

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### ***gia* 2015-2016 – IHA GLOBAL INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS FROM 23 COUNTRIES CELEBRATED AT THE INTERNATIONAL HOME + HOUSEWARES SHOW**

CHICAGO (January 29, 2016) – The International Home + Housewares Show and International Housewares Association (IHA), the global sponsors and organizers of the IHA Global Innovation Awards (*gia*) program, today announced the national *gia* winners of 2015-2016 – including 25 outstanding home and housewares retailers from 23 countries around the globe.

The *gia* program was created by the IHA and International Home + Housewares Show to foster innovation and excellence in home and housewares retailing throughout the world. Since the launch of *gia* in 2000, there have been close to 350 *gia* retail award winners, from over 40 countries on six continents.

The *gia* competition is structured on a two-tier level, national and global, to honor independent and multiple location home and housewares retailers for excellence in several business categories:

- Overall mission statement, vision and strategy
- Store design and layout
- Visual merchandising, displays and window displays
- Marketing, advertising and promotions
- Customer service and staff training
- Innovation

Each national *gia* winner is invited to the International Home + Housewares Show in Chicago where the global *gia* jury, consisting of four experts representing Asia, Europe and the Americas, plus a rotating group of co-sponsoring trade publication editors from around the world, will select up to five *gia* Global Honorees, the winners of the Martin M. Pegler Award for Excellence in Visual Merchandising and the *gia* Digital Commerce Award for Excellence in Online Retailing.

The 2015-2016 national *gia* winners are:

<b>Country</b>	<b>Store Name</b>	<b>Store website</b>
Argentina	Claudia Adorno	<a href="http://www.claudiaadorno.com">www.claudiaadorno.com</a>
Australia	Pigeonhole	<a href="http://www.pigeonhole.com.au">www.pigeonhole.com.au</a>
Brazil	Etna	<a href="http://www.etna.com.br">www.etna.com.br</a>
Canada	Lakehouse Home Store	<a href="http://www.lakehousehomestore.com">www.lakehousehomestore.com</a>
China	Wu Ben Liu He	<a href="http://www.ilubans.com">www.ilubans.com</a>

Colombia	Bojanini Art Gallery	<a href="http://www.bojanini.com">www.bojanini.com</a>
Denmark	Illums Bolighus	<a href="http://www.illumsbolighus.dk">www.illumsbolighus.dk</a>
Eastern Europe	Kaubamaja, Estonia	<a href="http://www.kaubamaja.ee">www.kaubamaja.ee</a>
France	La Trésorerie	<a href="http://www.latresorerie.fr">www.latresorerie.fr</a>
Germany	Homann schenken–kochen–wohnen	<a href="http://www.schenken-kochen-wohnen.de">www.schenken-kochen-wohnen.de</a>
Ireland	J&B Hope Ltd	<a href="http://www.jandbhope.com">www.jandbhope.com</a>
Italy	Puesme Home	<a href="http://www.puesme.com">www.puesme.com</a>
Japan	La Cucina Felice	<a href="http://www.lacucinafelice.com">www.lacucinafelice.com</a>
Malaysia	Kitchen Shop	<a href="http://www.katrinbj.com">www.katrinbj.com</a>
Middle East	Home Centre, United Arab Emirates	<a href="http://www.landmarkgroup.com">www.landmarkgroup.com</a>
Netherlands	K'OOK!	<a href="http://www.k-ook.nl">www.k-ook.nl</a>
Poland	BBHome	<a href="http://www.bbhomeonline.pl">www.bbhomeonline.pl</a>
Russia	Cité Marilou	<a href="http://www.cite-marilou.ru">www.cite-marilou.ru</a>
Spain	Cooking the Kitchen Company	<a href="http://www.cookingtkc.com">www.cookingtkc.com</a>
Turkey	Karaca Home	<a href="http://www.karaca-home.com">www.karaca-home.com</a>
UK	Lords	<a href="http://www.lordsathome.com">www.lordsathome.com</a>
Uruguay	Siferiz Shopping	<a href="http://www.sineriz.com.uy">www.sineriz.com.uy</a>
USA	Whisk	<a href="http://www.whiskcarolina.com">www.whiskcarolina.com</a>
USA – Gift Retailers	Leon & Lulu	<a href="http://www.leonandlulu.com">www.leonandlulu.com</a>
USA – Internet/ Catalogue	Chef's Resource	<a href="http://www.chefsresource.com">www.chefsresource.com</a>

During the 2016 International Home + Housewares Show in March, the winners are honored at a festive awards dinner, where the 2015-2016 *gia* Global Honorees, the winners of the Martin M. Pegler Award for Excellence in Visual Merchandising and the *gia* Digital Commerce Award for Excellence in Online Retailing will be announced. Other *gia* highlights at the International Home + Housewares Show include a *gia* showcase in the Hall of Global Innovation, in Lakeside Center Lobby, where visuals of the national *gia* winners' award-winning store design and branding ideas, examples of exquisite visual merchandising and innovative displays are on display. Banners for the honored retailers can be seen in the walkway that connects the Grand Concourse and the Lakeside Center.

