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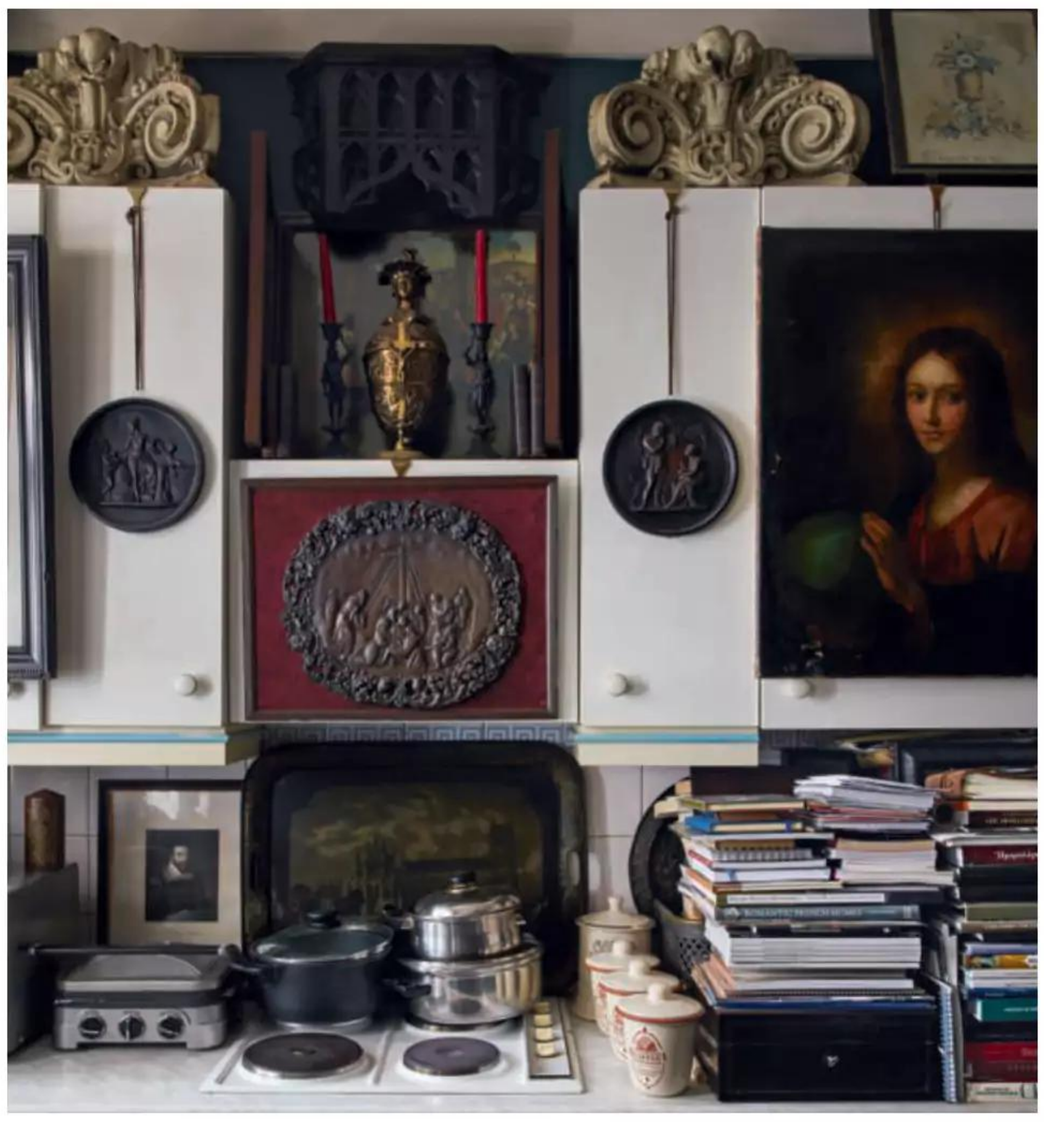
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Cover: pan theistic – in a Greek Orthodox priest's kitchen in west London, saintly plaques overlook a stack of pots. Hobnob with 'the father' in his flat on page 134. Photograph: James McDonald

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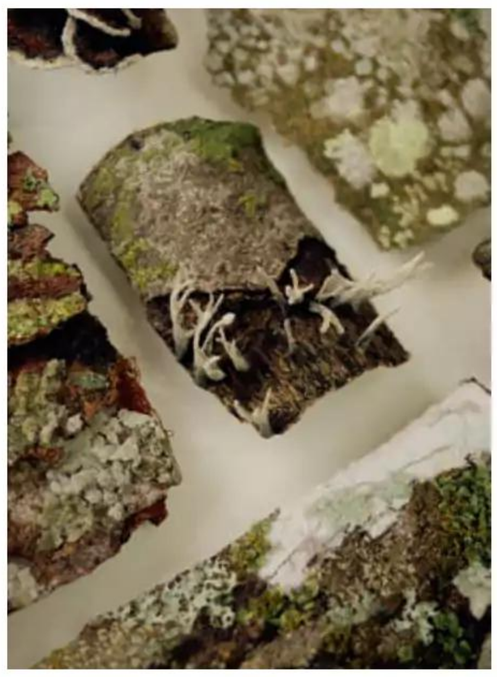
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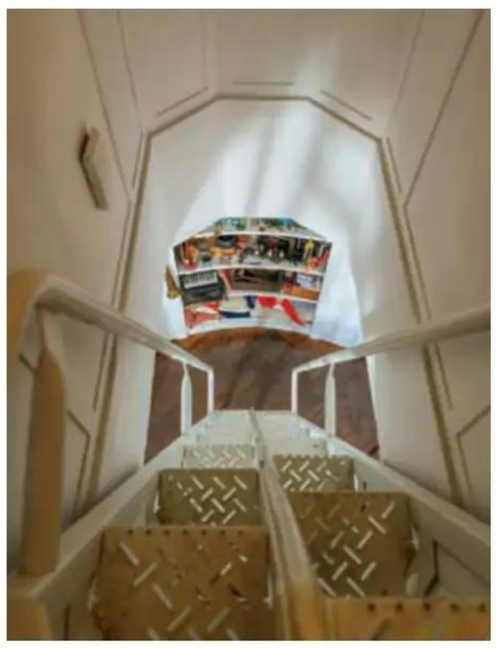
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photo Giovanni Gastel

Standard sofa and **Chiara** armchair by Francesco Binfaré.
"Smart" backrests and armrests, which can be modeled as desired, offer maximum comfort.
The seating system is modular to meet every need.

Scrigno container and **Brasilia** table by Fernando and Humberto Campana.
A mosaic of mirror splinters. Each piece is unique and handmade.

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Tracie Rozhon

Walker Evans gave a 12-year-old Tracie 'the Zeiss Ikon he used to shoot subways', sparking a passion for capturing interiors. Today a prolific writer on the subject, she's also eternally restoring her own 'wonderful wrecks – plus Rokeby, my husband's family's great house' (*WoI* June 2024). 'So when people ask where *exactly* we live, I reply: "in the car".' This issue sees her call on fellow obsessive Sumner Freeman (page 160).



Pascal Chevallier

A lensman with a glittering career in fashion photography – 'I'm still proud of my first accessories shoot in 1985 for *Vogue*, with André Leon Talley' – Pascal is often asked for advice by those just starting out. 'I always tell them: never listen to others and don't apply ready-made recipes.' Clearly the owner of a certain petite Parisian flat (page 102), with its bed-cum-dining room and statue saturation, would agree.



Ed Panar

'I love how a photograph is like an open secret,' says Ed: 'It can appear so full of detail, and yet it withholds as much as it reveals.' A 2022 Guggenheim fellow, he's used to pondering his work's resonances, including with other art forms. Just as he sees his craft as inviting 'a form of time travel', so the installation *Darkhouse Lighthouse*, which he visits from page 110, 'totally transports you, whisking you through deep time'.



Roli O'tsemaye

Roli's fond of Teju Cole's counsel that 'using mostly ordinary words, spiced every now and again with an unusual one, persuades the reader that you're in control of your language'. It was a lodestar while shepherding *Collector's Series*, a magazine on the African art world, into being. Nigeria's Sacred Grove, however, has a power beyond language. 'Each intricately carved wall holds countless stories' (page 118).



Elaine Feeney

For Elaine, 'writing fiction is like homework; I have to do the math before I can get to the fun bit: colouring in. Poetry, on the other hand, comes with high emotion and low light, often with a glass of something dark, like scotch or red wine. It sounds romantic because it is.' Her Object Lesson on a Walter Osborne piece also has her distinguishing between what's idyllic and what isn't (page 192). 'The expressions haunt me.'



Lexi Bishop

It was at a Moma show while at grad school that Lexi caught the contemporary-art bug. 'Called *Soundings*, it was my first run-in with audio art. Blew my mind, really.' Since, she's striven to pass it on, including by opening a gallery in Pittsburgh. In both her curation and her writing, Lexi's quest is to pin down a work without any 'pretentious jargon'; her latest stop, over on page 110, is *Darkhouse Lighthouse*.

ED PANAR PORTRAIT: NATHAN ALEXANDER WARD. ELAINE FEENEY PORTRAIT: NATHALIE MARQUEZ COURTNEY. LEXI BISHOP PORTRAIT: JAMES MURTON

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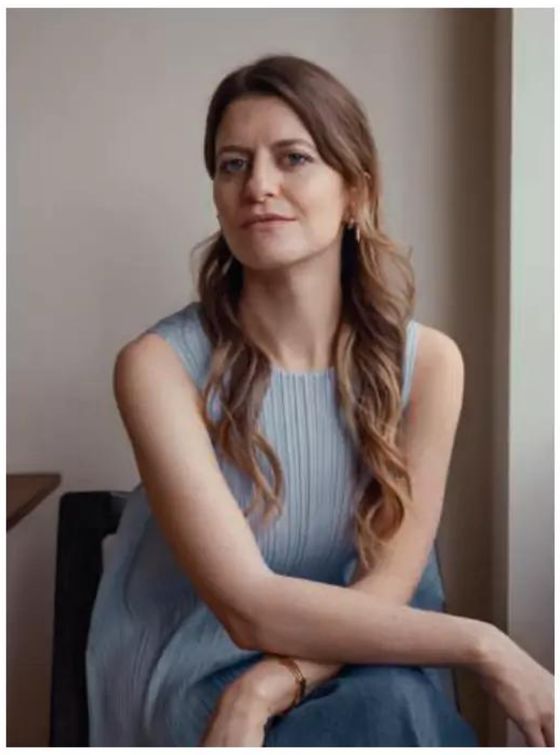
A CONTEMPORARY DECLARATION

WATERWORKS

آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات ، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی دکوراسیون داخلی
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Editor's Letter

November 2024



I often think of Alan Bennett's line from *The History Boys*: 'The best moments in reading are when you come across something – a thought, a feeling, a way of looking at things – which you had thought special and particular to you. Now here it is, set down by someone else, a person you have never met, someone even who is long dead. And it is as if a hand has come out and taken yours.' To me this is the perfect summation of what it is to read a good book (and, indeed, the power of a good writer). When I was small, reading was *the* thing. Once I discovered it, it was impossible to stop and the desire to write followed swiftly behind (although frankly at that point it was more an exercise in demonstrating just how much of the dictionary I'd ingested). I inherited books from my brothers and cousins and became a regular fixture at the school library, devouring new words, strange ideas and imagined worlds. Many *WoI* staffers were raised on a similar diet of fiction and fantasy, so when in the early days of 2024 the idea of a writing competition was mooted in the office there was delight all round. We've long known that our readers are an imaginative bunch, so why not invite you to put pen to paper?

And so, alongside the excellent people at Montblanc, we launched the first World of Interiors Writing Prize – and what a joyful experience it has been. Our crack in-house team, deftly spearheaded by our digital director, Elly Parsons, read and discussed the 750-odd entries. Again and again we were impressed by how daring, skilled and creative the submissions were, filled with funny, beguiling characters and evocative ideas. Turn to page 41 to read our winning texts and, if you're tempted to take part, keep an eye on the magazine and website for news of the next prize.

As autumn brings with it a slew of new exhibitions, we turn our attention to another sort of world-building: that of making and collecting art. From page 48, Tania Compton pays a visit to artist Amanda Cobbett's studio, where she discovers a rich ecosystem of moss, bark and fungi so brilliantly convincing it is impossible to believe these pieces are all embroidered from thread.

On page 102, we marvel at an apartment in Paris which is as small as it is chic. Who knew a Murphy bed and Louis XVI furniture could exist so happily alongside one another? Further afield, and arguably a touch less hospitable, is a house in landlocked Pittsburgh (page 110). Except that it's not exactly a house, it's a kind of magical thinking writ large: a fully functional lighthouse that has been built within an abandoned, burnt-out property.

Spirituality is expressed through art from page 118, where Roli O'tsemaye explores the Ọ̀ṣun Ọ̀ṣogbo Sacred Grove in Nigeria, a place of pilgrimage that has been carefully restored by many devoted hands after decades of slow deterioration. Magnificent and mysterious, the site draws thousands of visitors each year.

As Hannah Keegan writes on page 129, 'reality doesn't really interest' artist Laure Prouvost. Her studio is a pleasing mix of practicality and outlandishness; inhabited by the curious motifs that populate her work – breasts, octopuses, birds, fish and teabags. Here, the improbable is rendered 'essential creative fuel'.

Onwards to our cover story, shown in all its glory on page 134: the home of one Greek Orthodox priest. This, to my mind at least, is the true embodiment of 'living with art'. The kitchen in particular rises to the challenge, with formica cabinets hung with 18th-century black-and-white gravures and antique stained-glass panels and religious icons resting on the countertop.

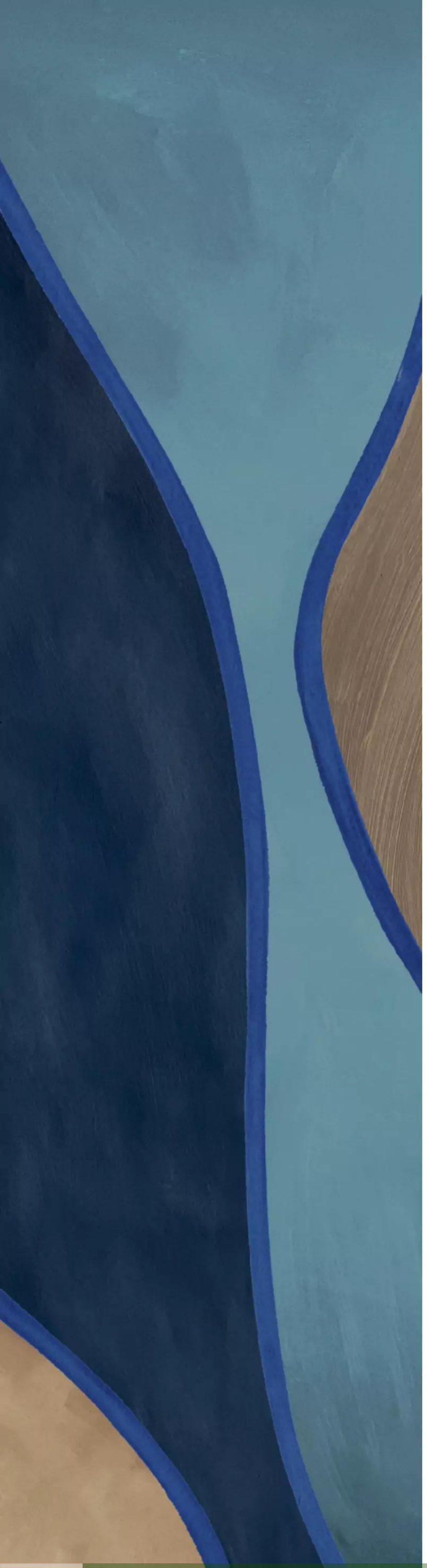
Mattia Bonetti exists on the flip side of this coin, as is revealed by the house that he lately furnished in Lugano, Switzerland (page 144): his pieces are cool and slick, with a dash of candy-coloured surrealism thrown in for good measure. It's a stark contrast with the home of Belgian artist James Ensor (page 154). Much like the house he lived in for much of his life, the painter and print-maker's work was compelling, mystifying and often outright unsettling; this year marks 75 since his death.

We close the issue with a visit to a Fifth Avenue flat where all sorts of different styles – Art Deco and Nouveau, Renaissance and various Revivals – run riot. 'The apartment represents the great enthusiasms I've gone through', says its owner, Sumner Freeman, and as such every object has a story to tell (page 160).

This issue in particular celebrates the multitude of ways in which people choose to live. I suspect the inhabitants of at least one of these houses would be utterly bemused at the thought of living in any of the other spaces set out on these pages – and thank goodness for that. What a relief that we're not all conforming to the same criteria. One person's minimalism is another's misery and vice versa. So, to go back to Alan Bennett's observations about reading, I hope that within this edition you will find words and thoughts that feel both familiar and unknown; comforting and uncanny. Above all, I hope you live in a space that feels completely yours and, better yet, a little bemusing to someone else ⊛ *Emily Tobin, editor*

PORTRAIT: VIRGINIE KHATEEB

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ACCESSORIES BATHROOMS BEDS
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CURTAINS, POLES & FINIALS
FABRICS FURNITURE HARDWARE
KITCHENS LIGHTING
OUTDOOR FABRICS
OUTDOOR FURNITURE PAINT
TILES TRIMMINGS & LEATHER
WALLCOVERINGS

ABI INTERIORS ALEXANDER LAMONT + MILES ALTFIELD ALTON-BROOKE AND OBJECTS ANDREW MARTIN ARTE ARTERIORS ARTISANS OF DEVIZES AUGUST & CO BAKER LIFESTYLE BELLA FIGURA BRUNSCHWIG & FILS C & C MILANO CASAMANCE CECCOTTI COLLEZIONI CHASE ERWIN CHRISTIAN LEE (FABRICUT) CHRISTOPHER HYDE LIGHTING COLE & SON COLEFAX AND FOWLER COLLIER WEBB COLONY BY CASA LUIZA CRUCIAL TRADING DAVID HUNT LIGHTING DAVID SEYFRIED LTD DE LE CUONA DEDAR DONGHIA AT GP & J BAKER ECCOTRADING DESIGN LONDON EDELMAN EGGERSMANN DESIGN ELITIS ESPRESSO DESIGN FLEXFORM FORBES & LOMAX FOX LINTON FRATO GALLOTTI&RADICE GEORGE SPENCER DESIGNS GLADEE LIGHTING GP & J BAKER HAMILTON LITESTAT HARLEQUIN HECTOR FINCH HOLLAND & SHERRY HOULÈS HOUSE OF ROHL HUMA KITCHENS IKSEL DECORATIVE ARTS INTERDESIGN UK JACARANDA CARPETS & RUGS JAIPUR RUGS JASON D'SOUZA JEAN MONRO JENNIFER MANNERS DESIGN JENSEN BEDS JULIAN CHICHESTER KINGCOME KRAVET KVADRAT LASKASAS LEE JOFA LELIÈVRE PARIS LEWIS & WOOD LINCRUSTA LIZZO LONDON BASIN COMPANY LONDONART WALLPAPER LOOM FURNITURE MARVIC TEXTILES MCKINNON AND HARRIS MINDTHEGAP MODERN BRITISH KITCHENS MORRIS & CO MULBERRY HOME THE NANZ COMPANY NOBILIS OFICINA INGLESA FURNITURE ORIGINAL BTC OSBORNE & LITTLE PAOLO MOSCHINO LTD PAVONI PERENNIALS SUTHERLAND STUDIO PHILIPPE HUREL PHILLIP JEFFRIES PIERRE FREY PORADA PORTA ROMANA QUOTE & CURATE RALPH LAUREN HOME RESTED ROBERT LANGFORD ROMO RUBELLI THE RUG COMPANY SA BAXTER ARCHITECTURAL HARDWARE SACCO CARPET SAMUEL & SONS SAMUEL HEATH SANDERSON SAVOIR BEDS SCHUMACHER SHEPEL' SIMPSONS THE SPECIFIED STARK CARPET STUDIO FRANCHI STUDIOTEX SUMMIT FURNITURE THG PARIS THREADS AT GP & J BAKER TIGERMOTH LIGHTING TIM PAGE CARPETS TISSUS D'HÉLÈNE TOLLGARD TOM RAFFIELD TOPFLOOR BY ESTI TUFENKIAN ARTISAN CARPETS TURNELL & GIGON TURNSTYLE DESIGNS TURRI VAUGHAN VIA ARKADIA (TILES) VISPRING VISUAL COMFORT & CO. WATTS 1874 WENDY MORRISON WEST ONE BATHROOMS WIRED CUSTOM LIGHTING WOOL CLASSICS ZIMMER + ROHDE ZOFFANY ZUBER

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ANTENNAE

Virginia Woolf had it in *Orlando* that 'we write, not with the fingers, but with the whole person. The nerve which controls the pen winds itself about every fibre of our being, threads the heart, pierces the liver.' It strikes us that her authorial pen seems to take on the quality of a great needle – and that texts are often thought of in textile terms. You weave an argument, spin a yarn. This November, our front section is also shot through – though less viscerally than in Woolf's telling – with a material seam. That link to writing isn't lost on us either: David Lipton teases it out in News, stitching EM Forster's vistas together with St Ives school-style blinds designed to mimic views; Elfreda Pownall, equally, marvels in Books at the history of printed fabrics, which have long conjured far-off worlds just as vividly as those other productions of the press. It's an appropriate common chord since (drum roll, please) this issue proudly presents our inaugural writing prize's winning entries, each weaving its own window to a singular habitat and the delicate ecosystem it contains. Come to think of it, there's also a strong metaphorical tie between textiles and the natural world – the web of life, as it were – whose spidery and silk-producing seamsters appear to need none of our training. Hamish Bowles's column this issue marvels at the embroiderers making Mother Earth their muse over at Highgrove gardens, while, for our Antennae Feature, we look agape at the creations of Amanda Cobbett, who renders lichen, moss and fungi on her sewing machine with such accuracy you can almost smell the bosky undergrowth. Keep that aroma in mind, for our Table pages serve you the forest floor's actual fare, specifically ceps, king among all mushrooms in Daisy Garnett's book. We've also rounded up the tools with which to gather them: baskets, blades, brushes, the lot, and all princely enough to match your quarry for quality. Our stylists have been foraging for much more besides, too: mirrors with which to check yourself for mud specks after days spent sniffing about the soil, a pint-sized ark of little ceramic animals and, relatedly, a set of sofas we've sent floating across Lake Maggiore – because why not? Virginia said it best: 'Blame it or praise it, there is no denying the wild horse in us.'

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In a house in Lugano, Switzerland, a cast-iron Art Nouveau side table bears a Lego Big Ben assembled by the owner's daughter. See page 144. Photograph: Valentina Sommariva

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What's in the air this month

by David Lipton



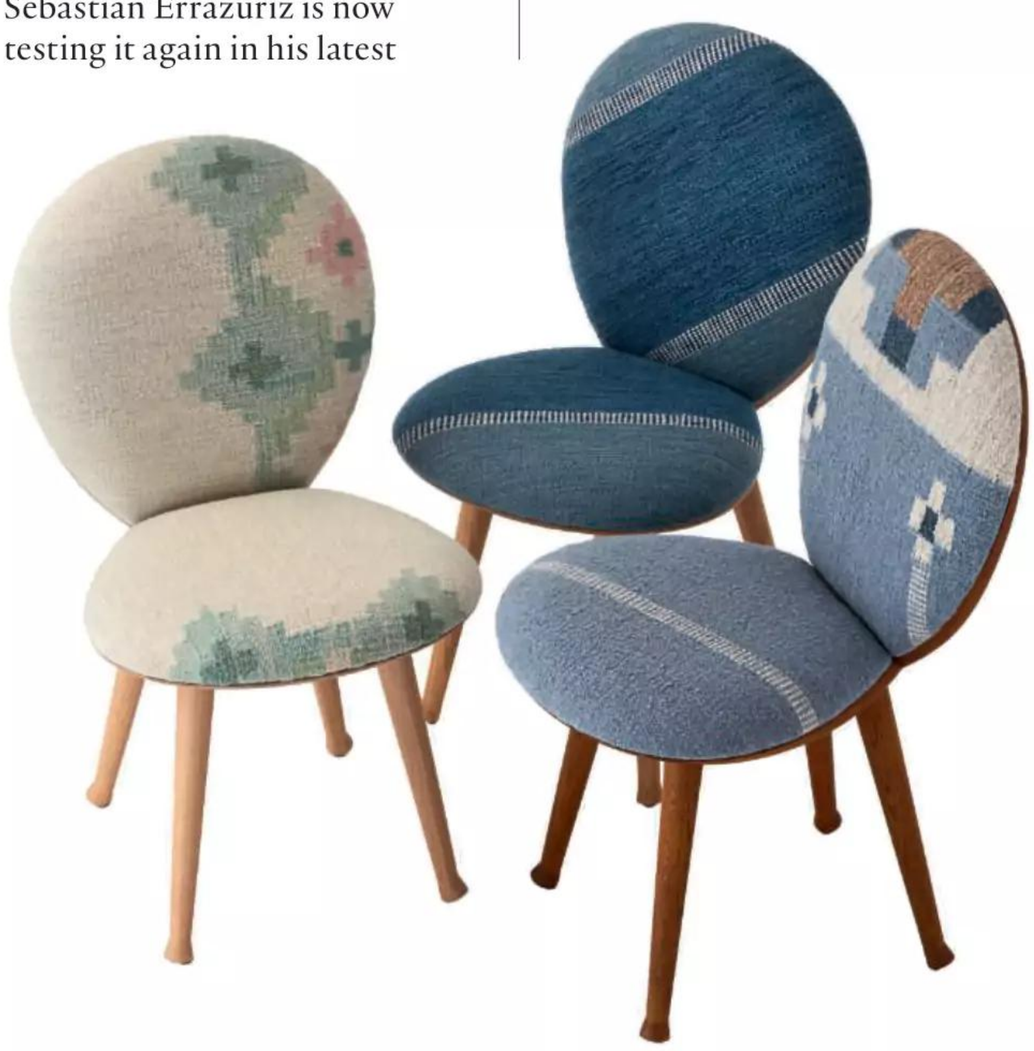
Athletes' Feat

The German archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann stated that imitating the Greeks was the only way to achieve greatness. Every generation, it seems, must weigh that assertion afresh: regardless of Michelangelo's tombs or Wedgwood's vases, designer Sebastian Errazuriz is now testing it again in his latest show, *Rebuilding Reason*. While the forms are familiar, the attitudes are not: for, aided by AI and digital 3D technologies, he has wrestled with ancient Greek athletes, forcing them into the functional postures of furniture. Humour and historic bricolage have long typified the Chilean's work: here two stacked Belvedere Apollo busts are bathetically surmounted by a table top. Imitation it may be, but it's no less innovative for all that. Shown left: 'Euphoria and Melancholia' side table, £14,100. *Visit davidgillgallery.com*

Snap 'em Up

Why clams are said to be happy nobody knows. Certainly, they gladden designer Pierre Yovanovitch's heart. The molluscs in question happen to be the perfect vehicle for his latest furniture collection – made in France and upholstered in antique Swedish flat-weave rugs. The 15 sprightly seats of the range are an extension of his simple but historically informed manner. Yovanovitch founded his atelier in 2001, introducing the furniture range three years ago, and the Nordic *röllakan* rugs offer a compelling through-line. So if Aristotle is correct that the proof of happiness is in the achieving, the Frenchman's joy sounds convincing. Shown: 'Röllakan' chairs, $12,000 each. *Visit pierreyovanovitch.com*





Faber and Fibre

Britney Spears immortalised the demand 'gimme more' in 2007, but the attitude is ancient. Napoleon, for example, couldn't get enough stuff, filling the Louvre with thousands of looted artworks. Paolo Veronese's vast *Marriage at Cana*, for instance, was rolled all the way to Paris from a monastery on the Venetian island of San Giorgio Maggiore. In the very same refectory in which it once hung, the craft biennial Homo Faber has adhered to a similar magpie maximalism. As a backdrop to the 800 exhibits in its last show, its organisers unfurled two new rugs in the Palladian space, which now houses the Fondazione Giorgio Cini. Designed by film director Luca Guadagnino (*WoI* May 2024) and architect Nicolò Rosmarini, they were produced with Jaipur Rugs – to whose collection in India the pieces have returned. As a whole, the show manifests the enduring aesthetic principle that more is indeed more. Shown above: 'Padiglione delle Capriate', Jaipur Rugs. *Visit homofaber.com/jaipurrugs.com*

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Tree Dimensions

From egg yolk to arsenic, calfskin to plant pith, humans have always painted with and on whatever lay closest to hand. But while the oil-on-canvas apotheosis has long been lauded, the tree-bark works of north Australia's Arnhem Land gained less attention. It was in the 20th century that painting with natural pigments on eucalyptus bark became the predominant vehicle for the *miny'tji*, or clan designs, in aboriginal art. Staging a corrective exhibition, Asia Society in New York is showcasing eight decades' worth of such artworks from the town of Yirrkala. Including 33 new pieces, it will not only celebrate the history, but demonstrate the enduring art practice, of Australia's indigenous community. They've been barking up the right tree unnoticed for way too long. Shown below: *Maḏayin: Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Painting from Yirrkala* runs until 5 Jan. *Visit asiasociety.org*

Strings to its Bow

Strangely, the most famous instrument in Britain isn't even real. Hanging on a door





at Chatsworth House, Jan van der Vaardt's trompe-l'oeil violin has been deceiving visitors for centuries. Inspired by such illusionism, Sibyl Colefax and John Fowler employed the artist George Oakes (*WoI* Oct 2022) to sprinkle some much needed postwar wonder on to their clients' walls. Indeed, for nine decades now, the firm has been defining the heights of interior ornamentation in this country. In the 1990s Oakes was followed by his daughter, Lucinda, into a painterly business that was in decline – with Colefax seemingly its sole champion. Thus, to mark its birthday, a show of her work will take place at its Pimlico Road shop – honouring an art form that has seen the venerable brand remain at the peak of interior decoration since the 1930s. Shown above: Lucinda Oakes, grisaille panels, £3,900 each. *The Lucinda Oakes Selling Exhibition* runs until 26 Oct. *Visit sibylcolefax.com*

A Blind Eye

While EM Forster imagined many a magnificent vista beyond his 'room with a view' in Florence, he did so in a realistic style. By contrast, Modernist painters were then transforming the world beyond their windows. Straight outdoor depictions are likewise not enough for textile designer Jennie Jackson. Inspired by the St Ives school, with her bespoke roman blinds she is turning windows into frames. Handmade to commission and printed in her Reigate studio, they imbue interiors with self-wrought scenery. Thus, even amid the doldrums of daily life, these blinds do not shut out the world but bring it to even more colourful life. Proof that no matter the room, everyone can conjure their own views. Shown below: 'Sculpture Garden', from £800. *Visit jenniejackson.co.uk*

Silver Wedding

'Send him to our hills,' wrote John Ruskin, 'and let him study there what nature means by a buttress, and what by a dome.' The Victorian art-theorist meant architects, but he could equally have been referring to craftsmen. Silversmith Shinta Nakajima has been steeping himself in the natural world to reinvigorate defunct decorative devices, such as acanthus leaves and ears of wheat. Studying first in Tokyo and then in Sheffield,



he brings to his work a rigorous technical skill. Nakajima's work alludes obliquely to Gothic art, in which, interestingly, Ruskin saw the Western aptitude for imitation of flora and fauna combined with an Eastern emphasis on the ornamental design. Having featured in our December 2022 design portfolio, the Japanese artisan is now exhibiting at the prestigious Goldsmiths' Fair: a showcase to test the mettle of nature's decoration. Shown above: Shinta Nakajima, *Fugacious Vessel/ Acanthus X*, from £11,000. Week two of Goldsmiths' Fair runs 1–6 Oct. *Visit goldsmithsfair.co.uk*



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Fantastic Beasts

What is a home without a pet pot or pot pet? David Lipton rounds up a class menagerie of domestic animals decorative and functional



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

1 'Porcupine', by Ardmore Ceramics, $124, Pascoe Gallery. 2 'Goose' jug, by Phil Arthur, £450, Primavera Gallery. 3 'Court Dog', £1,800, Joseph Dupré. 4 'Pájara', £439 approx, Nuria Figueiredo. 5 'Hare on Rooster', £560, Paul Young. 6 'Croc Looking Up', £85, Eleanor Meredith. 7 'Great Tiger', £305 approx, Stefan Mager's Art. 8 'Cockerel' sauceboat, by Prue Piper, £810, 8 Holland Street. 9 'Looker', by Shirley Vauvelle, £200, Yew Tree Gallery. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ⊛

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Business and Pleasure

Using handcrafted furniture from Jumbo Collection, Oniro Group's interior designers have reinvented this Madrid apartment into a dual-purpose space: now, it's both a setting to entertain clients and a family home-away-from-home



Deciding how you want your home to look is one thing: bringing these lofty ideas to life is quite another. Fortunately, the ability to execute even the most ambitious of projects is at your fingertips, thanks to the Oniro Group's comprehensive interior-design services.

Take, for example, one of its most recent projects. The elegant hideaway in the centre of Madrid was commissioned by a prominent businessman as both a place for his family to stay while in town and an environment suitable for entertaining clients. Emerging from the colourful, chaotic streets of the Spanish capital into this oasis-like space is like stepping into a particularly plush jewellery box: an impeccably designed palace with cleverly placed furniture from Jumbo Collection throughout. It's a haven of de luxe materials defined by warm creams, glimmers of gold and flashes of emerald green that allude to the verdancy of the city's parks.

Its understated sophistication can be attributed, at least in part, to the extraordinary craftsmanship of each Jumbo Collection piece. All of the brand's furniture is made in its entirety in Italy, marrying classic skills honed over generations with innovative new features. The result? Characterful pieces such as the 'Coquille' dining table, with its handmade top and carved-glass columns lit by LEDs, the classical curve of an 'Enigma' armchair and a neat, nesting pair of circular 'Andromeda' coffee tables. The brand thrives on exclusivity, and bespoke orders aren't just welcome – they're eagerly anticipated.

From planning the initial stages to placing the finishing touches, Oniro Group's interior designers will guide you through the entire process of creating a space that not only lives up to, but exceeds, even the wildest expectations ⊛ *For more information, visit jumbocollection.com*

Top: Jumbo Collection's exquisite pieces can transform any space into a restful escape from the city. Opposite: the entrance hall of the Madrid apartment designed by Oniro Group instantly envelops guests in an aura of serenity

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ANNOUNCING THE WINNERS OF

Writing home

THE WORLD OF INTERIORS WRITING PRIZE

Nearly half a year ago, we at *The World of Interiors* issued a hopeful call for submissions to our first ever writing prize. Since, we've been blown away by the range and richness of the responses we received. But now the wait is over. As competition director Elly Parsons announces, it's time to unveil our two winners and the runners-up

COMPETITION COORDINATOR: DONNA SALEK

Thank you to the 750 students, designers, photographers, scientists, philanthropists, teachers, social workers, conservationists, painters, actors and retirees who put pen to paper and entered our inaugural writing prize – and with such vivid, compelling and often soul-baring work. The youngest entrant was 18, and the eldest 84. Time and again we were struck by the clear care taken in crafting these rich and original pieces, be they poignant and highly personal stories of finding homes away from home, vivid romps through the bedrooms of drag queens, or ambitious, transportative prose poems. Choosing the winners has been both uplifting and immensely challenging. The competition set out to find a selection of outstanding writers from the USA and the UK, and the judges were blown away by the standard of the entries we received. 'It's ultimately so moving to have so many intensely talented people turn it on, so to speak, for *The World of Interiors*!' says judge and creative director at large Hamish Bowles.

