

The directory of the
100
leading interior designers

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES WE PRESENT OUR
 GUIDE TO THE TOP DECORATORS WORKING IN THE UK TODAY



If *House & Garden* is to be the standard bearer of the best in interior design, it follows that we must champion the men and women in the profession. That is why we publish this directory every three years – a list that is compiled after exhaustive research. Some of the names belong to large companies with an international reputation, others are individuals of outstanding talent. Just under 20 per cent are new entries since 2009. The interior-design industry in this country makes a significant contribution to the economy, nourishing many satellite businesses such as antiques and fine-art dealers, British manufacturers and craft-based enterprises. Exports also benefit from our world-renowned designers, and work by them on foreign-owned property generates huge amounts of overseas revenue. On the following pages, you will find 100 interior designers and 100 different approaches to design. Some create, some interpret, some are subtle, some are eccentric. Some are historically expert, some are minimal and some prioritise comfort. Some of these decorators will help you spend a fortune well and some will help you save money. However, they all have one thing in common: they have earned their place here by doing what they do excellently.

Susan Crewe, EDITOR

Susan Crewe





ALIDAD

Background Persian by birth but based in London for over 30 years, Alidad has a background in textiles, having been director of the Islamic art, carpets and textiles department at Sotheby's. He launched his design practice in 1985 and has a team of 10. *Projects* Alidad's current commissions include the decoration of residences in Beirut, Kuwait, London and Kiev. He has recently completed homes in Kuwait and London, a pied-à-terre in Dublin, and a converted farmhouse in Cornwall. His second fabric collection, inspired by sixteenth-century Italian velvets, was launched in 2011. *He says* I aim to produce timeless homes that are completely bespoke for the way my client wants to live. Life is so hectic that home is a vital haven. I help clients create something very special to lift their spirits. *We say* The charismatic designer of choice for international clients. His talent for mixing intricate textiles, jewel colours and precious antiques is unsurpassed, backed up by scholarly knowledge. *Spend or save?* I divide living spaces into primary areas, such as the main drawing room, right down to tertiary areas, for example the nursery. Never economise on primary areas. *Contact* Alidad: 020-7384 0121; www.alidad.com



MONIKA APPONYI AND GERALDINE APPONYI

Background Monika Apponyi trained at the Inchbald School of Design and set up MM Design in 1985. Her daughter, Geraldine, graduated in fine art and worked for a leading US architecture and design firm, then joined Monika as a partner in 2007. They work throughout London and Europe. *Projects* Right now, MM Design is busy on the renovation of a house in London, and a house in Esher for a repeat client, along with a 'spectacular' project in Vienna. They have also finished the renovation of two Chelsea properties and a flat in Notting Hill, and the rebuild of an old farmhouse in Austria. *They say* We like to create comfortable, welcoming homes that work hard for our clients. Our style nudges towards the classic, sometimes with emphasis on colour and antiques, sometimes more neutral, using Forties furniture and modern elements. *We say* A dedicated mother-and-daughter team with a shared design aesthetic and a love of luxurious finishes and bespoke detailing. At MM Design, the client-designer relationship is all. *Most challenging commission?* A newly built, classical house in Spain planned and designed after only three meetings with the architect and client. *Contact* MM Design: 020-7751 0171; www.biid.org.uk/member/mm-design



SUSIE ATKINSON (new entry)

Background After a brief stint at the Colefax and Fowler showroom, Susie trained at the Inchbald School of Design, then joined Chester Jones's design studio. Susie Atkinson Design was established in 1994 and in the last five years Susie has expanded her business to take on increasingly challenging projects. *Projects* With a varied mix of residential and commercial jobs, Susie is working on a large newbuild house in Notting Hill, a traditional country house and a new project in Berlin. She is the designer behind the Cowshed Spa at Babington House in Somerset, Electric House on Portobello Road, and Dean Street Townhouse, as well as Soho House Berlin and Soho House London. *She says* When working on a private home, I like to tell a story about its owners. The balance of colour, texture and tone, together with key pieces of furniture and art, should enhance a room and reflect those who spend time in the space. *We say* Susie is a classically trained designer who has honed her skills on high-profile commercial projects. Expect a cool colour palette, crisp lines and feminine detailing. *Favourite luxury detail?* Silk-velvet cushions filled with pure down. *Contact* Susie Atkinson Design: 01252-849546; www.susieatkinson.com

'Colour, texture and tone should enhance a room and reflect those who spend time in the space'



TOM BARTLETT AT WALDO WORKS

Background Tom Bartlett studied architecture at Manchester University and the Bartlett School of Architecture, and set up Waldo Works in 2000. His W10-based design practice, comprising 10 architects and designers, specialises in modern interiors. *Projects* Tom is working on the interior architecture and design of a house in Notting Hill; a project in Geneva; a department at Selfridges in London, and the refit of Smythson in Bond Street. He is also working with Jade Jagger on development projects in association with Yoo, in Mumbai and Morocco. *He says* We are known for bespoke interiors that are current, but we have an eye for history. Our strength is in the knowledge of both approaches. We concentrate on modern interiors, but with colourful personality and, we hope, some wit. *We say* Tom leads his team with vigour, turning out exciting designs with a sharp modern edge and the occasional colour shock. He is an intelligent designer who uses his architectural skills to bring a fresh perspective to every project. *Spend or save?* Never economise on ironmongery or painters, but do economise on paint. *Contact* Waldo Works: 020-8962 9767; www.waldoworks.com



