

AN INTERVIEW WITH TINA NICOLE OF NATHAN ANTHONY AUGUST 2015



Founded in 2005, [Nathan Anthony](#) is one of today's most sought after modern, stylish, and luxurious furniture makers. All products are designed by Tina Nicole and Khai Mai, and are handmade at its factory in Los Angeles. Here, Tina Nicole talks to AD360 about her love the business, design influences, and more.

It has been said that you have a love affair with furniture. How did this relationship develop? What draws you to furniture making?

There is no better feeling than to be able to greet each day being creative and make a living doing something you're passionate about. We each grew up in ambitious, creative families. Khai, at 23, started a mattress and furniture factory with his father's influence. I learned to sew, craft, and build things as a child from my grandmother. In my youth, I'd add my own touches to furniture, like a hand-painted fleur-de-lis pattern.

At Nathan Anthony, we design, engineer, and produce our own furniture products. It's like having your own crayon box and you get to color inside or outside the lines. Furniture making allows us to bring together our own personal styles, and express our unique voice. It also allows us to continue our lifelong love for creating beautiful things.

How would you describe the design aesthetic of your furniture?

We have a broad expression of styles across our furniture offering. For the past few years, our design aesthetic has shifted to a modern silhouette that is relaxed, sophisticated, and inspired by the major modern art and design movements: Cubism, Midcentury, De Stijl, and Art Deco.

It appears that art, fashion, and architecture have influenced your designs. Would you give an example of a collection(s) that clearly show these influences?

The Dutch De Stijl artistic movement of the early 20th century was comprised of famed painters such as Piet Mondrian and Theo van Doesburg, and architects Gerrit Rietveld and Robert van 't Hoff.

For our Elan collection, we take cues from this period, with the designs focused on the interplay of form and color. Asymmetrical and geometric patterns are sewn into the fabric used in our upholstery designs, which help to convey the movement's aesthetic ideals. The faceted panels may be upholstered in an infinite number of fabric combinations. Custom orders may feature monochromatic looks with contrasting textures or, more boldly, the mixing of bright primary colors.

Your furniture is modern but your manufacturing techniques stay true to old-fashion quality production. Why is this still so important?

In this digital age, people still want things made by hand. Furniture making is a labor of love and a delicate craft. When human hands make something, it takes on an individual beauty unlike anything else. There's heart and soul in it. Our staff is encouraged to take extra time to perfect tailoring. So much furniture in the marketplace is nice but ends up looking the same, but at Nathan Anthony, we know it's the subtle details in the application that distinguish one from the other.

Your Gobi collection is a comment on minimalism.

Yes, with its pared down design, the Gobi collection reflects our love for minimalism. Cushions are thin-edged and linear, yet built for comfort, which is in keeping with Nathan Anthony's soft-modern approach.

The group also features a bed with similar, understated shaping. The only points of floor contact are at the headboard, which is down-filled, and the simple foot rail. The bed's thin-profile side edges have a flanged seam that adds visual interest.

With clean lines and no exposed wood or metal on the frames, these pieces are ideal for complementing a wide array of home accent pieces.

If you could only have one piece of furniture in your home, which one would you choose? Why?

The Sabine sofa. It's a comfortable statement piece. It's like having a timeless sculpture in your home.

Has social media had an impact on your business? If so, how?

Yes. Online social networking has increased the awareness for our brand tremendously. It's allowed us to connect with designers and design enthusiasts that we otherwise would not meet. By posting every day, we are in the conversation and making connections. We are kept abreast of tips and trends as they happen. It's important to stay informed and on top of things.

What's the most challenging part of furniture making?

Not only do we make standard in-line product, we also do custom sizes and use customer-owned material. So, it's bringing together the many aspects involved in furniture making—designing, engineering, producing, handling, and delivering our furniture products—in an uninterrupted, rhythmic flow.

What's the most thrilling?

When customers feel they've purchased something very special; something they will live with daily that uniquely defines them and their individuality.

What's next for Nathan Anthony?

Our fans would like to see us expand our product offering into other categories of furniture. That means more beautiful things for us to look forward to creating together.