Entrants were given the deliberately ambiguous prompt of 'Writing Home' and tasked with creating a piece of short creative writing in whatever style, mode or form they would like – whether poetry, prose, journalism or creative non-fiction. A small team of four dedicated staffers who understand the magic ingredients of a *World of Interiors* piece carefully read each entry before whittling the applications down to a longlist of just 12 – each one outstanding and totally distinctive. These were then read, re-read and pored over by our expert judging panel, including Hamish, *WoI* editor Emily Tobin, esteemed editor Shelley Wanger and acclaimed playwright Jeremy O. Harris. They knew going in that the winning pieces would have highly original ideas and an exceptional quality of writing, but ultimately, as Emily puts it, 'we chose texts that moved us deeply; that stayed with us long after reading'.

The final six entries are presented here, with one overall winner from the UK and USA and four worthy runners-up. If you missed out this year, stay tuned as the writing competition will be returning in 2025 with a new theme and another chance to feature on our pages. Head to worldofinteriors.com for the latest announcements about next year's competition, and to read even more of our favourite stories on the longlist ❀ *Judges: Emily Tobin, Hamish Bowles, Shelley Wanger, Jeremy O. Harris. Readers: Damian Thompson, Leyla Spratley, Donna Salek, Elly Parsons. Created in collaboration with Montblanc*

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UK WINNER

Tayiba Sulaiman

Tayiba Sulaiman is a writer and translator from Manchester, England. She recently completed a literary translation mentorship in German with the National Centre for Writing. As the judges discussed her piece *The End*, there was a unanimous sense it was 'complex' and 'mysterious' – other words reverberating around the room were 'mystical' and 'dark', 'rich' and 'alive'. 'Her story holds a great deal of power,' says Hamish, with Jeremy agreeing: 'I felt like I was in VR.' Shelley says the opening line 'hits you like a gut punch'.



US WINNER

Mary Bergman

Mary Bergman is a preservationist from Provincetown, Massachusetts, and now lives on Nantucket Island. When not writing or swimming, she can be found at the registry of deeds or in the dunes. Mary's story, *We Could Never Live Here Again*, swoops over each sense one by one, just as it sculpts the 'wind-blown Liza Minnelli' within it. 'It felt like a celebration of this specific moment in time,' says Emily, 'and the sadness that can be glossed over by someone else's experience in that same space.' Shelley describes the piece as 'unbelievably original'.



UK RUNNER-UP

Jack Greenlees

Though he is new to creative writing, Jack Greenlees will not be unfamiliar to fans of *Shetland* and other British TV shows. The actor was raised in Perthshire, Scotland, and studied English literature and art history at the University of St Andrews before moving to London to work across film, television and theatre. He loves to write and run in his spare time. 'This story was so palpable,' says Jeremy of Jack's vivid Highlands prose.



US RUNNER-UP

Janae Lu

Janae Lu is an aspiring writer who favours free-verse poetry and creative prose. She's a junior at Tesla Stem High School and the 2024–2025 Seattle Youth Poet Laureate. More than one judge picked up on individual lines in her piece, drawn in by particular atmospheric details: how 'rooms smelled like sage', the image of shoulders that 'curl inward like a late November leaf'. 'It quickly and succinctly captured me,' says Jeremy.



UK RUNNER-UP

Lee Louise

'Lee's piece is a great illustration of abstracting the prompt,' says Jeremy. 'It's really strong, emotive writing.' Shelley agrees that 'there's a lot of feeling here: I think none of the other entries are quite like this'. Lee Louise writes, occasionally reads words aloud, makes books and zines and teaches literature. She is open to cross-arts collaborations and is currently working on a pamphlet of poems about the witch Sybil Leek.



US RUNNER-UP

Nick Spain

'This story was so complete,' says Emily of Nick Spain's fraught and nostalgic *Domestic Bliss*. 'I found it moving, but funny in a dry way.' Nick is a designer who works chiefly across interiors and gardens, dabbling on occasion with styling commissions and creating furniture pieces. Born and raised in east Texas, he now splits his time between Brooklyn, New York, and the foothills of western Massachusetts.

MARY BERGMAN PORTRAIT: MATT COSBY

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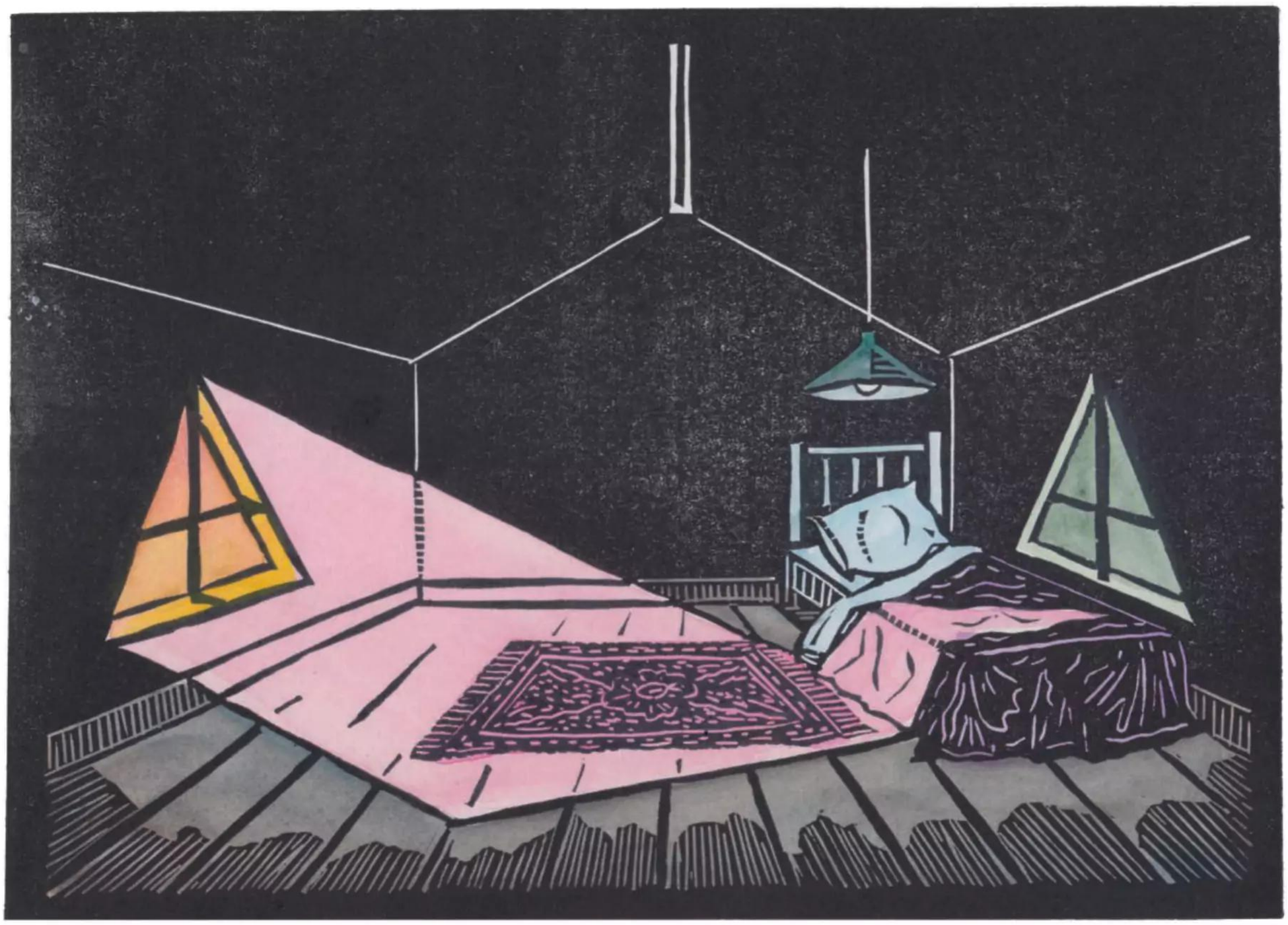


ILLUSTRATION: CHRISTOPHER BROWN

The End, by Tayiba Sulaiman

UK WINNER

When we moved for the first time, I was stowed in the attic like an empty suitcase. The room was barely high enough to stand and terribly insulated, but I only had eyes for the two triangular windows, one on each side of the house. We never bought curtains, so that winter I rose with the sun. Looking out, I'd put my cheek to the glass and see the tree outside the far window turn pale behind the condensation of my breath, the blue peaks blanching in the distance, as if, from their vantage point, they had seen something coming.

When my mother's sister-in-law came to visit, she sat in the kitchen not touching her coffee as usual. She wore a necklace with a real compass on it and I was convinced she was the most glamorous woman alive. Every time she came, I would make her show me how it worked. That day she showed me the qibla. 'It's helpful to have,' she said absent-mindedly, picking at a knot in the chain that held the compass between her collarbones, 'because on the day the world ends, the sun will rise from the west'.

I stood very still, focusing on memorising her exact words. As soon as she was gone, I raced upstairs to the attic. A sliver of orange coming through one window was making jewels out of specks of dust. I shuffled back and forth, bent over slightly, using the direction of prayer that she'd shown me to figure out which way my windows faced. I guessed that one looked southwest and the other northeast.

I had been hoping this discovery would be comforting: waking up with the sunlight on my pillow would assure me life would go on. Instead, I began to worry about the logistics of her claim. Where does the sun rise first? Sunrise for one half of the earth is sunset for the other, so would the sun make a U-turn?

When we moved on to flats, the new room had a singular small square window on one side. When she came over, she told me that it faced east. If the sun ever rises backwards, I thought, I'll find out too late: the light would kiss concrete while I slept through the spectacle, and by the time I got the news, my last day could well already be over. That year I spent hours in the library drawing turrets with windows on all sides. No-one has ever explained to me how on earth the sun could ever set off on its usual rounds, change its mind, throw the towel in and turn its back on creation, but I still don't sleep with the curtains drawn. If I can just find that turret, I'll be the first to know when it happens. And in the glory of the end, the whole left side of my sleeping body will be lit up like a beacon ⊛

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We Could Never Live Here Again, by Mary Bergman

US WINNER

We moved to that house the year our deaf neighbours on Mechanic Street rediscovered disco, the summer MacMillan Wharf was rebuilt. Bass cranked loud; walls undulated. Cher sang 'Do You Believe in Life After Love?' at a volume outmatched only by the ping of pier pilings pounding, acoustic echo bouncing from Long Point to Provincetown. I was saturated in sound.

My mother and I ripped up the old carpet and splatter-painted the plywood subflooring. We kept the walls as they were – a deep hunter green. Our house was decorated with other people's discards: paintings a frustrated artist tossed in with the recycling were rescued from the roadside on Monday mornings, before the trash trucks came. When the power went out, we listened to the 45s my father found at the Truro dump on a wind-up gramophone. No hurricane was complete without Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue'. The house was a duplex, but our end looked out on to conservation land and the old railroad bed. This unobstructed view of the woods almost made up for the hollow-core doors and bare wooden floors. Across the street sat a funeral home, bodies stacked like cordwood in the garage-cum-freezer.

On the other side of the wall was an older straight couple who owned a gay bar downtown. They were surprisingly severe: the woman, short and hunched over, her jet-black hair cut angular around her face, a wind-blown Liza Minnelli. He was almost perfectly spherical, face unwrinkled from years spent inside the dark club. They never, ever went to the beach. Before us, they'd rented this side to the drag queens who performed nightly at their club. Plastic hooks, originally meant to hold hanging plants, hung from the ceiling of my bedroom. Water-stained spots on the hardwood floor corresponded to

ILLUSTRATION: CHRISTOPHER BROWN

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where the tenants hung up their sweaty wigs after rinsing them out. They'd left town, off to perform in another resort. But their wig-tracks remained, fossilised in the peeling hardwood. It seemed impossible that anyone so glamorous had lived in this house, where the windows struggled to open, and every conversation could be heard from the second floor bathroom.

We left town. We left behind growth spurts measured in tick marks on the wall, phone numbers and tide charts, and a million grains of sand, wedged in wood floors. From across the dunes: a coyote's howl, a cat's last cries. We watched from the old railroad bed, up to our ankles in soft sand. New cedar shingles, as raw as a wound. They sat on the back deck, now screened in, sipping coffee. We'd seen the photos online on the rental site: the stripped floors, the faux-coffered ceiling, the porthole windows in the bedrooms, the white walls. We (the house and me) were gutted.

It looked light, airy. Any indication that we – or the drag queens – had ever been there was scrubbed away ⊛

Untitled, by Jack Greenlees

UK RUNNER-UP

Mellors trudged up the rocky path that wove around the headland away from the quiet harbour up into the hill that looked over the Sound. The little cottage he called home was tucked away three miles from the small fishing village by the harbour and two miles from the nearest neighbour, and as the path climbed steeply he was just able to see the lazy drift of peat smoke from its chimney. Sally would have lighted the fire and stacked it in readiness for his return before heading out as usual to herd the cattle on the new spring grazing further up the glen. As he neared the dry stone dyke he'd built as a younger man, and the gate – the wood of which had been stripped to pearly white by the salty sea air – the sweet tangy smell of the lavender from the garden drifted to him and lifted him liltingly the last few steps home. Sally had left a bucket of water and hard-haired brush by the front door. Seven and a half months at sea on the Tarbert whaler had had their effect, and he dutifully stripped down, bearing his stark nakedness to the whirling egrets. Once he had scrubbed himself raw, cleaned the filth from his fingernails and scrubbed his beard, he dunked his head in the freezing cold water. He straightened up, shook himself like a dog, and let himself through the low wooden door. A woollen blanket had been left hanging for him. He dried himself and wrapped it around his waist as the men were wont to do on the Hebridean Isles at the time. The peat in the hearth crackled quietly, and Mellors took a deep breath that filled his lungs with home. He felt the cold flagstones underfoot and smelt the fresh loaf Sally had left to cool on the windowsill, the sprigs of lavender and wild flowers in the cracked clay jug on the cracked wooden table in the middle of the room. The whitewashed walls glimmered, and the songbirds' cheerfulness danced on a gentle breeze that idled through the small open window. Sally's shawl lay draped over the back of her chair and he lifted it to his face and breathed her in. Taking the loaf from the windowsill and the small earthenware platter of butter from the cold store, he tore a knuckle from the loaf and lathered it in the salted butter from their six beloved cattle. Sitting down in his old wooden chair with the worn embroidered cushion, his feet resting by the fire, he took a bite and closed his eyes, savouring a freshness he hadn't tasted in seven and a half months. After he finished the knuckle and counted his earnings and put them away in the tin under the bed and filled and smoked his pipe, he figured he must have dozed off because he slowly became aware of a jangling of distant bells and his wife's voice as she whistled and cajoled the cattle back down the mountain. He looked down at his calloused hands and broken fingernails and thought of the months away on churning sea that only wanted to kill you for daring to fish her, the thick ropes and sails that tore at your hands and limbs and face, the cramped and putrid cabins sleeping head to toe with men who smelt no better than you, the stale bread and the vermin that nibbled at it – how worth it it all finally was, just to come home to this ⊛

I Have a Fantasy Where Everyone I Love Sits at the Same Dining-room Table, by Janae Lu

US RUNNER-UP

The air smells like sage, and the candlelight is dimming because the wicks were lit so long ago. There is laughter that comes from the bottom of the stomach; there are absent-minded smiles. My shoulders do not naturally curl inward like a late November leaf. No-one is missing; every seat is filled. Someone passes a plate to the person next to them. When a glass slips from a hand and shatters on the hardwood, it is met with one single apology and half a dozen voices saying hey, don't worry about it, everything is just fine.

We never learned what it means to fight or how it feels to hang up without saying goodbye. Instead, someone asks me if I've tried any new recipes lately. They ask me to recommend a book for them. They ask if I've had enough to eat.

For a brief moment, I catch the melted shapes of all our reflections in the window. I stare until we are no longer separate entities, until we are one watercolour blur, until there is nothing I would change ⊛

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Writing Home, by Lee Louise

UK RUNNER-UP

'A young woman lives in Santo Sospir. It wasn't a question of decorating the walls, but rather drawing on their skin… Santo Sospir is a tattooed villa.' (Jean Cocteau)

Recently I had the number of my home-before-last tattooed on to the pad of muscle just beneath my right shoulder. The fact that it was the home-before-last, despite moving out of it less than a year ago, might hint at the state of the London rental market but actually tells you no such story. It was a place of settling where I lived for six and a half years. Through healing from an attempt to evict myself from my own body, making rafters from my ribs through selective starvation and through two years of my friend/landlord and I denying entry to the rampaging virus outside our front door. When I write that I had the number scribed on me, I mean it. No choosing of font, lingering over LA-gang gothic versus florid curlicue. Instead, I had the friend/landlord send me a picture of the actual metal numbers screwed into that shaky, gap-filled, uninsurable front door and showed it to the tattoo artist, who laughed gently at their terrible design. Serifed but ill-weighted, top-heavy in some places and poorly kerned. They look virtually hand-made, we noted, and since then I've been seeing the same machine-resistant pieces all over the city. She observed that both designs I had etched that day had a quality of impermanence – 'something that's there and not-there'. And isn't that one definition of a home?

I am not the only person I know to try and capture a sense of belonging in such permanent impression. Another friend has a fine-line rendering of the door of his childhood abode on his ribs, a door he'll likely never open again. The design shows it closed, which seems accurate for an attempt to memorialise a place past. Despite this, everywhere you live leaves its mark, more than you leave on it. Whenever I see the poems-in-moonlight left by meandering snails I shudder back to the five-bed Victorian that was essentially an unholy permeable membrane between inside and outside, the kitchen regularly visited by these creatures (and by slugs, mice, woodlice, fungi…). As the artist bent over my awkwardly stretched arm wielding a stick-and-poke needle, I felt she was not writing the space on me, but stitching the idealised idea of it into me. We agreed to leave space to show where the screws were, and I asked for a shadow to make them seem more three-dimensional. More real.

The size and space of this piece makes sense of my other tattoos. It gives me an excuse to extol the unusual virtues of my arrangement with my friend/landlord to anyone who asks about the number 392. This gives hope to those still wrestling with unconscionably cold-hearted landlords of their own. It helps me inhabit my first dwelling and, at last, to expel a holy sigh of relief at the possibility of always coming home to myself ⊛

Domestic Bliss, by Nick Spain

US RUNNER-UP

The more I look at it the more holes there are: clean-cut gaps in the timeline that have been tidily packed into tiny little boxes or placed into out-of-sight corners to gather dust. They're difficult to recall not just because of the time that has passed, but because at some point I tucked my own will to conjure them underneath the stairs and left it there.

Leaning against a particle-board wall in the attic is the nutty-coloured frame of a pine bunk bed that was once adorned with complementary chocolate-and-green paisley-print sheets. Most of my childhood was spent playing kiss and tell on this bed, until I was banned from seeing a next-door neighbour after we kissed and then he told his parents. There were no more sleepovers – just awkward afternoons spent peering at each other across invisible lot lines. One day the moving trucks came and they went away to Houston. I never saw him again. I can't even remember his name.

Somewhere in the nightstand of my old bedroom, there is a green or blue or yellow Bic lighter. I'm sure because those are the only colours I would buy at 16, along with the Parliament Lights I got caught smoking behind the azaleas when my parents returned early from their own trip to Houston, this time to visit my Uncle Paul who was dying of lung cancer after a pack-a-day habit himself. He was small and frail and wiry the last time I saw him in spite of his preternatural consumption of Twix candy bars, a habit he had picked up in AA decades prior.

'Better chocolate than alcohol,' he said at the dining table one evening, me quietly craving my next cigarette as I stared at my pubescent features held against his dying ones in the mirror over the buffet. Stuffed for the better part of ten years into a box in the garage that's labelled TO DONATE is a fire-engine-red Abercrombie hoodie that I wore every day during the summer I did nothing but watch *TRL*, afraid to leave the house for fear I might see the bully who tripped me in the school yard because I was most definitely gay, no matter how much I tried to change my voice to a cavernous baritone. I hated him because all the girls thought he was handsome despite his protruding buck teeth and turgid eyes. I hated myself because I thought the same.

How amazing it is, this ability homes have to shelter us from elements not just natural but man-made, even when created by our own hand. It's a sort of capaciousness that sucks away the marrow of memory until all that's left is a serene mirage. What remains is an uncluttered vista: gleaming hardwood floors; fresh-cut roses in the kitchen; the golden thread of brocade curtains glinting in the July sun. How else could I go back? ⊛

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Lichen Minded

Using only yarn and a basic sewing machine, Amanda Cobbett renders fungi, bark and moss, stones and their encrustations with stunning verisimilitude. The work has garnered her an international following and, recently, a commission from the Duke of Buccleuch on his Scottish estates. Tania Compton is our overseer of the spores. Photography: Jacob Lillis



Above: in October 2022, while at Bowhill on the Buccleuch estate, Amanda gathered (and then recreated as shown) windfall twigs covered with, left, the sunburst lichen and pearly-grey wood bristle moss, middle, 'Lecanora sp.' and the tiny kidney-shaped 'Crepidotus variabilis' and, right, peeling oysterling. Opposite: during her stay at Drumlanrig, around the same time, the artist found a false turkey tail or hairy curtain crust, as well as a fragment of beech bark with crustose, warty and map lichens

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The artist Amanda Cobbett recreates nature with the virtuosity and collectability of a contemporary Mrs Delany (*WoI* April 2010). In lieu of 18th-century masterpieces conjured with paper and scissors, however, Amanda's creations are made with a needle and thread.

Tucked away in her studio in the Surrey Hills, she has perfected a singular method of replicating some of the most ancient organisms/materials on our planet – bark, mosses, lichens, stone and fungi – down to their very pores and stomata, using a basic Bernina sewing machine and a rainbow of neatly racked reels of thread.

Her work has had scientists scratching their heads and first-time clients asking whether her pieces will be sent hermetically sealed so they stay fresh, or how to get them through customs, or whether they need watering with a spray mist.

You can imagine how easy it would be to confuse these evocative embroideries with the living organisms they honour. Especially as Amanda sends them with a certificate noting as much detail as she can: 'I always take a grid reference of where any piece has been found.' Each lichen-encrusted twig, invocation of stone or blanket of bark therefore also has a long-term scientific significance traceable to its 'original' site as an indicator of pollution levels and climate change.

Amanda grew up in a family of makers. 'When I was about four, we moved into a house that my father designed and built, which gave me an early lesson in 3D construction.' After her mother taught her to sew, Amanda gave her Sindy doll a wardrobe fit for any occasion. Her fantasies veered from romantic picnics to parties with her brothers' Action Man. Theirs were more… well, let's just say they involved bonfires and a disrobed Sindy.

A pivotal moment of Amanda's textiles and printmaking degree at Chelsea was a visit to the Natural History Museum to see the original Sydney Parkinson plates for the *Banks' Florilegium* engravings, exotic plants etched in dire conditions that piqued her interest in where nature and art collide. These led her to Kew Gardens. 'I just fell in love with Kew. In those days, you could show up and someone from the mycology department opened drawers for you, lifting sheets of tissue paper to reveal previously unseen spore prints. I was totally fascinated.'

Two children (and a break from her career painting thousands of florals for textile houses) later, Amanda would head for the woods, papoose in front and elderly dog on lead at a pace that allowed for acute observation of colour and texture, the acid greens of spring, the hurtberries of summer and an abundance of autumn fungi. Her mother-in-law's best friend gave Amanda her old sewing machine, and when the school needed cakes

Top left: a close-up of the extraordinary layers of texture and colour that Amanda captures with thread, achieving unimaginable verisimilitude. Top right: encrustations growing on an old stone wall at Drumlanrig Castle include, top, a soft covering of the rough-stalked 'Brachythecium rutabulum', centre, various crustose and leprose lichens and, bottom, sprays of the maidenhair spleenwort

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An assortment of objets trouvés Amanda collected on soft wet ground at Drumlanrig, 125 metres above Cold Stream Loch, included a beech leaf and a collared parachute/pinwheel mushroom, 'Marasmius rotula', attached to a Scots pine twig. Twenty metres further up she collected shield and Evernia lichens and a fan-shaped white oysterling fungus, all here transfigured in yarn

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for a fundraiser, Amanda thought: What would happen if I create embroideries of the windfalls that I fill my pockets with from the woods instead? An instant sell-out. Then another, until 60 pieces on a stand at Chelsea Flower Show in 2019 were snapped up before the week ended. The entreaties of her now international collectors have been put on ice for the past two years while Amanda fulfils the commission we see here, an exploration of the fungi and lichens on the various estates belonging to the Duke of Buccleuch.

At Bowhill in the Scottish Borders, Duke Richard asked for the robot mowers to be kept off the lawn for a month before Amanda's visit. An incredible array of life forms sprang from the sward that had the duke, Amanda and Scott Macdonald, head of collections and conservation for the Buccleuch Living Heritage Trust, lying face down in an eccentric display of acute observation. During her time at Drumlanrig Castle in Dumfries and Galloway, the duke's home 60 miles further west, the embroiderer spent a day with a retired keeper whose knowledge of the estate led them to places so rich in different specimens that her head was spinning.

The duke has first refusal on the 20 or so pieces and his choices will go on a touring display of family seats Bowhill, Drumlanrig, Boughton (*WoI* Feb 2023) and Dalkeith House. The pace of this project has enlarged Amanda's repertoire: 'I have had time to experiment and now have a different technique from two years ago.'

The artist's lightning-speed dexterity with her sewing machine makes Merlin Sheldrake's chapter on lichens ring in my ears: 'Fruticose lichens drape and tuft; crustose and squamulose lichens creep and seep; foliose lichens layer and flake.' These flaking, draping, tufted and tubular life forms miraculously appear, with needle gauges chosen like pencils from finest 6H to broadest 6B. The bobbins and threads are Amanda's palette. A verisimilitudinous exploration of nature emerges from her skilful conjuring as if by magic ⊛ *Amanda Cobbett. Visit amandacobbett.com*

A thick-bodied velvet bolete, 'Suillus variegatus', with a fern attached to its base contrasts with the thread-like, and thread-made, 'Mycena rorida'. Using a free-motion embroidery technique on her bog-standard Bernina sewing machine, Amanda builds up multiple layers on a substrate of dissolvable fabric – fabric that is washed away after the 'organism' is complete

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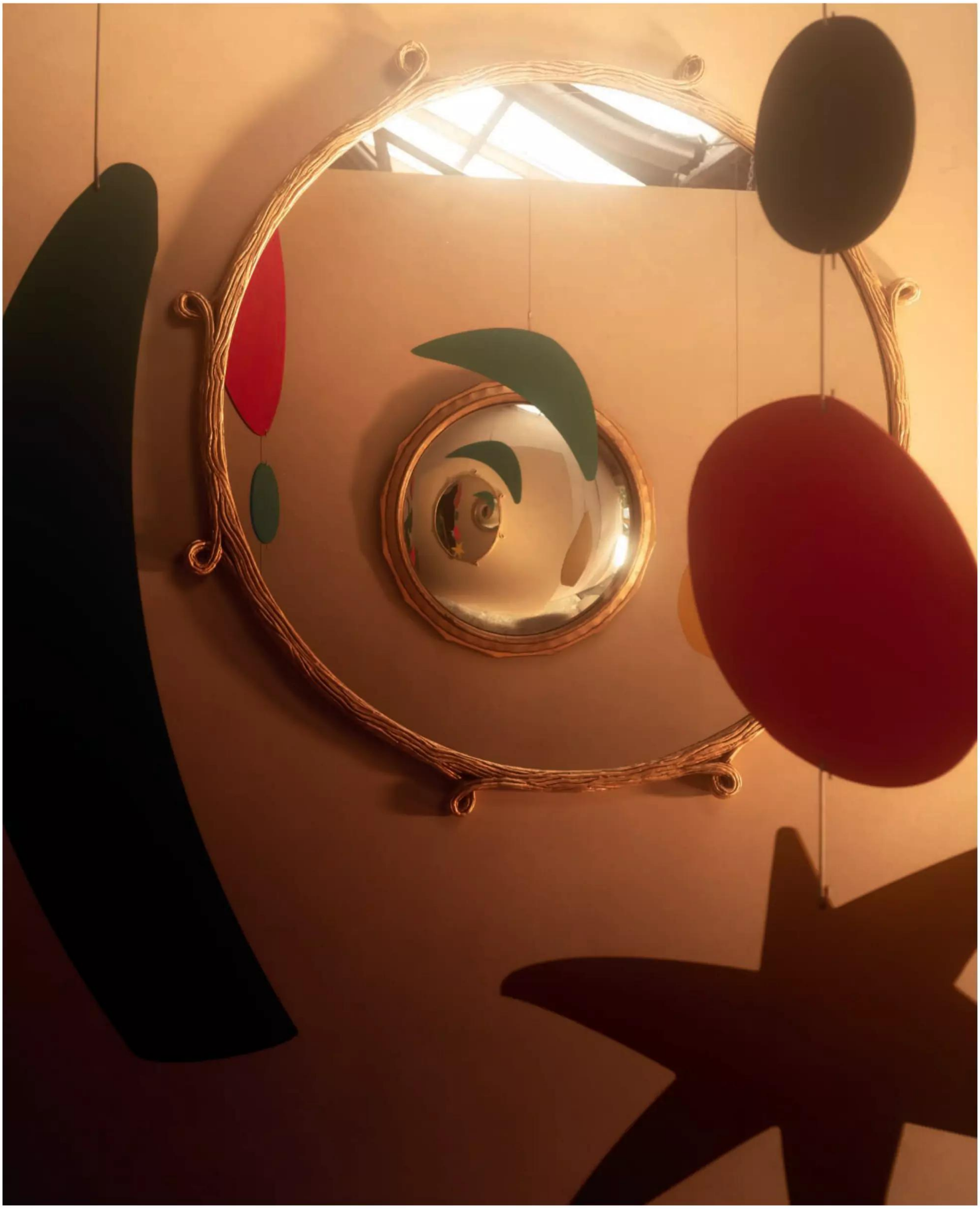
Haul of Mirrors

Shopping for a looking-glass can be a disorientating task. Should you go for classic or contemporary, free-standing or wall-hung? And how does convex compare with a crenellated frame or totally cosmic bulbous? Mercifully, Miranda Sinclair has prepared a whole gallery of concentric treats for you to carefully reflect on. Photography: Oskar Proctor



Mirrors, from outside in: 'Quiet Loud', by Daniel Hayden, £2,360, Invisible Collection. Rectangle 'Arcs', by Muller Van Severen for Hay, £389, Selfridges. 'Banded', £550, Dominic Schuster. Reflected shapes painted in, clockwise from left: 'Heat', £64; 'Canton', £64; 'Atomic Red', £64; 'Bronze Red', £64; all Little Greene

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Mirrors, from outside in: 'Jolly', £2,400, Porta Romana. Twentieth-century antique round convex mirror, £1,250, Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler. Foreground shapes painted in, clockwise from left: 'Puck', £64; 'Puck', as before; 'Atomic Red', £64; 'Yellow-Pink', £64; all Little Greene

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Outer mirror: 'Flora', £1,180, Balineum. Reflected, left: rectangular 'Bucranium', £4,080, Jamb. Right: 'Man Ray Glass Leaf', £18,600, Cox London. Foreground shapes painted in, from top: 'Atomic Red', £64; 'Citrine', £64; both Little Greene

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Free-standing mirror: 'Audrey', by Emmanuel Gallina, £5,547, Poliform. Reflected: 'Pirelli', £2,375, Julian Chichester. Shapes painted in, from top: 'Atomic Red', £64; 'Puck', £64; 'Atomic Red', as before; 'Yellow-Pink', £64; 'Canton', £64; all Little Greene

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Mirrors, from outside in: 'Crocodile Tooth', £10,800, Soane Britain. 'Island', £5,950, Rupert Bevan. Shapes painted in, from top: 'Atomic Red', £64; 'Puck', £64; 'Canton', £64; 'Heat', £64; 'Mister David', £64; all Little Greene

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Mirrors, from top: round convex mirror, from £6,450, Collier Webb. Stripy mirror, from £2,150, Beata Heuman. Shapes painted in, from left: 'Atomic Red', £64; 'Bronze Red', £64; both Little Greene. Paint prices throughout are for 2.5 litres of 'Intelligent' matt emulsion; all prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ⊛

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Photography: Giulio Ghirardi



'Yves' sofa, by Hannes Peer, £12,660, Minotti

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'Solar' daybed, by Faye Toogood, £3,967 approx, Tacchini. Fabric on raft: 'Gildo 00T2101800', £203.50 per m, Dedar

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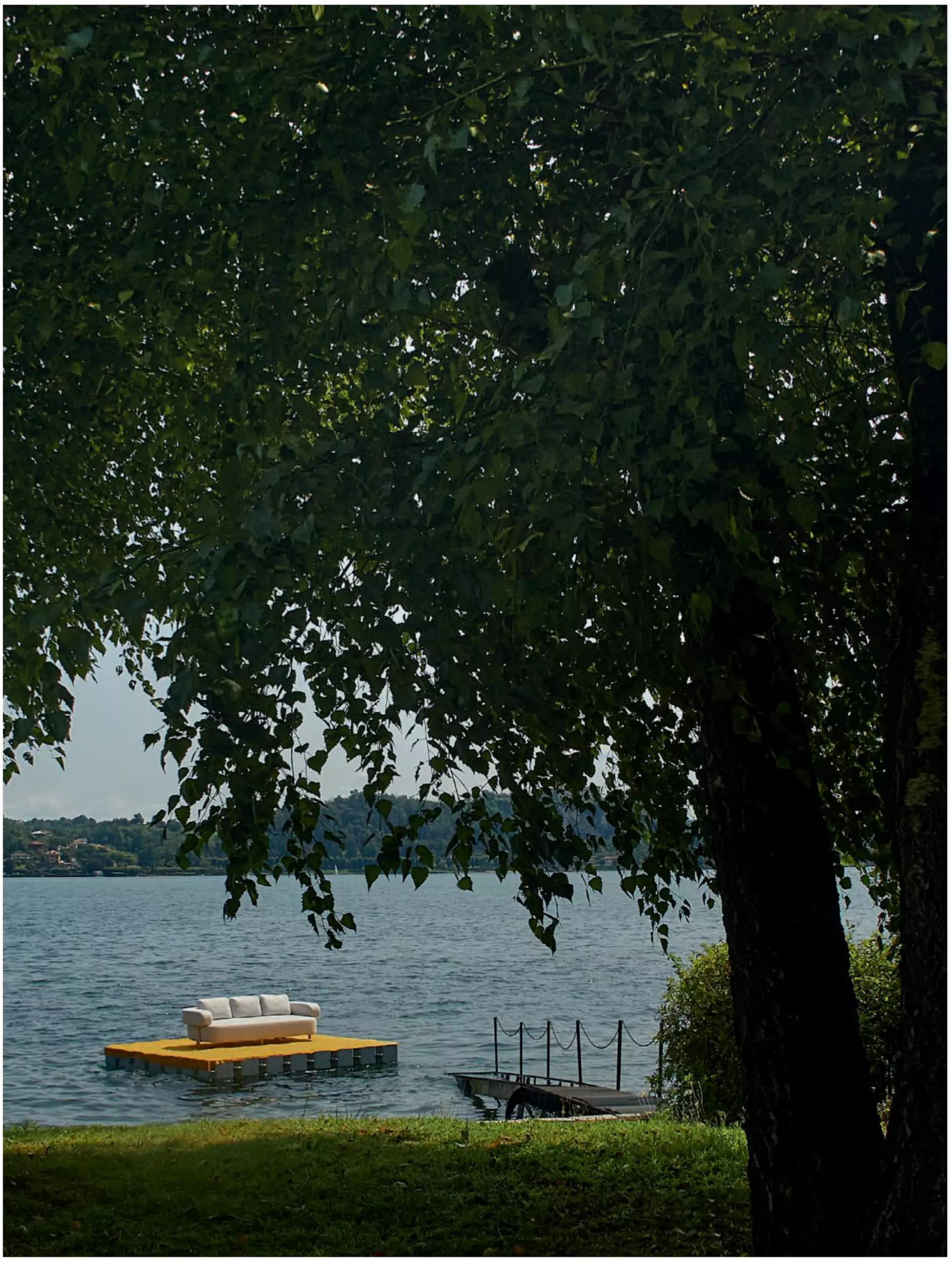
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'Grande Soffice', by Francesco Binfaré, from £11,460 approx, Edra

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'Roma' sofa, by Monica Armani, £9,246, Turri. Fabric on raft: 'Gildo 00T2101800', £203.50 per m, Dedar

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'Wave' sofa, by Nika Zupanc, £3,510, Natuzzi Italia

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'Tiretto' daybed, from £5,780, Fendi Casa. Fabric on raft: 'Gildo 00T2101800', £203.50 per m, Dedar

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'Lucio' sofa, by Vincent van Duysen, from £6,230, Molteni & C

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'Sunday' sofa, by Flaviano Capriotti, from £8,611, Poliform. Fabric on raft: 'Gildo 00T2101800', £203.50 per m, Dedar

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'Guscio' sofa, by Antonio Citterio, from £5,433, Flexform. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ⊛

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’Shroom at the Top

Few mushrooms can rival the imperial ceps – aka porcini. Cooked fresh with butter or olive oil and herbs, and attended by little more than toast, rice or pasta, these meaty marvels become a feast fit for a king. But they dry superbly well too, making them a much-prized, long-lasting kitchen staple. Daisy Garnett doffs her cap. Photography: Tessa Traeger



For me, they are the most delicious mushroom of all, and that’s a tough call given the competition from chanterelles. Russians call what we think of as ceps or porcini (*Boletus edulis*) the tsars of the mushroom world, and they do look kingly, their cap a crown. But it is their stalks, all stout girth with proudly bulging middles, that make them so immediately distinctive.