CHARLES BATESON

Background Charles Bateson started out by working at David Hicks as a product designer, then switched to interior design. After nine years there, he joined John Stefanidis. He launched his design consultancy over 15 years ago and deliberately keeps his practice small, with a team of four, as his clients like a personal service. *Projects* Charles's team is currently working on the part rebuild and part refurbishment of a house in the Cotswolds. He has recently completed the refurbishment of a Holland Park home, a newbuild lakeside house in Geneva, and a modern house on the Isle of Wight, among others. *He says* My sole aim is to create interiors for my clients that make them feel stimulated, comfortable, organised, glamorous and confident, and make the path to achieving that a journey of discovery. We can truly lay claim to offering a tailored, personal solution to every project. *We say* Charles is a super-efficient designer, who respects the trust a client places in him and eschews the 'cookie cutter' school of design. A sure hand with either a city or a country property, he turns out smart, beautifully tailored interiors. *Most challenging commission?* A newbuild teak junk in Hong Kong, for which I designed all the interior joinery, lighting and furnishings. *Contact* Charles Bateson Interior Design: 020-8560 5260; www.charlesbateson.com



BILL BENNETTE

Background Since starting his design practice in 1986, Bill Bennette has established himself as one of London's most respected designers. He and his team of six work on major building and refurbishment contracts alongside architects and contractors. *Projects* Bill has just completed a 36.5-metre motor yacht in Miami, a property in the Bahamas, and the remodelling of a Grade II-listed house in Mayfair. He is also working on a major redevelopment of 23 Cavendish Close, a luxurious scheme including a Grade II-listed house and new underground pool/spa complex; a newbuild project in Mayfair; and the refurbishment of a north-London house. *He says* I love order and discipline and believe that everything in a room should have a purpose. An interior should function well and be calm and beautiful in a timeless style. *We say* Highly regarded and with a razor-sharp eye for detail, Bill specialises in super-luxurious, elegant interiors. His trademark style fuses quality materials and expert craftsmanship with state-of-the-art technology and lighting. *Most challenging commission?* Keeping the design inspiration alive on a large private residence in Europe, which took seven years to complete. *Contact* Bill Bennette Design: 020-7351 2550; www.bbdesign.co.uk



TIM BEDDOW

DAVID HARRISON; BRUCE THOMAS



BENSON STUDIOS

Background Carolyn Benson trained in the restoration of historical buildings and worked on assorted National Trust houses, then worked with the late Victoria Waymouth on interior and restoration projects. She started Benson Studios in 2004 and, as the sole designer, works with a network of craftsmen and specialists.

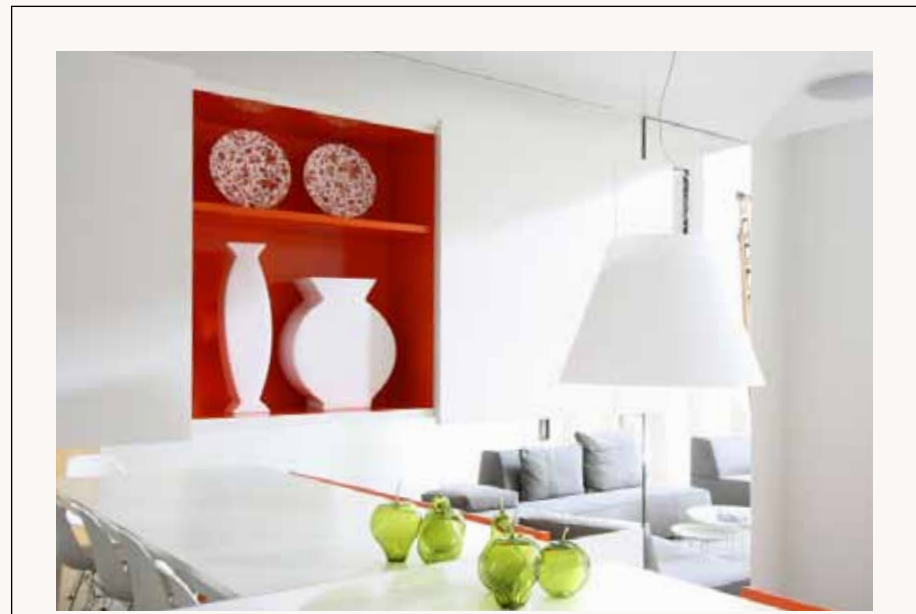
Projects Carolyn is currently engaged on the restoration of two Grade II-listed properties: a fourteenth-century farmhouse in Somerset and a Sussex project with fifteenth-century origins. She is also refurbishing a large artist's studio and several apartments in London. She has her own line of handmade leather rugs.

She says As I was trained in restoration, I know that the interior should not contradict the architecture and must also reflect the owners. It is so important to create 'personal atmosphere'.

