



The Spanish designer is on a mission to rescue the bathroom from dismal functionality and turn it into a place to linger. His art-deco inspired range for Bisazza is just the start

For Jaime Hayón, the bathroom is the most important part of a house. For too long, the designer believes, the room that's usually the smallest has been the lowest priority. "Especially in the last 30 years, the bathroom has been neglected. It's become functional and almost non-pleasurable."

Keen to instil more personality into the space, the acclaimed Spanish designer has created a new range of bathroom furniture for Italian luxury brand Bisazza, the first of several it plans to release. Though Bisazza is well known for its mosaic tiling, there's not a mosaic to be seen. Instead, Hayón has produced an elegant art-deco inspired collection, where black and white marble combines with hi-gloss ceramic and copper-finished piping in a design inspired by the glamour of the 1930s, and strikingly different to mainstream designs.

"They are all similar," he complains. "Why does everyone make only square bathrooms? What happened to colour? There's a lot of white, white, white... My pieces are more expressive, more pleasurable and have a splendour that was lost in the last century. The use and quality of materials was incredible then, but isn't now. That's why I want to go back to it."

The sinuous forms of the Bisazza Bagno range are reminiscent of the bathroom he designed for Barcelona-based ArtQuitect in 2006, but the textures are very different. Where that featured smooth, flat surfaces and bold colours, his new work is more subtle. Hayón says he greatly prefers working with natural materials and was keen to use marble and ceramic for the project, combining industrialised production with hand-finishing and assembly.

"I'm a fan of things that are really well made. I use old-school materials that have been around for years and are really alive and natural," he says. "They are durable and

## PROFILE

WORDS:  
Pamela  
Buxton

**Right**  
Hayón's designs blend art deco with Scandinavian and Japanese influences

**Left**  
The range includes console tables and basins, as well as bathroom accessories

**Below**  
A monochrome palette and a mix of marble and ceramics evoke the glamour of the 1930s



very long-lasting. I didn't want materials that in a few years go yellow. The way marble gets old is so beautiful."

His collection is a combination of console tables, cabinets, basins, baths, brass wares, shower screens, mirrors and lighting. Hayón has developed a distinctive tubular frame system, available in either copper-finished aluminium or chrome steel, to house the basin/counter units and mirrors. These can also be accommodated in tables. Ceramic basins have deep bevelled edges and have hi-gloss white, black, gold or platinum finishes, with mixer taps to match. These are combined variously with black Marquina or white Carrara marble counters and shelves. Mirrors and lamps can also be mounted on the counters. Baths are metacrylic and

housed in a hi-gloss white or black varnished wooden frame. Bathroom cabinets are in white or black lacquered wood.

The biggest challenge, says Hayón, was to retain the purity of the design concept and the hand-finished quality throughout the rigours of the development and production process. He is particularly happy with the bath – its form and the way it combines with the wooden bathside accessories. As well as the obvious art deco influence in the colours and form of the collection, Hayón has drawn inspiration from the Japanese approach to combining different materials such as wood and ceramic.

But on one level Hayón may have failed. While he strives to restore style to the bathroom, some fans have already decided the range is too attractive to be confined there. When the collection was launched at the Frankfurt and Milan fairs, there was interest in using elements from the range in other parts of the house.

Bisazza Bagno's second collection is designed by Marcel Wanders and will be launched in September at the Cersaie fair in Bologna. This will display a more baroque approach, but again will not feature mosaics. A third range by an as-yet-undisclosed Italian designer will follow.