Ceps (or *cèpes*) is their French name. The Romans christened them porcini, which translates as ‘little pigs’, though opinions vary on why. Is it because the slightly raised network of reticulations, a sort of mesh slip cover that grows over their stems, resembles a pig’s skin? Or because they were prized for their firm, meaty texture when pork was scarce, or because clustered together, with their pale-brown caps, they look like baby pigs? Certainly, their appearance (when young, the caps resemble a crusty bread roll) led to their English name, ‘penny buns’. But that doesn’t suit, I don’t think. Quite apart from their high price tags – nothing penny-ish about that, alas – ceps are giants in terms of what they offer in the kitchen. Sometimes literally too. You may remember a Polish cep making news in 2013. It weighed more than three kilograms.

Ceps aren’t rare, apparently. They are almost impossible to cultivate but grow in all kinds of climates in woodlands across

Top: ceps grow plentifully in the wild here in Britain and all over Europe – you just need to know where to find them. Opposite: whether cooking and eating immediately, or laying out to dry, slice ceps vertically for maximum flavour and to show off their distinctive shape

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Europe, as happy in Russia as in Greece, North America and parts of Asia, mostly in clusters, arriving a week or so after a rain. I've yet to find a single one in the wild. I have, however, come across great hauls of them, stacked up on market stalls, at this time of year both in northern Italy and France, and each time have felt a surge of panicky joy at the sight. How could I buy, cook and eat enough of them to sate my urgent greed, when I was in neither place for long and without a kitchen, to boot? (I often think: can I justify a cheap flight to southwest France simply to go cep shopping? I cannot. And yet…) Because that is how fresh ceps are best enjoyed: cooked and eaten in a kitchen at home, though not necessarily your own.

That sounds trite. But you know what I mean. A piece of Dover sole? You want to eat that in the kind of restaurant that insists on starched-linen tablecloths. Noodles: best slurped sitting on a wooden stool at a local ramen shack; cheese sandwich, up a mountain. And so on. We all know context, when it comes to food, is an intrinsic ingredient. And who doesn't relish a mushroom risotto at a good Italian restaurant? But mostly, for dishes in which the mushroom is an ingredient rather than the lone performer, the cook reaches for dried porcini. That's how most of us eat them most of the time. Ceps dry brilliantly, their flavour intensifying as they dehydrate. They come quickly back to fleshy life too after a hot (though not boiling) bath, rewarding you with both mushrooms and stock. You buy them dried by the packet and they keep for ages, always there, patiently waiting, and, if you have risotto rice too, the basis for a perfect store-cupboard meal: classy and delicious.

But nothing compares to a fresh cep or two, cooked in butter or olive oil, a little garlic, thyme and parsley, then eaten, quietly and slowly, with some kind of starchy carrier: toast or a little brown rice, a dollop of polenta, or fresh ribbons of tagliatelle. Are you googling flights to Bergerac yet? I'll see you there.

Because that's the task: getting your hands on enough good ones. Ceps require so little else to shine, but that is the point. You don't want any distractions. No waiters, no fussing, no protein even (OK, bacon is good and so are slivers of Parmesan; an omelette at a stretch). You just need a knife – slice your ceps vertically after brushing off any dirt (don't bother peeling or washing them) – and a hot pan slicked with fat so the slices can sizzle while turning golden brown. Garlic. Herbs. Bread. That's it. It's everything ⊛

Cooked ceps deserve one's full attention and should never be sidelined. To make a meal of them requires the right support act: an accompaniment that is filling and delicious but not scene-stealing. A rich but unshowy omelette works well

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Let the Fungi Begin

No need to go foraging for kit prior to that mushroom-picking expedition – Rose Eaglesfield has already rooted out the best for you



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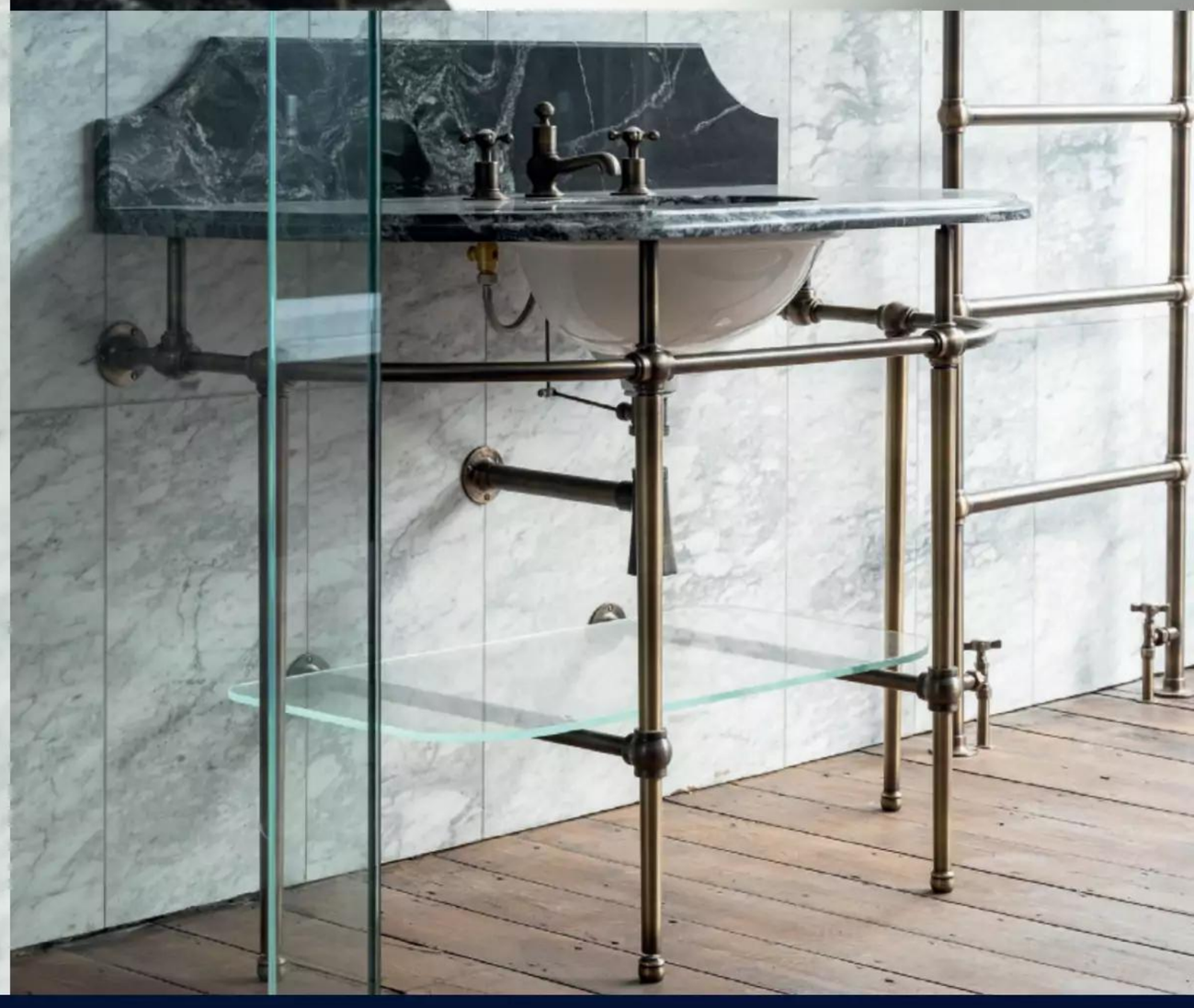
1 Oval foraging tote, by Amy Krone, £290, Toast. 2 Mushroom brush, £6.99, Sous Chef. 3 Fungi-illustrations tea towel, £10, Curating Cambridge. 4 Popular 'Storm' kettle, £62.99, The Eydon Kettle Co. 5 Wooden trug, £32, Burgon & Ball. 6 Mushroom plate, by The Platera, £204 for a set of six, Maison Flâneur. 7 'Taira Ueki' garden scissors, £89, Niwaki. 8 Drawstring mesh bag, £3.35, The Clever Baggers. 9 'No. 8' mushroom knife, by Opinel, £24.95, Berry Useful. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ⊛

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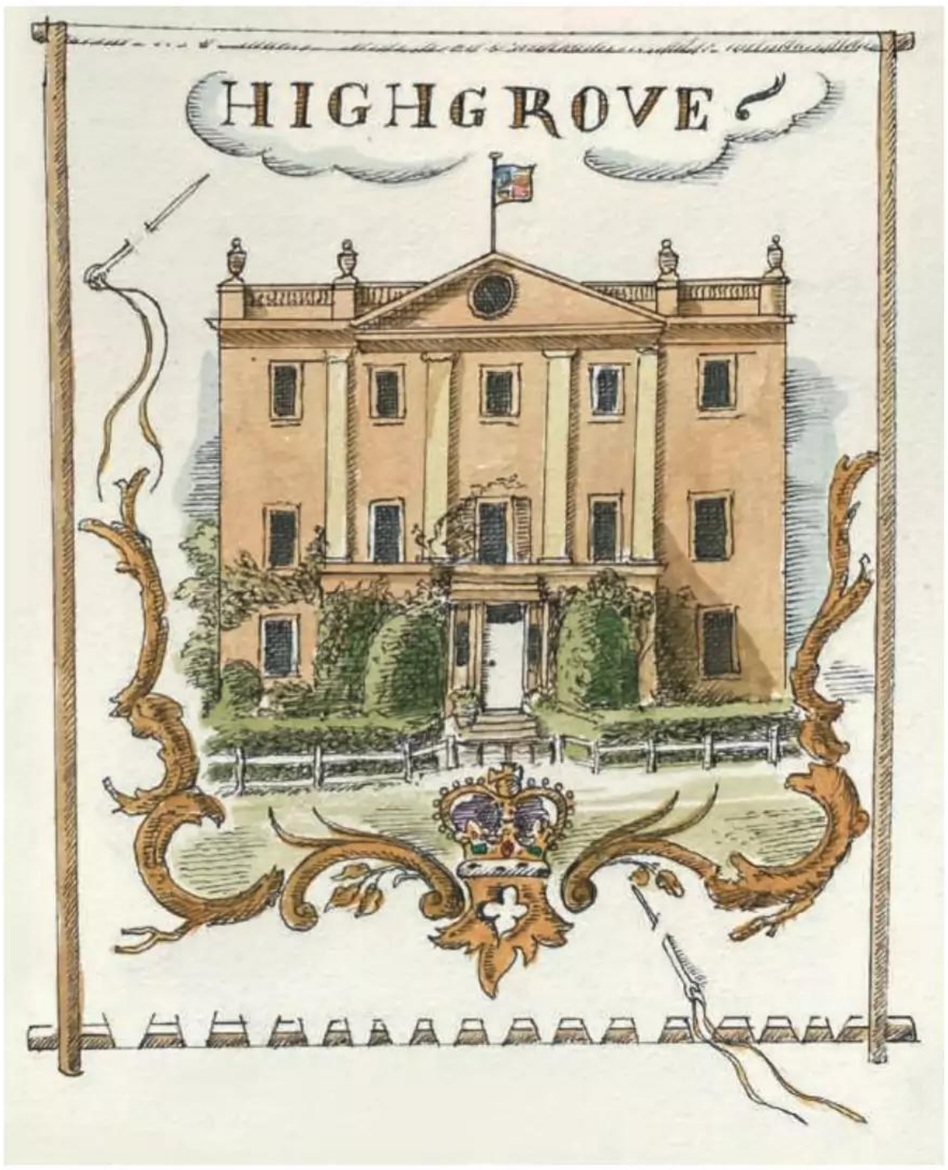
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Monarch's Butterflies

As embroiderers flit about the King's gardens, Hamish Bowles finds the golden thread



First, the setting. A cottage in the heart of the verdant Gloucestershire countryside, and beyond that: Charles III's gardens, which he's worked on since he acquired the estate in 1980 and thereafter made into something out of a fairy tale, curious and otherworldly. It clearly moved the six graduates – whose work we'd come to see – selected for the Métiers d'Art embroidery fellowship, a programme by Chanel and the King's Foundation, who were challenged to produce pieces inspired by the horticultural enchantments here. Even in the light showers, it was a blissful place.

As well as their muse, this idyllic setting has been a workshop for Angelica Ellis, Alice Long, Imogen Marmont, Rosie Merriman, Brook Nelson and Beth Somerville for the past six months. Guided by the Chanel embroidery team and the directors of Lesage, Atelier Montex and Lemarié, their final body of work forms an impressive display. Ellis, a Royal College of Art and Central Saint Martins graduate, had spread a crop of stretch-paper crocuses over a bed of 3D silvery fragments to form a bodice. 'I've always been a big-picture thinker,' she says. Recounting the time she spent with the embroiderers at Le 19M, the Chanel couture craft hub, she adds: 'Here, I really learned to look at details.' Beth Somerville (Falmouth University) created a capelet shaped like a flower spread flat; up close, it's ribboned with tiny blossoms and shimmering white and spring-yellow fringe. These pointillist effects contrast with the rigour of the cape design at large. Her mood board collected 19th-century botanical studies; it was here one saw, together with the haziness of the petals, the mathematical precision needed to describe the stamen et al. Her experience at Le 19M, she says, was 'beyond my wildest dreams': a full immersion in 'the pace, rhythm and structure of an atelier'.

Rosie Merriman, of Hereford College of Arts, worked on a whoosh and whirl of rhododendrons (like those that grow in the arboretum at Highgrove) in dark tulle and silvery frostings with dripping pearls and beads; the resulting gown is a show-stopper evoking Christian Lacroix's theatrical adventures. Imogen Marmont (the Royal School of Needlework) created spectacular sleeves for a sheath dress: crusted golden shoulders cascading in ice blue, gold and ivory, ending in feathery horsehair fronds. The design drew on both the royal armour at Windsor Castle and the blue tits of Highgrove's gardens, marrying, as she puts it, 'the birds' graceful agility and the armour's stability'.

Having had our fill of fine needlework, we then had the treat of exploring the gardens as the fellows had done. Past the vegetable patches, Isabel and Julian Bannerman have created a vast stumpery: a jungle of ferns and mossy stones among the roots of ancient trees. Here, Charles has set a bronze sculpture of the Queen Mother, the humble wood of the portrait's frame fashioned into a blazing memorial. It's a glorious thing. Then there's the garden front of the house (rather severe when the King took it on, it's now been embellished by Felix Kelly) and, along the path, the delightful array of yew hedges, each clipped into its own fantasia. Plus, there's the walled Hispano-Moresque garden, with its fountain and different levels, which was certainly romantic. Even in the rain ⊛

ILLUSTRATION: LAWRENCE MYNOTT

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Apropos Calico



The Book of Printed Fabrics: From the 16th Century to Today (by Aziza Gril-Mariotte; Taschen, rrp £150)

The cover of volume one of these two massive books, which together weigh more than six kilos, is a tongue-in-cheek riff on the ancient Indian Tree of Life design, known in Europe since the 16th century. 'Vegetable Tree', designed in 1944 by Josef Frank for Svenskt Tenn, and still in production, shows a brightly coloured tree hung with jolly/grotesque vegetables and quirky leaves. The choice of motif underlines the many historic interconnections among the 900 ravishing images in this compendium, furnished by a museum in Mulhouse, which celebrates the Alsatian city's role in the history of French printed textiles, with a collection that continues to the present day. The text is written by the institution's former director.

The first volume deals with the influence fabrics from India have had on the printed-textile industry, particularly in France, from the arrival of the first Indian traders in the 16th century to the present day. To a population accustomed to clothes made of wool, silk, linen or hemp, the light cottons they introduced, brightly printed with floral patterns, were a revelation – not least because they could be washed endlessly and still keep their colour. Such was the demand that in 1686 Louis XIV placed a protectionist ban, with punishments of penal servitude and even death, on importers of calicoes from the subcontinent. Despite these draconian sanctions, *indiennes* (the term was used for both the fabric and dresses made from it) remained the height of fashion in France. And the scramble began, with much covert industrial espionage, to discover the mordants, the substances that fix the dye, used by Indian producers.

The first three chapters of the trilingual text show the flowers – some realistic, most of them fantastical – that featured in early woodblock and hand-painted patterns as well as Tree of Life wall hangings. These fabrics appealed to every level of French society, from the marquis who commissioned a so-called *palampore* with his crest at its centre to peasant girls whose floral neckerchiefs were bought from travelling pedlars. Further chapters show the floral designs extensively reimagined, their tiny details rescaled and reused as geometric patterns. In the 18th century a new interest in

This Indian cotton with a Japanese-style pattern comes from the Coromandel Coast, first half of the 18th century

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botanical illustration, alongside advances in printing techniques, resulted in more realistic flowers, more meticulously defined. The same progression can be seen in volume two, with every improving iteration of the *boteh*, or paisley, motifs of Kashmiri shawls, which arrived in France in the early 19th century.

European fabric designs became more detailed and precise, as wood blocks gave way to plates and rollers of copper, the latter allowing some wonderfully wild Op art designs *avant la lettre* in the 1830s. In 1833 the fabric manufacturers of Mulhouse, a town already known for its luxurious printed fabrics, decided to save the choicest samples of their wares – and this collection became the kernel of the museum when it was founded in 1955.

Aziza Gril-Mariotte acknowledges that almost every advance in printing came from England, with Christophe-Philippe Oberkampf even printing early versions of his famous toiles de jouy in London. Despite this, vanishingly few English specimens are shown. But every twist of French fabric fashion is here, wonderfully illustrated to boot. While the lack of an index is a great loss for textile scholars, the general reader will find the writing informative, especially on the individuals who advanced different techniques. And the images are, without exception, sublime. They should provide endless inspiration to designers and great pleasure to lovers of textiles ⊛

Elfreda Pownall is a freelance writer



This ornate cotton furnishing fabric, manufactured in Wesserling in 1874 by Gros Roman-Marozeau & Co, features an Arcadian peasant with baskets of fruit in a grape- and leaf-fringed cartouche

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Roaming Network

Daido Moriyama: Record 2 (ed Mark Holborn; Thames & Hudson, rrp £60)

Tokyo in the 1960s was a riot. The city, much of which had been razed by American bombs during World War II, was expanding at lightning speed. In 1964 it hosted the first Olympics ever to be staged in Asia. New buildings sprang up, new highways. There was even, most modern of miracles, a bullet train. The population of the city grew bigger than anywhere else in the world. Young people craved scooters, cars, nightlife. Who needed the past in this neon playground of the senses? *Throw Away Your Books, Rally in the Streets*, the name of a 1968 play by Shūji Terayama, captures the heady, almost lawless energy that coursed through the capital.

The key chronicler of this period was Daido Moriyama. Born in Osaka, he moved to Tokyo at the age of 23 in 1961. He saw and heard the commotion around him – the shifting skyline, the retail revolution, the heightened student unrest. But he didn't use his camera to document – far less protest against – these changes. Rather he prowled the city, especially after dark, trying to convey the way it felt. His images are black-and-white, grainy, blurred, like third-generation photocopies, cropped in unexpected stylings. They tend not to show individuals or recognisable places; instead there's the smear of motion, noir-ish hallucination, pre-punk alienation. They appeared in magazines such as *Provoke* and *Record* as much as they did on gallery walls.

Record, a photographic journal that notated these intensities around him, was self-published from 1972 to 1973. In 2006 Moriyama relaunched it and, in 2017, published work from all 30 issues in book form; *Record 2* picks up where the original left off, bringing together issues 31 to 50 in an equally covetable slipcase edition. The project, perhaps inevitably, has changed over time. Tokyo is still an enthralling city, but, for good or for bad, no longer defines modernity. Moriyama, as he often mentions in his short prefaces, is in his own twilight years. This is a book marinated in memories, autumnal in tone.

So many echoes of the past: here are shots of rain-streaked back streets, tangles of cabling outside residential blocks, close-ups of billboard adverts, mannequin parts, chain fences that resemble fishing nets. And here are unknowable pedestrians disappearing into the distance, African traders, rush-hour commuters. There's shadow and shade, but night time is less of a central character than in the past. There's movement too, but it's tentative, almost stilted. The wired vitality of 1960s and 1970s Tokyo is in retreat.

Part of the reason is the pandemic. Moriyama recalls that, as someone whose art depends upon 'footwork' (and the practice of *chorosuna* – that is, roaming), he found the enforced 'telework' of lockdown difficult. Still, out and about he went. The young people he spots are masked. They're often peering at their smartphones. The charged eroticism of his earlier photographs has dissipated. Yet the ghosts of old Tokyo in *Record* still linger. Moriyama's reverie-rich prose, his commitment to stalking the city, his willingness – his need – to keep logging its moods and motions, continues to mesmerise ⊛ *Sukhdev Sandhu is the director of the Colloquium for Unpopular Culture at New York University*



In 'Record No. 39', Moriyama's photo journal published in 2018, Western faces on a Tokyo billboard attempt to snag the attention of a young woman engrossed by her smartphone

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Oil Change



Salvo: Arrivare in Tempo (Arriving on Time)
1 November–25 May
Pinacoteca Agnelli, 262 Via Nizza, Turin 10126

In 1974, the Italian artist Salvo slayed a dragon. Painting himself in the guise of Saint George, he severed links with his prior conceptual practice in favour of figurative painting. The choice of saint was pointed, referencing works by Raphael, who first inspired Salvo to pick up a paintbrush. The timing, too, was emphatic, following the death of the most famous living painter, Pablo Picasso. It was by no means the first act of artistic reinvention – 60 years earlier the Futurist Giacomo Balla had staged a funeral for his previous artistic persona – but was Salvo's return to the unfashionable medium of painting in fact an abandonment of his conceptual practice, or an evolution of it?

An exhibition in Turin highlights the continuity between both phases of Salvo's career, connecting their recurrent thematic cycles, exploration of light and attention to art-historical references. Organised in collaboration with the artist's archive, it supports the claim he made in 1973 that he was always 'Salvo the conceptualist, just as before I was already Salvo the painter'. In a first for the Agnelli, his work will spread beyond the dedicated exhibition galleries and into the permanent collection, which features both modern artists, including Balla and Picasso, and the old masters he so esteemed.

Born Salvatore Mangione in Sicily in 1947, Salvo moved to Turin with his family in 1956. This northern Italian city was a mecca for artists, critics and gallerists associated with Arte Povera, a movement introduced in 1967 as, in critic Germano Celant's words, 'a poor art concerned with contingency, events, ahistoricism, the present'. In this milieu, Salvo became close friends with Alighiero Boetti; the pair shared a studio and a talent for wit and word play, as is evident in the phrases Salvo carved into marble blocks. He also looked to Arte Povera's international, especially American, friends, drawing on the self-referential works of Joseph Kosuth.

'San Giorgio e il drago', 1974, oil on panel

THIS PAGE: COURTESY OF FONDAZIONE SANDRETTO RE REBAUDENGO, TURIN.
OPPOSITE: PRIVATE COLLECTION

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By becoming a producer of paintings, as he termed it, Salvo disconnected himself from current artistic trends and sought connection with the past. His uncanny architectural pastiches – such as *Paesaggio con rovine*, or *Landscape with Ruins*, where Classical columns and architraves from Agrigento in Sicily are transplanted into lush landscape – have both antique and autobiographical allusions, plus a healthy dose of Giorgio de Chirico. An obsession with capturing light effects led him to high-keyed colours that owe as much to his love of Rococo painter Giovanni Battista Tiepolo as to the palette of Postmodernism. With their layered references to painting's past, his scenes show little respect for chronology; similarly, in their tendency to return again and again to the same motifs, his works at large are often difficult to place within his long career.

This is the most extensive show of Salvo's work since his death in 2015. The recent revival of figurative painting has brought him greater attention and invited comparison to contemporary painters such as Nicolas Party. At the Agnelli, Salvo takes his place in the art-historical tradition from which he joyfully plundered, arriving right on time to be offered up to a new generation ⊛ *Rosalind McKever is a writer specialising in modern European art*

'Paesaggio con rovine', 1984, oil on canvas

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Material Girl

Nicola L.: I am the Last Woman Object
Until 29 December
Camden Art Centre, Arkwright Rd,
London NW3

It's been half a century since Nicola L.'s art was first shown at Camden Art Centre, but her playfully, politically pop work feels as fresh as ever. In 1974, her *La Chambre en Fourrure* (1969) was included in a group exhibition; this October, the institution will host her first major European show.

A free-standing room into whose purple fur walls visitors can insert themselves by means of stitched-in bodysuits, this work caught the mood of the swinging decade's participatory art 'environments', from the fun-house chambers of the Stedelijk Museum's 1962 *Dylaby* show, to Andy Warhol's drifting *Silver Clouds* (1966), and Yayoi Kusama's first *Infinity Mirror Room* (1965). It also tingles with a summer-of-love erotic static – heir, with its *Venus in Furs* overtones and tawdry boudoir sensuality, to the sexy-surreal of Meret Oppenheim's famous follicled teacup.

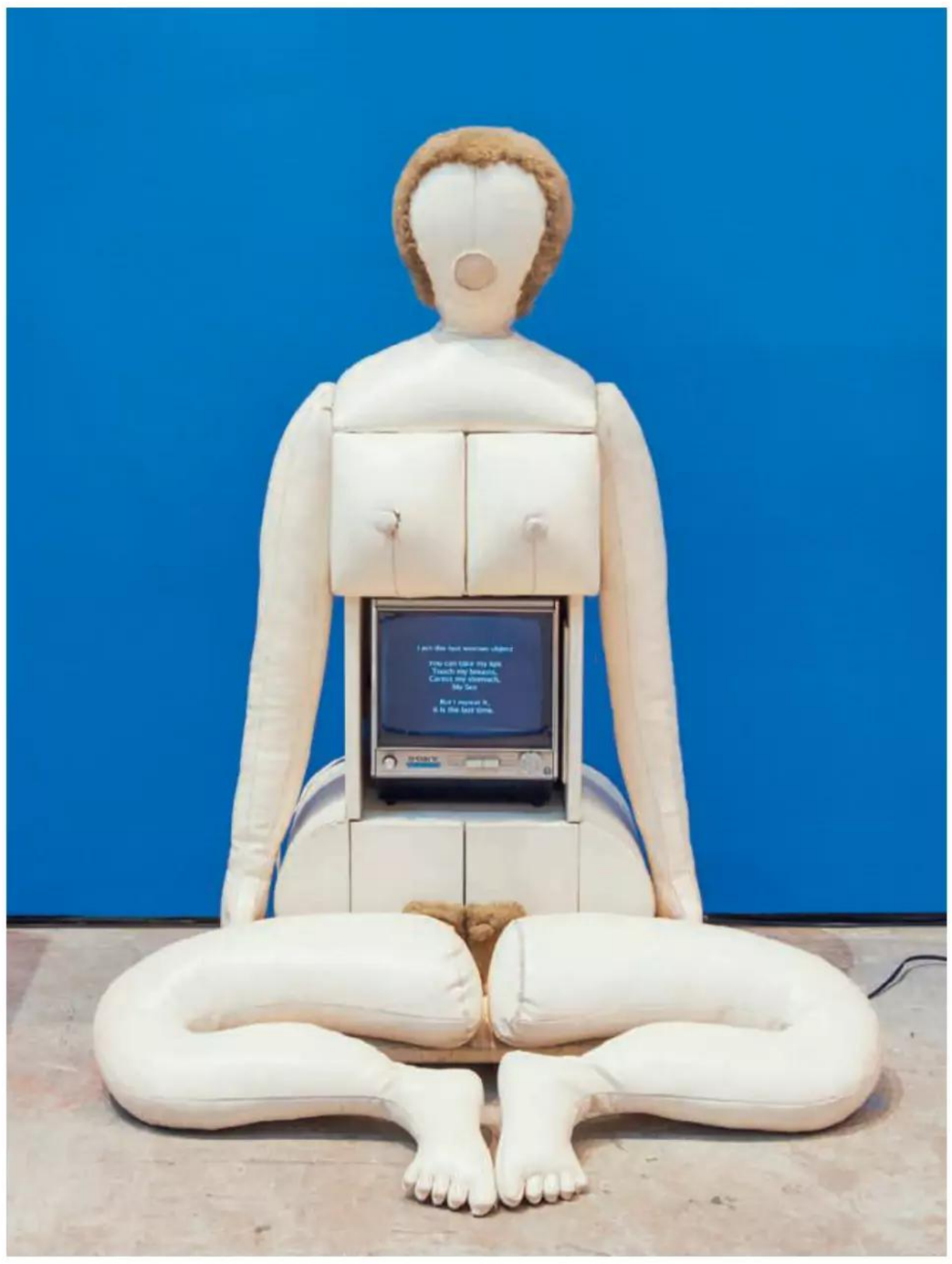
Born in colonial Morocco, trained in Paris and based there, in Ibiza and in New York – where she lived for many decades at the legendary Chelsea Hotel – Nicola valued freedom in all its forms. *La Chambre* is the largest in a long-standing series of inhabitable works made between the mid-1960s and her death in 2018. The critic Pierre Restany, on whom the works' latent eroticism was not lost, called them *pénétrables*. Many, including a remake of *La Chambre*, will be on show in the gallery. The origin of these pieces is intensely personal, first conceived to commune with a lost friend, but their steel was tempered in the political heat of late-1960s New York. Free love, civil rights and antiwar protest coalesce in these skins-in-common, which express a humanity that transcends visible difference. (And, in their shedable nature, evoke the napalm-flayed victims of the Vietnam War.)

'I have an obsession about the human body,' Nicola told a reviewer from the *New York Times* in 1973. Her best-known works are her body/objects: eye lamps, head planters, foot and hand sofas, and wardrobe women (*femmes commodes*: a play on the double sense of *commode* as 'cabinet' and also 'comfortable' and 'convenient' – *easy women*). The Camden show takes its title from a 1969 work, *Little TV Woman: 'I Am the Last Woman Object'*, a vinyl woman-cabinet with yogic legs and a TV screen for a belly. It is a comment, of course, on the object status of the female form and the way women are often ventriloquised. But it's witty rather than chastising. You open the top set of drawers using the nipples and the bottom ones via the pudenda; it makes prigs or perverts of us all.

It was also well used, having lived for many years in the bedroom of Nicola's teenage son, where it was desired above all for its TV screen and its capacity for storing dirty plates. Likewise the *femme commode* that stood sentinel in the living room of her apartment at the Chelsea Hotel, and the large white foot sofa on her Ibiza terrace. Nicola was not afraid of function, nor of her artworks being trivialised as mere 'design'. (Her former husband, Alfred 'Fred' Lanzenberg, who was instrumental in the realisation of many of Nicola's pieces was, after all, the nephew of design doyen Henri Samuel.)

There is something irresistibly direct about Nicola's output that – to me – makes it more compelling than much overtly 'political' work being made today. But then, as a curator of the artist's pieces put it as early as the 1970s: 'It's a fact that many trips, today, are no longer the adventures they once were. Whose fault is that?'

⊛ *Amy Sherlock is a writer and editor based in London*



'Little TV Woman: "I Am the Last Woman Object"', 1969, vinyl, wood, television and acrylic fur

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1 Lapada Berkeley Square Fair, London's leading art and antiques event, returns to Mayfair from 23 to 27 October. Showcasing over 80 specialists in fields from crystals and jewellery to fine art and furniture, it will cater to established and fledgling buyers alike. New for 2024 is Lapada Fringe, a celebration of the area's world-famous local establishments, from Cartier to the Connaught. *Visit lapada.com*

2 You might recognise Kathryn Ireland from Netflix's *Million Dollar Decorators*; or perhaps you have one of her books, the latest of which celebrates 30 years of her comfortable, bohemian schemes. Now, the designer – whose upcoming lines include weaves and tartans – has a new showroom in Los Angeles, teeming with textiles, antique objets and custom furniture. *Visit kathrynireland.com*

3 Evocative of fairytale forests, the 'Ivy Shadow' chandelier, by Tord Boontje for Porta Romana, creates a whimsical glow, its 'foliage' casting lively shadows. Made from aluminium with a decorative finish applied by hand, the piece comes in two sizes and several colours including persimmon (shown). Check out the brand's matching mirror to discover the fairest of them all. *Visit portaromana.com*

4 Teaming up again with long-time partner Gachot Studios, Waterworks has unveiled 'Finot', a range of over 50 sculptural pieces spanning bath accessories, lighting and hardware. Inspired by Modernist form and the precision of couture tailoring, 'Finot' represents the brand's most contemporary expression to date. All pieces are available in chrome, brass and two shades of nickel. *Visit waterworks.com* ⊛

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VIEW CATALOGUE

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VISITOR'S BOOK

In what is now regarded as a seminal piece of early 20th-century art, Marcel Duchamp submitted a 'readymade' porcelain urinal (which he signed 'R. Mutt, 1917') to an exhibition held at New York's Grand Central Palace. He stipulated it be oriented upside down and titled *Fountain*… The impish Dadaist was trying to show how much context, or what art historians call the 'arena of discourse', matters. In several of this month's stories, belongings and backdrop fit together hand in glove. The Paris apartment of an art-world insider may have a tiny footprint, but its soaring ceilings are the ideal foil for the gilty pleasures of Asian-inspired Neoclassicism; a casket to cosset a Dufrêne lamp, a Tiffany candlestick, a Magnien commode… Likewise the Ruhlmann furniture, Poiret carpet and other Deco delights of two retired medical men in Manhattan glimmer all the more thanks to onyx floors, copper-leaf ceilings and, not least, an epic view over Central Park. More modestly, but no less effectively, a Greek Orthodox priest has over decades turned his bland church-supplied flat in west London into what feels like the interior of one of the old-master paintings he worships, a velvety cocoon for icons, vestments and limewood statues. In a leap of faith, the colossal Yorùbá shrines and sculptures in the Oṣun Oṣogbo Sacred Grove, a venerable festival site in Nigeria recognised by Unesco, also seem to spring naturally from the terracotta-toned terrain (though in fact they've been lovingly restored by generations of gifted craftspeople). Certain pieces are, by contrast, so eye-popping that they demand a muted setting. That's the case with Mattia Bonetti's Baroque-on-acid tables, chairs and cocktail cabinets, their candy colours standing in apparent defiance of the Brutalist laboratory-like villa in Lugano that's their home. Ditto the white box of a studio in Brussels occupied by Turner Prize-winning artist Laure Prouvost, where fictitious grandfathers, octopus tentacles and giant papier-mâché breasts join forces to form 'a web of elaborate half-truths'. Finally, let's herald those places that seem to spar with their contents. One conceptual-art caper worth clocking is the lighthouse located in landlocked Pittsburgh. Not only that, its spiralling form and Fresnel-lens lantern are encased within one of the city's derelict terrace houses. A similar uneasiness hangs over the family home in Ostend of painter James Ensor, its stolid bourgeois trappings contrasting uncannily with the Belgian Symbolist's macabre, mask-filled paintings. And thus, you've been framed!