We say With over 28 years' experience, Carolyn is sensitive to the needs of period houses, yet sympathetic to the requirements of twenty-first-century living. Clients return time and again for her blend of classic English style, mixed with unusual textures and a dash of eclecticism.

Favourite luxury detail? A real log fire – yes, even in London.

Contact Benson Studios: 020-7352 1099; www.bensonstudios.com



BENTHEIM

Background After studying at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, followed by environmental design at the Royal College of Art, David Bentheim set up his Chelsea-based interior-design practice in 1989. The company works on a broad range of commissions, from galleries to restaurants, but most recently the focus has been on residential projects.

Projects The in-house team of five is working on a rebuild of a house in The Little Boltons, an eighteenth-century Bloomsbury town house, interiors in New York State and San Francisco, and several commercial projects. In 2011, David completed the refurbishment of two flats in the Alps, and a restaurant in Westfield, Stratford.

He says I not only translate what my clients say they would like, but try to interpret how they really want to live. My design style has its roots firmly in modernism but I enjoy playing with that and introducing subversive elements.

We say David Bentheim is a true original, bringing an intellectual, deeply visual edge to his interiors, whether residential or commercial. Look out for classic modern furniture and surprise flashes of colour.

Most challenging commission? The public areas in the Radiotherapy Department at Guy's Hospital, which he decorated in vibrant green, with leafy graphics and sculptures.

Contact Bentheim: 020-7376 3427; www.bentheim.co.uk

TARA BERNERD

Background Tara Bernerd started her design career with a property company and went on to co-found the design practice Target Living in 2002. Last year, she relaunched as Tara Bernerd & Partners, focusing on creative direction and interior design. She has a team of 10 at her new Belgravia offices.

Projects Tara's recent triumph has been the complete interior architecture and design of Belgraves, a flagship hotel in Belgravia. Also ongoing is the design of 1,000 lodges for a new Center Parcs village near Woburn Abbey; a 50-metre yacht for a family; an apartment in the Trump Tower, New York; and several private homes.

She says We approach each project systematically, giving consideration to layouts before tackling materials, fabrics and furniture. Our style is bold and edgy, but we aim to create warmth and atmosphere, with a sophisticated use of colour and texture.

We say Newly rebranded, Tara is firing on all cylinders. She is an experimental designer with a commitment to pushing creative boundaries, yet the results are consistently glamorous, comfortable and exciting.

Spend or save? Don't compromise on flooring as it is a high-impact finish. There is only one chance to make a first impression.

Contact Tara Bernerd & Partners: 020-7245 1658; www.tarabernerd.com



ANN BOYD

Background Ann has a background in fashion, having studied at St Martins School of Art. After working in fashion journalism, she became creative director for Europe at Ralph Lauren. Ann launched her design practice in 1997, and has completed high-profile commercial projects, from The Randolph in Oxford to the Vogue Cafe in Moscow, as well as town houses and country residences.

Projects Current commissions include the renovation of a Victorian house in Yorkshire, the redecoration of a Jacobean property in Suffolk and a house with medieval origins in Leicestershire. She is also working on two substantial properties in Chelsea, and a newbuild house in the Bahamas.

'I want to create for my clients the one place on earth that they really want to be'

She says My philosophy and design style are the same: I want to give clients a sense of peace and tranquillity, and create a home that is the one place on earth that they really want to be.

We say A sought-after designer with exquisite taste, turning out chic, airy interiors with a distinctive English spirit and a strong understanding of comfort. She keeps her team small and the service personal.

Most challenging commission? A medieval Grade I-listed country house.

Contact Ann Boyd: 020-7384 1660; e-mail: info@annboyddesign.com



LOUISE BRADLEY

Background Louise Bradley launched her design career designing friends' houses; then, in 1991, she opened her interiors showroom in Walton Street. Today, she has a team of 23 in-house designers, interior architects and retail staff at her studio and showrooms in Brompton Cross, in addition to the Walton Street showroom.

Projects Right now, Louise is working on an apartment in Knightsbridge, a 2,800-square-metre property in Surrey, a large private home in Scotland and a villa in Saudi Arabia. The Louise Bradley collection of furniture, comprising over 100 pieces, with bespoke options, continues to expand.

She says The mix of modern and classic brings timeless elegance into our projects. I have the utmost respect for form and function and am passionate about detail. Ultimately, we always aim to surpass the highest expectations and create a unique space for every client.

We say A self-confessed perfectionist, Louise continues to deliver her trademark style of slick, modern elegance to a global clientele. The look is glamorous, the detailing intricate and the palette neutral.

Spend or save? If the budget doesn't allow for polished plasters and expensive finishes, the clever use of wallcoverings can add impact.

Contact Louise Bradley: 020-7589 1442; www.louisebradley.co.uk



MARTIN BRUDNIZKI

Background Swedish-born Martin Brudnizki moved to England in 1990 and studied interior architecture and design at the American University in London. He worked for a variety of architects and designers before launching his practice in 2000. He heads a thriving team of 40 at his Lots Road design studios.