*gia* is more than an awards program. Representing retailing excellence around the world, it is part of a larger education initiative that includes seminars by retail experts, columns in international housewares publications and educational sessions at events in sponsors' home countries. Part of *gia*'s educational offering, on March 7, the four *gia* Expert Jurors, Martin M. Pegler, Wolfgang Gruschwitz, Scott Kohno and Henrik Peter Reisby Nielsen, will conduct a special session in the Innovation Theater of the 2016 International Home + Housewares Show, with topic *Top Ten Retail Trends for 2016*.

*For more information about the IHA Global Innovation Awards (gia) program, the co-sponsors, or participating in 2016-2017, contact Piritta Törrö at [piritta.torro@inspiredconnection.fi](mailto:piritta.torro@inspiredconnection.fi). Additional information on the *gia* program is also available online at [www.housewares.org/show/gia-retail](http://www.housewares.org/show/gia-retail).*

*For more information on the 2016 International Home + Housewares Show, taking place in Chicago on 5-8 of March, and to pre-register for an entrance badge, visit [www.housewares.org](http://www.housewares.org).*

**To follow are short descriptions of the 2015-2016 national *gia* winners:**

## **Argentina**

**Claudia Adorno – [www.claudiaadorno.com](http://www.claudiaadorno.com)**

**Buenos Aires**

After 17 years, Claudia Adorno is more than a simple store. What started out as a local bazaar, has become a component of Buenos Aires' culture and design. This local concept offers a distinct and innovative proposal with its own style, adding new fans year after year.

Today, having a piece of Claudia Adorno's collection decorating a room of your home doesn't go unnoticed as the popular brand is recognized not only for the quality and uniqueness of the products, but also for its status and prestige.

## **Australia**

**Pigeonhole – [www.pigeonhole.com.au](http://www.pigeonhole.com.au)**

**Sydney**

Founded in 2007 as a tiny one-stop shop in a long forgotten arcade in the heart of Perth, Pigeonhole is now a budding flock of 10 stores across Australia with a wholesale/distribution agency in Sydney and a production office in Seoul. Pigeonhole specializes in uncovering offbeat design found off the beaten track, bringing together a delightfully eclectic collection of fashion, gifts and homewares. The glue that holds Pigeonhole together is its pursuit of fresh design, its involvement in the creative community and its commitment to helping customers find the perfect gift for themselves or for someone they love.

## **Brazil**

**ETNA – [www.etna.com.br](http://www.etna.com.br)**

**Sao Paulo**

Based in Sao Paulo, Etna has grown rapidly in 10 years and now covers 83% of the Brazilian market. Etna pioneered a new one-stop shopping concept in Brazilian home furnishings retailing offering consumers a place where they can find everything for the home. Attractive environments inspire and delight shoppers as home furnishings, home décor and housewares are displayed in comfortable room settings that suggest decorating ideas.

The innovative environments are created by Etna's staff architects and invited designers. Displays include rugs and curtains, lighting, furniture, décor, home organization and kitchen & bath items reflecting trending fashions. Etna offers high-design products at affordable prices to enhance everyday life. The larger stores include children's playrooms and restaurants for family shopping. On a weekend, a store usually attracts 6,000 people.

## **Canada**

**Lakehouse – [www.lakehousehomestore.com](http://www.lakehousehomestore.com)**

**Kelowna, BC**

Situated along a pristine lake in the spectacular Okanagan Valley in British Columbia, Lakehouse opened its doors just five years ago. But from day one, owners Ben and Sue Boschman have wowed both residents and tourists by expertly showcasing products that have both purpose and world-class design.

Like a great recipe, Lakehouse Home Store combines unique ingredients to create an exceptional and unexpected shopping experience. That experience is enhanced by outstanding customer service and in-store events. With the slogan “Live. Cook. Play,” Lakehouse captivates customers with a retail environment that perfectly reflects the upscale home and cottage culture of the region.