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In Yorùbá culture, 'ibejì', or twins, are venerated as deities, and this sculpture in the Oṣun Oṣogbo Sacred Grove (probably by Saka Aremu) depicts a mother carrying them front and back. See page 118. Photograph: Manny Jefferson

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BIJOU BUT BOUGIE

The owner of this tiny apartment in the centre of Paris, a connoisseur of art and antiques, freely admits that he possesses far more things than he could ever hope to display within its off-white walls. But what has made it out of storage wouldn't shame the Louvre just down the road – be it Louis XVI gilt-mounted furniture or his many marble busts. If only there were room for the full panoply of porcelain, silver and glass that's been boxed away, he tells Gay Gassmann. Photography: Pascal Chevallier

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Previous pages: sheltering under sprays of blossom in the Paris apartment is 'Florentine Princess' by Vincent Désiré Faure de Broussé, which was exhibited at the 1876 Salon. Meanwhile, Harriet Goodhue Hosmer's 'Medusa', made in 1854 while the sculptor was in Rome, sits just the other side of the wall. Opposite: an 18th-century terracotta bust looks askance towards a patinated console by Eric Schmitt for Christian Liaigre and a Louis XVI folding tripod table. Following pages: the bronze-inlay commode in the sitting room is of the same vintage as the latter and is by master cabinetmaker Claude-Mathieu Magnien, while the decorative shield hanging above it dates to 1913. The owner himself drew the large Neoclassical nude after Jacques-Louis David's 'Patroclus'. Sittings editor: Gianluca Longo

Hidden behind a discreet doorway on a petite Parisian *rue* is an unexpectedly beautiful 18th-century staircase that winds up through a four-storey building erected in 1780. Ascend to the first floor and you will be greeted by yet another surprise: a compact treasure-trove of an apartment, dense with its owner's cherished collection of art and design. The art-world insider, who prefers to remain anonymous, previously lived in a studio in the city's second arrondissement, which he sold before finding his current home in a charming spot between the Louvre and Place Vendôme. The building's first floor was divided in two in the 1960s, and he has been gradually making the space his own since moving in six years ago. 'If I was to do something else, I would be a decorator,' says the collector, who has a passion for breathing new life into old spaces. 'I love doing these projects and thinking about the space.' Mission accomplished, it would seem; the apartment's four-metre-high ceilings make the proportions feel grand and gracious, even though it is a modest 42 square metres in area and chock-full of his things. 'Once you've lived with high ceilings, there's no going back,' he says.

The entrance hall doubles as a library, with a floor-to-ceiling bookcase packed with Pierre Cardin, Roberto Polo and Jacques Garcia monographs and volumes. Hidden behind that is the original double door that previously connected the apartment to what is now his neighbour's home. This small hall opens into the main salon, to the left of which is a kitchenette and bathroom; to the right is a pair of three-metre-high doors that lead into the bedroom-cum-dining room. Yes, the bed flips over and becomes a table big enough for the owner to host a modest supper party. 'I love this space. It is very cosy,' he says. 'I can have eight for dinner seated and then people can come after and we can be up to 15, but not more. I have too many things! Maybe if I had more space it would be more minimal, but with all the same things.'

His home is compact and well thought out with not one inch of space wasted. Everything in the bathroom is bespoke, while the entire kitchen area is clad in beautiful dark-stained and varnished wood, inspired by a gate he saw in Kyoto. He also brought in all the parquet floors, made up of salvaged timber. And while the space and setting are impressive, the real treat is the art. The whole place is a casual mix of things that he has inherited, such as an 18th-century commode in the salon dating from the time of Louis XVI, and a collection of somewhat outré 19th-century art glass and silver. Among these pieces are several large-scale japonisme works by master glassmaker François-Eugène Rousseau and his student Ernest Léveillé, who took over the former's studio on his death in 1885. The duo's characteristic layering of the material with gold leaf and Asian-influenced motifs is on full display in the apartment, which provides the perfect setting for their beautifully shaped, technically perfect creations.

Also in the main room are two pieces by the French silversmith and jeweller Henri Husson, a self-taught niche artist whose work was inspired by nature (despite Husson featuring in the collection of the Petit Palais in Paris he remains relatively unknown). Other artworks on view include a Neoclassical bust by the American sculptor Harriet Goodhue Hosmer and sculptures by Vincent Désiré Faure de Broussé. In addition to all the glass and silver, there are numerous antiques of more recent provenance. The owner sourced two Michel Boyer side tables originally created for the Rothschild Bank in Paris at auction, a bronze Tiffany candlestick from one of the Yves Saint Laurent/Pierre Bergé sales and an impressive narwhal tooth that once belonged to Hubert de Givenchy. 'I also collect tabletop things and love doing tables,' he says, before rattling off a list of possessions for which he has yet to find space. 'My storage is completely full. I have some Fornasetti, Puiforcat, Haviland, Christofle and lots more… I have a table by Rick Owens, which I can't put here. I have a space full of things I don't have room for.

'I love what Rick Owens does,' he continues. 'My dream is to have him completely redo a huge space and then fill it with all of my objects. He is so radical and that is what I like about his style, like Jean-Michel Frank and what he did for Marie-Laure de Noailles. Something radical and pure.'

Just as I prepare to depart, I ask him what advice he might offer young collectors. 'Ask the professionals, follow the auctions, go to the dealers and ask prices. You might be surprised – not everything is expensive,' he says. Then, as our conversation draws to a close, he throws in one final pearl of wisdom: 'Ebay!' ⊛

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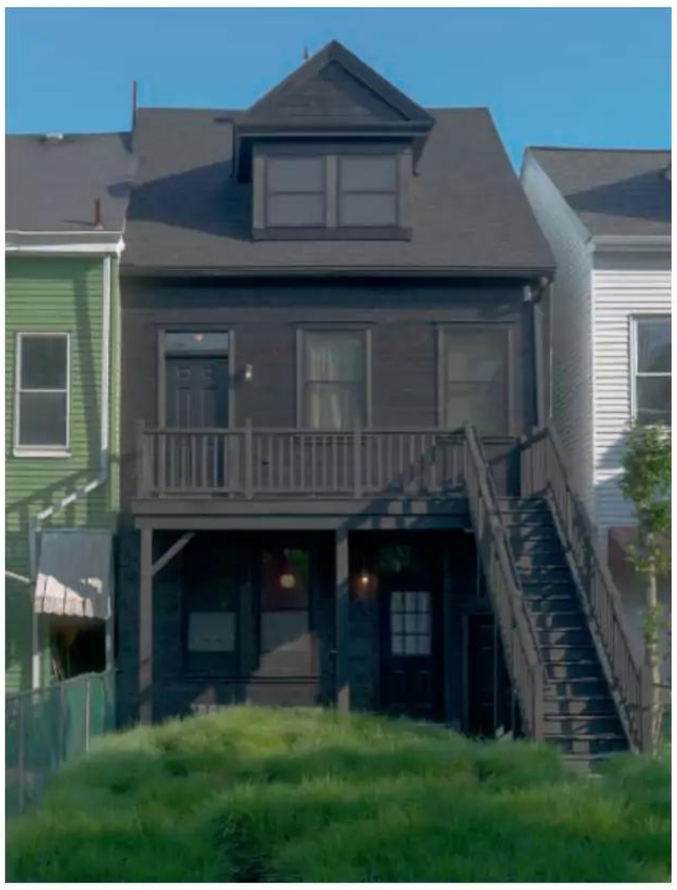
Above: the bedroom doubles as a dining room thanks to a space-saving Murphy bed. Opposite: when that is raised, the owner can hang his c1900 portrait by Albert Lynch, pull up a second Empire giltwood chair, wheel out the table and – hey presto – he is all set for a supper. The Art Nouveau pendant lamp is attributed to Maurice Dufrêne and came from a flat he decorated in Avenue Henri-Martin

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When is a lighthouse not quite a lighthouse? When it's hundreds of miles from the nearest coast and surrounded by suburbia. That small matter aside, however, this one rising from the middle of a burnt-out property in Pittsburgh is authentic in just about every respect – right down to the working Fresnel lens in the lantern and the canned blare of a foghorn. Still, you'd be forgiven for feeling all at sea here. Beam us up, says landlubber Lexi Bishop, as she gingerly wends her way up to the 'widow's walk'. Photography: Ed Panar

I SEE NO SHIPS





Above: the cladding to the rear of the property was fashioned using 'yakisugi' – a Japanese method of burning cedar as a way of preserving the wood. Right: the juxtaposition between the house's remnants and the lighthouse is both absurd and shocking

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There's a house in Pittsburgh where one's reality is a mutable material. Conceptualised, designed and built over the course of four years by local artists Lenka Clayton and Phillip Andrew Lewis, *Darkhouse Lighthouse* is a space within a space that tests the limits of art and architecture, obscured by the façade of an ordinary terrace house in the city's Troy Hill neighbourhood.

Occupying an abandoned, burnt-out property, *Darkhouse Lighthouse* is part of a series of experimental art ventures known as the Troy Hill Art Houses, started by Pittsburgh-based collector Evan Mirapaul, which span four previously vacant homes in the area. The first, *La Hütte Royal* by German artist Thorsten Brinkmann, opened in 2013 and combines items left by squatters with new works. In 2016, Polish artist Robert Kuśmirowski completed *Kunzhaus*, in which the artist conflates his own family history with that of the home's former residents. A complete installation by Mark Dion, titled *Mrs Christopher's House*, launches this autumn.

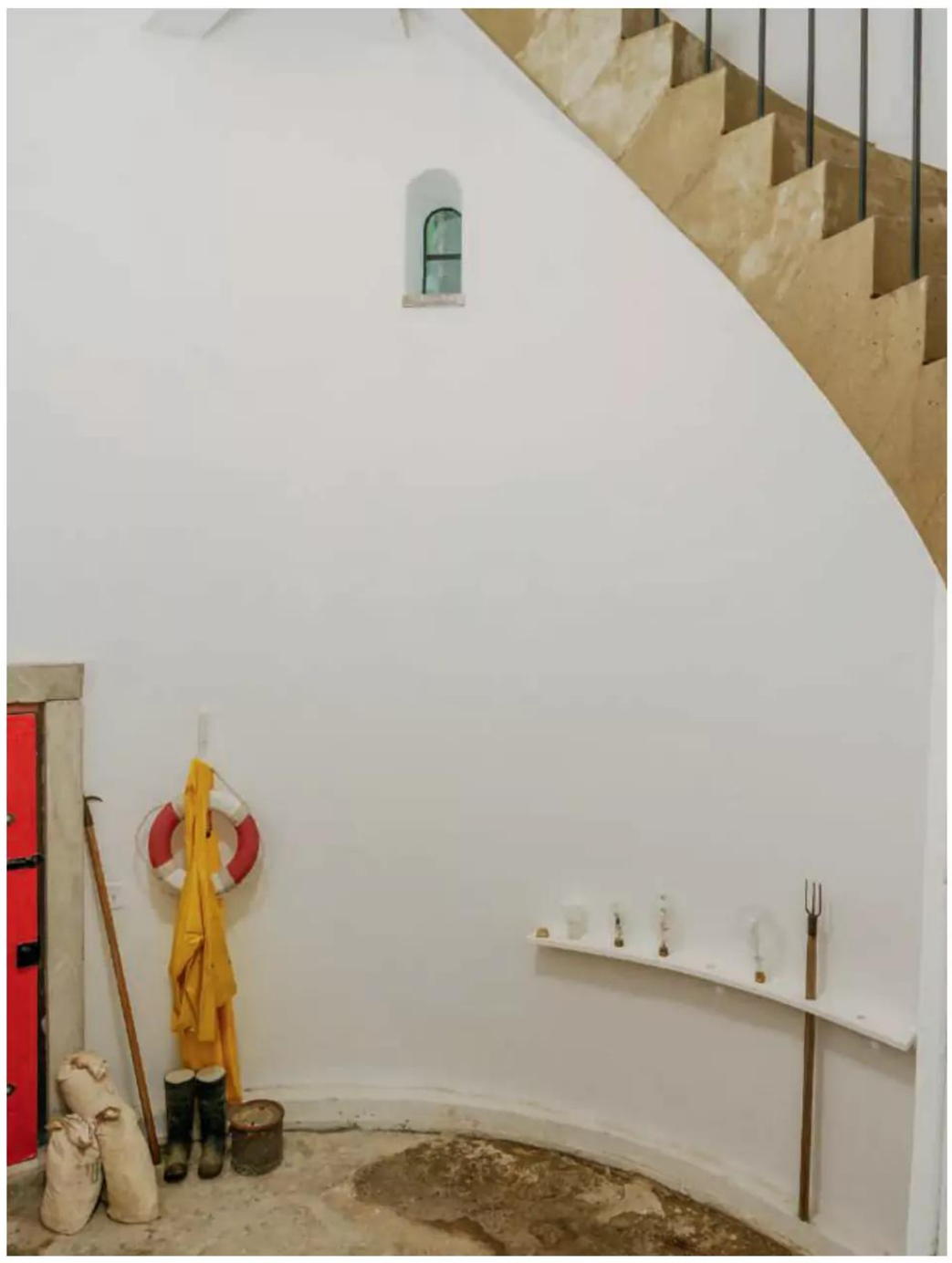
Darkhouse Lighthouse, which had its debut in 2022, took years of back-and-forth with city officials, architects and engineers before it could be realised. Given the zoning of the place, it had to be liveable, which made sense for Lenka and Phillip since lighthouses were historically intended to accommodate a keeper. The space contains two architectural structures: the lighthouse and its unassuming exterior, each with its own doors, stairs, heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and electricity. A fire burned out the core of the original property and the tower now acts as the spine that holds it all together.

Behind the front door is a long, dark 'breezeway' corridor, a feature common to terrace houses that allows for direct access to the garden without losing space. The temperature here is noticeably cooler. As you move through the corridor, space literally condenses, the ceiling slanting downwards and the hanging light fixtures becoming markedly larger in size. This breezeway acts as a conduit between the life you left on Troy Hill's Tours Street and the *Gesamtkunstwerk* of Lenka and Phillip. It is the only space one moves through twice – the entrance pulling you into an unfamiliar realm, before the exit pushes you back into reality.

At the end of the breezeway is another door, a portal perhaps, and then the lighthouse. Lenka acknowledges that 'it's momentarily absurd' yet fully functional. The black-and-white-striped tower rises from the concrete foundation through four floors of the gutted home, terminating in a weathervane that pierces the property's roof; it is the only clue to the lighthouse's existence from the street outside. Like a rock out at sea, a narrow, damp basement was the site for this lighthouse, and it's here that one encounters a glossy, fire-engine-red doorway.

Below left: all lighthouses have a pattern that can be recognised during the day, such as these spiral stripes, although there is no standard model. Here, the structure intersects the stone foundation wall of the existing house. Below right: the artists collected the items in this entryway from dumps along coastal Maine. All are objects that a keeper would have used. Phillip Andrew Lewis reveals that the spiral concrete staircase was particularly difficult to make, because as the steps rise up the walls they also curve in, making each one different





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Among the objects in the keeper's quarters are a functioning gas stove, a typewriter, notebooks, a curved bed and a white alternating-tread ladder that leads up to the lens. An amber-coloured jar containing a rock sits on the centre windowsill, one of many secret works that the artists have hidden inside the lighthouse. This one is called 'Rock Inside Bottle Smashed by Rock Inside Bottle'

Step through and everything you know and expect, smell and feel is manipulated by the meticulous world-building of Lenka and Phillip. The first floor is filled with all the articles you would expect to find in a lighthouse: 'We raided dumps along coastal Maine to accumulate fishing ropes and nets, life rafts and tins,' Lenka says. The air is cool and moist, the smell of wet rock permeates and the faint sound of a foghorn, recorded at Rodeo Beach in California when the duo first met, can be heard through speakers concealed within the installation.

After ascending a spiral staircase, you arrive at the lighthouse-keeper's quarters, fully outfitted with the accoutrement of solitary living, items both found and made. In an attempt to maintain the mystery, the artists are reluctant to disclose which elements they acquired and which ones they crafted. The circular living space is stocked with items that confuse time and place: historical sea books, shells meticulously organised and labelled, wooden objects the keeper might have fashioned in free time, a radio emitting static, a plastic toothbrush, several clocks set at different times. And small nods to Pittsburgh: a copy of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, and *Flood Pennsylvania 1972*, sit on the shelves.

Four windows look on to remnants of the destroyed house outside, providing glimpses into an unknowable past: peeling wallpaper, an upturned chair, lace curtains. The artists call these the 'weather windows', as each view is manipulated by different weather conditions: one slowly fills with fog, another wind, then darkness and finally the glow of summer sun. In the lighthouse, time is irrelevant because it's all the time – all hours of the day and all seasons – past, present and future. Lenka notes: 'Time is the most exciting material. A personal loop that engages with this larger unfathomable loop we are in.'

A white, alternating-tread ladder in the centre of the room leads to a large and intricately designed Fourth Order Fresnel lens custom-made by Dan Spinella, the last lighthouse lens maker in North America. Lenka and Phillip explain: 'Each lens has its own characteristic flash pattern of light that mariners would then look up in a light chart, allowing them to determine their position at sea.' The Troy Hill lens, then, like that of any lighthouse, is a beacon and a warning specific to its site – a landlocked maritime signal.

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Opposite: an open copy of Herman Melville's 'Moby Dick' lies on the custom-made curved bed, which is covered with a quilt made from the signal flags of 27 shipwrecks. A single seagull feather hangs over it. Above: this is the final room in the old house before the visitor exits to the back porch. The medicine cabinet contains items appropriate to it, while pink bathroom tiling awkwardly meets pink wood panelling. The artists intend us to wonder whether this is how they found the room, or whether they constructed it this way

Rather than crashing on to the rocks of some unknown shore when stepping off the ramp that surrounds the lens – known as the 'widow's walk' – you find yourself in the house's attic. Remnants of the blaze, black soot and white residue from firefighters' foam coat the walls. Another spiral staircase takes you to a back door leading to a deck, where a red day marker sits against the skyline in the direction of the Allegheny river.

While this lighthouse is hundreds of miles inland, it's more than possible that as sea levels rise, the ocean may someday reach the edges of *Darkhouse Lighthouse*. It's also possible that, thousands of years ago, water touched the edges of Troy Hill, perhaps completely submerging the small district. In Phillip's notes on the work, he writes: 'This architectural instrument will sit much like a latent time capsule in anticipation of being fully activated one day as a functional navigational marker once the sea level rises to meet the work – currently 879 feet above and 382 miles away from the ocean.' Thus, *Darkhouse Lighthouse* exists somewhere between a plausible past and a plausible future, where both are visible from an ordinary house in an ordinary neighbourhood in Pittsburgh ⊛ *'Darkhouse Lighthouse', 1913 Tours St, Pittsburgh, PA 15212. To arrange a viewing, visit troyhillarthouses.com*

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A view of the top of the tower from within the attic of the property. Lenka and Phillip commissioned a Fourth Order Fresnel Lens – designed for lighthouses by the French engineer Augustin-Jean Fresnel – for this lantern room. It rotates and is fully operational. The glass for these devices was developed in a specialist factory that was lost to bombing in World War II

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SHRINE OF THE TIMES

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Long venerated by the Yorùbá people, and the site of an annual festival, the Oṣun Oṣogbo Sacred Grove received a major boost in the early 1960s when the Austrian-born artist Susanne Wenger – herself a high priestess in the faith – assembled a team of artisans to turn the sanctuary into a monumental sculpture park. In the intervening period, the colossal works have been variously damaged by the elements or attacked by religious fanatics, but now a new generation of craftspeople has restored this forested oasis of southwestern Nigeria to its former grandeur, as Roli O'tsemaye reports. Photography: Manny Jefferson

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Previous pages: the original entrance, the Flying Tortoise Gate was intended to prevent cars driving in to the grove. In 1990 Susanne Wenger wrote that the reptile 'symbolises the heaviness of matter, and it taking to the air evokes a turning point in one's rational habits. For here, other laws prevail.' Below: the work of multiple artists, the Ogbóni Shrine is an assembly point for Yorùbá traditionalists associated with the earth deity. 'Like a spectacular tree', in critic Ulli Beier's words, Wenger's design is composed of three enormous roofs that rise against the sky like giant lizards, representing the forces of the earth before mankind. Opposite: the Obàtálá Shrine Complex celebrates the deity of creation, who manifests as a bull elephant – hence the tusks and ear-like flaps of the tallest structure



Each August thousands of devotees gather in Ọ̀ṣogbo to honour the Yorùbá goddess of fertility, Ọ̀ṣun. At the height of the celebration, a procession winds its way through the Nigerian city before arriving at a verdant grove, where white-robed pilgrims cleanse themselves in the deity's namesake river. Folklore suggests that a group of migrants once encountered Ọ̀ṣun in this very place. They had been driven from their village by drought and famine, and this seemed like a promising spot for settlement. But, as they set about clearing the land, the goddess appeared and instructed them to relocate a short distance away, leaving the grove as her sacred place. In exchange, she promised protection and prosperity, provided the refugees offered an annual sacrifice to her. Legend tells that this rite has continued uninterrupted for centuries ever since, evolving into the Ọ̀ṣun Ọ̀ṣogbo Festival as we know it today.

A Unesco World Heritage site spanning roughly 75 hectares, the Ọ̀ṣun Ọ̀ṣogbo Sacred Grove is a treasure trove of biodiversity. It harbours upwards of 400 species of plants, with more than 250 known for their healing properties. The river itself, nourished by the roots of these medicinal

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herbs, is believed to carry potent, curative powers. And alongside nature's bounty, a proliferation of man-made sculptures honouring various Yorùbá deities can be counted among the grove's riches too.

The Flying Tortoise Gate – a magnificent concrete arch beckoning visitors into the realm of the *òrìṣà* (deities) – is one such sculpture. Erected in the early 1960s, it was jointly crafted by Austrian-born artist Susanne Wenger and local sculptor Adebisi Akanji, who were part of the pioneering movement that, over many decades, transformed the grove into a monumental art space.

An early proponent of Surrealism, Wenger and her husband, the critic Ulli Beier, moved from London to Nigeria in 1950. She subsequently resolved to spend the rest of her life there, became an initiated Yorùbá high priestess and adopted the name of Adùnní Olórìṣà. By this point, the grove was in a state of disrepair. Most shrines had been abandoned and one, known as *Ayé Dákun Yípadà* (World, I beg you to reconsider your ways), was destroyed by religious fanatics. Oṣun's high priestess called on Wenger, propelled by her artistic skill and profound faith, to repair the shrines in the late 1950s. So she assembled a group of local artisans expert in various crafts, including bricklaying, textile work, carpentry, wood carving, painting and blacksmithing. Beyond their skills, Wenger intentionally sought craftspeople who had an affinity with the Yorùbá faith or, as she put it herself, an '*òrìṣà* within them waiting to be aroused'.

'Mama believed everyone to be an artist,' says the current chief priestess of Oṣun, Adedoyin Faniyi, one of Wenger's several adopted children – the activist/artist Nike Davies-Okundaye (*WoI* Nov 2023) is another. 'So, she gathered various artisans working in different parts of Oṣogbo and nurtured their creativity. These people came to be known as the New Sacred Art Movement, some of whom are still alive today.'

The group included dozens of artisans with diverse artistic languages, all of whom were mentored by Wenger. Among the founders were Akanji, her closest associate and artistic leader; Sàngódáre



These two sculptures, representing the male and female principles of Obàtálá (the god of creation), are examples of Wenger's earliest works of art in the grove. Their Cubist style is typical of the graphic design that she did in the late 1950s for 'Black Orpheus', a groundbreaking pan-African literary and art magazine founded by her then husband, Ulli Beier, and published by the University of Ibadan. Over time the earthen core weakened and the figures collapsed, and so were completely reconstructed in 2016 by collaborators Adeyemi Oseni, Adebisi Akanji and Adebisi Nurudeen under the direction of New Sacred Art Movement leader, Sàngódáre Ajàlá

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Gbádégesin Ajàlá, a textile artist from a lineage of Sàngó (the god of thunder) priests and another of Wenger's adoptees; and the carpenter Buraimoh Gbadamosi. Also included were Foyeke Ajoke and Songo Tundun, who specialised in shrine paintings, an art form traditionally associated with women in Yorùbá culture.

Their creations are scattered throughout the grove, greeting visitors with surreal details, Cubist forms, stone finishes and meticulous wood carvings. At the entrance to the Oṣun shrine, a gigantic tree stands beside a stone sculpture of Eṣù, the divine messenger, created by Gbadamosi. Hiding among the shrubs elsewhere is *Obàtálá Greeting Alájere*, a looming figure with bulging eyes created by Wenger in the 1970s. Other notable works include Saka Aremu's statue of the goddess Oṣun, considered his masterpiece, and Lasisi Isola's Igbó Fá entrance gate and walls, which leads to a private area reserved for initiations and rituals. This list is by no means exhaustive; indeed the sheer volume of artworks attests to the dedication and consistency of Wenger and the New Sacred Artists, who worked for more than six decades to develop this holy site.

But their sculptures, initially rendered in concrete-covered clay, were not built to last. Weather and climatic factors caused many to deteriorate, including the Flying Tortoise Gate, which collapsed in the 1990s. In an effort to preserve the sculptures and support ongoing artistic work, the Adunni Olorisha Trust/Foundation was established in 1998, raising significant funds that enabled large-scale restoration efforts in the following decade.

After Wenger's death in 2009, Ajàlá, Akanji and the surviving New Sacred Artists reassembled to begin restoration works and train the next generation of artists. Among them is Akanji's son, Adebisi Nurudeen, who in 2014 helped to recreate the Flying Tortoise Gate with his father, relying on photographs and memory. 'To guarantee its longevity, we used high-quality materials such as strong metal reinforcement rods and netting and then used high-quality coloured cement for its finishing to retain its colour,' explains Nurudeen, who has led the

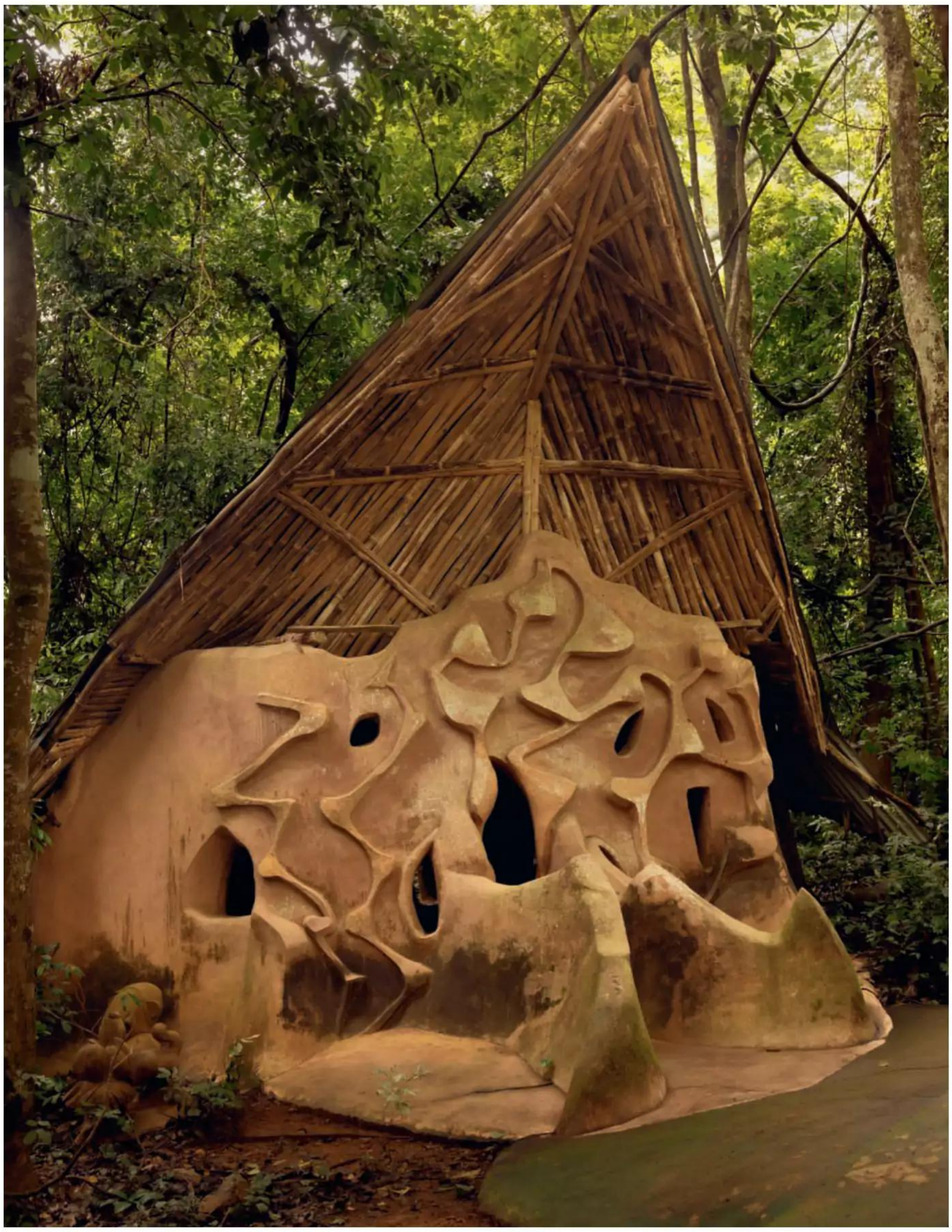


Created in the late 1960s by Saka Aremu, one of Wenger's earliest protégés, 'The Marketplace' (restored 2012) is a large flat rock populated by larger-than-life cement sculptures. In the words of his Austrian-born mentor: 'Ojà Ońtótóo is a market for gods, subterranean and supernatural beings, angels and clairvoyant humans. It is an amphitheatre where earthly and heavenly beings are actors and audience combined.' There are drummers, hunters, an elephant rider, a large mother stretched out on the ground with her small child, snakes, and tortoises – all representing the spirits that come from the forest floor, out of the earth, and down from the trees

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Opposite: this monumental, five-metre-high sculpture, situated close to a precipice, depicts Wenger's early 1970s statue of (the god) 'Alájere Jumping over the Cliff'. Nearby he is depicted dancing. As she put it: 'This death–life, life–death motion… [impersonates] the ambivalence of a sacred force as such.' Below: the Alájere Shrine is, in Wenger's words, 'a dwelling place, which the god, and occasionally his priests, humans and snakes, may take physically as an abode'. Its façade is sculpted with thorny creepers, valued by the deity for their psychodynamic qualities. Following pages: created by Ojewale Amoo (originally a bricklayer by trade), the Egúngún Walls celebrate the cult of sacred ancestry in which masked, costumed dancers connect reverently with their forebears



restoration team since his father's death in 2023. 'Our goal was to restore it to its original form as accurately as possible.'

Susanne Wenger's influence extends far beyond the grove. At the 2024 Venice Biennale exhibition, *Foreigners Everywhere*, five of her early cassava-starch monochrome batiks, depicting scenes inspired by Yorùbá cosmology, are displayed alongside pieces by Ajàlá. The exhibition's theme of alienation resonates deeply with the life story of Wenger, an Austrian artist who found home in Nigeria, while Ajàlá's works, which depict the initiations of *olórìṣàs* (individuals consecrated to Yorùbá deities), echo motifs that can be found within the sacred grove.

This year, like those before it, the holy site filled with drumming and dance as practitioners from around the world joined in celebration. The Arugba, a maiden entrusted with the sacrificial offering, made her way towards the river, while the pious filled jerry cans with healing water for loved ones who couldn't partake. Presiding over it all were Oṣun and her concrete custodians. Thanks to the efforts of the New Sacred Restoration Team, their grove will remain a place of pilgrimage for generations to come ⊛

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Look up in the main room of French artist Laure Prouvost's Brussels studio and you will see a large pair of breasts. 'They're my grandmother's,' she says of the papier-mâché installation that dominates a good portion of the ceiling. 'She made it to cover up my grandad's conceptual work and to make it more joyous and feminine. To say: we're here, we're staying.' Originally this piece hung in Milan's Pirelli Hangar Bicocca as part of a 2016 exhibition entitled *Grand Dad's Visitor Center*; now, eight years later, here it is, 'welcoming you', as she says, into her studio – and aptly introducing a corpus so fantastical and unsettling that it can disorientate its viewers.

The first thing to know is that the grandparents in question are fictional. Secondly, it is not unusual for Prouvost to weave an elaborate web of half-truths around each new creation – worlds she continues to inhabit long after an exhibition is over. To outsiders, this may seem bizarre and confusing; for Prouvost, it is essential creative fuel. Today, we're talking over a video call, where she plays with her hair and smiles, amused, as she recalls each fictitious nugget. You get the sense that reality doesn't really interest her.

Prouvost has been based in the studio she's calling me from since 2022, when her four-year-long quest to turn two industrial structures into a live/work space for herself, her partner and their two children finally reached its conclusion. 'The buildings are located in Molenbeek, an area to the west of central Brussels, home to a large number of similar places that are increasingly being repurposed by people looking to take advantage of the space,' explains Tom Finch, co-founder of Morales Finch, the architectural practice Prouvost worked with on the project.

'The place is split into two parts – the main house and the atelier – and was executed broadly to plan with the typical tweaks and revisions one might expect to make as a family home takes shape, including a few playful decorative additions,' says Finch. One of these is a tiny door at the front of the house – so tiny, in fact, that you have to crouch to walk through it. 'I like the idea that you have to change your mental space to enter [the room]: it's like going deeper into your subconscious,' Prouvost explains.

Small spaces are a theme in her work, too: her 2013 piece *After After* involved a small, blacked-out room lit up sporadically by flickering strobe lights; more recently, her 2022 Seoul show *Deep Travel Ink* invited visitors to squat and enter through a miniature door to view the installation *Uncle's Travel Agency Franchise*.

'I mean, it's usually completely illegal. My studio is somewhere I can do it because it's not a public space – it's always difficult in an exhibition,' she says. The design of the building's exterior, a grand, slanting 'm' shape that rises up from the roof in a curvy mass of blush pink, is another playful touch. 'I thought of the façade almost like a Hollywood studio. I wanted to create an image of what could be on the inside and for them to be completely different, and to play on that. The shape is like two breasts or clouds or whatever you want to see, really – it could be a mosque.'

Prouvost first came into the public eye when she won the Turner Prize in 2013 for her installation *Wantee*, which featured a rotting cabin in the woods from which she told the story of her fictional grandfather's battle to maintain his reputation – and his subsequent disappearance down a tunnel he'd built under the house. As she rose to accept the award, the presenter surprised her with her newborn baby, whom she notably declined to hold: 'It was a moment where it was about my work,' she would explain later on. Since, Prouvost has built up an arsenal of motifs, characters and sleights

BODY LANGUAGE

Laure Prouvost's corpus is certainly corporeal. As a visit to her studio in Brussels quickly makes clear, the French installation artist's symbolic system is heavy on parts both human and animal, often fantastically disembodied or spliced. Breasts and octopus tentacles play starring roles, but, as Hannah Keegan discovers, the main mythos behind her idiom is altogether stranger than even these anatomical props might imply… Photography: Oskar Proctor

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of hand associated with her corpus – the grandparents, breasts (obviously), maternity, octopuses and their slippery tentacles, teabags (and pots), birds, fish, raspberries and deliberate mistranslations – all of which are littered across the studio, itself akin to a big white box.