Projects Martin and his team have recently completed the interiors of three notable restaurants in London: Le Caprice, The Rib Room and 34, a brand new steakhouse by Caprice Holdings. They are currently working on the designs for a large hotel in Chicago, a private members' club in Mumbai, a country estate in the UK, a large family home in Notting Hill and a hotel in Shanghai.

He says My starting point is my client's enthusiasm for creating a home.

We say Martin Brudnizki is riding high, the trusted designer du jour for opulent, modern designs in restaurants around the world. For the lucky few, he also designs selected private homes.

Favourite luxury detail? A beautifully designed sofa in mohair velvet with gorgeous silk cushions.

Contact Martin Brudnizki: 020-7376 7555; www.mbd.com



EDWARD BULMER

Background Edward Bulmer studied art history and worked with David Mlinaric on the restoration of Spencer House, before setting up his design practice in 1993. As an architectural historian with a keen interest in sustainable materials, Edward enjoys a multidisciplinary approach: he also runs the eco-paint company Pots of Paint and SEED Homes, for sustainable housing. His team of nine works from converted nineteenth-century farm buildings in Herefordshire.

Projects Edward's current commissions include the conservation and redecoration of the Coffee Room at White's, the redecoration of a sixteenth-century manor house, and the complete restoration and redecoration of a classical Georgian house. Edward is also advising English Heritage on the redecoration of the Adam Library at Kenwood House.

He says I listen carefully to what the client would like, I respect the architectural qualities of the building and I pay proper regard to the effect of our project on the environment.

We say Edward is that rare beast, a skilful interior designer with a classical knowledge of restoration, so a popular choice for clients who wish to breathe new life into grand English homes.

Most challenging commission? Taking '75 rooms of Grade I neglect' and transforming them into the fully furnished private members' club Home House.

Contact Edward Bulmer: 01544-388535; www.edwardbulmer.co.uk



JULIETTE BYRNE

Background Juliette Byrne graduated from the Chelsea School of Art and trained at Conran, before launching her architectural interior-design consultancy in the Eighties. At her SW3 offices, she has four full-time designers.

Projects Juliette's ongoing work includes the restoration of a Grade II-listed villa in Greenwich and the decoration of houses in Richmond and Chelsea, and, with Catherine Pawson, she has completed a property in Phillimore Gardens. This year, she will go to China with the London Chamber of Commerce to develop relationships with potential clients.

She says I interpret the client's style and carry it out to the highest standards, from construction to a turnkey finish. I work with the client's own collections or create a new bespoke selection. Everything is executed with tremendous attention to detail, within the client's budget.

We say A dynamic designer with a firm understanding of period architecture, turning out elegant, streamlined interiors based on a subtle colour palette. Bespoke lighting is a speciality.

Most challenging commission? Working alongside listed-building specialists on a Grade II-listed Chelsea town house, mixing traditional detailing and modern features, including a glazed atrium.

Contact Juliette Byrne: 020-7352 1553; www.juliettebyrne.com

'I interpret the client's style and carry it out to the highest standards'



JAMES McDONALD



NINA CAMPBELL

Background One of the world's most respected interior designers, Nina Campbell started off as an assistant to John Fowler at Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler. In 1974 she established her interior-design practice. Today, the Nina Campbell brand includes bespoke furniture, a carpet collection, and fabrics, wallpapers and accessories distributed by Osborne & Little.

Projects Nina's team is working on several large London residential projects, a New York apartment, a mountain home in the US and a hotel in Germany. She has just finished the English country-house hotel Ellenborough Park.

She says I work worldwide: everyone has a different point of view, so nothing is right or wrong. But rooms must feel comfortable and the space should work in a practical sense, so that my clients can get on and lead their lives.

We say An internationally renowned designer with her finger firmly on the pulse and not averse to using brushstrokes of strong colour. Her interiors are relaxed, elegant and fresh.

Most challenging commission? Decorating a newbuild house in China. Everything had to be shipped out, including a team of 28 people, from curtain makers to painters.

Contact Nina Campbell: 020-7225 1011; www.ninacampbell.com



CANDY & CANDY (new entry)

Background The interior-design and development-management company Candy & Candy was set up in 1999, by Nick and Christian Candy. A team of 60 designers is headed by creative director Matthew Carlisle (left), who qualified as an interior and architectural designer and joined Candy & Candy at its inception. The company won Best Residential Living Space at the International Design & Architecture Awards 2011.

Projects Candy & Candy is currently working on private client projects in eight countries, including the UK, the US, India, Nigeria, Spain, Monaco and Switzerland.

They say Interior design is subjective and we approach all our projects with an open mind. The ultimate goal is to create a long-lasting, beautiful space that prompts positive emotions within our clients, whatever the aesthetic. Many commissions are modern, with twentieth-century influences, but we also undertake traditionally themed interiors.

We say A slick design team catering for a global clientele, dedicated to searching out the latest technology and commissioning rising young designers for one-off pieces. This is turnkey design at its most sophisticated.

Favourite luxury detail? Door and drawer handles. They are such tactile items and add an instant layer of luxury.

