

Moving up

Tokyo [CIBONE]

Ever since it opened in 2001, Tokyo interiors shop Cibone has been a beacon for fresh design and imaginative retailing. The shop was the main attraction at Bell Commons, a landmark building designed by Kisho Kurokawa in 1976. When the property's owners announced they were planning to demolish and rebuild, Cibone's founder Masaki Yokokawa (pictured) was forced to look for a new home. "We were thinking about renovating anyway," says Yokokawa, "We'd been there for 14 good years and built up layers of history." He ended up choosing a bright, open space just across the road on the second floor of a brand new building.

The shop opened in July with one of Cibone's famous parties (dress code: white). "We haven't changed our identity," says Yokokawa. "We're still about good things but we've piled up years of experience. When we started we were thinking about bringing things from overseas to Japan. Now we're thinking about going in the other direction, selling more products made in Japan so it's half and half." Cibone still carries select pieces from the Dutch brand Moooi and also stocks towels from Imabari and wooden boxes handmade in Matsumoto.

The new Cibone is a leaner version, tightly edited and styled with flair, blending a Workstead floor light from Brooklyn with a dresser from Danish company Gubi. "We've narrowed the selection down and blended everyday products with vintage and unique pieces." The shelves are also filled with kitchenware,



Japanese ceramics, toiletries and a selection of clothes from the likes of Knott and Taro Horiuchi, plus shoes from New Balance and E Porselli.

Some of the signature pieces from the old shop, such as Piet Hein Eek's reclaimed wood table, are still there. But Yokokawa's eye is also drawn to new talent. Recent arrivals include the Beetle chair by Danish-Italian duo GamFratesi and industrial stacking chairs from French design group Ciguë. Yokokawa, whose company Welcome also runs the popular design shop Today's Special, says that the Japanese market has changed since Cibone opened. "Design is more about lifestyle now. People don't just want the name of the designer: they want to know what's behind the design." — FW
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