In the main room, a long resin table curves its way through the space like a tentacle; this is where Prouvost tends to work with her studio staff. 'It's 15 metres long and is the shape of an octopus's arm – it was left over from a show,' she says. 'It's often the leftovers that I'm stuck with, the things no-one wants. Really, I love when I'm working on something that's a big production and the studio gets completely crazy in preparation, so when all those things go, I feel a bit empty. But the space is very malleable and constantly changing.' As she talks, there is a painting – a pair of breasts against a dark background with the line 'Looking at you looking at us' printed underneath – propped up on the wall behind her that will soon be swept off to be exhibited. 'It's from a series of 30 paintings where my grandmother was improving on my grandad's black, monochromatic style,' she says. 'She's constantly reappropriating history and making it hers.'

Many of the choices in the space are utilitarian. I ask about the shade of green she plumped for in the bathroom, for example, wondering if it had any links to the ecological themes of her more recent work. 'No, it was the cheapest,' she says with a shrug. 'It's not intentional, I wanted the space to feel rough.' Interestingly, though, this means what I'm seeing is merely a snapshot of Prouvost's creative intentions here, which are ever-evolving: how the space appears now may not be how it looks in a month. 'It's like a factory, I just have the things I need,' she adds.

In this sense, to read too much into Prouvost's chosen décor – and interrogate how it represents or informs her work – would be beside the point. 'It's just a canvas. The [real] studio is the people outside in their gardens, the parks, or going slowly out for a drink at the end of the day,' she says, smiling and looking towards the door, 'disappearing into the tentacles of the city' ⊛

Previous pages: a pair of papier-mâché breasts, created for the show 'Grand Dad's Visitor Center', hangs over the main room of Laure Prouvost's studio. The table bears a number of other artistic souvenirs, among them a milk bottle like the one clutched by her 2019 octopus sculpture 'The Means', which has two breasts in lieu of a head, and a crow harking back to the glass birds she brought to Oslo's National Museum. Top: a wood sculpture that has sprouted Murano glass udders is flanked by 'The Octopus Body – Feeling the World', the latest in a line of octopean oil paintings. Opposite: 'Pink Vapper on the Horizon', a 2020 tapestry by the artist, doubles as a door curtain

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This page: the tentacular theme continues at the artist's snaking resin table – where much of her work gets done – with a spray of tendrils mounted on metal rods. The seated figure's mask is from Prouvost's film/installation 'Deep See Blue Surrounding You'. Opposite: a figure with a football for a head makes itself at home on the sofa, while the dangling produce comes from 'Stong Sory Vegetables', a video piece

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ARTICLES OF FAITH

Beginning with a blank slate of an apartment, courtesy of his church, one Greek Orthodox priest has over the decades fashioned a spiritual haven with all the aura of an old-master painting. Every surface of this velvety cocoon in west London is dotted with icons, vestments and limewood statues. In the Eastern tradition, such craftsmanship and creativity are seen as facets of the divine – it's a principle, says Melina Blaxland-Horne, to which her friend 'the father' wholeheartedly subscribes. Photography: James McDonald

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Previous pages: in the living room, an embroidered dress that once clothed a Baroque Spanish statue of the Virgin Mary stands next to an intricately carved Victorian oak tallboy. Above: the Georgian painting of a pigeon that perches in the entrance hall had a long stint as a period-film prop. Opposite: over the door a set of 18th-century French plates illustrates the life of Joan of Arc. Sittings editor: Gianluca Longo

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On the coffee table, a Limoges enamel triptych screen records the Holy Family's escape to Egypt. Obscuring two side windows are an unusual pair of 17th-century Brazilian oil paintings, depicting Saint Frumentius, left, and Saint Iphigenia, right. Between them, silhouetted by the central panes, stand oak figurines of the Virgin and John the Evangelist, who were both present at the Crucifixion

More than two decades ago, a meeting about a marriage application led to a wonderful and unexpected friendship. My soon-to-be husband and I visited the vicarage at a Greek Orthodox church in London and connected immediately with the father who was to marry us – initially through our common faith and spirituality and, later, through a mutual appreciation for collecting artworks and artefacts.

The father has lived in a small, beautifully arranged apartment in a quiet, green area of west London for as long as I have known him. On my last visit, I was cordially welcomed as usual with Assam tea served in a parrot-green Minton bone-china cup and saucer. Walking together throughout the already familiar space, the father explained: 'My main concern when I took up residence was the fact that I was to live alone. A home ought to be a place of welcoming, particularly if one does not have company, the embrace of one's family to come back to. I needed to create a home that promotes a sense of peace, which can also be reflected in my everyday life and vocation. One can truly empathise and focus on others only when they feel peaceful themselves.'

The modestly sized, one-bedroom apartment is full of wonders at every turn. In the kitchen, where I sip my tea perched comfortably on a 16th-century hand-carved ebony chair, the cupboards – off-the-peg units finished in standard white Formica – have been transformed into a kind of picture gallery. A series of beautifully framed 18th-century black-and-white gravures hang in front of them, attached to picture hooks, while antique stained-glass panels and religious icons rest against the surfaces. The few pots and pans on view are elegantly arranged on a late 1980s stove, which is just about noticeable among densely deposited piles of books, while a microwave in one corner of the room feels oddly out of place. (The washing-up sink barely registers at all.) Behind me, still in the kitchen, is an unexpected and exquisite canopied daybed dressed in a thick floral Hines of Oxford tapestry fabric, whose rich hues contrast with the deeply verdant walls (Little Greene's 'Dark Brunswick Green').

The flat is provided by the church and the father moved in when he took up his current position. At that stage, it was 'like a blank, plain canvas', he explains. 'There was nothing.' His first decision was to paint the walls, favouring the dark, dramatic palette of old-master paintings.

'Burgundy is an ecclesiastical colour representing the blood of Jesus Christ and the Martyrs, who gave up their lives for God. It connects me to the Divine Source, offering me tranquility. Green is the colour of hope and of nature, for the creator of heaven and earth.' Indeed, in the Orthodox church, there has always been a strong connection between the adornment of spaces of worship and the divine. God, in this world view, is seen as the source of all creation and beauty, and is therefore present in skilled workmanship and aesthetic expression. Thus churches are often adorned with opulent decorations and use iconography, mosaics and intricately handcrafted wooden altars.

Beautiful examples of many such objects are to be found throughout the father's apartment (including the bathroom, which is so full of books that it could double as a library). However, his collection is by no means limited to religious artefacts. He is guided, instead, by pieces that seem to have a story. One of his favourite works is a small Dutch painting in which a mother, in simple 17th-century attire, leans over her young child, book in hand, as though about to read him a bedtime story. 'The modest clothing and simple surroundings make it evident that the family is not wealthy; however, the mother's affectionate approach indicates that the little boy is well cared for and content,' he explains. 'Each piece of art I acquire allows me to travel back in time to a different era.' There are also numerous portraits from diverse periods, whose pale faces are luminous against their midnight-coloured background and the dark walls. 'It gives me great pleasure to contemplate the personalities of these individuals and try to envisage who they were. Over time, I find myself feeling as though I am looking at beloved companions.'

The father attributes his appreciation of beauty to his parents. 'They were quiet people yet avid consumers of literature and music. Their graceful demeanour greatly influenced my upbringing. My mother played a particularly significant role in instilling in me an appreciation for beauty as a form of self-respect and way of life. Even if I had not pursued the priesthood, I am confident that I would have still embraced the same aesthetic.' At the age of eight, his father entrusted him with his grandfather's valuable stamp collection, a formative experience in the art of putting together sets of objects. 'I started to save up my allowance so I could collect my own treasured items from local markets in northern Greece, where I grew up.' Six decades later, he continues to be as drawn as ever to the beautiful products of skilled craftsmanship – art and antiques that attest to our shared humanity.

In the living room, a pair of cast-iron portrait medallions adorn a fabric-lined wall, while floor-standing statues cast their silhouettes across the carpet. The textile-covered ceiling features an intricately carved wooden dove – the symbol of the Holy Spirit – dating to the 17th century. There is just about enough space to glimpse the burgundy walls behind the rows of paintings and strategically piled religious artefacts. Every square inch of this property is exploited. Even the windows, draped with gauzy white fabric, are partly obscured by pictures and objects, limiting the natural light and accentuating the home's sanctuary-like air.

To be there is to be encased in a velvety cocoon, where the sounds of the father's favourite classical composers drift through the air, adding to the sense of having stepped out of the clamour and relentless pace of contemporary reality and into another time and place entirely. An elegant safe haven. His own holy land ⊛

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Opposite: the canopy above the daybed is embossed with a late 16th-century carved-oak face of a cherub, while down below, next to a Jacobean water jug, an 18th-century portrait of a monk peeps from behind a large carpeted cushion from Afghanistan. Above: even cupboard doors and the window have been co-opted as gallery space, while the worktop accommodates everything but the kitchen sink, including antique mantel clocks and a towering library of books

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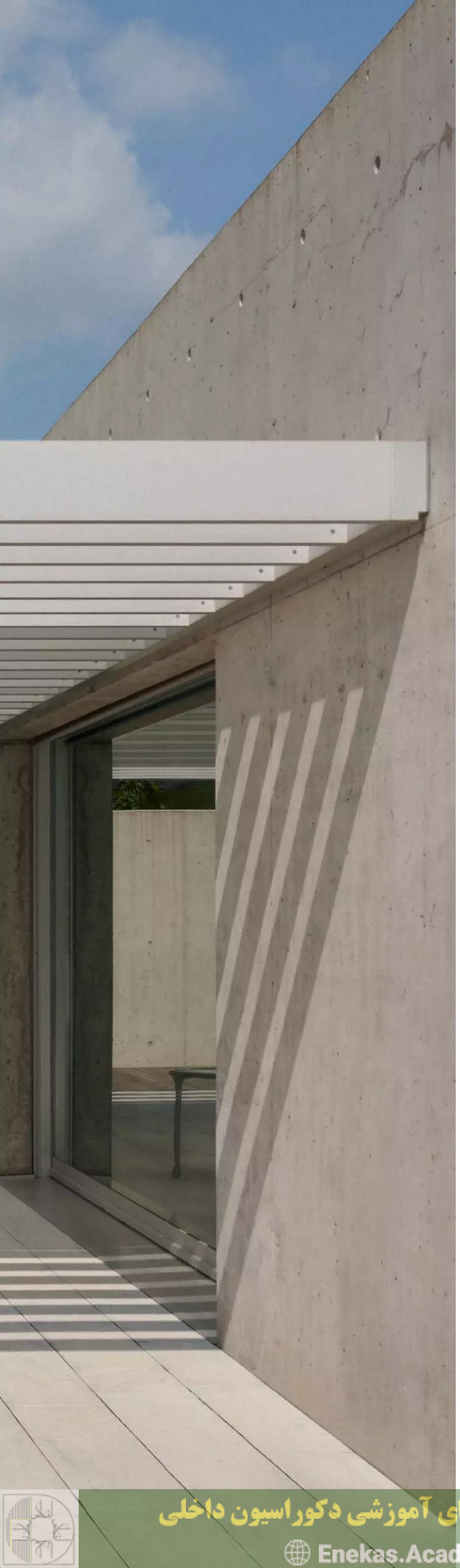


Above: a limewood statue of the Virgin, likely from the school of Tilman Riemenschneider, a renowned German Gothic sculptor, looks past a first-edition set of engravings of Hogarth's 'A Harlot's Progress'. An Anglican clergyman's chasuble drapes over the bed head. Opposite: Victorian father-and-son portraits usher one into the bathroom, with its lithograph celebrating Botticelli's 500th anniversary

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NOUVEAU NICHE

In his curving, sculptural furniture, Mattia Bonetti draws on the fluid, whiplashing style of the early 20th century while creating one-off, playful pieces that are thoroughly his own. A coolly rationalist house in Lugano, Switzerland (coincidentally the designer's home town), has proven the perfect foil for his wiggly mirrors, molten gold/green side tables, a pink acrylic bed frame and other custom-made confections. Amid acres of Corbusian concrete, candy is undeniably dandy, reckons Mitchell Owens.
Photography: Valentina Sommariva

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Once upon a time there was a house. A white house. A very, very white house that also happened to be a very contemporary house, Brutalist even, with raw concrete on the outside and pearly plaster on the inside, and with so much glass involved that it could have been a lantern. The furniture was white, too: that blameless Eero Saarinen table, flaring from the pale-grey marble floor like a tulip, and its matching chairs. There was a round white bed also, a pure platform as spotless as a cloud. All of this was – and still is – in Switzerland, namely Lugano, where the designer Mattia Bonetti and his wife, Isabelle Forestier, live when they're not in Paris. But it is not their house; it belongs to relatively new clients. And though Bonetti part-times in Lugano, and his clients live there about as often – an absolute coincidence, by the way – they met for the first time in Paris, via a chance connection in London.

'We made their acquaintance through my niece and her husband, who are probably their best friends,' Bonetti says. 'Four years ago, they were all together in a rented apartment for a long weekend in Paris, in the Rue de Rivoli. One day the wife called me up from the Marais, where she and her husband were strolling, and said they would like to meet me.' Curious about his work, which they had heard Bonetti's niece describe, the couple arrived at the designer's apartment in the 11ème, and began surveying his career through books, magazines and photos stored on the designer's laptop. Bafflingly, despite his international renown, he still doesn't have a website or an Instagram account, idiosyncrasies in which he takes great pride. 'They stayed for an hour or two, and just before they left, the wife asked if I'd make a couple of things for them. I said: "Of course; that's what I do."'

Husband and wife ordered two armchairs, dipping a toe in the waters of *le style* Bonetti, rather than taking a deep dive. After all, the Swiss's one-off work can be an acquired taste: brilliantly coloured, curling and whirling, flawlessly and shiningly finished, fantastical, a space-age style where Baroque meets Art Nouveau meets Crayola crayons. But it became clear that the couple were secretly more adventurous than their laboratory-look Lugano lodgings suggested. 'Strangely enough, they love Art Nouveau and own a gueridon by Hector Guimard, in cast iron,' says Bonetti, son of antique dealers and designer of two exhibitions about the whiplashing mode, one in 2004 and another in 2009, at the Musée d'Orsay. He was further surprised to see another *retardataire* possession, an 18th-century *pendule*. 'I've always liked Art Nouveau, which is so despised now, but I'm sure it will be back one day or another,' Bonetti observes. 'From a technical point of view, it is amazing.' Plus, he added, the wife was desperate for a house with colour.

Now, she and her husband have it. 'They became quite hooked,' Bonetti explains of the plethora of handmade works that eventually arrived: chairs with fuchsia-pink frames, tables large and tables small, mirrors square and mirrors rectangular. The husband, who works in the healthcare industry, wanted a desk with a white leather top for his home office. Bonetti delivered a free-form writing table in the desired material, its surface floating atop a golden serpentine base that passes in and out of the leather, in the manner of a golden thread. Still, Bonetti had misgivings. 'Aren't you afraid that working on a white-leather desk will ensure that it will quickly be ruined?' he asked the husband. The gentleman, the sort of man who prefers to do his own laundry because he trusts no one else to do it properly, responded with a seigneurial reply: 'I never touch a pen; I only have a laptop.' Says Bonetti with a smile: 'He's a maniac, actually. But a very nice one.'

On and on it went. Each time Bonetti delivered another piece of furniture, another few would be ordered, each more enthusiastically than the last. A little occasional table in the husband's office looks like a combination of mercury and something molten and green, as if an unusual form of lava had been arrested in mid-drip. The bar in the *jardin d'hiver* – where San Francisco-based Swiss artist Mona Caron painted a mural of fantastical pink flowers blooming across a jade-green ground – is fashioned of rose-toned acrylic with a hilly silhouette. 'I've been working a lot in acrylic,' Bonetti says. 'It's not ecological at all, but I like to combine it with other materials, so the petrol aspect is lessened a bit.' The designer even put his singular stamp on two vintage Sacco bean-bag chairs – 'The husband likes to lie down' – upholstering them in leather that has been dyed pink, green, and blue and pieced together. As for the terrace, it has been outfitted as a *plein air* salon, where a somewhat wiggly six-metre-long mirror stretches across one wall and reflects an arrangement of seating with bubbly silver-tone frames.

Bonetti isn't often stumped by a request, but when it came to the primary bedroom, he was taken a bit aback. 'I want a headboard, but it doesn't have to be an actual headboard,' the wife explained to her plainly puzzled domestic maestro. Bonetti recalls thinking: 'How can I design a headboard that isn't a headboard because they don't actually want a headboard?' After some thought, he came up with an inventive solution that he calls 'this pink thing'. By which he means an installation that looks like a giant wall-spanning pelmet fashioned of pink sculpted acrylic and richly decorated with scrolling vines composed of silvery artificial pearls. Where a conventional headboard would have been is, instead, an expanse of pure white wall, a sort of cut-out. Consider it the ghost of a headboard, a suggestive and somewhat stagy spirit. Indeed, it does possess the air of a proscenium, which might be unusual for most bedrooms. Though what is being staged there is really none of your business ⊛ *To contact Mattia Bonetti, ring 00 33 1 48 05 61 21, or email mattia.mattiabonetti@gmail.com*

Previous pages: Mattia Bonetti-designed cast-aluminium side tables and a pair of couches with waterproofed fabric upholstery add lustre and glamour to this concrete terrace protected from the sun by a 'brise-soleil'. The six-metre-long mirror with glass-shaded candleholders is also his. Opposite: a Mona Caron mural in the 'jardin d'hiver' proves the perfect foil for a Bonetti cocktail cabinet

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Above: Ron Arad's 2005 stainless-steel 'Blo-void 1' armchair draws the eye in the ground-floor entrance lobby. Opposite: in the dining area, a 'Birdie' pendant light by Ingo Maurer hangs above an original 'Tulip' table and chairs by Eero Saarinen for Knoll. Signed by P. Musson and B. Lieutaud, the green-horn and gilt-bronze cartel clock sitting on a radiator hails from Paris, c1750

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Previous pages: the drawing room contains a stainless-steel sculpture (2014) by Tony Cragg and 1960s paintings by Mario Schifano. Opposite: a 'B302' swivel chair by Perriand, Jeanneret and Le Corbusier (1928) graces an alcove in the main bedroom. Above: Bonetti's pink acrylic bed frame features 'embroidered' arabesques, made of thousands of cast-aluminium pearls covered in white gold leaf

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In the damask-lined Blue Salon of James Ensor's Ostend home, one wall is dominated by a copy of his masterpiece, 'Christ's Entry into Brussels in 1889' (the original being in the Getty Museum collection). His parents' souvenir shop on the floor below houses a trove of grotesque masks – a key subject for the artist, as the one sitting agape on the sofa, the spit of its 2D companions above, makes clear

SURFACE TENSION

On the face of it, James Ensor's satiric and somewhat sinister works instil his Ostend family home – today a museum to this influential painter and print-maker – with an unsettling ambience. But those jarring proto-Surrealist scenes are set against otherwise comfortably bourgeois trappings, all flock wallpaper, tasselled sofas and solid sideboards. To be sure, the comfortable and the carnivalesque make for a beguiling combination, says Barbara Stoeltie. Photography: René Stoeltie

In the summer of 1948 I spent a weekend with my aunt at the Belgian seaside resort of Ostend. Apart from the intensely grey North Sea and the inevitable hours spent paddling, there is one thing that has remained with me ever since: a trinket box decorated with tiny shells that I saw displayed in the window of a curiosity shop. Unbeknownst to me, that shop was owned by the acclaimed Belgian painter James Ensor, who had lived with his family in the residence just above for most of his life.

By the time of my visit, Ensor (1860–1949) had come to be known as the Grim Reaper among the people of Ostend, owing to the black cape and matching three-piece suit he would wear to stroll along the seafront. Often he'd be joined by his servant August van Yper, or Gustje, his sister Mariette or his loyal friend Augusta Bogaerts, whom he nicknamed the Mermaid. This distinguished gentleman was a living legend in his home town at the time; his bust stood proudly outside the original Kursaal casino (Ensor had unveiled the statue himself in 1930) and, in 1929, he was made a baron by Albert I of Belgium.

The son of an English father and a Belgian mother, Ensor lived with his family on Vlaanderenstraat above the souvenir shop they also owned until 1917. The large 19th-century building was barely 100 metres from the promenade and beach, and the artist grew up fascinated by shells and seaside paraphernalia, which his mother had sold since her childhood along with various curios, Chinese porcelain and carnival costumes. Grotesque grinning masks of a similar kind would come to assume a prominent place in Ensor's oeuvre.

In 1877 he enrolled at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Brussels. It would be the only significant period he spent away from his home in Ostend – but almost as soon as he arrived he found his teachers' approach archaic, clashing with his own idiosyncratic ideas. Ensor's motto, 'I abhor the banal because I am looking for the blissful', was the impetus for founding the avant-garde group Les Vingt along with painters Théo van Rysselberghe and Fernand Khnopff. However, following the vicious criticism levelled at his 1882 canvas *The Oyster Eater* – a portrait of Mitche at the family dining table rendered in far brighter colours than were the norm at the time – Ensor turned his back on the city's art scene. His most ambitious work, *Christ's Entry into Brussels in 1889*, is considered by many to be his masterpiece, and was painted with diluted wall paint on a canvas he nailed to the wall of his studio, located in the attic of his family home. But his real breakthrough came ten years later with *Self-Portrait with Masks*, in which the artist depicted himself among a heaving crowd of ominous disguised figures, their false faces monstrous and occasionally corpse-like.

There has been much speculation about Ensor's fascination with the strange and macabre. According to some critics it stems from the tense relationship he had with the father after whom he was named; the artist admired James the elder greatly, but in 1885 the latter was savagely beaten by local thugs, prompting a breakdown from which he never recovered. Others attribute the darkness to his grandmother, who kept a bizarre menagerie consisting of a large number of cats, a parrot and a

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grotesquely dressed monkey. Notable visitors to the shop – including the Belgian king Leopold II and Wilhelm II, the last emperor of Germany (and Queen Victoria's grandson, known as Kaiser Bill among Brits) – frequently bore witness to her devilish sense of humour. She was known to have disguised the young James Ensor as a trained monkey before taking him for walks along the beach and the Palais des Thermes. One night, she burst into the boy's bedroom dressed as a terrifying witch, wearing a monstrous mask with a beaky nose. It was a traumatic experience that the artist later incorporated into one of his most dramatic paintings, *The Astonishment of the Mask Wouse*.

In contrast to the looming threat suggested by much of Ensor's work, the family home, with its rock-solid furniture and blue flock wallpaper, is typical of the cosy, *fin-de-siècle* interiors of the Belgian bourgeoisie. One can easily imagine how Ensor might have passed his time there; painting and playing music, meals served promptly on a beautifully set table, giving way to leisurely evenings spent with friends, a glass of port and an ample supply of rude jokes. This was the daily setting of the acclaimed Baron Ensor, who, showered with grace and honours, enjoyed his reputation as a precursor of Surrealism and firmly believed that an artistic

Top: a second velvet sofa bears another papier-mâché mask, this time of an imaginary long-beaked bird. Hanging to the left is a string of smaller works by Ensor – a few landscapes and, topmost, the Poe-inspired 'Hop-Frog's Revenge'. Opposite: the harmonium was a gift from Emma Lambotte, a dear friend of the artist's. On it rest two of his etchings, including 'Christ Tormented by Demons' (1895)

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career was like 'a soap-coated pole' – only the very best made it to the top.

Despite his success, though, Ensor felt threatened by the demon of poverty throughout his life; and so the curiosity shop remained ever open. Today, both it and the residence above are a museum and remain largely untouched (save the original paintings, which have been replaced by copies). A full-sized version of *Christ's Entry into Brussels in 1889* – now at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles – hangs in its original position on the wall behind the harmonium. Ensor played the recorder and the piano but could not read music, and primarily used the black keys. He composed and performed his own pieces too (described by novelist Stefan Zweig as 'silly little polkas') and was deeply disappointed that his ballet *La Gamme d'Amour* was never staged at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées in Paris.

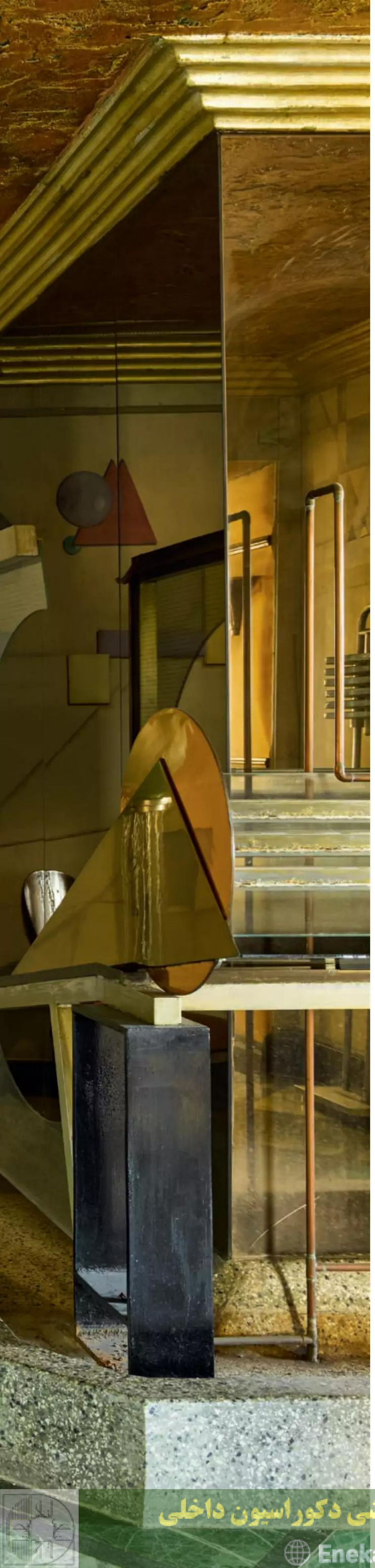
After a major renovation to mark 75 years since Ensor's death, the building now has a museum shop; visitors can buy trinkets just as people did in the past. The shell-decorated box that I admired three quarters of a century ago, however, is locked up in a cabinet and not for sale ⊛ *The James Ensor House. Email info@jamesensorhuis.be, or visit ensorhuis.be/nl. A story about the family's shop downstairs can be seen at worldofinteriors.com*

Top: Ensor placed his easel beside the mahogany buffet, which now sports a copy of his 'Skeletons Fighting over a Hanged Man', a set of ginger jars and a portrait of him on the beach with Augusta Bogaerts (the Mermaid). Opposite: around the fireplace hang facsimiles of 'The Astonishment of the Mask Wouse' and 'Old Woman with Masks' – nods to Ensor's childhood terror at his disguised grandmother

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DECO CHAMBERS

Myriad design eras reverberate through this Fifth Avenue apartment bought for a song by an eminent ear, nose and throat specialist nearly 50 years ago. But one in particular is a recurring leitmotif: the suite of Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann furniture, the Paul Poiret carpet, the Erté drawings and those lingerie-silk walls point unmistakably to this being a thoroughly Moderne milieu. With a healthy dose of Art Nouveau, Renaissance Revival and 1980s PoMo for good measure, of course… 'I love to collect,' says the owner with a degree of understatement. Tracie Rozhon offers her ringing endorsement. Photography: Annie Schlechter

After a brief parley with the uniformed doorman in a staid Fifth Avenue prewar, and a quick trip in a traditional wood-panelled elevator, the visitor enters a kind of kaleidoscope. Not of colourful plastic bits, but an explosion of leopard-print fabric, Pepto-Bismol pink, pleated silk walls and hidden closets with jazzy shirts bearing Fornasetti faces.

Stepping from the elevator, one is confronted by a wall-to-wall mural of Roman nymphs, cherubs and a green-and-silver fountain resembling a stage set. A real fountain, a 1980s black-glass-and-terrazzo creation, sits around the corner in the entrance hall. Unfortunately, a demonstration cannot be arranged. 'It has a leak,' explains Sumner Freeman, who lives here with his husband, Roy Yeager. (The former is a retired ear, nose and throat man; the latter, a retired dentist.)

Don't be disappointed: this apartment is chock-a-block with a mouth-watering mélange of Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Renaissance and Renaissance Revival furniture and art, plus later additions from the 1950s to the 1980s: big red Plexiglass lips on a metal stand, Val Bertoia sculptures and the 1980 stepped fountain, designed by Freeman himself.

He says he has put all the pieces together, and Yeager agrees with a bemused smile. 'I love to collect,' says Freeman. 'The apartment represents the great enthusiasms I've gone through.' When he first came to New York, he rented a one-room studio on East 84th Street, and shortly afterwards went on a shopping trip with his mother. They found the huge camphor-wood chest, now anchoring the library, in a department store. The object filled up the whole studio apartment, he explains, but eliminated the need for any closets. And so it began.

It was 1977, just two years after the *New York Daily News* ran the famous

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Previous pages: Sumner Freeman and Roy Yeager's hall in Manhattan is blanketed by walls painted in a Russian Constructivist style and is anchored by a green-onyx floor. 'It was all the marble yard in Queens had left, so to fill out the space we made a border of shiny black marble,' the former says. After a disastrous experience with wax, everyone slipping and sliding about, they now oil it to achieve just the right lustre. The ceiling, meanwhile, is an amalgam of gold, silver and copper leaf left over from other rooms in their apartment. Opposite: an Art Moderne torchière stands sentry beside a 1930s Fresnel sconce

headline: 'Ford to City: Drop Dead'. Freeman had left the studio, and was hunting for a grand apartment in a buyer's market. Through a tip from his banker, he found what in real-estate parlance is called a 'Classic Six': living room, library, dining room, two bedrooms and kitchen. The views were then, and still are, to die for. The apartment overlooks Fifth Avenue and Central Park. He paid $120,000. President Ford would be amazed; the apartment is worth millions today, but Freeman has no intention of selling. 'They'll have to carry me out of here!'

The two men pass from the Roman ruins in the private elevator lobby to an entrance hall painted in a Russian Constructivist style. It's stunning, with colourful spheres and triangles floating around the walls, painted by their friend, the late Peter Osnato; a tour de force that might have been created if Kandinsky and Klee had somehow collaborated.

We stroll into what looks like the living room but the men call the library. Glancing around, I don't see any sign of books. Freeman, heavily tanned and sporting a tomato-red polo shirt, explains: 'We just call it that because it's so comfortable.' Indeed, family photographs sit on a side table; group shots of at least a dozen people. 'They're all Roy's relatives; I inherited a large family,' he says, adding: 'We've been together so long – 31 years – that I consider them my family too.' He paused to repeat what, undoubtedly, has become an often-revisited line: 'I didn't know I was unhappy until he told me.'

Yeager, a tall white-haired man wearing khaki shorts and a crisp white shirt, laughs. 'If you can imagine 40 people in this room for Thanksgiving…'

It's the next room that they call the living room, and, indeed, this is an elegant space – a corner room overlooking the park – with a Ruhlmann suite of furniture and a poison-green Nichols carpet (from Sotheby's, but a close relative of the one in the library he got from his Aunt Rose). Above the mantel is one of the apartment's treasures: a 17th-century landscape by 'Monsù Desiderio' (a pseudonym, possibly for more than one artist). Beneath the painting is a particularly inviting Chiparus sculpture, an enchanting 'Starfish Girl' covered in green bronze and ivory, which Freeman bought in Greenwich Village in the 1960s. 'There were two,' he says with regret, 'but I could only afford one.'

Just east of the living room, the dining room is set off by an Art Deco carpet by designer Paul Poiret and a jaw-dropping Howard Chandler Christy painting of gambolling nymphs. Before the apartment was bought, Freeman had it on the wall in his office. Signed and dated 1927, it was created a few years before the remarkably similar ones that emblazoned the walls of the late, great Café des Artistes, the Upper West Side French restaurant patronised by celebrities from Woody Allen to Lee Radziwill to Truman Capote.

The principal bedroom is secluded, down a hall behind the dining room, a peachy-pink hideaway that is itself a work of art. Although the walls, lined with 'lingerie silk' pleats, may be the most memorable, the parchment-covered, queen-sized sleigh bed comes in a close second, its ivory Egyptian lions' feet resting securely (I'm assured) on a pin-light, studded platform. A red-fox fur from Hermès, a gift from a Japanese friend, is thrown casually across. Two ornate iron columns flank the windows. The pair, which house strip lights, came from the Roxy Theatre men's smoking room, and were so stained with tobacco that Freeman immediately had them cleaned and coated with silver leaf. The ceiling is silver leaf too, to match. It is a leitmotif. 'The living room ceiling is gold leaf, the dining room is silver leaf and the library is copper leaf!' he points out.

Not to be outdone, the adjoining room was once another bedroom, but is now an enormous bathroom seemingly fresh from a Roman pleasure palazzo, with huge red mosaic-tiled bath and a hot tub, and a Corbusier-style lounging couch, all under the gaze of two bronze male statues. 'Get me a nice cold martini or a sidecar!' jokes Freeman, recalling his times relaxing here.

Off this bathing palace is a hidden closet, complete with a small writer's desk and racks of clothes any vintage dealer would tear her hair out over. A jazzy nylon shirt, perfect for a late-night disco in, say, 1973, is emblazoned with black and white lines and a large Fornasetti face. 'It's kind of a "Go to Hell" shirt,' says its owner. 'You can only wear it once. Once you've seen it, you've seen it!'

Passing through a dark and narrow hallway that returns us to the entrance hall, Freeman points to three Erté original drawings, dated 1913, 1918 and 1922, discovered in one of his favourite antique shops so long ago that he can't remember which. He pauses to contemplate his joy at living in the apartment.