Contact Candy & Candy: 020-7590 1900; www.candyandcandy.com



CARDEN CUNIETTI

Background Carden Cunietti was established 16 years ago by Audrey Carden and Eleanora Cunietti. Audrey (top) studied art history at Glasgow University and Eleanora graduated in art and design from Ontario College of Art and Design. They have a team of 12, and Sarah Chambers also became a director in 2007.



Projects Specialising in high-end residential design, Carden Cunietti is currently at work on projects in Ireland, Israel, two houses in the South of France, and a manor house on Jersey. They have recently completed a mansion in Los Angeles, two apartments in New York, and family houses in London and Hong Kong.

They say We don't have a set design style but our philosophy is to work to the clients' brief to interpret their needs. We like a creative mix of styles. We are unfazed by unusual requests and have worked on everything from a G5 Gulfstream jet to a luxury yacht.

We say The place to come for glamorous interiors spiced with zesty colour and underpinned with luxury. The Carden Cunietti team are creatively bold, so expect the unexpected.

Favourite luxury detail? Velvet- or leather-lined drawers, and bronze inlays in floors.

Contact Carden Cunietti: 020-7724 9679; www.carden-cunietti.com



ROBERT CARSLAW

Background Robert Carslaw has run his eponymous design practice for over 25 years, having trained in interior design at the London College of Furniture, where he graduated with distinction. He has two full-time designers, and regularly calls on a team of skilled craftsmen. Robert has offices in Chelsea and Cornwall.

Projects As well as the interior design of a newbuild house in Surrey and the redesign of a London home, Robert is working on the interior design for an Arts and Crafts-style house in Ireland, a Georgian house in Yorkshire and a newbuild house in Truro.

He says It is my job to create appropriate living and working spaces, in appropriate buildings, and I have never needed to develop a 'house look'. My design style is gentle and understated, avoiding fashion statements.

We say Robert's understanding of classical proportion and period design styles is second to none. Many of his clients return to him for his thoughtful approach and expertly detailed interiors, be they traditional or modern. He is super-efficient too.

Spend or save? The best economies are made when I advise that an existing scheme needs nothing added to it. By rearranging furniture and pictures, one can effect remarkable change.

Contact Robert Carslaw Design: 020-7376 4440 and 01326-251194; www.robertcarslaw.com



CARTER TYBERGHEIN

Background Patrick Tyberghein established Carter Tyberghein 14 years ago with the late Laura Carter. French-born Patrick studied interior architecture in Paris, and the company merges the parallel disciplines of architecture and interior design. The Putney studio reflects the company's Anglo-French origins, with half its core team of six being French nationals.

Projects The architectural design team's projects range from a modern seaside property on Jersey to the conversion of a Hampstead home. Completed projects include the redesign of two houses in Kensington, the refurbishment of a cottage that overlooks the Sussex Downs, and several penthouses in the London docklands.

He says We produce modern yet classic, eclectic interiors, involving our clients at every stage to achieve their aspirations. We pay particular attention to the architecture of the property to achieve harmonious, individual interiors.

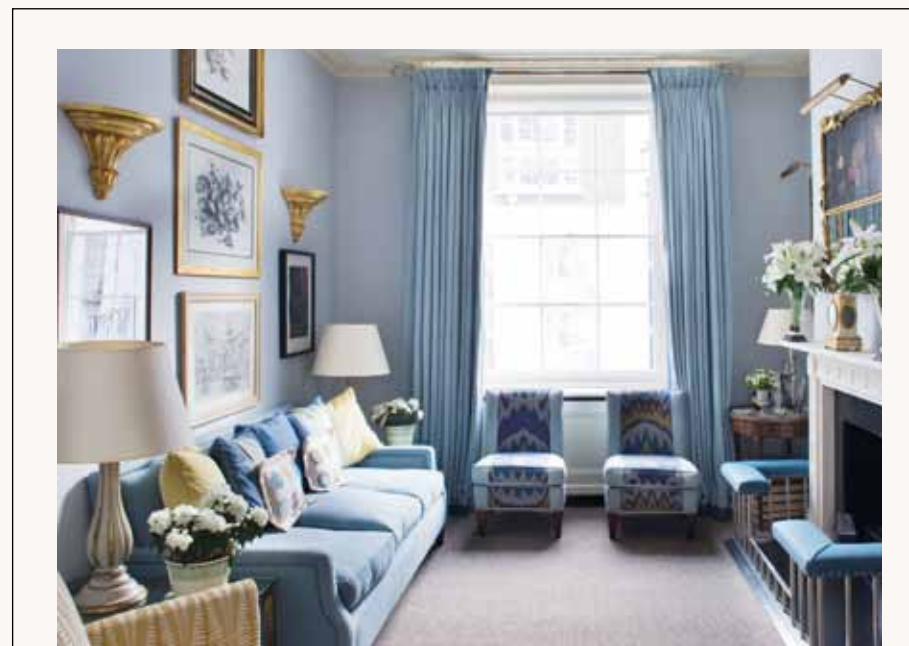
We say A talented architectural team capable of large-scale vision executed with a light touch. Faultless space-planning, purity of line and boldness of scale are trademarks.

Most challenging commission? Leading a team of expert consultants on the restoration of a listed building, from the complete design aesthetic down to sourcing the last accessory.