## **China**

**Wu Ben Liu He – [www.ilubans.com](http://www.ilubans.com)**

### **Jinan**

Wu Ben Liu He offers Ming-dynasty inspired furniture based on traditional Chinese culture, using the international design language to create new and innovative products. The result is a pleasing blend of aesthetic form and utilitarian function that transforms life through design.

Wu Ben Liu He’s retail store allows its customers to harmoniously integrate classical grace and simplicity into today’s modern lives. The store aspires to become a pioneer in the development of Confucius values and culture with design solutions.

## **Colombia**

**Bojanini Art Gallery – [www.bojanini.com](http://www.bojanini.com)**

### **Barranquilla**

Bojanini Art Gallery was founded 23 years ago in Barranquilla, Colombia, by artist Ana Cristina Bojanini. Bojanini is known for its original art work, the permanent exhibit of its canvas paintings and for the colorful handmade products designed to inspire its clients.

The galleries provide an assortment of products, including paintings, gifts, home accessories, décor and furnishings. The pillars of Bojanini’s work are creativity, versatility and originality. Her art and paintings are considered modern expressionism, and the strength of her work is derived from her extraordinary use of colors of the Caribbean.

## **Denmark**

**Illums Bolighus – [www.illumsbolighus.dk](http://www.illumsbolighus.dk)**

### **Copenhagen**

Illums Bolighus has been the international flagship of modern living, design and furnishings for generations. It is a real utopia that always takes the lead when it comes to presenting both Danish and international innovation. In this trendsetting interior-design store, handmade Danish furniture can always be found alongside the latest designs and modern lifestyle products.

Located in the heart of Copenhagen, this design forum shines with large display windows decorated with the very latest interior trends. These decorative displays tempt large numbers of Danish and international customers to shop in an attractive, visionary and inspirational shopping environment.

## **Eastern Europe**

### **Kaubamaja, Estonia – [www.kaubamaja.ee](http://www.kaubamaja.ee)**

#### **Tallinn**

The Kaubamaja concept store is one of the only home stores in the Estonian market that offers a wide selection of branded home goods, presented in solution-based categories according to customer needs. They are also well-known for services including a wedding & gift registry, curtain making, engraving, gift wrapping and floral design. All of their sales staff are solution-oriented consultants who make Kaubamaja stand apart from the competition.

Kaubamaja is one of the few home stores to offer a selection of products made locally by Estonians. The retailer also mentors design students through a special program about retail sales and operations while encouraging local design and production.

## **France**

### **La Trésorerie – [www.latresorerie.fr](http://www.latresorerie.fr)**

#### **Paris**

With La Trésorerie, Elsa Coustals, Lino Landau and Denis Geffrault have developed a new vision of retail trade – one in which the history of the product takes center stage. Once an office for collecting taxes, the space has been renovated into a modern and welcoming environment with every room of this 400 m<sup>2</sup> (4,300 ft<sup>2</sup>) retail store devoted to a particular universe: kitchen, dining, lounge, bathroom and office. Parisian consumers appreciate the responsible approach of La Trésorerie, which selects its suppliers based on qualitative, social and environmental criteria.

## **Germany**

### **Homann schenken–kochen-wohnen – [www.schenken-kochen-wohnen.de](http://www.schenken-kochen-wohnen.de)**

#### **Dülmen**

Authentic, honest, competent, friendly – these are the strengths of Homann schenken-kochen-wohnen. Products are interchangeable, but the staff is one of a kind—enthusiastic and passionate about retail. Their most loyal customers are the more than 2,000 members of the Cookery and Baking Club, who come from far beyond the city limits of Dülmen. The aroma that fills the sales rooms improves the general mood and atmosphere throughout the store, and attracts even more customers. Their customer communications strategy focuses not only on their loyalty card, boasting more than 8,000 regular customers, but increasingly on social media. In doing so, Homann schenken-kochen-wohnen is successfully attracting the interest of young customers.

## **Ireland**

### **J&B Hope Ltd. – [www.jandbhope.com](http://www.jandbhope.com)**

#### **Cavan**

Some days you deserve freshly-brewed, hand-ground coffee, a hearty stew simmering in a cast iron Dutch oven, soft light from an oil lamp and the comforting silence of wet clothes drying on a clothes line above the fire. A brief return to the past, even if tomorrow means back to the fast-paced routine.

Welcome to J&B Hope Ltd., Cavan's Amish-influenced, Irish-American General Store whose motto is "keepin' life simple." Founded on a belief that life's simple pleasures can be the best. J&B Hope's focus

is on helping people reconnect with times when things were done slow and easy. Walk into J&B Hope, smell the coffee, slip back in time and make yourself useful.