'I still love to walk around here,' he reveals. 'Everything has a story. Mostly what I buy, I keep. I rarely switch around. When the housekeeper dusts, she tilts things. I go right after her and put everything back exactly as it was' ⊛

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Facing East 77th Street, the living room is connected to the dining room by an ovoid cut-out, either side of which hang a pair of c1840 New York State mirrors. These in turn are flanked by brass jardinière pedestals topped with purple Minton urns designed by Christopher Dresser, which were bought in a shop in Greenwich Village. The sofas came from the Freeman family home in Haverhill, Massachusetts, while the mirror-top table is a William Pahlmann piece. The Chinese Deco carpet was purchased at Sotheby's – immediately after the auction, while that particular lot was still unrolled on the saleroom floor, Roy Yeager was to be heard instructing unsuccessful rival bidders not to walk on it at any cost

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Displayed against one wall of the library are, from left, a Ming pedestal, a Sèvres plaque of c1925, a plaque decorated with a letter U (made, its owner says, 'before the Victoria and Albert was named that'), a ninth-century Cambodian figure, a Nepalese dancing figure and the mate of a temple jar to be found at the Met. The last two were gifts from grateful patients. 'You know, I didn't ask for these things!' the retired surgeon protests with a laugh. Just glimpsed on the wall to the left, within a pair of shadow-box frames, are models of two early Ohio River steamboats. The coffee table is 18th-century Chinese



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An iron railing salvaged from a long-demolished hotel separates the business end of the kitchen from a dining platform, where a burr-chestnut table designed by Freeman to fit the tight space is surrounded by a collection of 19th-century keystones from Urban Archaeology in Tribeca

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Formerly a bedroom, the main bathroom is a glorious mix of periods and styles. The Art Deco sconces were bought from the old Stern's department store on 34th Street in Manhattan, while the large vase in the foreground is Dinanderie and the urn against the wall is, says Freeman, '18th [century], no, 19th… Anyway, before my time.' The tiled bench with a Corbusian curve is, he adds, the ideal spot to enjoy a cocktail post-soak

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The 'pièce de résistance' in the main bedroom is the parchment-covered sleigh bed, which was bought at Lillian Nassau, a legendary antique shop on West 57th Street. At its foot is an Egyptian Revival iron mirror, an Art Deco gem. The fluted walls are covered in peachy-pink lingerie silk, while the ceiling is silver leaf, to match the salvaged iron columns either side of the windows



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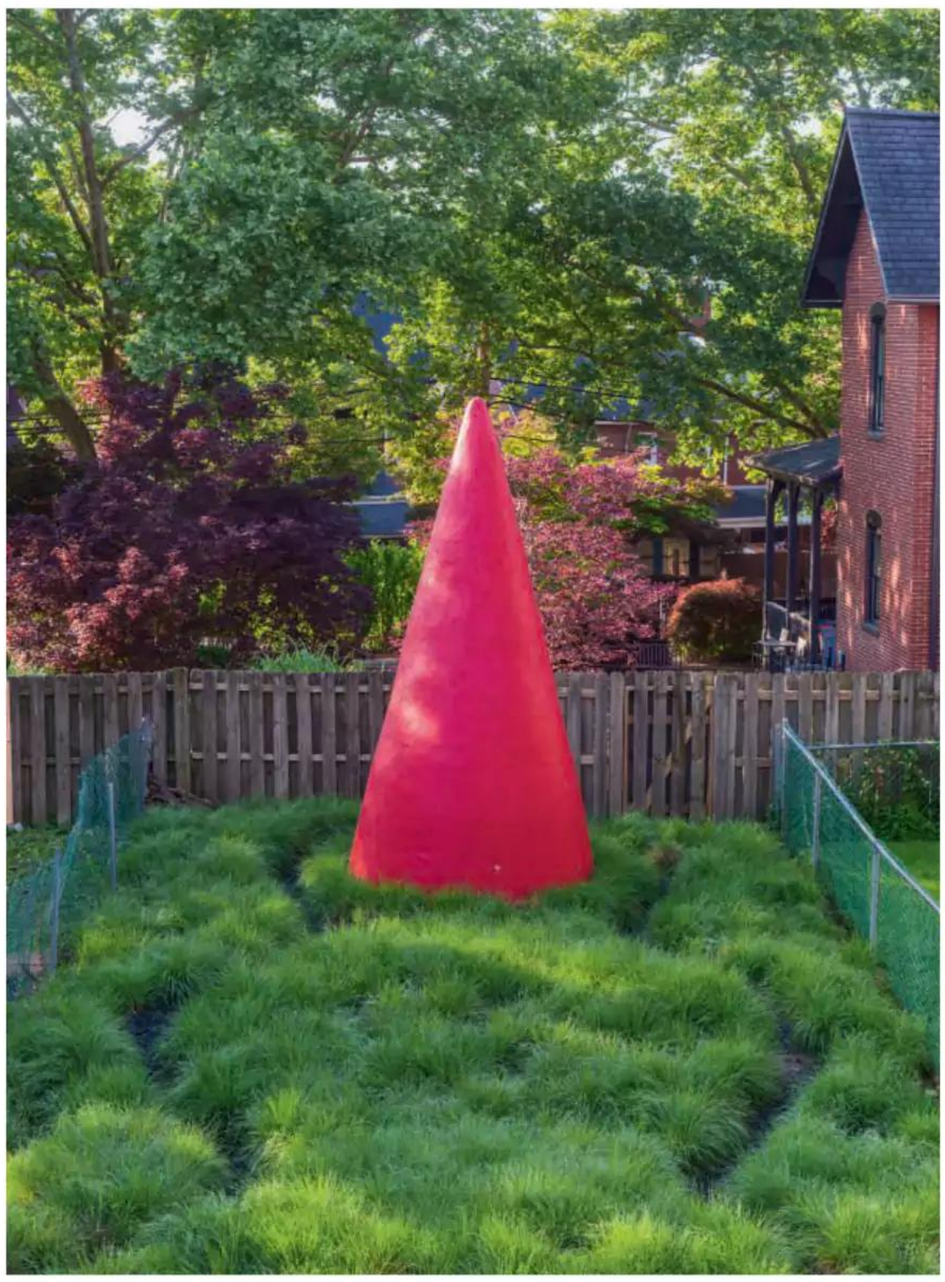
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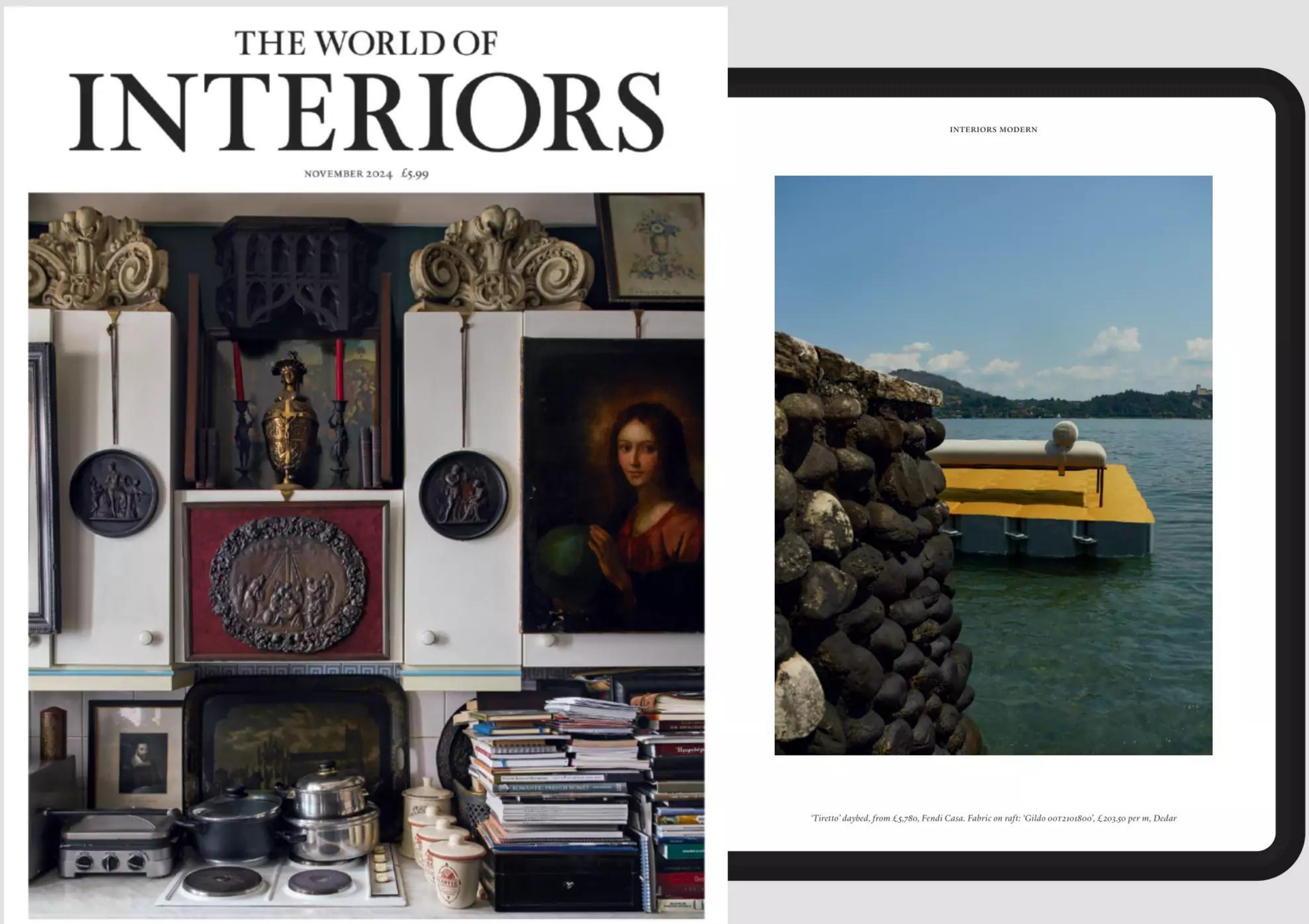
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A concrete day marker – typically found on clifftops for sailors to use as navigation aids – instead sits in the garden of 'Darkhouse Lighthouse' in landlocked Pittsburgh. See page 110. Photograph: Ed Panar

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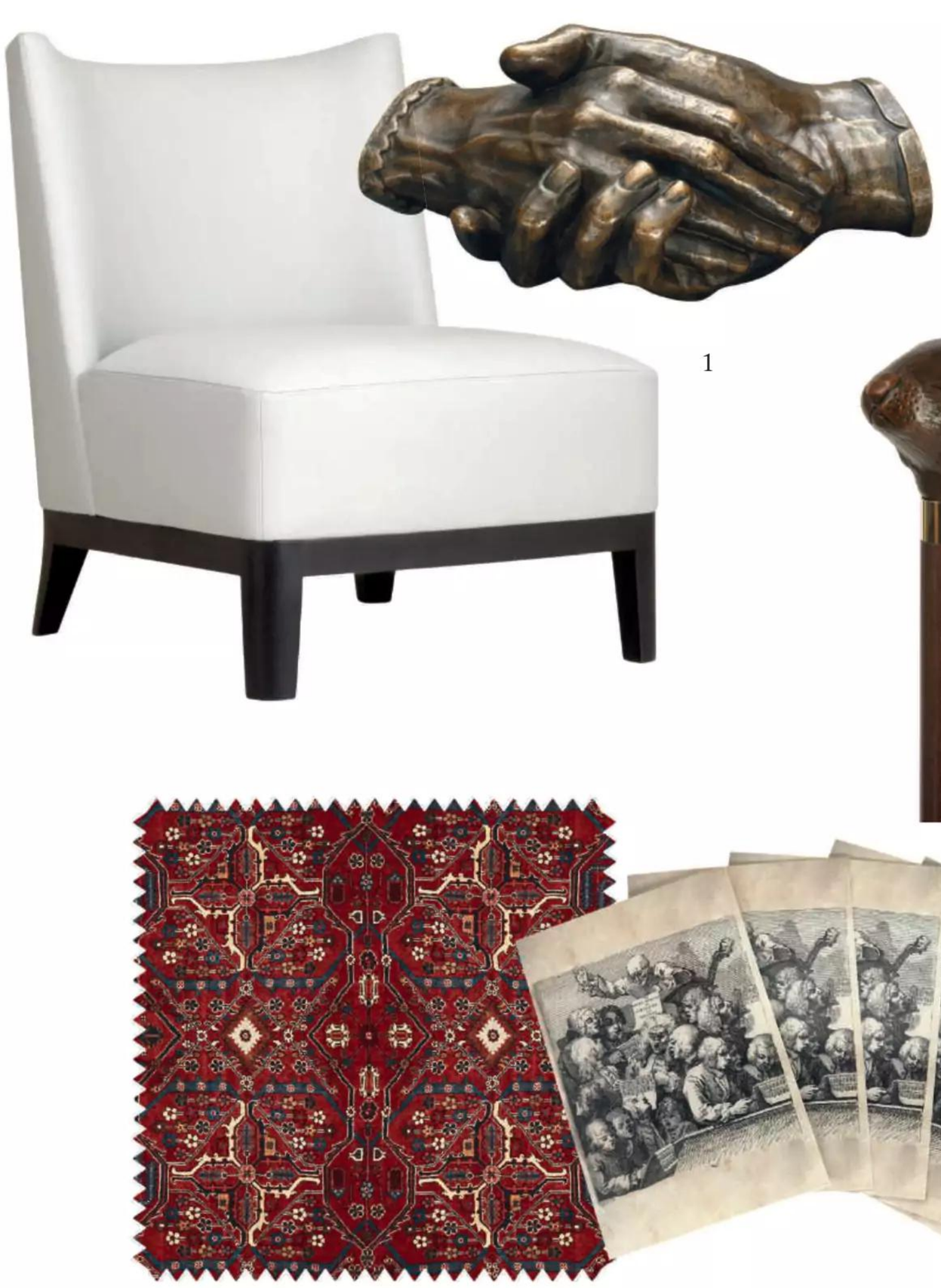
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Inspiration

Some of the design effects in this issue,
recreated by Gareth Wyn Davies and Ariadne Fletcher



1



2



1 Tucked away between Place Vendôme and the Louvre, our art connoisseur's diminutive Paris apartment is a masterclass in living close up with lots of stuff. Lesson one: box clever with furniture that will create, or lend the illusion of, space. In this case, that means a Murphy bed that magically makes way for a dining table, and a pair of Liaigre's 'Mandarin' leather lounge chairs (page 106), which minimise visual noise, being armless, and have an open base that doesn't interrupt the flow of that fine parquet (£6,570; studioliaigre.com). Lesson two: failing all of the above, surrender to the possibility that you, like the phlegmatic flat-owner, might simply need to rent extra storage. It was while living in Rome in the 1850s that Harriet Goodhue Hosmer made the marble bust of Medusa seen looking askance on a Louis XVI commode (page 102); she was also busy befriending Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whose entwined hands she then cast. A tribute to their love, that sculpture can be viewed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where you might mosey into the store to buy this faithful, 20cm-long bronze reproduction ($175; store.metmuseum.org).
2 Why the long face? You said you wanted a wacky walking stick or umbrella like those gathered in the Greek priest's crepuscular quarters in west London (page 136), so we gave you three: a doleful-looking greyhound (£81), much happier hare and totally quackers duck (both £78 each), all from the Stick and Cane Shop (stickandcaneshop.co.uk). A handle of a wholly different sort now: House of Hackney's plush 'Mey Meh' velvet (£140 per m; houseofhackney.com), which has the feel, aesthetically speaking, of the father's covetable Afghan carpet cushions in a similar pattern and palette (pages 139 and 140). No less sought-after are those first-edition Hogarths hanging in the bedroom (page 142). Inspired by them, and mindful of the festivities fast approaching, may we suggest

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3







4



his *The Chorus of Singers* in Christmas-card form from Sir John Soane's Museum (£8.95 for five; shop.soane.org)? Finally, a pleated lampshade in a teal to make you squeal (page 140). This one's by Maverick Soul Interiors, costs £50 approx and has the added benefit of a velvet trim (mavericksoulinteriors.com).

3 Big-game changer: lion's-paw feet such as those supporting the parchment-covered bed in Manhattan (page 169) will elevate any interior – or exterior, for that matter. Consider, for example, these terracotta plant-pot risers from Mud Mountain (£17 each; mudmountain.co.uk), which would surely do any patio proud. Armand-Albert Rateau, doyen of *les arts décoratifs*, might have had Roy Yeager and Sumner Freeman in mind when he designed this 'Palm 24638' sconce in gilded bronze, which comes from Tisserant (£4,888 approx; tisserant.fr), for it would look right at home in their Fifth Avenue lair, illuminating the metal-leaf ceilings with soft pools of light (page 160). On which subject, save yourself the bother of that most punishing of finishes with Mylands' 'FTT–022 Pale Gold' paint (£55 for one litre; mylands.com). Job done, sit back in a Bauhaus-style chair evocative of theirs (page 166) – say hello to 'Susanna' by Zanotta from Chaplins (£2,125; chaplins.co.uk) – and then tune in to Art Deco FM or whatever on a Brionvega 'Radio.Cubo' from Artemest (£510; artemest.com), one of which sits beside the couple's football-changing-room-style bath (page 168).

4 It's a brave soul who makes a feature wall of a James Ensor print, as in the eponymous Ostend museum (page 155). But a tote bag from KMSKA Shop (£15 approx; kmskashop.be)? While it may be a bit *League of Gentlemen* for some tastes, it would get you noticed at the farmer's market. A far safer bet, wallcovering-wise, would be Graham & Brown's 'Gothic Damask' paper in cobalt from John Lewis (£130 per 10m roll; johnlewis.com), which is eerily similar to the ghoulish artist's (page 158).

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1



2

1 To the lighthouse now – the *Darkhouse Lighthouse*, more precisely, a beacon of artistry and incongruity in landlocked Pennsylvania. While not strictly speaking entirely echt, it does boast everything you'd expect of the genuine article, right down to a 'widow's walk' and fully functioning lantern (page 116). First off, evoking the octagonal form of the latter, we offer you a 43 × 43 × 50cm cloche – for plants as opposed to a Fresnel lens, obviously – from Claverton Cloches (£380; clavertoncloches.com). Could we find a curved bed like the one custom-made for the artists Lenka Clayton and Phillip Andrew Lewis (page 114)? No, we could not, frankly, but we did chance upon Crate and Barrel's 'Jenny Lind', which does at least have bobbins and spindles in all the right places (shown: children's twin, $699; crateandbarrel.com). We're also feeling smug for discerning in this 2 × 3m Tate & Darby jute rug (£495; tateanddarby.com) distinct echoes of the chequered tiling in the building that conceals the lighthouse proper (page 110). We really don't recommend staring too hard at that particular image, as to do so might well bring on a funny spell, but please do check out the opaline pendant hanging over the abyss and then marvel at its resemblance to this lamp from the excellent Agapanthus Interiors (£95; agapanthusinteriors.com), which specialises in new and old lighting and vintage furniture.
2 Finally, let's meander to Molenbeek in Brussels, where Laure Prouvost lives and works. Try as we might, we couldn't lay our hands on a pair of pendulous papier-mâché breasts similar to those that greet visitors to her studio, so we've settled for something altogether more, well, practical: a rusty log burner from Graham & Green (£275; grahamdandgreen.co.uk) to channel the oxidised industrial girder (page 131); and Ikea's 'Råshult' trolley (£25; ikea.com), of which the artist is a sworn fan, though she's chosen to hide hers discreetly off-camera ⊛

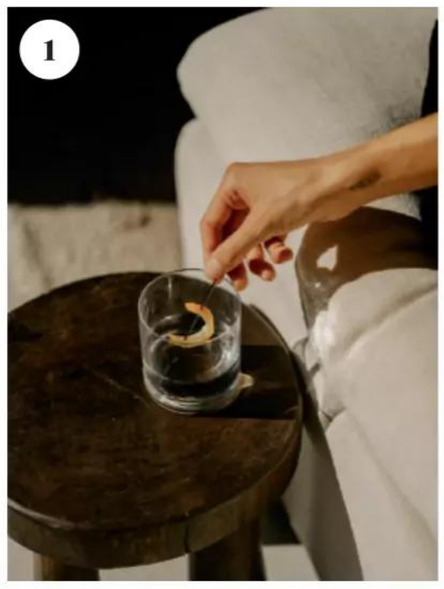
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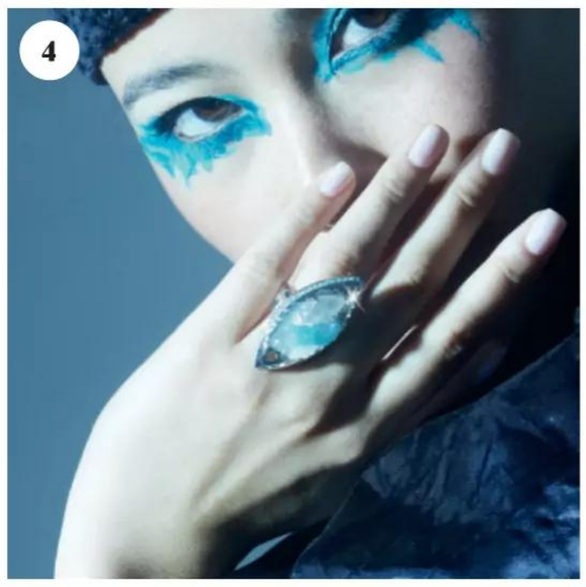






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BOHOBO LONDON



Bohobo is a rising London-based design brand redefining sustainable luxury. At the cutting edge of innovation, it creates 3D-printed home décor from bio-based materials and recycled plastics. Each piece beautifully integrates eco-conscious principles with contemporary elegance. Explore at bohobolondon.com and follow @bohobo_london on Instagram. Photography by Mary Kalecinska.

BLUNTAS BESPOKE



Bluntas Bespoke are committed to crafting high-quality furniture by blending meticulously sourced luxury and reclaimed materials. Each handcrafted piece reflects the company's dedication to sustainability, transforming waste into timeless, eco-conscious designs. See more at www.bluntasbespoke.co.uk call 07818 300525 or follow @bluntas_bespoke on Instagram.

CHRISTOPHER CLARK WORKSHOPS



Christopher Clark Workshops are a fine furniture maker who have served the top of the trade since 1979. Based in Norfolk, their team of craftspeople are versatile, experienced, and friendly. For one-off free-standing or joinery commissions call 01366 389400, email info@christopherclark.co.uk or visit www.christopherclark co.uk

DAVID HALL BESPOKE FURNITURE



Cambridge based David Hall designs and makes national award winning kitchens and interiors including bespoke bronze doors and details – a lifetime dedicated to design, materials and craftsmanship. Visit www.davidhallfurniture.co.uk and follow @davidhallkitchens on Instagram.

THE DOUGLAS WATSON STUDIO



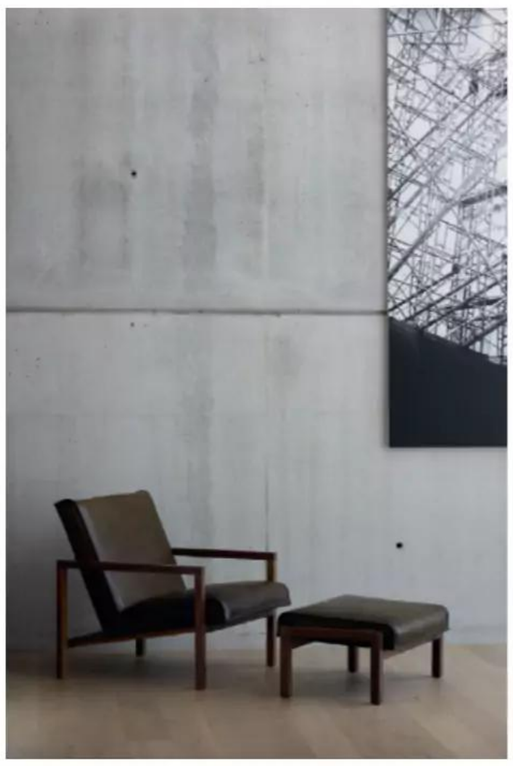
The Douglas Watson Studio offers high quality handmade and hand painted tiles using traditional techniques with a wide range of colours, glazes and styles. Panels and installations for kitchens, bathrooms and fireplaces are made to each client's specifications. A design service is available for fully bespoke work. For more information, call 01491 629960, visit www.douglaswatsonstudio.co.uk or follow @douglaswatsonstudio on Instagram.

MORRIS BESPOKE



A London-based design studio and manufacturer of contemporary and timeless furniture. The Morris Bespoke Collection is handcrafted in Sussex, with each piece custom-made according to client specifications. Morris Bespoke also welcome commissions for unique, one-of-a-kind pieces. Visit www.morrisbespoke.com and follow @morrisbespoke on Instagram.

BRETT PAULIN DESIGN



Brett Paulin Design is a furniture design studio based in Toronto, with a focus on creating beautiful, one of a kind pieces. Through the use of thoughtful design and carefully curated materials, their creations transcend function, providing an artistic focal point to the room for sophisticated spaces. Visit brettpaulindesign.com and follow @brettpaulindesign on Instagram.

DESIGN BY DEGENNE



Design By Degenne presents Piscatio•I a limited edition set of nested tables handcrafted with intricate inlaid mosaic. This statement piece draws from the rich heritage of Roman crafts, masterfully marrying materials procured from the farthest reaches of the ancient empire, spanning from Petra to Hadrian's Wall. Glimpse the exquisite mosaic, slate and brass work by visiting www.designbydegenne.com and follow @designbydegenne on Instagram for exclusive updates.

GALGO STUDIO

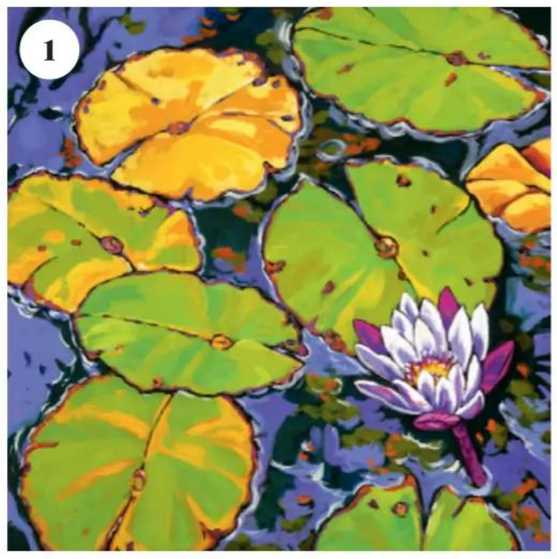


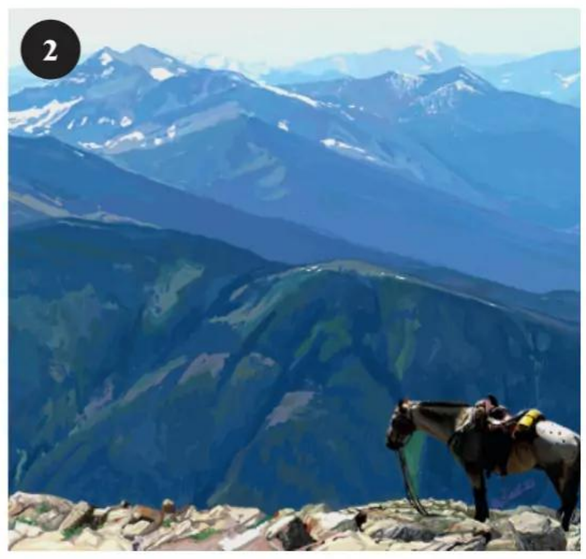
Galgo studio is a Parisian duo seamlessly blending imaginative explorations with meticulous craftsmanship to curate spaces and sophisticated objects. The Virgile chair, subtle in its simplicity and details, choreographs a ballet of contrasts. Crafted from raw oak wood, it strikes a balance between stability and natural allure, juxtaposed with floral fabric. This fusion creates a tension between rusticity and contemporary. Visit www.galgo-studio.com and follow @galgo_studio_ on Instagram.

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ARTISTIC IMPRESSIONS



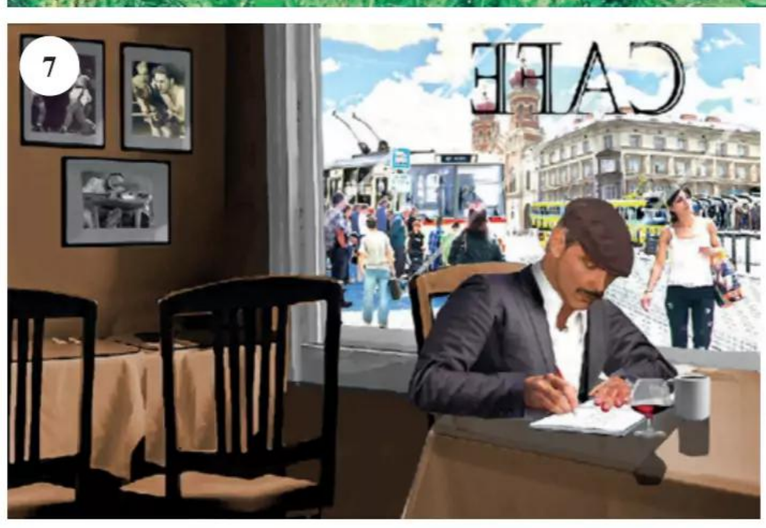
















1. Florida artist **SALLY C. EVANS** began her career as a graphic artist before transitioning into a full-time painter in the early 1990's. Her award-winning, vibrant works of art bring nature and colour to life, characterised by her expressive use of colour and bold designs. Her lithographs have been showcased on television and in movies. Sally's subject matter ranges from landscape paintings to figurative works. Visit www.sallyevans.com and follow @sallyevansfineart on Instagram or email sally@sallyevans.com

2. PAM LITTLE has been creating her artwork since childhood. After a career in Biomedical Illustration, she returned to fine art, using a variety of media, but now painting using primarily digital media. She is inspired by the scenery and wildlife around her home in Montana, and around the Rocky Mountain west. Visit www.pamlittlefineart.com and pam-little.squarespace.com and follow @pamlittlemontana on Instagram.

3. SARAH WEBB is a distinguished contemporary British artist who has portrayed a wide range of subjects but is best known for her dramatic landscapes, seascapes and portraiture. Webb's expressive oil paintings have been exhibited worldwide including in London's National Portrait Gallery and the Queens Gallery. Based in Lincolnshire, Webb continues to paint and exhibit her work nationally & internationally. Visit www.sarahwebbfineart.com or email agent@sarahwebbfineart.com and follow @sarahwebbfineart on Instagram and Facebook.

4. ZACHARY DEAN JONES is a southern Ohio artist that uses natural materials from his property to create large earthworks. This is from his series a Midsummer Night. The gods must be crazy exhibit. See his full collection at www.Zacharydeanjones.com and follow @zacharydeanjones on Instagram.

5. ALEXANDRA KAUKA, an Austrian born artist, refined her technique at the prestigious Art Students League of New York. She has a passion for gentle abstraction of mystical nature. Her art shows places that are sublime and meditative, imaginary worlds but beyond abstraction, one sees and feels reality. Some of her methods are very scientific, resulting in masterfully executed layered effects. Truly organic and random in nature. Pictured is "Green World", 34" x 44", mixed media, acrylic, impasto, gold leaf. Visit www.artistalexandra.com or email kaukaart@gmail.com

6. Light atmosphere and movement by Trudy Pizano. **MARÍA ISABEL DE LINCE**'s abstract oil paintings offer a unique blend of natural landscapes and personal experience. She explores the earth, water, and sky, emphasising the interplay of light and colour, creating a sense of movement and energy in her pieces. Visit www.mariaisabeldelince.com and follow @midelince on Instagram.

7. Capturing moments. Finding Dreamers. Illustration: Life as you perceive and interpret it. **MARTY JONES** has worked as a freelance illustrator for over 40 years. His preferred media is digital painting. Visit mjarts.com follow @mjartscom on Instagram.

8. JENNIFER LAPIERRE is a California based artist specialising in plaster and cracked linen large-scale abstracts, lyrical layers and textures. Through an atmospheric and evocative lens, her work is meant to move, whether it be to calm, complement or add tension. Visit jenniferlapierre.com and follow @jenniferlapierrefineart on Instagram.

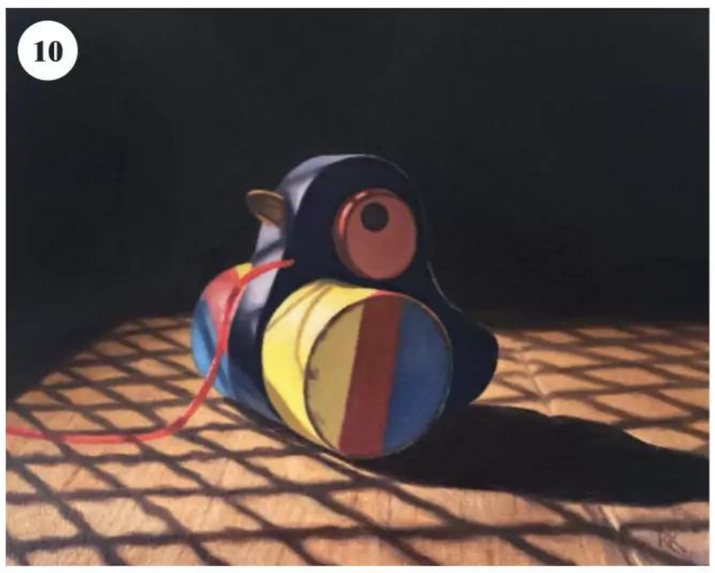
9. LIV OLSEN creates soulful art inspired by the beauty of nature. She paints organic forms with depth and lightness. Her art transforms spaces into beautiful homes, infusing them with a sense of tranquillity and wonder. To discover more, visit www.studio-liv-olsen.com and follow @studiolivolsen on Instagram.

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ARTISTIC IMPRESSIONS





















10. REBECCA RITCHIE, a still life artist based in Tunbridge Wells, captures the beauty of everyday objects with striking realism. Her work evokes a sense of nostalgia and reflection, blending classical composition with modern elements to create timeless, captivating pieces. Visit rebeccaritchie.co.uk and follow @rebeccaritchie.artist on Instagram.

11. KATHY STANLEY is a visionary artist and ecopsychology educator based on the US West Coast. Her acrylic paintings and mixed media artworks explore an intuitive, embodied journey to the ecological self, celebrating Earth and invoking wholeness, joy and aliveness. See SacredArtJourneys.com and follow @kstanleyart on Instagram.

12. NELL DANIEL is a Brooklyn-based artist and designer who combines photos into hypnotic patterns. They encourage viewers to look a little closer at what's hiding in visual and behavioural patterns all around us. For more, visit nelldaniel.com or follow @nelldaniel28 on Instagram.

13. KATHY PLANK is an artist, based in Surrey, having studied Fine Art at Liverpool University. She works to combine the ever-changing beauty of the natural world with the energy and spirit of expression. In her recent work, Kathy has been revisiting her love of literature and the magic of storytelling. Kathy has exhibited both nationally and internationally and has work owned in the UK and overseas. Visit Kathyplankart.co.uk and follow @dreamfairy1 on Instagram.

14. EVA BREITFUSS is a German award winning visual artist, internationally recognised for her 'Art of Presence'. Her works have been displayed in galleries, museums worldwide and international magazines and books. She creates energised life-affirming art that provides an enlightened and transcendental experience for viewers. Her intention is to inspire an opening to consciousness, to presence and greater awareness. Visit www.evabreitfuss.space and follow @breitfusseva on Instagram.

15. RENATA KUDLACEK was born in Zabreh, Czech Republic and graduated with a MA in Fine Art at the RCA London. She is a mixed media artist, specialising in fine art photography and print media. Her work has been exhibited widely across Europe whilst actively working for various art and education initiatives including project management and curation. 'My Bohemia- Prague' was commissioned by Cloud One Hotel Prague. Visit www.renatakudlacek.com and follow @artist_renatakudlacek on Instagram.

16. BECCA RILEY is an Atlanta based artist, she creates beautiful paper pieces as well as larger statement pieces, acrylic is her primary medium. See more at www.beccariley.art and follow @beccariley_art on Instagram.

17. London-based painter **SIMON JONES** works in oil, watercolour, and pastels to capture reflections on everyday life. With a mastery of colour and line, his art evokes a personal, mysterious and evocative perspective, offering viewers original and unique insights into the world around them. Visit www.simonjonesart.com and follow @simonjones_art on Instagram.

18. With the inevitability of death as motivation, **SPRING BREAK JAKE**'s art ultimately recognises that while no one gets out of this life alive, we can all find paradise along the way. Visit springbreakjake.com and follow @springbreak.jake on Instagram.

19. COURTLANDT SWARTZ lives and works in Toronto, Canada. His works are inspired by the phenomena generated within his sculptural works and focus on evoking feelings of meditativeness, tranquility, and peace. From sculptural forms to two and three-dimensional painting, his artworks are skillfully made, visually striking, and are meant to challenge the viewer's perception of space and presence. Visit www.courtswartz.com and follow @courtlandtswartz on Instagram.

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20. Internationally collected visual artist **JOHNETTA DEXTER** showcases her work in Bentonville, Arkansas and Birmingham, Alabama. Featured here is 'Ollie's Obsession', acrylic and oil on canvas, 153cm x 122cm x 8cm, 2024. To see more, visit www.johnettadexter.com and follow @johnettadexter_artist on Instagram.

21. Discover 'Water Thicker Than Blood', a captivating series by Bahamian artist **MOSES VICTOR**. Through 30"x 40" acrylic works with intricate graphite details, Victor explores the emotional depth of friendships over family ties, reflecting emotional depth and chosen connections. Follow @_Vmoses on Instagram or email Moses at moses_victor@hotmail.com to find out more.

22. KATIE KUT is an oil painter. This piece is entitled "Forest Painting #1". It is 152cm x 213cm. To contact the artist, email katiemcmullinart@gmail.com or or call +1 206 841 1086. You can also explore more of Katie's work on her website www.pyramidsandrainbows.com or follow @katie___kut on Instagram.

23. ANGELINA DAVYDOVA creates her work using both oils and digitally. This oil painting on handmade paper, size 29cm x 39cm was made as an expression of made-up language with the message of calmness and happiness. To see more, visit angelinadavydova.art and follow @angiedavydovaart on Instagram.

