

THOUGHT-STARTER: HOW CAN TECHNOLOGY ENCAPSULATE SERENITY?

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01 : 03 : 2019 Technology : Design : Smart Homes



How can we design technology that promotes mindfulness? Kaz Oki, CEO and co-founder of Mui Lab, envisages a more natural interface experience.

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The company is launching Mui in June, a type of intelligent furniture that will bring a philosophical approach to hardware. 'When we started designing Mui we selected several potential materials, including stone and fabric, but we ended up focusing on natural wood because, conceptually, it related best to our philosophy in its reference to the Japanese tradition of forest bathing,' explains Oki.

By using wood, users engage with the interface in a different way. 'We have put natural material between man and machine, or between man and information,' Oki says. 'This changes the relationship between humans and machines. At the moment we feel a coldness from them, but by using natural wood, the perceived value of information shifts more towards humanity.'

'Consumers are tired of looking at screens all the time. Companies need to start thinking about completely redesigning their user interfaces,' he continues. 'At Mui we promote silencing the product, or silencing the information display, until it is needed.'

Look out for the full Q&A.