## **Italy**

**Puesme Home – [www.puesme.com](http://www.puesme.com)**

### **Cittadella**

A “green” and white building, 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> (10,760 ft<sup>2</sup>) exhibition hall and a strong idea are the distinctive features of the Puesme Home showroom. Established in 2007, designer Erika J. Puesme was driven by a strong passion to create an innovative creative hub. Her vision became a meeting place, a space for thinking and a source of design ideas; a stage for cultural and artistic initiatives, which has now turned into a point of reference for the industry. Puesme Home is a dynamic and inspiring design store that stands out because of its range of international brands and the constant search for innovative products and events.

## **Japan**

**La Cucina Felice – [www.lacucinafelice.com](http://www.lacucinafelice.com)**

### **Tokyo**

With its rich supply of high-quality, high value-added products, La Cucina Felice has won the support of customers who desire safety, peace of mind and authenticity from their purchases. The broad selection of seasonal and holiday products offers a coordinated experience all the way from the kitchen to the table.

La Cucina Felice not only offers great products, but also employs a knowledgeable staff providing sales consultations, helping to secure trust and loyalty from their customers.

## **Malaysia**

**Kitchen Shop – [www.katrinbj.com](http://www.katrinbj.com)**

### **Subang Jaya**

Kitchen Shop is a wonderland of chic kitchenware, savvy electrical tools and home appliances. Visitors will find global brands of culinary tools, high-tech gadgets and classic utensils to outfit their cooking space. The store only sells products that meet its twin core philosophy of “Healthy Living” and “Conserve Energy.” It enriches customers’ lives by offering personalized training on the benefits, use and care of the innovative tools it sells, and by conducting cooking classes on a regular basis with professional chefs. Their tag line of “pay less for more” is about bringing the world’s best kitchenware direct from factories at affordable pricing.

## **Middle East**

**Home Centre, United Arab Emirates – [www.landmarkgroup.com](http://www.landmarkgroup.com)**

### **Dubai**

Since 1995, Home Centre has been in the business of making homes beautiful. What started with a single store in UAE is today the most preferred home shopping destination in the Middle East, with a wide network of 90 stores across 10 countries.

When Home Centre began 20 years ago, its vision was to inspire people to create homes that are beautiful, functional, within budget and a true expression of themselves. Today, Home Centre celebrates

that vision with a wide range of home furnishings, bringing inspiration into every room. Their brand promise of featuring new designs, the latest trends and delivering outstanding quality at a great value is stronger than ever!

## **Netherlands**

**K'OOK!** – [www.k-ook.nl](http://www.k-ook.nl)

### **Wormerveer**

What started off as an exciting adventure by two friends 10 years ago, K'OOK! has now become a flourishing business with a free-standing kitchen, a large collection of cookbooks, a coffee bar and plenty of space for everything to do with cooking, kitchen products and fine dining.

But no matter how much has changed at K'OOK! over the past 10 years, the team's enthusiasm has remained the same. Their customers have good reasons for saying: "this is really a shop that makes you want to buy things!"

## **Poland**

**BBHOME** – [www.bbhomeonline.pl](http://www.bbhomeonline.pl)

### **Warsaw**

BBHome has always strived to offer luxury home furnishings and interior design & decoration services. Agnieszka Pudlik, a designer and owner of BBHome, has daily contact with customers, creating a family atmosphere that allows promoting her own unique style. The retailer currently has six stores in Poland and an online store selling throughout Europe. Next year, BBHome plans to expand by offering franchise locations and by selling products to businesses.

## **Russia**

**Cite Marilou** – [www.cite-marilou.ru](http://www.cite-marilou.ru)

### **Moscow**

From its beginning in 1991, Cite Marilou has traveled a great distance from two small stores in Ufa to 44 not-less-than 1.000 m<sup>2</sup> (10,760 ft<sup>2</sup>) stores throughout Russia, including 16 locations in Moscow.

Even with a rich history, Cite Marilou is a modern store offering fresh concepts. Their success represents a mixture of 25-years' experience in retail combined with the deep understanding of their customers' needs, desires and expectations.

Cite Marilou is proud of their accomplishments and looks forward to remaining original into the future.

## **Spain**

**Cooking The Kitchen Company** – [www.cookingtkc.com](http://www.cookingtkc.com)

### **Barcelona**

"Cooking" has become iconic in Spain's culinary world with stores in both Madrid and Barcelona. Cooking also has a fantastic partnership with Canal Cocina, Spain's largest TV channel specializing in the cooking world.