Contact Carter Tyberghein: 020-8871 4800; www.cartertyberghein.com



'We produce modern yet classic interiors, involving our clients at every stage'



JANE CHURCHILL

Background Jane Churchill began her design career working for Michael Raymond at Colefax and Fowler, and launched herself as a designer at the age of 21. In 1982 she rebranded as Jane Churchill Design, with her own range of wallpapers and fabrics, subsequently selling the collections to Colefax and Fowler. Since 1985 she has focused on interior design, trading as Jane Churchill Interiors at her Pimlico Road shop.

Projects Jane is currently working on the space-planning and redecoration of two large houses in Mayfair and the redecoration of a country house in France. In addition to her well-established chimneypiece collection for Chesney's and carpets for Tim Page Carpets, Jane has recently added a new desk design to her range of furniture for Julian Chichester.

She says I work on the principles of comfort, style and individuality.

We say An internationally recognised designer for whom poised, classic, yet modern, English interiors are a trademark, but in command of an inspiring palette and with an appreciation of comfort and practicality.

Spend or save? Never economise on beds, sofas and taps, but it's amazing what one can find at Ikea with time and energy.

Contact Jane Churchill Interiors: 020-7730 8564; www.janechurchillinteriors.com



WOODY CLARK (new entry)

Background Woody Clark studied three-dimensional design at the Chelsea School of Art, then joined Terry Farrell & Partners and, later, George Spencer Designs. In 1992 he set up on his own, working on some of the greatest historic houses in England and Ireland, including the private apartments at Knole; Henry III Tower, Windsor Castle; and historic rooms in and around Whitehall.

Projects Woody and his team of three are currently working on Grade I-listed houses in Kent and Sussex, the renovation of a Grade II-listed house in Oxfordshire, the renovation of a historic pub under National Trust covenants, an eighteenth-century Palladian house in Ireland, a nineteenth-century Cornish seaside retreat, and three London town houses.

He says I choose projects with extreme care to ensure trusted long-term relationships with clients. Highly detailed planning and costing at the start is the key to success, as is assembling the best possible team of experts.

We say A strictly word-of-mouth designer with a multifaceted approach, covering interior design, restoration and landscaping. He leaves no stone unturned in the search for authenticity.

Most challenging commission? The restoration and conservation of Castletown Cox, Abbeyleix House and Ballyfin, three of Ireland's most important historic houses.

Contact Woody Clark: 01223-247711; e-mail: woody@woodyclark.com



COLLETT-ZARZYCKI

Background Anthony Collett (top) and Andrzej Zarzycki founded their design practice Collett-Zarzycki in the mid Eighties, and their team of 21 architectural, interior and furniture designers offers a multidisciplinary approach. They work on high-end commissions in London, the US, the Far East and Europe.

Projects Right now, projects include a newbuild in Cannes; a new house in Bridgehampton, New York; a hotel in Lech, Austria; and a beach house on Corsica. There are newly completed projects in Mayfair, a private house in Ibiza and houses in Knightsbridge and Kensington.

They say Our design style is 'classic modern' and very varied: we work with the vernacular language of the house. Our common denominator is an intense appetite for detail.

We say A well-honed partnership with the experience to work on big architectural projects. Quality materials, intricate detail and streamlined space-planning are hallmarks, whether it is a rustic farmhouse or a modern penthouse.

Favourite luxury detail? A pivoting air vent built into bespoke shower doors, which seals in steam to create a steam room.

Contact Collett-Zarzycki: 020-8969 6967; www.collett-zarzycki.com



SIBYL COLEFAX & JOHN FOWLER

Background The legendary decorating firm Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler was founded in the Thirties, but offers a decoration and architectural-design service that is entirely twenty-first century. Heading a staff of 50 at the Mayfair headquarters are (from top) Wendy Nicholls, Emma Burns, Roger Jones, William Hodgson and Philip Hooper.

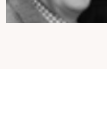
Projects Current projects include modern and traditional styles. In the UK, prestigious commissions include an eighteenth-century mansion in London, houses in Chelsea and Belgravia, and a loch-side estate in Scotland. Internationally, there are ongoing residential projects in Greece, France, Thailand, the Caribbean and Canada, as well as yacht interiors.

They say We work to the highest possible standards to achieve interiors that are comfortable and appropriate to the client's lifestyle. Clients are actively encouraged to engage with the design process throughout a project.

We say Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler remains the best-known design house for classic English style. Comfort and quiet luxury lie at its core, with personal service and design expertise guaranteed.

Spend or save? One can simplify the design and use cotton instead of silk, but one should never compromise on the quality of the craftsmanship.

Contact Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler: 020-7493 2231; www.sibylcofax.com



SIMON BROWN; EDINA VAN DER WYCK; SIMON UPTON/THE INTERIOR ARCHIVE; JAKE FITZJONES PHOTOGRAPHY



DAVID COLLINS

Background Irish-born David Collins studied architecture at Bolton Street School of Architecture in Dublin, then moved to London and formed his architectural practice in 1985. The team comprises 45 architects, interior designers and furniture designers. David's most recent hotel and bar triumphs include The Delaunay in Covent Garden, Massimo and Bassoon at the Corinthia in Westminster, and Lime Wood in the New Forest.

