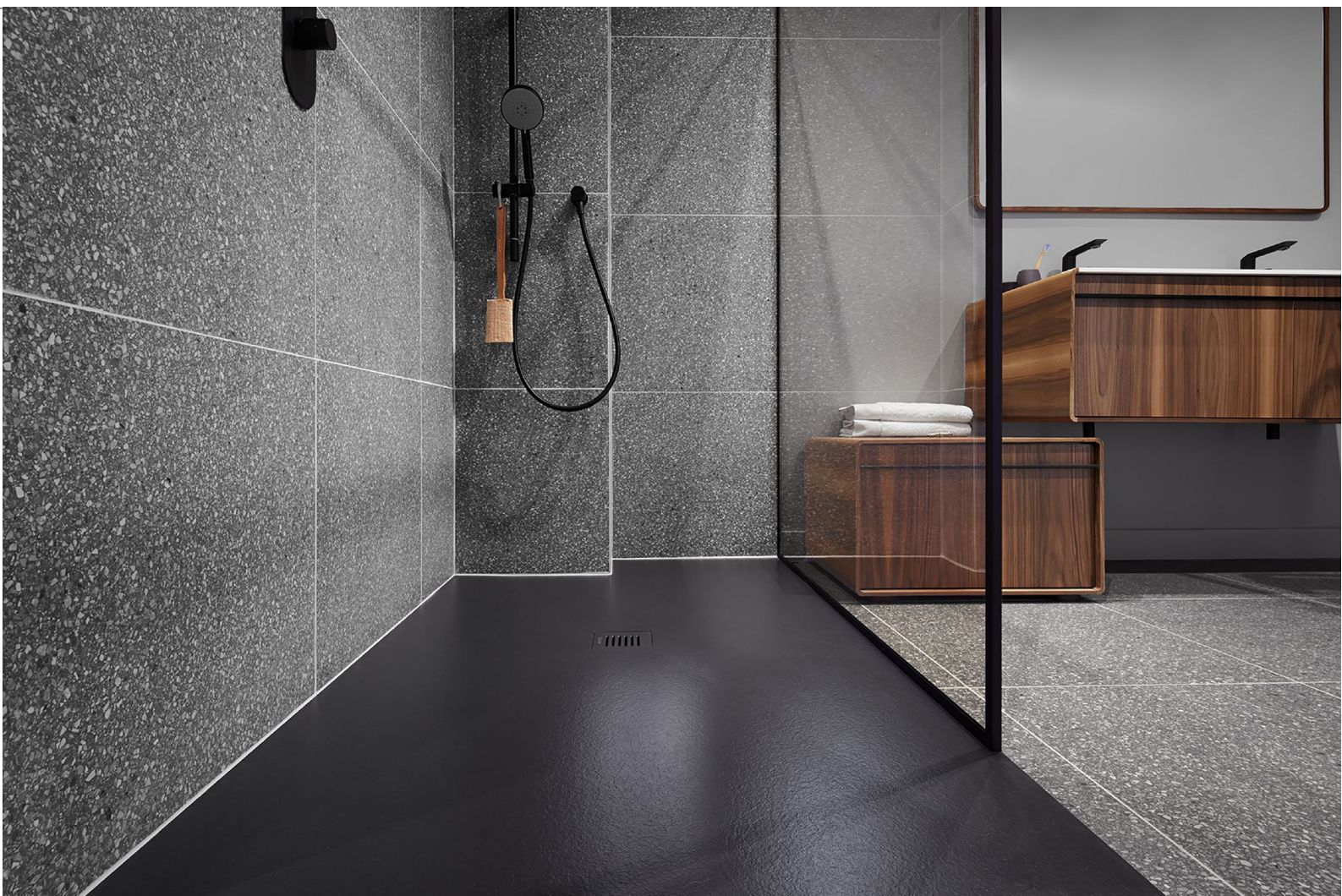
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heat better and is easier to repair than its plastic counterpart, according to Wolinsky, but it's also more labour intensive to produce, which is why it's more expensive.

The new showroom has nearly 30 sink models and 20 bathtub models to choose from that are made of the proprietary material, as well as close to 10 furniture collections that are made in Rosemont at Wetstyle's furniture factory, using Forest Stewardship Council-certified woods that are formaldehyde free, and contain low to no volatile organic compound adhesives.

Many of the models, such as the seashell-inspired design of the Couture bathtub and the modular M collection have received international recognition and industry awards. Also among the display are the Good Design award winners for innovation, which include the Stellé vanity collection, Mood bathtub and Feel shower bases.

"We have a modern design esthetic that's very simple and



The Feel shower base in black slate is made of a single slab of the company's proprietary material and replicates the natural texture, and feel, of stone.

- ALL PHOTOS: ADRIEN WILLIAM, COURTESY OF V2COM

SEE DESIGN ON E3



The 11,600 sq. ft. showroom was awarded the best showroom design prize by the 2020 Grands Prix du Design.



The C collection console is inspired by minimalism and made of stainless steel.

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I’VE FOUND MINE.”

— Mansfield

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Design

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well-proportioned, with nice attention to detail,” says Wolinsky, who took helm of the brand in 2008 and leads the Wetstyle Design Lab. “Our design inspirations come from a few different places including the company’s industrial design team and product designers, such as Pierre Bélanger, Joël Dupras and Patrick Messier, as well as third-party designers.”

Wolinsky — who attends all of the industry’s big events such as Salone del Mobile as part of his role in the company’s design lab — says some of the upcoming trends to look out for in bathroom design include more colours, polished brass and chrome finishes, curved shapes and an eclectic mix of styles. Wetstyle always aims to push the envelope and create innovative, stylish pieces.

“Traditional white is still the

most popular shade but we’re seeing more grey and black tones, which we’re coming out with in 2022: a new slate colour and a new grey colour for our fixtures,” says Wolinsky.

“On the furniture side, we’ve introduced a new pacific blue lacquer, which is a rich, beautiful colour that matches up perfectly with walnut, oak and other wood finishes.”

Wetstyle is currently working on releasing a new collection inspired by the Bauhaus movement and the White City of Tel Aviv, which has thousands of Bauhaus buildings, as well as developing new methods and tools to help with the labour shortages and manufacturing delays associated with the pandemic, which are ongoing.

“It was difficult manufacturing in Quebec before the pandemic and now it’s become extremely challenging,” Wolinsky says. “We’re looking at bringing in tools like artificial intelligence to help us address those challenges.”



The minimalist design of the Stellé pedestal in walnut fits easily into any powder room or bathroom, no matter its size.



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