Canal Cocina's website, <http://canalcocina.es>, has 1.4 million monthly visits from more than 800,000 unique visitors. Their customers are gourmet connoisseurs, mainly middle to upper middle-class women aged 30 to 55 years. In recent years, interest has grown from young, urban males as well. Canal Cocina ensures an excellent positioning of Cooking and their associated brands and products, which results in significant increases in online sales.

The flagship store in Madrid is a must-see destination for all cooking lovers and is frequently visited by famous people from the world of finance, art and television.

## **Turkey**

### **Karaca Home – [www.karaca-home.com](http://www.karaca-home.com) Istanbul**

KARACA began in 1973 through the courage, hope and enthusiasm of a father and his sons. The family has always respected tradition and prioritized creativity, inspiration and intimate communication with consumers, which makes them feel personally connected to the KARACA brand. This unique relationship has made KARACA the leader in glassware, home appliances and home textiles in Turkey over the past 40 years.

Through its retail stores, KARACA HOME, the company displays its creative collections in a comfortable shopping environment where consumers can discover products and product combinations that best suit their lifestyles. With the same enthusiasm it had in 1973, KARACA HOME continues to share its creativity to intensify the moments people enjoy with friends and family.

## **UK**

### **Lords – [www.lordsathome.com](http://www.lordsathome.com) London**

Lords is a family owned, specialty housewares retailer with six stores on local high streets. The brand is dedicated to being a local business for customers providing an exemplary level of service. While strong branding is common across all stores, individually the shops are designed with the surroundings and customer in mind. Each environment aims to be welcoming and inviting, providing a superb experience through excellent customer service and well-curated ranges that are merchandised with thought and care. Touch points such as a free delivery service, provenance stories, iPads to browse products beyond the store and in-store demonstrations make shopping at Lords a memorable experience.

## **Uruguay**

### **Siñeriz Shopping – [www.sineriz.com.uy](http://www.sineriz.com.uy) Rivera**

In 1987, Mr. Hilmi Husein Abdullah, an Arab immigrant, decided to develop a new kind of business in a poor and unexplored region. He created a retail store that offered his customers “lots of opportunities” and a focus on selling high-quality products. The first time a consumer makes a purchase, they know they have a quality product with a useful warranty, something that even today is hard to find within in the region.

Siñeriz Shopping started with a simple 200m<sup>2</sup> (2,150 ft<sup>2</sup>) store, but grew by buying the retail space on either side and now has both a 10.000m<sup>2</sup> (107,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) store and a 2500m<sup>2</sup> (27,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) location on the city's most important shopping street.

## USA

### **Chef's Resource – [www.chefsresource.com](http://www.chefsresource.com) Laguna Hills, CA**

Founded in 1999 and based in Laguna Hills, California, Chef's Resource has been delivering hand-picked kitchen tools to their customers for more than 16 years. Several now well-known gourmet brands were first brought to the online marketplace by the retailer.

Chef's Resource is an award-winning, family-owned business that combines the gourmet expertise of a local store with the power, resources, availability and inventory depth of an online retailer. And to create an unbeatable shopping experience, for several of their top brands including All-Clad, Wüsthof and Shun knives, they carry every piece in their assortments!

## USA

### **Leon & Lulu – [www.leonandlulu.com](http://www.leonandlulu.com) Clawson, MI**

Leon & Lulu is serious about good design, fabulous service and great pricing, but it has a sense of humor about everything else. Located in the historic Ambassador Roller Rink, the 1,400 m<sup>2</sup> (15,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) store is a one-of-a-kind, eclectic mix of upscale furniture, unforgettable gifts, housewares, women's clothing and accessories.

In addition to the fabulous merchandise and friendly, fun atmosphere, the store also serves as a unique event space, hosting 73 events in 2015, 63 of which benefitted local charities.

Leon & Lulu is currently expanding with the opening of The Show, located in the vintage Clawson Theater.

## USA

### **Whisk – [www.whiskcarolina.com](http://www.whiskcarolina.com) Cary, NC**

When customers walk into Whisk, they instantly feel the store's energy and know that they have discovered a really special place. Whisk is unexpected.

Owners Dan and Diana Saklad have created Whisk in their own way, hiring a staff of passionate cooks with no retail experience, building flexible work schedules for employees and creating a surround-sound sensory experience for customers.

Just two-and-a-half years old, the 390 m<sup>2</sup> (4,200 ft<sup>2</sup>) kitchenware store and cooking school in Cary, North Carolina, has become *the* place for amateur and professional cooks to learn, buy quality kitchenware and find inspiration for their culinary creations.