Projects Just finished in time for the Jubilee is the St James's Restaurant at Fortnum & Mason. Ongoing is the redevelopment of 10 Trinity Square in the City of London, including private residences and a luxury hotel, as well as the redevelopment of the restaurant Oriel in Sloane Square. David also works on high-profile private houses.

He says I am interested not just in architecture but in all the arts, and love to discover the spirit and humanity behind artistic work. My job is an expression of the creativity I see around me.

We say A visionary designer with faultless taste, whose interiors fuse opulence with tantalisingly pretty colour. Bespoke furniture from the David Collins Studio is the icing on the cake.

Favourite luxury detail? Unfinished silk, frayed at the edges, where one kind of beauty unravels to create another.

Contact David Collins Studio: 020-7835 5000; www.davidcollins.com



CATHY CONNOLLY AT NORTHWICK DESIGN

Background Cathy Connolly's interest in decorating emerged through helping friends to design their own houses, and she launched Northwick Design in 1985. In 2005 Naomi Broadbent joined her, and she is now a co-designer. Naomi, an art-history graduate, had previously worked as assistant designer for the late Victoria Waymouth.

Projects Together, Cathy (top) and Naomi are working on a country estate in Gloucestershire, a rectory in Winchester, a fifteenth-century farm in Essex and a country estate in Ireland. They are also designing a number of London residences.

They say A house should flow in terms of colour and texture and we like a simple palette. At Northwick Design we encourage our clients to use their own personal objects, such as artwork and books, so that they feel their home really belongs to them.

We say The look is restrained, the colours fresh, and the approach is gentle and hands-on. Here is a pair of designers who won't rest until the client is happy and every painting hung in the perfect place.

Favourite luxury detail? Underfloor heating. It allows more space for beautiful pieces of furniture and for artwork on walls where there would have been radiators.

Contact Northwick Design: 020-7372 3305; www.northwickdesign.com



CHARLOTTE CROSLAND

Background Charlotte Crosland studied interior design at Chelsea College of Art & Design, then worked for an architectural practice and at Charles Hammond, before setting up her first design practice in 1990. She has a team of five.

Projects Charlotte is working on the interior design for newbuild houses in Wimbledon and Gloucestershire. She is also finishing off the total redecoration of a house in Hampshire and a large home in Norfolk, while recently completed projects include a Grade II-listed London house, a family house in Sheen, and the refurbishment of a Thirties house in Buckinghamshire.

She says I aim to design well-planned, elegantly comfortable, inviting interiors. I'm especially keen on working out the positioning of everything that forms the rooms, as well as what is within them.

We say An award-winning designer whose beautiful, realistically planned interiors make her a top choice with families. Warm colour and bold patterns abound, and her way with oversize light fittings is a thing of beauty.

Most challenging commission? Converting an old embassy into a luxurious 1,500-square-metre home, including a swimming pool and a cinema.

Contact Charlotte Crosland Interiors: 020-8960 9442; www.charlottecrosland.com



I aim to design well-planned, elegantly comfortable, inviting interiors'



SARAH DELANEY

Background Sarah Delaney was a television producer before she switched to designing private houses 12 years ago. From her Notting Hill base, she specialises in large-scale domestic refurbishments, collaborating closely with architects.

Projects Right now, Sarah is working on the design of a 60-room house in Gloucestershire with Michaelis Boyd Associates, a barn in Kent, and a flat in Little Venice with Thomas Croft Architects. Last year she finished a 560-square-metre Arts and Crafts house in Kensington, a 560-square-metre house in Holland Park, a barn in France, a house in Connaught Square, and a house in Elgin Crescent, also with Thomas Croft Architects.

She says My approach to design is simple: I enjoy giving clients what they want, but better than they could achieve on their own. The initial meetings are the most important part of the process, when we work out what they want to achieve and why.

We say Approachable and effortlessly stylish, Sarah is a little-black-book designer par excellence. She combines luxurious textures with singing colour, and has a brilliant eye for twentieth-century pieces.

Favourite luxury detail? Time spent on researching and sourcing solutions will always be reflected in the quality of the end result.

Contact Sarah Delaney Design: 020-7221 2010; www.sarahdelaneydesign.co.uk



PHILIPPA DEVAS

Background Philippa Devas worked at Percy Bass and then with Chester Jones for 12 years, before going on to launch her practice in 1998. She keeps her business small, with just one assistant, and deliberately limits

projects to allow for close collaboration with clients.

Projects Philippa is working on the interior design for a town house for an art dealer, an apartment in South Kensington, a newbuild in south London, and a country house in Oxfordshire. She has recently completed a small fishing lodge in Ireland, a large private house in central London, an eighteenth-century rectory in Dorset and an apartment in north London.

She says It is important that interiors are interesting and aesthetically pleasing, but above all my philosophy is to create elegant and practical spaces in which people feel comfortable and enjoy entertaining.

We say A charming designer with a sensitive approach, now working closely with artists to create special pieces for clients, and a trusted professional when it comes to sourcing paintings. Colours are cool, the ambience tranquil and the look classic.