24. AHLAM AMRANI (Netherlands, 1986) creates vibrant artscapes blending cubism and Art Deco with her European-Moroccan heritage. Skilled in colour, her unique compositions narrate a path of rediscovering dreams and aspirations, encouraging viewers to find light in darkness, follow their hearts, and embrace bold risks. She explores the dualism in life with round vs. geometrical forms. Pictured is "Blue Beginnings." Discover more at www.ahlamamraniart.com and follow @ahlamamrani.art on Instagram.

25. RACHEL GOFFREDO is a self taught artist specialising in textured pieces predominantly using oils and palette knives. Inspired by nature, her aim is to reinforce its beauty and vulnerability whilst conveying joy and pleasure to the owner. Visit www.rachelsart.uk and follow @rachelsartworks1 on Instagram.

26. SARAH GULDAGER PEDERSEN is a Denmark based self taught painter, cell biologist and psychotherapist who finds inspiration and healing in nature. She works in acrylics and oils. Her expression has developed from abstract, collage to figurative and naturalistic using self-made photos from nature. She works mindfully with thin layers upon one another to give the painting life. Most of her works are framed in golden frames as it adds to the impression of completeness. Sarah offers commission works too. Visit and follow @Sjaelelivet on Instagram to explore her works.

27. LYDIA WARREN's atmospheric painting captures different forms of material energy in her west coast, Hebridean landscape. Using texture, seasonal colour and ancient fresco techniques, she creates dynamic contemporary plaster panels or murals that can work for both interior and exterior feature walls. Visit www.lydia-warren.com and follow @lydia.w.arren on Instagram.

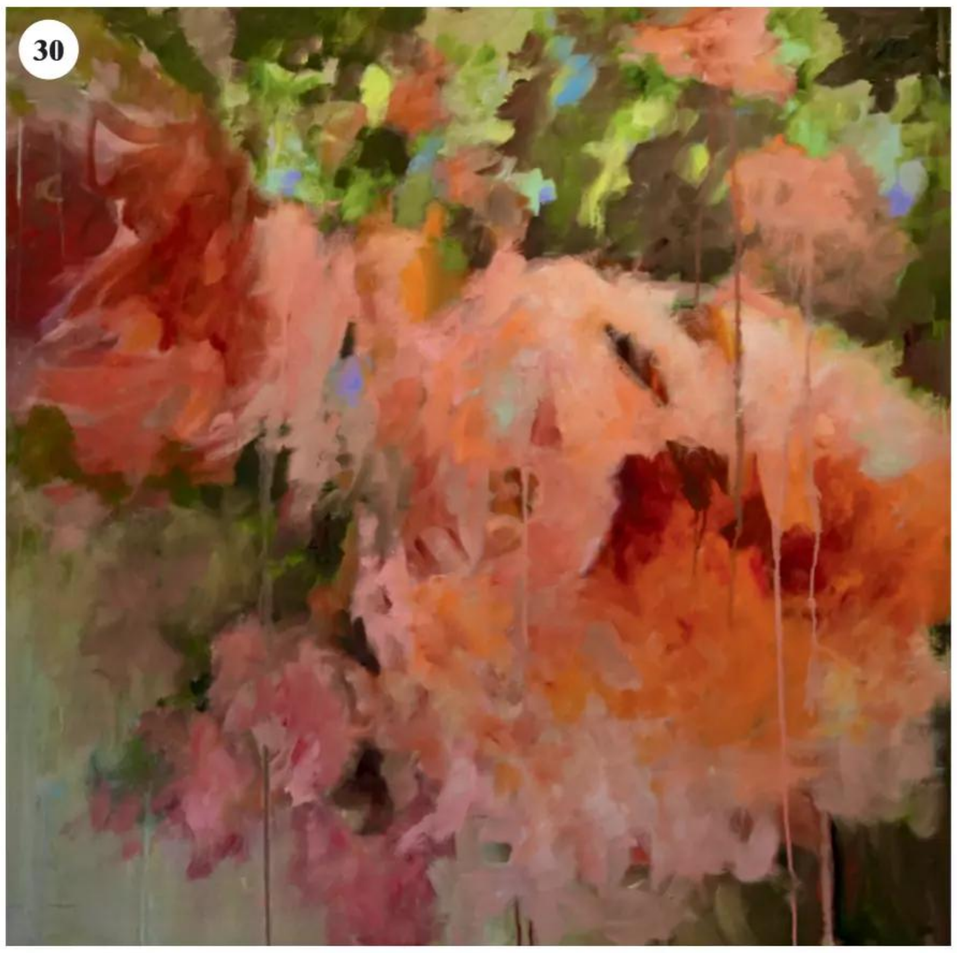
28. DIANE CARNEVALE is an American based artist who specialises in painting exquisite interior portraits. Her work is colourfully vivid and detailed, and captures the spirit and essence of a room with atmospheric lighting and shadows. She also paints room concept renderings for renowned interior decorators in the U.S. and abroad. Visit www.dianecarnevale.com email diane@dianecarnevale.com and follow @diane_carnevale on Instagram.

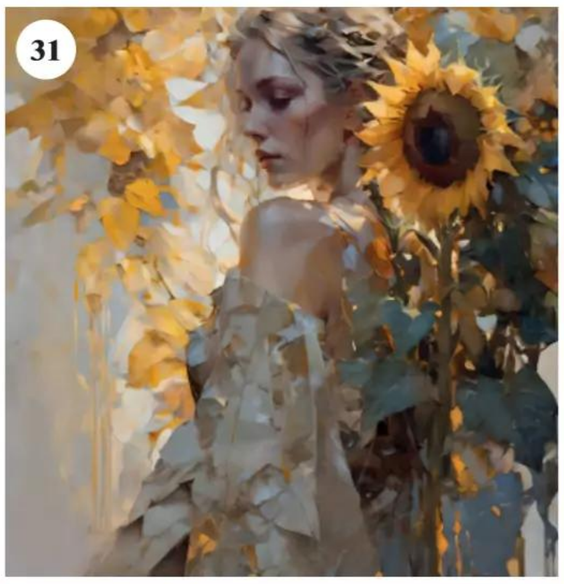
29. LIBERTÉ GRACE is a contemporary artist and auteur filmmaker working in the mediums of video, installation, drawing and photography. Her works have screened and been exhibited in cultural institutions in Australia, France, and Italy, including the Cannes Film Festival, Art Basel, Art Gallery of NSW, and Times Square, New York. Visit www.LiberteGrace.Art and follow @libertegrace on Instagram.

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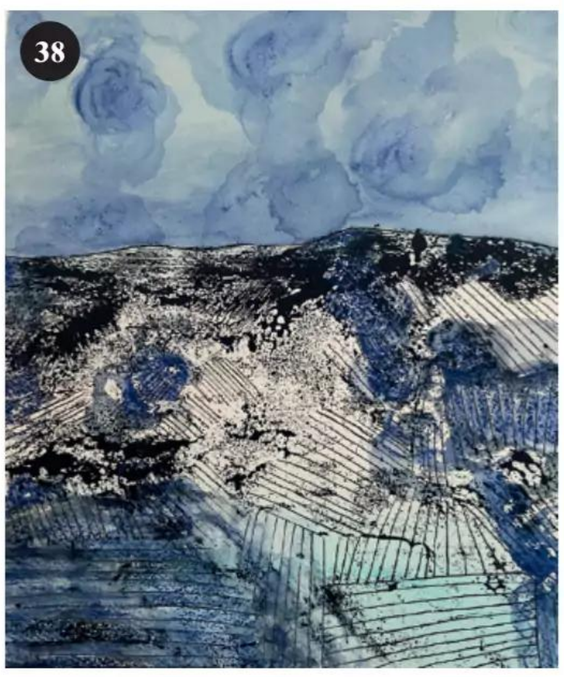
















30. GWEN FOX is known for her intriguing abstracts filled with intense colour, energy and passion. As an art coach and teacher she gently guides her artists to be able to let go of their limiting beliefs so they can release the creative energy that is within their soul. She is known nationally and internationally for her unique method of coaching artists so they can reach their highest creative dream. Her work was selected to show with His Royal Highness Prince Phillip's work at the Fermoy Art Gallery in Kings Lynn, England. Her work is in many corporate and private collections worldwide. Visit www.gwenfox.com and follow @gwenfoxstudio on Instagram.

31. LEIGH WITHERELL's "Woman and Sunflowers" subtly blurs the boundaries between reality and memory, creating a fitting tribute to the artist's deceased daughter and her affinity for sunflowers. The artist creates a dreamlike atmosphere which signifies the inseparable bond and the everlasting presence of loved ones in our lives. Visit www.leighs.art and follow @leighsartfl on Instagram and Facebook.

32. EMILY NAM is an Australian-born and NYC-based interdisciplinary artist. Using oil painting as a primary medium, Emily is examining the sensorial interplay between colour and shape and its implications with a direct experience. Visit www.emilynamstudio.com and follow @namshapes on Instagram.

33. HELEN SADLER is an artist living in Ibiza, creating elegant abstract paintings with acrylics on canvas. She takes her inspiration from the light and colours in nature all around Ibiza. Each artwork uniquely captures energy in an explosion of colour. To see more work and exhibitions, follow @helensadlerart on Instagram or visit www.helensadlerart.com

34. LAURA PRETTO VARGAS is a 30 year old Italo-Brazilian artist living in Miami. Her art, influenced by Abstract Expressionism, embraces gestural brushwork and vibrant colours. Inspired by her heritage, her hometowns and the world around her, Laura paints intuitively, expressing emotions without constraint, inviting viewers to connect with her. Visit www.lauraprettovargas.com and follow @lauraprettovargas on Instagram.

35. APRIL PSONIS is a self-taught artist based in Melbourne Australia. April creates semi abstract works that challenge the traditional notions of beauty and femininity, to present the female form as a source of compelling strength and extraordinary resilience. April Psonis is currently represented by Sibu Gallery in Sydney. For commissions, contact and follow @aprilpsonisart on Instagram.

36. CINDY BRIDEAU is an abstract artist whose work draws inspiration from landscapes and nature. Her expressive paintings emphasise texture and intricate layers, designed to evoke emotion through a carefully curated colour palette and marks, creating a deep connection with the viewer. Visit CindyBrideauArt.com or follow @CindyBrideauArt on Instagram.

37. SERAPHINA SOL brings the untamed beauty of nature into refined spaces, creating abstract paintings that evoke the dynamic interplay of earth, sea, and sky. With expressive brushstrokes and a nuanced palette, her works echo the wonders of our world and precious resources, inspiring a sense of connection and responsibility for its preservation. Discover more at www.seraphinasol.com and follow @seraphinasol on Instagram.

38. CAROLINE HOSKIN, a visual artist from the United States, works in watercolour, ink, and mixed media. She translates observations from nature into abstract compositions with atmospheric qualities. This piece, entitled 'Amsterdam', will be on exhibit at the Tappan Gallery in Princeton, NJ, in December 2024. Visit www.carolinehoskin.com email hello@carolinehoskin.com and follow @artline.ch on Instagram.

39. "Walensee in Walenstadt" by **NATHALIE EBERLE**, a Latvian artist based in Liechtenstein. This plein air painting beautifully captures the moods, life, and emotions of the scene. Nathalie Eberle works with oil paints, incorporating natural mineral pigments to create her stunning works of art. Discover more of her work at www.eberle-natalie-art.ch and follow @en_d_arte on Instagram.

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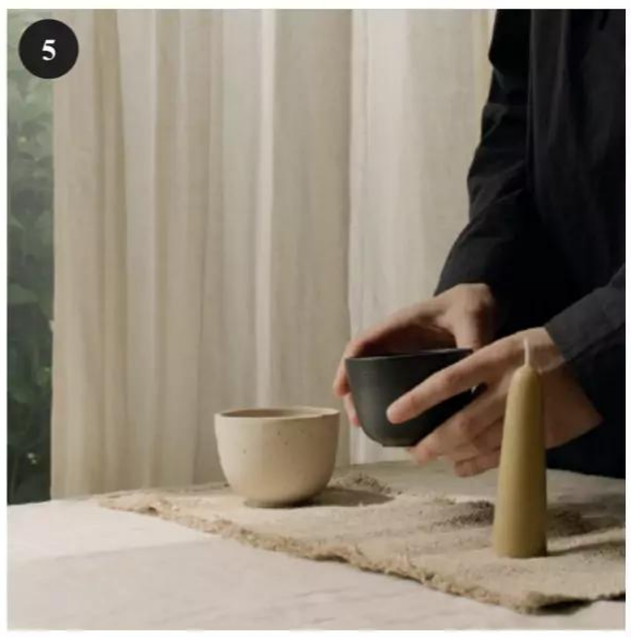




1. Tazz'amore by **OURSOUL** is a handcrafted ceramics shop based in Ortigia, Italy. Every piece is created by hand, without the use of moulds, ensuring each one is truly unique. From the heart of the Mediterranean, worldwide shipping. Follow @Tazzamore on Instagram for exclusive pieces and inspiration.

2. VESSELS AND STICKS is your destination to discover unique ceramic artworks by artists from around the world. Their well-curated selection comprises ceramic works that are contemporary in both design and conceptual approach. Visit vesselsandsticks.com or follow @vesselsandsticks on Instagram to learn more.







3. JENCCLAY creates wheel thrown and altered pottery to form her functional series, "Water Drop". These unique pieces are smooth flowing metallic against the lacy, sharp but delicate rim. She creates energetic one of a kind pieces inspired by her culinary and metal sculpture backgrounds. Jennifer is based in Marin, California. Follow @jencclay on Instagram or visit www.jencclay.com

4. ALEXANDRA VAZ's studio, located in the north of Portugal, hand paints ceramic pieces of different design, both for the exterior and interior of the house: vases, pots, candlesticks, tea lights, napkin rings, etc. Each piece is unique and exclusive, numbered and signed. Colourful pieces that celebrate joy and uniqueness! Each one is made with love, ensuring no two are alike. It will be a great pleasure for you to be part of our community and for the exclusive pieces to bring a lot of joy to your home, just as they bring it to Alexandra Vaz's life. To learn more, follow @alexandravaz_2021 on Instagram or email avazatelier@gmail.com



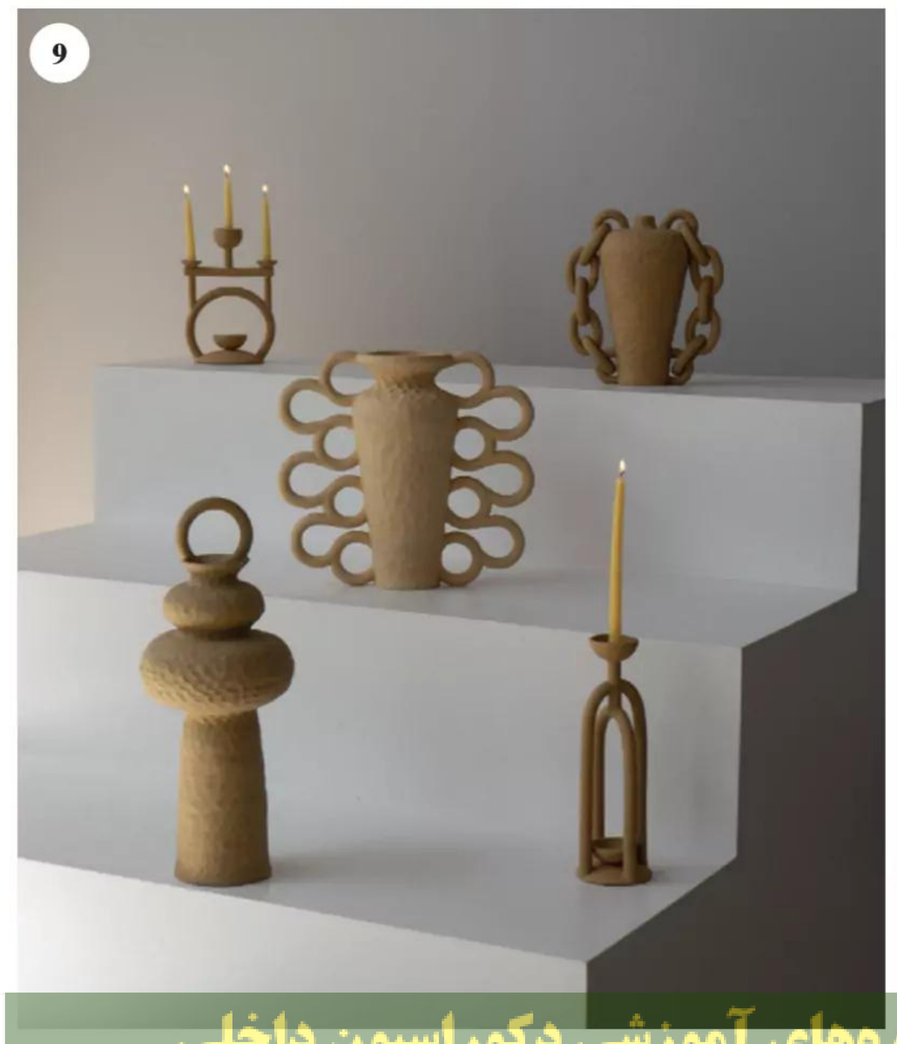


5. Spaces and objects influence our daily life. The focus of Tanja's work at **ATELIER TNJ** is to create everyday objects that bring a sense of calm in the space around you, to unwind and be in the present moment. Photo @by__maikegrimm. Follow @atelier_tnj on Instagram or visit www.ateliertnj.com

6. The elegant porcelain "Musu" vase by **FELIX PÖTTINGER** for Porzellanmanufaktur Nymphenburg features a clever, dual-end design, offering flexibility for vibrant bouquets or unique single stems. Discover more at www.nymphenburg.com and at www.poettingerdesign.com

7. SASHA COURT is a self taught ceramic artist from the east coast of Canada. She specialises in painterly voluminous vessels that demand your attention. Her signature glazing technique is pushing the boundaries of ceramic art creating changing compositional vantages as the viewer moves around the piece. Visit www.sashacourt.com and follow @sashacourtstudio on Instagram.

8. GIGI CERAMICS is a Los Angeles based, limited run studio. Each piece aims to introduce a sense of warmth and grounding with the organic shapes Gigi creates. To stay updated on Gigi Ceramics hand built artwork, visit www.gigiceramicsshop.com or follow @gigir_ceramics on Instagram.





9. LATCH KEY is a limited run ceramic studio based in Oakland, CA. Each piece is hand built by designer Whitney Sharpe with intentions to create modern heirlooms for the keen collector of one of a kind ceramics. Visit www.thelatchkey.com or follow @latch_key on Instagram to learn more.

10. SIERRA KANISTANAUX is a ceramic artist whose hand-built statement pieces embrace texture and pattern while incorporating forms found in nature. Influenced by nostalgic European architecture and the western landscapes of Montana, she creates stunning, unique pieces that enliven the senses. Photography by Danica Taylor. Visit kanistanaux.com and follow @skanistanaux_ceramics on Instagram.

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1. Discover **ECOLUXE** Furnishings, where sustainability meets luxury. From reclaimed wood dining tables to ethically sourced velvet sofas, each piece is crafted with a commitment to quality and the planet. Join the movement toward sustainable luxury. Shop now at www.ecoluxefurnishings.com and follow @ecoluxefurnishing for interior inspiration that's as cool as it is conscientious. Because living luxuriously should never cost the earth.



2. In search of the imperfect and unusual, **MILLINGTON AND HOPE** offer an understated elegance and relaxed aesthetic to lift your spirit and elevate your everyday. Beautifully curated online at www.millingtonandhope.com follow @millingtonandhope on Instagram and find them at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire.



3. PULLMAN EDITIONS designs striking original limited-edition posters that capture the enduring appeal of Art Deco. Their posters feature winter sports, glamorous resorts around the world, and historic automobiles. Over 100 designs available at £420 each. Call 020 7730 0547 or view and buy online at www.pullmaneditions.com



4. Established in 2005, **ELIZABETH HOME** has grown from a proprietary residential design studio to a multi-faceted, brick-and-mortar showroom which offers interior design services to private clients coupled with a retail shop, coffee bar, art gallery and florist. Visit shop.elizabethhomedecor.com and follow @elizabethhome on Instagram.



5. STUDIO FABIUS CLOVIS is a forward thinking Eindhoven-based design studio, heralding a new beginning of multidisciplinary material artwork. Easily straddling the boundaries of art, furniture and fashion, the young designer's pieces appear as though they have jumped straight from the 2D page, untethered from categorisation. Pictured is the 'Anti-Fragile' hand-crafted chandelier, with its distinctive burned wooden frame andpaper shades. Visit www.studiofabiusclovis.com and follow @pepijn_fabius_clovis on Instagram.



6. WUNSCH CABINETMAKERS are a small team of designers and makers, offering an entirely bespoke service to create unique spaces and one-off pieces to last a lifetime. Their handcrafted kitchens and furniture are individually designed and made, where every detail is carefully considered and each material conscientiously selected. Find them at www.wunsch.co.uk and follow @wunsch_makers on Instagram.



7. GENEVA KIDD DESIGN is an emerging talent in the design world, blending traditional elements with vibrant colour and spirit. With a passion for preserving historic charm, Geneva creates enchanting table settings and offers consulting services that combine elegance and playfulness. Each setting tells a story, inviting joy and sophistication to every gathering. Visit www.genevakidddesign.com and follow @genevakidd_design on Instagram



8. Proportionally perfect and eternally impressive, the majestic Quai Standing Lamp from **LVL-USA.COM** is equally at home framing an urban cityscape or a pastoral countryside. The mystery of its simplicity lies in the hidden wires discretely concealed inside the sleek metal frame. The 61" tall by 24" wide lamp is crafted from anodised black aluminium. View the entire range of products at LVL-USA.com follow @lvl_usa on Instagram or contact JSmith@lvl-usa.com



9. Introducing the Galba Wall Sconce by **BENEDIKO** – a stunning blend of art and function. Handcrafted from two sculpted pieces, this sconce is designed to cast a soft, ambient backlight. Each piece is meticulously formed in plaster and is available in two sizes. Discover more at www.benediko.com or follow @benediko_design on Instagram for updates.

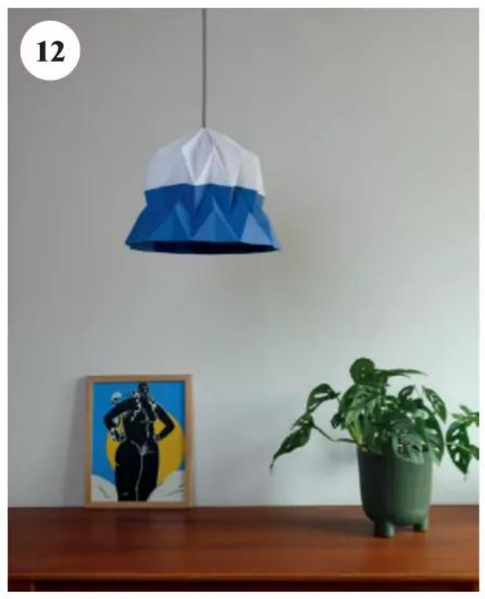


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10. BUREAU BRUTON deals in furniture, art and objects of understated sophistication. They have a passion for unearthing the unusual and distinctive, and pieces are sourced thoughtfully, with appreciation of their timeless charm and beauty. Their ever-changing collection can be viewed by appointment at their showroom Bruton, Somerset or online. Visit www.bureaubruton.com and follow @bureau_bruton on Instagram.

11. GRAY ANTIQUES welcomes Autumn with an all new collection of antique and vintage furnishings, tabletop and decorative objects for home and garden that celebrates the warmth of the season. Located in the Connecticut countryside, shop the collection at www.grayantiques.com and follow @grayantiques on Instagram.





12. ORIGAMI POP is a contemporary Paper Art Studio based in Turin, Italy. Specialising in the creation of paper lampshades and artistic installations. Origami Pop's products are characterised by lively colours and minimal style that recalls Scandinavian and Japanese home décor. All creations are handmade, folded with love, care and precision. Visit www.origamipop.com and follow @origami.pop on Instagram.

13. DUGGAN SOCIETY offer a carefully curated selection of tableware to elevate your dining experience, ensuring your meals are not just served, but celebrated. Solana Braun Duggan and Catalina Sola Duggan design elegant and inspiring tablescapes so you can focus enjoying the party without the trouble of selecting every object. To see more visit duggansociety.com and follow @duggansociety on Instagram.

14. DUNLIN: A luxurious Lighting Collection designed in Bondi Beach, Australia. Renowned for its exceptional craftsmanship, Dunlin utilises top-tier materials, catering to both commercial and residential projects. Worldwide Shipping. Visit www.dunlin.com.au call +61 1800 649 586 email orders@dunlin.com.au follow @dunlinhome on Instagram.





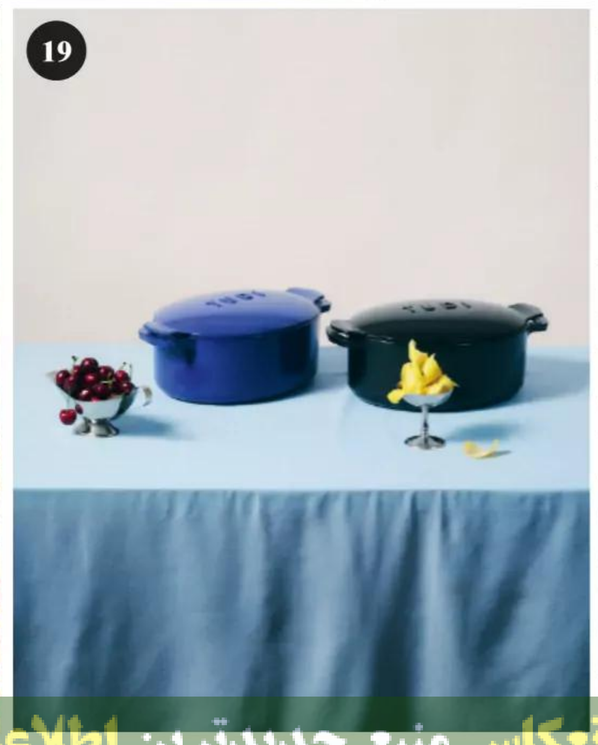
15. OTTOMANIA offers this beautifully striped towel made of a fantastic quality terry cotton. A wonderful, authentic Turkish towel with hand-knotted fringe. Available in two sizes and in various colours. For more information, see www.ottomania.nl or call +31 23 7370426. Also available wholesale.

16. EMILY JOUBERT HOME & GARDEN is a lifestyle brand boutique in California, catering to design-conscious customers in Woodside, Santa Barbara, and San Francisco. The store offers a curated selection of artisan-crafted home and garden décor. Visit www.emilyjoubert.com and follow @emilyjoubert on Instagram for updates, or contact them directly at flowers@emilyjoubert.com or call +1 415 226 6811.

17. Cherished pieces of furniture can lose their splendour but not their sentimentality. **MUSE BESPOKE UPHOLSTERY** understands this. Their experienced, dedicated and caring upholsterer will give your furniture a bespoke, tailored new lease of life. Discover more at www.musebespokeupholstery.com and follow @musebespokeupholstery on Instagram.







18. Sometimes it's about the perfect tablecloth, plates, glasses and vases — mostly it's about everything else. Discover **HOSTED** by Kelly Gaudreau where hosting is transformed into an art form. Visit www.hostedbykg.com or contact kelly@hostedbykg.com

19. TUDI, launched in 2023, creates cookware and tableware of timeless design and highest quality. From Warsaw, Poland they create products with carefully selected materials. Take a look at their cobalt blue cast iron cookware. Visit tudistudio.com and follow @tudi.studio on Instagram.

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20. MUST HAVE BINS present a stunning collection of hard to find essential home accessories – bins, tissues and jardinières, all beautifully handmade, they are just too good to hide! Visit musthavebins.co.uk or contact 020 3744 2384 to find out more or email info@musthavebins.co.uk

21. TOSCA & WILLOUGHBY have specialised in bespoke wooden loo seats for over 40 years and have supplied some of the most prestigious houses and projects worldwide. From their Thunderbox seats in oak and mahogany and the Albany in a variety of timbers and finishes, their seats are individually hand finished to the highest standards. Discover more at www.looseats.com email sales@looseats.com and follow @toscaandwilloughby on Instagram or call 01844 353477.







22. THE MERCHANT'S TABLE is a shop selling beautiful, handcrafted furniture, lighting and objects for the home by independent British makers and artists. They seek work with a narrative running through it, a recognition of provenance and heritage craftsmanship skills. Every object has a strong sense of the maker's hand. Visit themerchantstable.co.uk and follow @the_merchants_table on Instagram

23. OBEETEE, India's oldest handmade rug makers, boasts a century-long legacy of unparalleled quality, design, craftsmanship and service. Established in 1920 by Oakley, Bowden, and Taylor, Obeetee seamlessly blends tradition with innovation, continually pushing the boundaries of rug making to create an outstanding array of exclusive pieces. Explore their debut rug, cushion and table linen collection at their London Belgravia showroom from 22nd - 24th October 2024. Discover more at obeetee.com and follow @obeetee on Instagram. Contact Chloe on 07597297189 or at Chloe.sharratt@obeetee.com for more information.

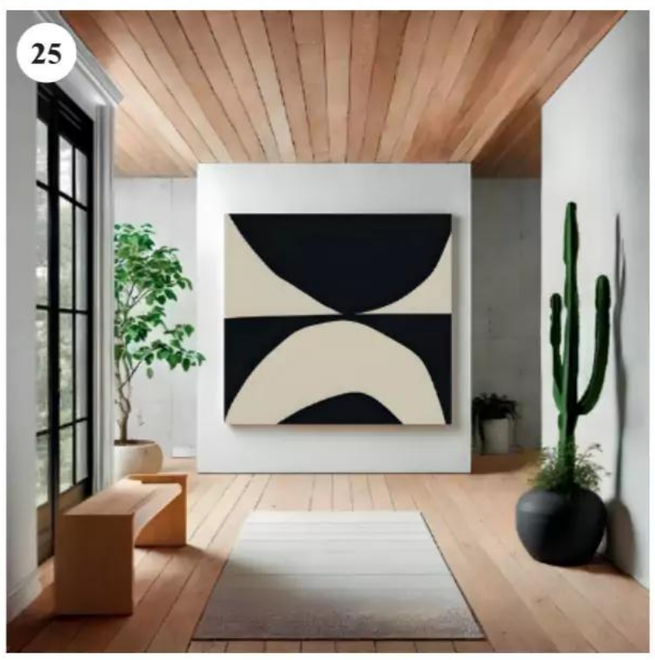




24. APPLEY HOARE offers this late 19th century Swedish Baroque-style chest of drawers with pale grey/blue paint. Four large drawers with the Maker's Stamp still visible in the top drawer - B.E. Jonsson of Stockholm, est.1883. A beautiful piece with good storage space. Circa 1890. Visit www.appleyhoare.com email appley@appleyhoare.com call 07901 675050 and follow @appleyhoareantiques on Instagram.

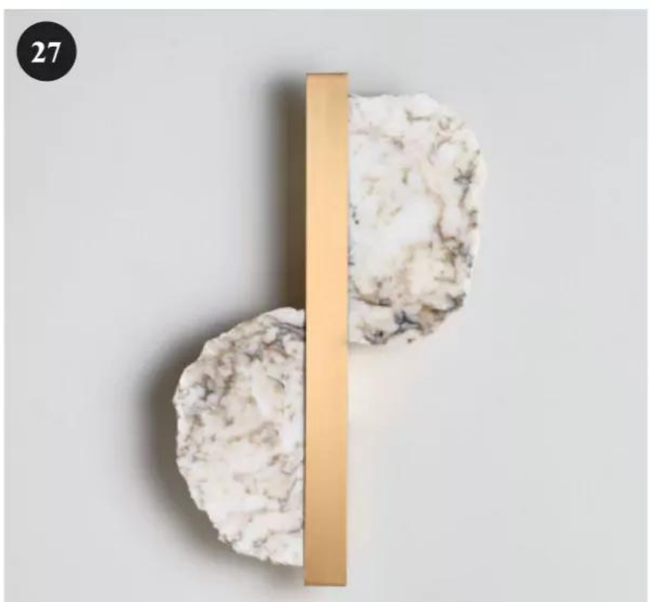
25. Discover **GIANTART.COM** a women-led company redefining interior design with top-quality giclée prints. Explore large-scale, curated artworks at accessible prices. Follow @giant.art on Instagram.

26. DEVOL KITCHENS – Designers and makers of handmade English kitchen cupboards. deVOL has five beautiful kitchen ranges and an ever-growing collection of simple and authentic home accessories. All deVOL furniture is made in their workshops in Leicestershire and can be viewed at their Cotes Mill headquarters, Tysoe St. and St. John's Square showrooms in London, the Bond Street location in New York City and now their historic new showroom in Bath. You can also see and shop their range of lovely handmade lighting, hardware, tiles and so much more on the deVOL website. Visit www.devolkitchens.co.uk or call 01509 261000.





27. MATLIGHT MILANO is an Italian brand combining craftsmanship and high design for timeless luminaires in precious stones and metals. The Eclipse wall sconce represents a perfect fusion of nature and contemporary craftsmanship. The raw alabaster plates, left in their natural form, create a fascinating interaction between light and matter. Visit www.matlight-milano.com and follow @matlight_milano on Instagram.



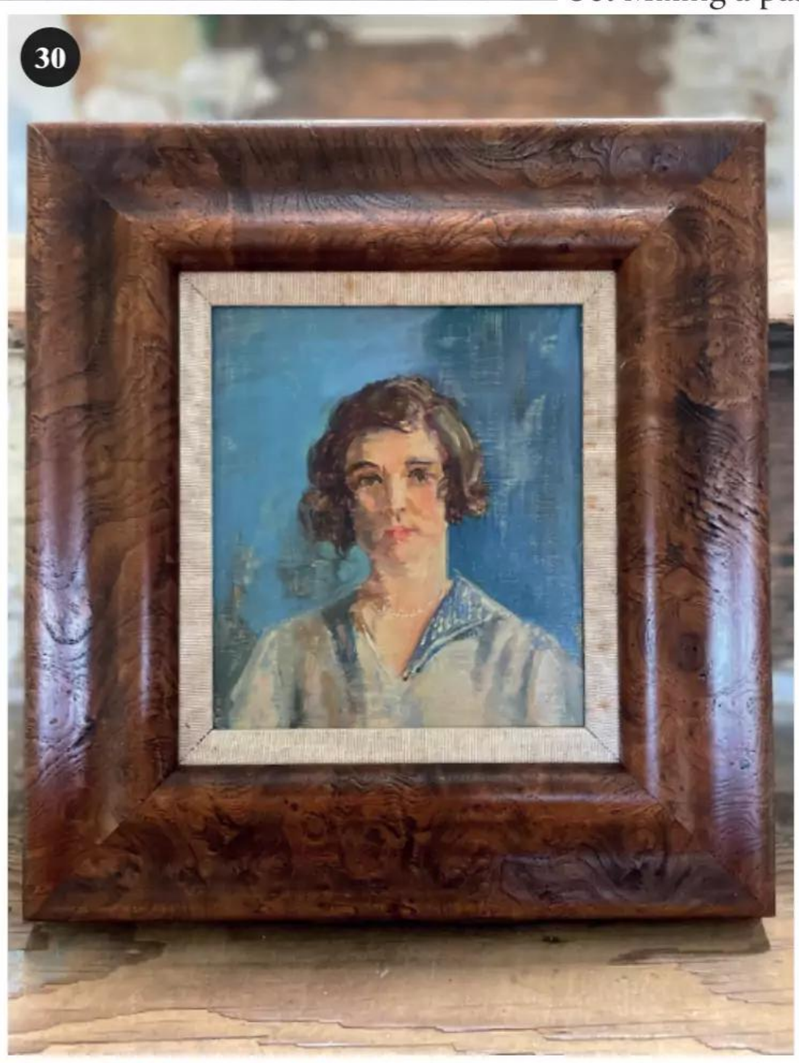
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28. CASA DEXTILES are a mother and daughter team that sells hand crafted home furnishing and accessories created by exquisite Indian artisans. They offer a bespoke range of sustainable fabrics made from eco-friendly sources celebrating design, crafts and textiles. Their range of elegant table linens, cosy soft furnishings, and playful throws embrace beauty in simplicity with serene palettes and delicate motifs. Visit www.casadextiles.com and follow @casadextiles on Instagram.

29. THE SOHO LIGHTING COMPANY brings the inside out with their versatile Langdon Lantern collection. Perfectly timed for the onset of Autumn, their Langdon IP Rated Porch Lantern will create a welcoming ambience to your entrance hall or porch, and look equally stunning gracing your interior spaces. Available in solid brass and blackened brass with three size options, it provides a nod to the traditional with a sophisticated contemporary feel. See more at Soholighting.com or call 020 8106 1221.





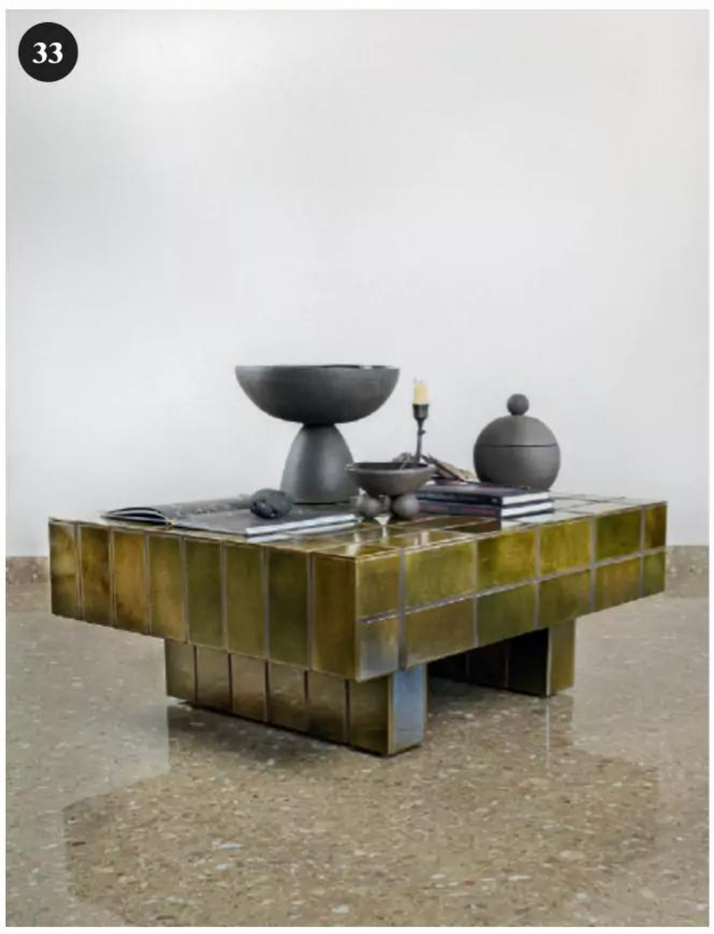
30. Mixing a passion for design and style with a curiosity for the unusual, **PALMER SINCLAIR** source art and collectables from the 19th and 20th Centuries that stimulate conversation and help make a statement. They help fulfil interior needs from the everyday, to the rare and exotic. Making your world more beautiful. Visit www.palmer-sinclair.com call 020 7790 8300 or email info@palmer-sinclair.com



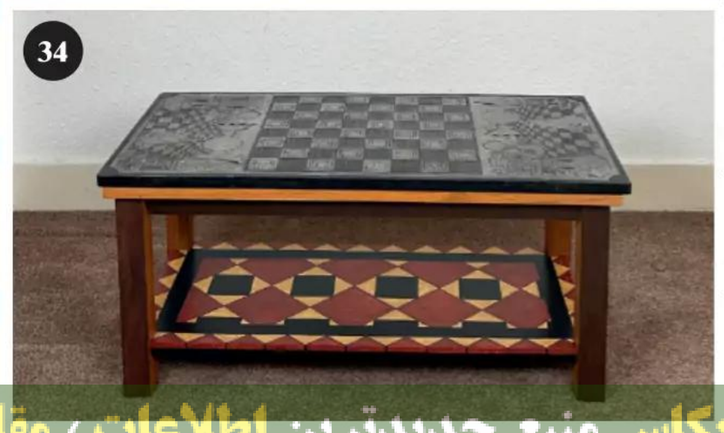
31. ARCH PLUS ULTRA, a Milan-based design studio, creates unique, Italian-made lighting. Merging artisanal savoir-faire with cutting-edge innovation, their lamps feature clean lines and precious materials like ebony and cast bronze. The result is a timeless aesthetics, perfect for both classic and contemporary spaces. Visit www.archplusultra.com or contact info@archplusultra.com



32. CASA GUSTO's hand-painted frames and mats embody this design house's whimsical form. This time, they feature a set of 18th-century German Johann Volkamer Lemon Engravings. Visit their website and explore all their fresh framed pairings of prints and engravings. Shop at www.getthegusto.com and follow @getthegusto on Instagram.



33. TINA VAIA is based in Valencia, Spain and draws inspiration from nature, architecture, and the tactile beauty of ceramics. Her bespoke furniture and ceramic pieces bring warmth, texture, and personality to any space, appealing to those who appreciate craftsmanship, sustainability, and the unique character that handmade ceramics bring to modern design. The tiled Tallat table is the latest piece in her new furniture collection. Visit www.tinavaia.com and follow @tinavaia on Instagram.



34. THE DECORATIVE FURNISHINGS collection includes painted pieces by Riley Chambers. 'Vicky Tiles', pictured here, is a coffee/games table with Victorian encaustic tiled paintwork. For more details/ commission enquiries, visit www.decorative-furnishings.com or follow @decorativefurnishings on Instagram.

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ALLISON WILLSON DESIGN
With nearly 2 decades of industry experience, Allison Willson Design is a full service residential interior design firm located in Toronto, serving clients throughout North America. Renowned for their beautifully customised and curated spaces, Allison's designs intentionally layer architectural details, vintage furnishings and modern touches, yielding timeless and inviting interiors.

info@allisonwillson.com
www.allisonwillson.com



ADURA DESIGN
This high-end interior architecture and design studio, specialises in crafting luxurious, bespoke spaces that reflect the distinct tastes and lifestyles of their discerning clientele. Their multidisciplinary and talented team blend sophistication with functionality to create environments that inspire and delight.
aduradesign.com
studio@aduradesign.com



NICOLE ARRUDA
Nicole Arruda, founder and principal designer of Nicole Alexandra Design Studio was a featured designer at the Holiday House Hamptons. She infused a harmonious balance of old and new, with the majority of the pieces being vintage and primarily sourced from Italy and France. Photography - Kyle Caldwell.
Stylist - The Primary Essentials.

www.nicolealexandradesign.com
@nicolealexandraarruda



STUDIO SEFERLIS
This London-based interior design firm, blends style, personality, and smart budgeting. Specialising in bespoke spaces that feel refined and thoughtful without overspending, they work with both local and remote clients. From full transformations to finishing touches, Studio Seferlis delivers curated, timeless, and elegant interiors. Photo: Milo Hutchings

www.studioseferlis.com
@studioseferlis



MINIMAL INTERIOR DESIGNS
UK-based and founded by Labeeda Bhatti, Minimal Interior Designs offer a personalised and friendly design service. With a bespoke approach, each space is carefully created while focusing on the client's specific interior needs and ideas. Enriching the space with a modern twist and process, unique interiors become a living dream.

www.minimalidesign.com
@minimalinteriordesigns
labeeda@minimalidesign.com



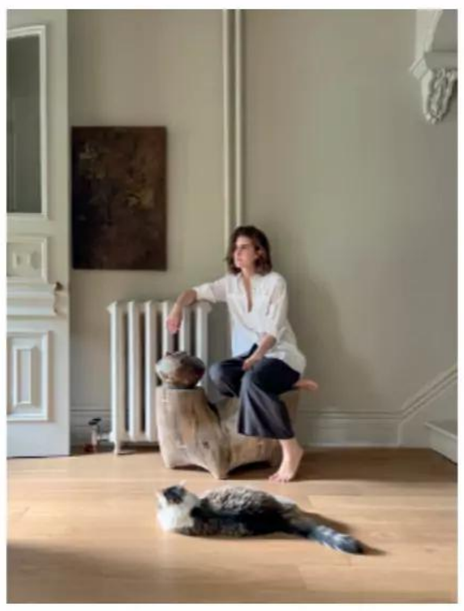
THE GOOD DESIGN GROUP AND ALLISON THOMPSON INTERIORS
Designed in collaboration between The Good Design Group and Allison Thompson Interiors, Otie Bakehouse is a contemporary cafe in Calgary, Canada. The design team explored bold colours, bespoke millwork, custom furniture and eccentric lighting.

Photography: Klassen Photography
thegooddesigngroup.com / @thegooddesigngroup
allisonthompson.xyz / @allisonthompsoninteriors



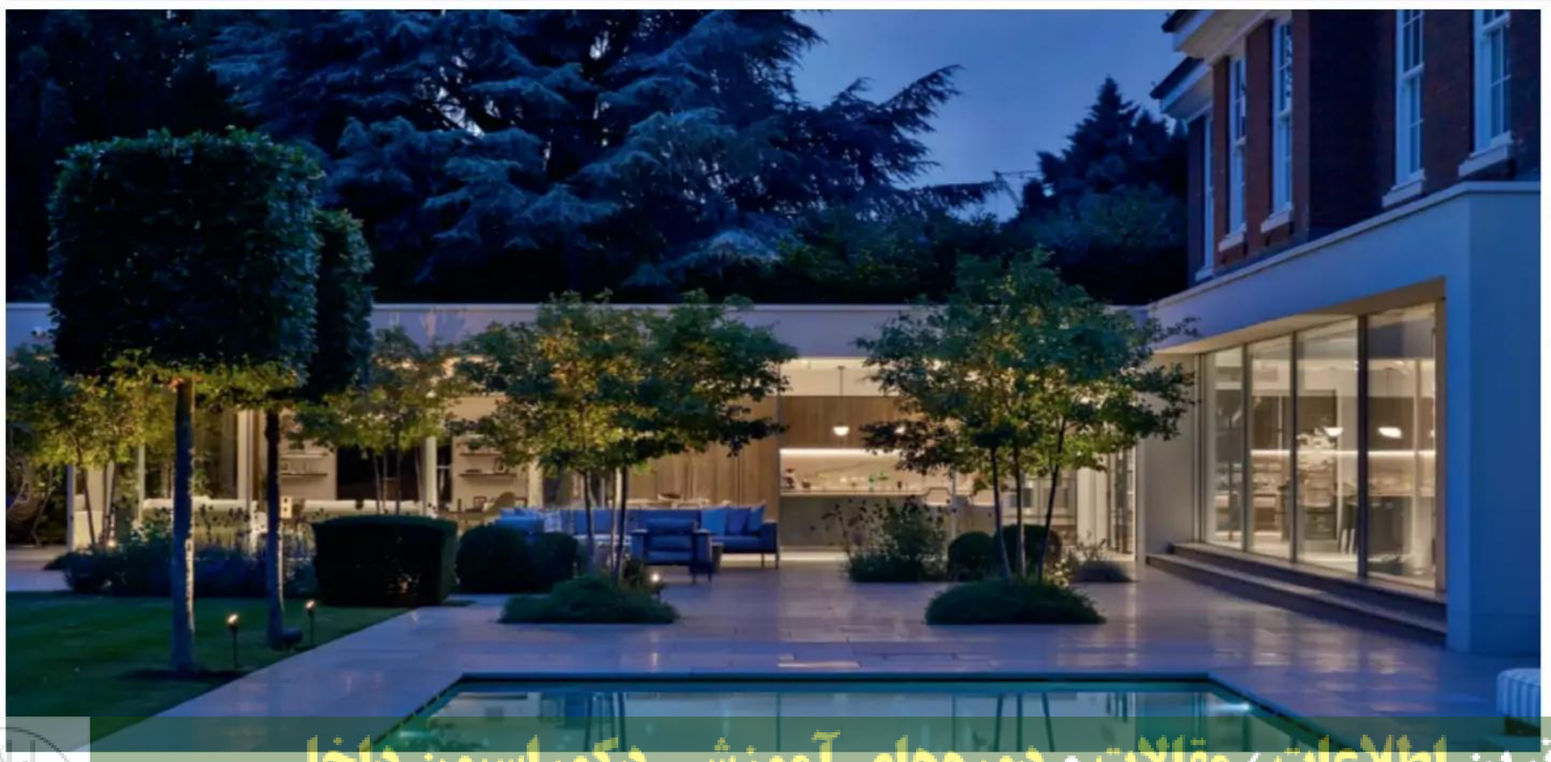
INTERIORS CURATOR
Jessie Jones is a seasoned interior designer with over seven years of experience, specialising in crafting refined and sophisticated spaces. From her Houston Heights home, she draws inspiration to create stylish interiors which exclude elegance and grace.

interiorscurator.myportfolio.com
@interiorscurator



NO.2 COLLECTION, founded by stylist Kaela Shaw, is a creative studio known for its refined, imperfect elegance. She offers interiors photo styling and sourcing worldwide. Kaela also curates The Residence, an exclusive gallery featuring contemporary art in a restored historic home, with her curation also available online.

www.numbertwocollection.com
@no2.collection



GREGORY PHILLIPS ARCHITECTS
Does your house have small windows, limited access and obscured views of the rear garden? Resolving the poor connection between the inside of the house and the garden is a mission on which Gregory Phillips has embarked to transform. Creating wonderful living spaces that effortlessly flow into the adjacent outdoor space. Gregory is passionate about creating gorgeous contemporary comfortable houses. 'We transform houses to create incredible living spaces with a spectacular relationship to the garden'…. Gregory Phillips

020 7724 3040
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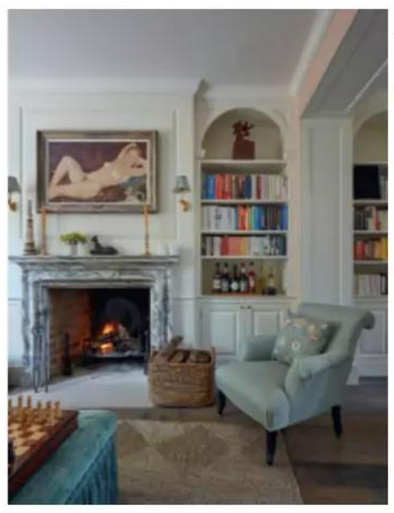
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MAYBANK ASSOCIATES
Maybank Associates has been a pioneer in state-of-the-art interior decoration, specialist finishes and refurbishment services since 1960's. After having delivered successfully at Buckingham Palace, St Paul's Cathedral, Beaumont Hotel, Dior, The Chelsea Barracks and Fortnum & Mason amongst others, they've touched the international shores in the last few years with land and sea projects including the cruise ships.

www.maybankassociates.com
maybank@maybankassociates.com



JACK DAVIDSON
Jack Davidson's design philosophy is centred around creating spaces that feel timeless and elegant, with a focus on period properties and architectural finishes. Working on everything from London townhouses to sprawling country piles, they meticulously select everything from materials and furnishings, to paint colours and decorative pieces, working closely with clients to understand their vision and create a home that reflects their unique personality and taste.

@jackdavidsondesign nikki@davidson.co
jackdavidsondesign.com



VANESSA LEYLAND INTERIORS
is based in The Netherlands and works globally. Vanessa's main focus is providing exceptional interior design and interior architecture. The team at VLI have a personal design approach to build trust and understanding with their clients to create interiors that reflect individuality, and surpass all expectations, with a timeless design that feels exciting and completely right.

@vanessalinteriors
www.vanessaleylandinteriors.com
info@vanessaleylandinteriors



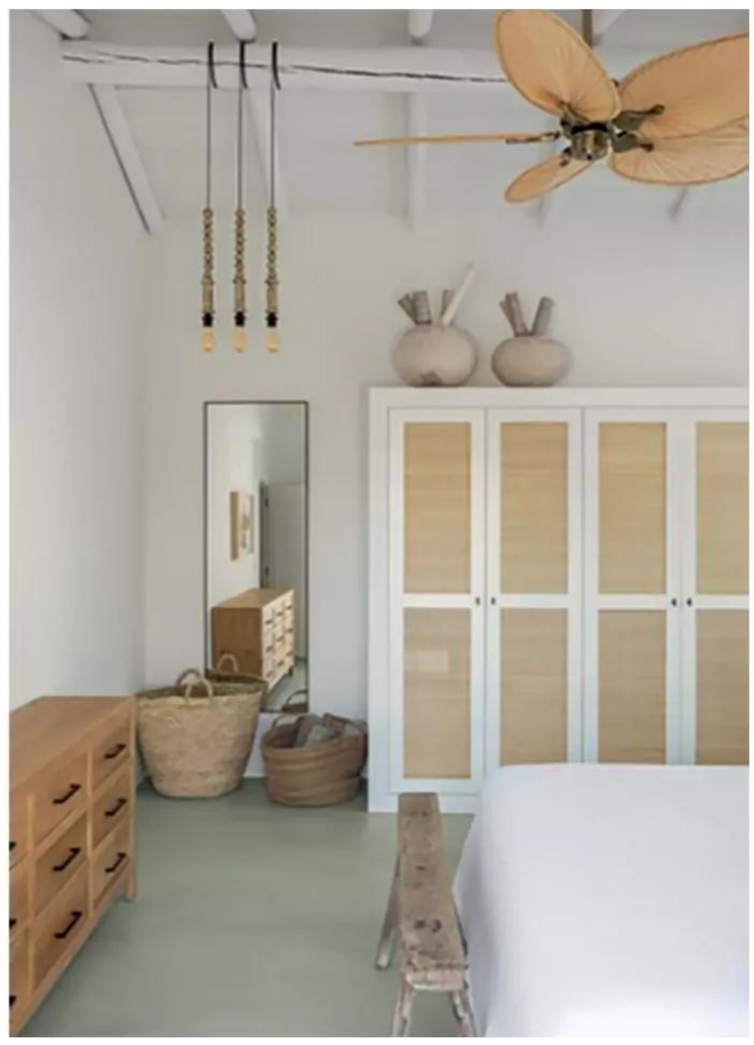
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With an expertise in both listed building projects and brand new developments, Carter Fleming offer a complete turnkey architectural service to meet your varied requirements. Working on planning, design, construction and implementation, they have the skills and capability to deliver client-centric work of lasting quality that will sensitively dove-tail into your interior or exterior needs. Contact them today for a free consultation.

www.carter-fleming.com
hello@carter-fleming.com



CORINNE VICTORIA DESIGN
blends historic charm with modern sensibility for busy professionals in Northern Virginia's classic homes. By embracing architectural heritage and layering personal style, she creates timeless interiors that function beautifully for contemporary living. Photography by Stylish Productions.

www.corinnevictoriadesign.com
@corinnevictoriadesign



WHITE&KAKI STUDIO
Initially established as a cultural centre in the 1980s with 5 century-old houses, this space showcased visual arts and performances by notable artists, including Nobel laureate Günter Grass. Now converted into a family summer house, the adaption and renovation were renovated by Fuste architecture with interior design, signed and crafted by White&Kaki Studio, led by Vítor Duarte and Carlos Rocha.

whiteandkaki.com
@whiteandkaki



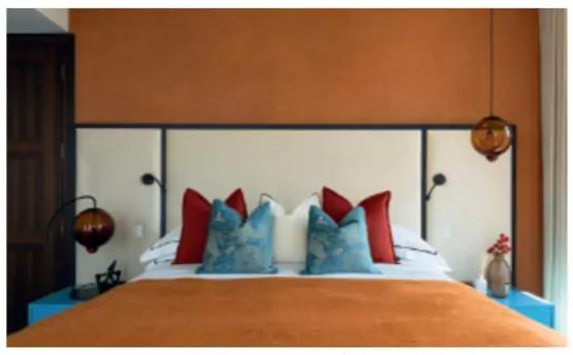
DOVERFIELD DESIGNS
is a London-based interior design studio specialising in full-service renovation projects. Headed by Claudine Murphy, whose experience working for several leading London art galleries is strongly reflected in their work, they craft cosy and inviting homes across London and the Home Counties, focusing on creating spaces that aren't just beautiful but also functional.

www.doverfielddesigns.com
studio@doverfielddesigns.com



BROWN DESIGN GROUP
Isabella Brown, founder of Brown Design Group, is a visionary interior designer who believes black is a happy colour. Her style emphasises organic living and natural textures. Known for her passion for quality, Isabel also established an exceptional upholstery department and transformed Murray House into a luxurious lifestyle centre, preserving its historical charm.

isabel@browndesigngroup.co.za
themurrayhouse.co.za



ROSE DEEB STUDIO
Rose Deeb is an interior design studio dedicated to creating sophisticated, high-end interiors in the UK and abroad, blending timeless elegance with playful flair. The studio designs unique, functional spaces that enhance well-being, curating a harmonious and diverse blend of eclectic elements. Driven by passion and boundless curiosity, each project reflects refined, authentic interiors tailored to each client.

www.rosedeeb.com
@rosedeebstudio

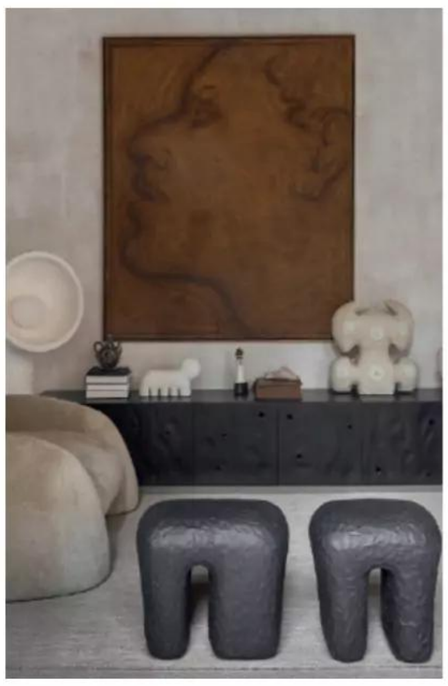


STUDIO SONA
is a boutique design studio, focusing on the luxury residential market, across London and abroad. Their passion lies in creating environments that evoke warmth and emotion, capturing the essence of each unique story. The London based studio crafts experiences that resonate with each individual client, creating personalised and beautifully designed spaces.

studiosona.co.uk
@studiosona_design
Design@studiosona.co.uk
020 3536 1776

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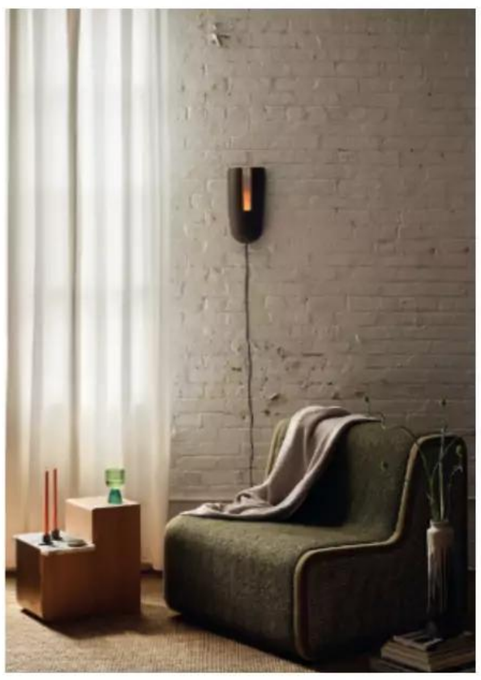
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VICTORIA YAKUSHA STUDIO

The award-winning Victoria Yakusha Studio offers interior designs rooted in the 'live minimalism' philosophy, merging minimalist forms with traditional craftsmanship and natural materials.

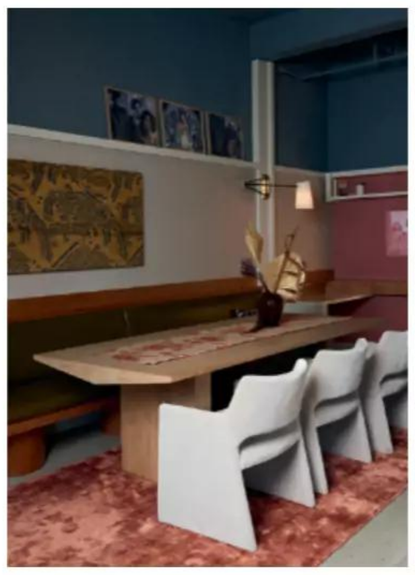
@yakusha.studio
victoriayakusha.com



EMBER STUDIO

Ember Studio is a modern creative practice focused on intentional spaces and objects. Pictured here is the Entwine Series, a collection of customisable furniture and lighting, available for purchase through Colony in NYC.

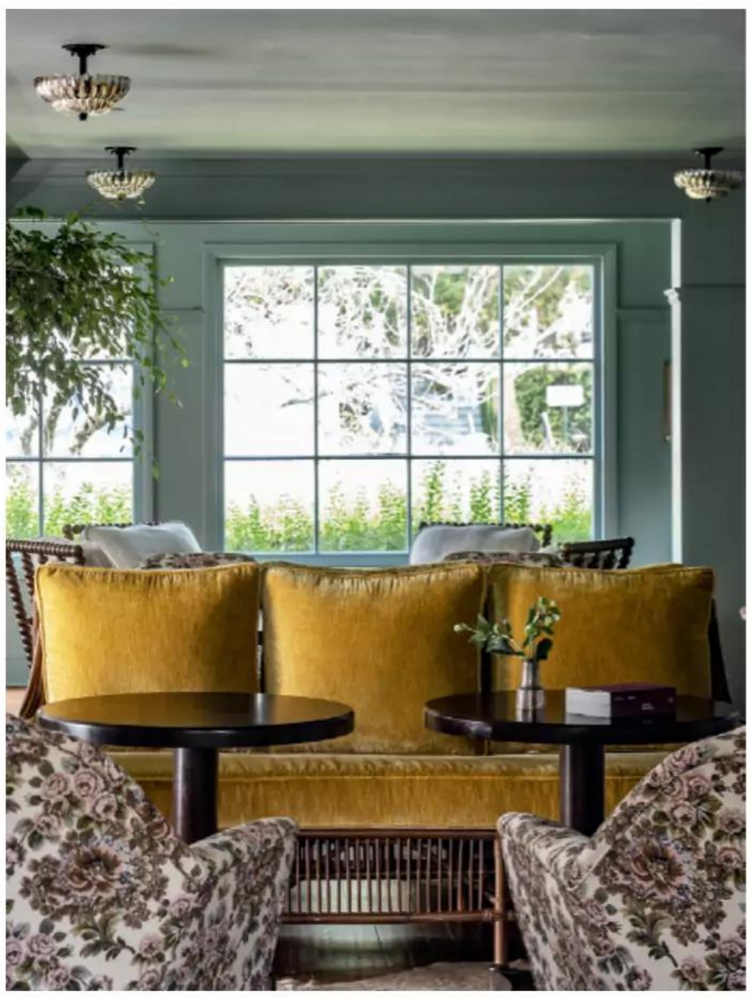
ember-studio.co
@emberstudio__



STUDIO ROSLYN

Based in Vancouver, Canada, Studio Roslyn develops considered design solutions for built environments across the milieu of commercial, institutional and residential spaces. Co-founders Jessica MacDonald and Kate Snyder have formed a unique aesthetic of 'refined maximalism' through their work with vibrant designs that spotlight pattern, texture, and colour. Photographer: Lauren Zbarsky

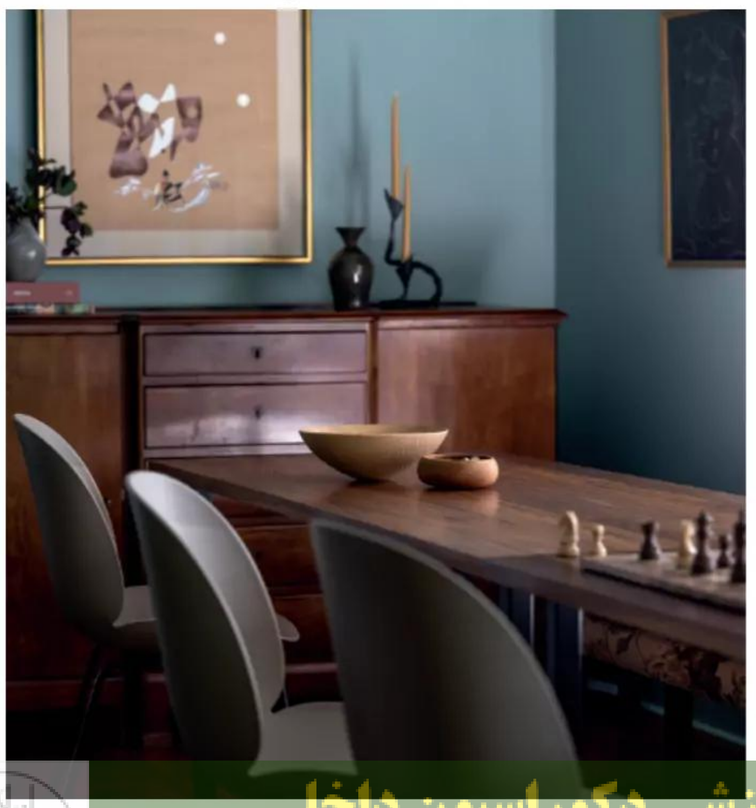
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+1 778 656 1767 info@studioroslyn.com



STUDIO VICTORI

With nearly two decades of experience at the helm of New York's most esteemed design firms, Christina Spates Victori founded Studio Victori, an interior design studio specialising in luxury residential and hospitality projects. From Houston to the Hudson Valley, and New York's Upper East Side to the East End, Christina masterfully harmonizes clients' tastes with her visionary design and technical rigor, crafting timeless spaces that tell stories that resonate deeply with those who dwell within.

www.studiovictori.com
@studiovictori





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provides a wide range of high-quality products, supported by a team of experts in brand knowledge. They offer exclusive discounts to Interior Designers, Architects, and Home Stagers through their Interior Design membership. John Lewis Business ensures a seamless purchasing experience for all projects. Contact the team today.

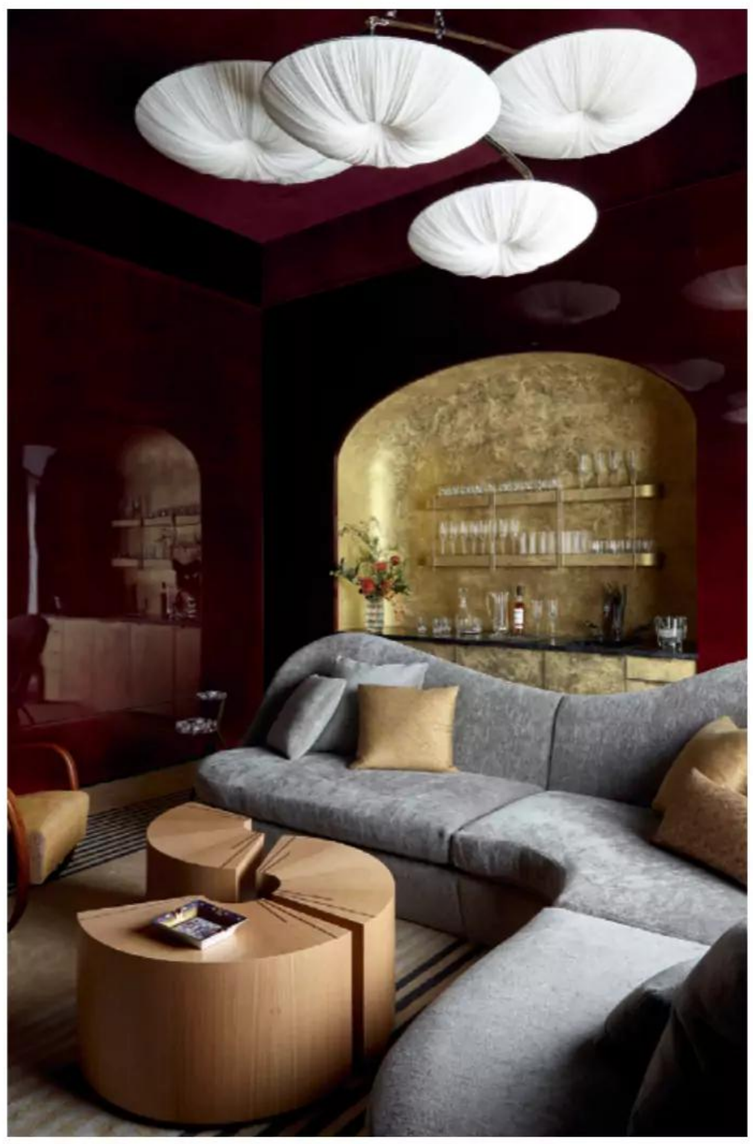
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Impression, Surmise

At first sight, Walter Osborne's group portrait seems *en harmonie* with the uplifting canvases of Monet et al. But this dappled scenario harbours darker undertones, suggests Elaine Feeney



Ever since my aunt took me to a Joan Miró exhibition at Dublin's National Gallery of Ireland when I was 16, I have been a regular visitor. On my last trip, the day's drizzle had prompted a sea of umbrellas as I walked through Trinity College, past the cricket pavilion, towards the back gate. There, a boy lay in a sleeping bag by a damp wall, tracking a novel with his index finger. I exited the grounds and crossed Clare Street to the gallery's entrance.

The building has an airy and expansive foyer. I wandered into exhibition rooms, avoiding maps due to my poor navigation skills. Over the years, my fascination with the paintings has evolved. In the 1990s, I was captivated by Caravaggio's *The Taking of Christ*, which had been recently acquired. Life events – marriage, childbirth and loss – later drew me to William John Leech's *A Convent Garden, Brittany*, and I felt comforted by its remarkable interplay of colour and light.

The Irish painter Walter Osborne depicted 19th-century working-class life in this city with profound realism. His painting *In a Dublin Park, Light and Shade* seems lively and typically Impressionistic until you focus on the subjects. The sunlight breaching the trees offers serenity, but the subjects seated beneath them propose a jarring juxtaposition. The dappled light is intense, yet unlike French Impressionism, where brush strokes can barely offer form, this painting draws the eye to its five compelling and mysterious subjects. They vary in age and sit on a park bench below a tree, perhaps making a generational statement on the passage of time contrary to nature's cycles.

The figure to the far left is a barefoot boy, his feet dangling from the bench. He looks as though he has been crying. Next to him sits a woman, likely his mother, with a sleeping baby on her lap. The infant appears exhausted, and the woman's expression conveys profound weariness, almost beyond fear. A well-dressed man sits beside her, and I wonder how he came to be positioned in the middle of this group. Another man, with a more dejected look, completes the quintet.

The painting raises more questions than answers. Who bruised the woman's face? Why is the young family seated in the park during the day? Shouldn't the boy be running about, and has he ever worn shoes? What lies behind the wall? Most intriguingly, did the men ever speak to the woman, and if so, what words were exchanged?

Osborne's work elicits empathy – a contemplative moment of pain trapped in the beauty of the natural world. People spending time in a harsh reality seems as pertinent now as it did then; little has changed. Trees bloom, some people have nowhere to go. I consider again the importance of urban communal spaces, the permanence of art.

As I leave the gallery, I notice the day has brightened. People bustle about the street at a more leisurely pace, a man in a suit flags down a taxi, and a bus pulls in to allow travellers to disembark. The boy has disappeared from the gate, leaving no trace of himself or his book ⊛ *Elaine Feeney is a poet and writer whose latest novel is 'How to Build a Boat' (Harvill Secker, rrp £16.99)*

NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND

Walter Osborne, 'In a Dublin Park, Light and Shade', c1895, oil on canvas, 71 × 91cm

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