Most challenging commission? The complete redecoration of a yacht in Barcelona in less than three months.

Contact Devas Designs: 020-7584 9966; www.devasdesigns.co.uk



NICKY DOBREE

Background After studying languages, Nicky Dobree trained in interior architecture and design, then worked for an international design company. She launched her studio in 2003 and designs in the UK and across Europe. She works closely with architectural designers to offer a fully comprehensive design service.

Projects At present, Nicky is doing the interior design for chalets in St Moritz, Klosters and Verbier, and a country house in Kent. Recently completed commissions include a Tuscan villa, a chalet in Val d'Isère, a chalet in Switzerland, and the redesign of a nineteenth-century Chelsea mews.

She says A house must be a home and a pleasure. The way it is designed influences the way that you feel, and by changing your surroundings you can change your life too. My style is classic, timeless, elegant and above all comfortable, full of warmth.

We say Nicky designs crisp, chic luxury chalet interiors, fusing modern lines with traditional vernacular, while her UK work exudes quiet luxury and the occasional bold accent colour.

Most challenging commission? Working in an international environment means that communication is key. Speaking foreign languages has helped me overcome many challenges.

Contact Nicky Dobree Interior Design: 020-7627 0469; www.nickydobree.com



SIMON BROWN; TONY BRIGGS; HUGO BURRAND; PHILIP VILE



STEPHAN EICKER

(new entry)

Background Stephan Eicker studied retail design management at the University of the Arts London, then trained with architect Pierre-Hervé Walbaum in Paris before setting up a design practice, Eicker & Houghton, with Gavin Houghton. Stephan launched his own company in 2010, and has a team of three.

Projects A beach house and estate in the Hamptons are currently on the go, as well as the complete renovation of four houses on a separate estate in the Hamptons. Stephan is putting the finishing touches to a villa in Panama, and starting work on a 30-bedroom boutique hotel, also in Panama. He has just refurbished houses in Kensington Gate and Primrose Hill.

‘I deliver designs that are uplifting and atmospheric’

He says I deliver designs that are uplifting, comfortable and atmospheric. I am inspired by classicism but always like to give a modern edge to a space, without making it overpowering.

We say Now going it alone, Stephan Eicker is on a roll, turning out quirky, deeply visual interiors on both sides of the Atlantic. Eclectic decorative antiques and vibrant colour feature large in his schemes.

Favourite luxury detail? I love antiques, especially vintage fabrics. I’ll use any excuse to dig through markets in Istanbul, India and the US.

Contact Eicker Design: 020-7821 8188; www.eicker-design.com



FOX LINTON ASSOCIATES

Background Mary Fox Linton established Fox Linton Associates over 40 years ago. Today there are two directors at the helm, Dennis Irvine (centre) and Peter Young, who joined in 2000 and 2004 respectively. They head a team of 18 at the central London offices, focusing on private homes and commercial development projects.



Projects Fox Linton is currently working on The Wellesley Hotel and the Waldorf Astoria in London and the Caledonian Hilton in Edinburgh, as well as private residences in Chelsea, Eaton Square and Monaco, and a hotel in Moscow.



They say The Fox Linton style is synonymous with quality, elegance, timelessness and comfort. Every project is unique. We look to optimise the potential of every job and to create a piece of art that is both beautiful and functional.

We say With a new senior design team in charge, Fox Linton continues to deliver refined, cutting-edge spaces, and is always in search of new exotic materials and fresh technologies for a unique finish.

Most challenging commission? One client handed us the keys and departed for a year, saying, ‘The only thing I don’t like is yellow.’ He returned to a completely renovated house.

Contact Fox Linton Associates: 020-7907 2269; www.foxlinton.co.uk



MARK GILLETTE

Background After training at the Inchbald School of Design, Mark Gillette went on to establish his Chester-based practice in 1994, and has clients across Europe. He runs a team of six.

Projects Recent work includes the conversion of a medieval fortress in Salzburg into a domestic dwelling, the interior design of an apartment in Vienna, the refurbishment of a wing of a stately home in Rutland, the refurbishment of a luxury apartment in St Moritz, and the redesign of the clubhouse at Formby Golf Club near Liverpool.

He says I bring a property to life through the prism of its owners. The style will be influenced by the building itself and the tastes of the client. My love of art, beautiful objects and luxurious furniture and fabrics gives the final result a certain sumptuousness.

We say A trusted designer happy to work on a grand scale, with a broad knowledge of design movements, and the ability to breathe new life into classical interiors.

Spend or save? Make economies once the full picture of the project is established. A shrewd 'eye' knows what can be lost or changed without it affecting the overall quality and look.

Contact Mark Gillette Interior Design: 01244-851897; www.markgillette.com



CHRISTOPHE GOLLUT

Background Christophe Gollut studied law but, after coming to London, retrained in interior design at the Inchbald School of Design. With a career spanning over four decades, he has become synonymous with elegant European style, with a particular interest in nineteenth-century antiques. He works globally.

Projects Right now, Christophe is working on a shooting lodge in France, a large Jacobean country house in the north of England, various projects in Little Venice and an old stone house in a Lebanese village.

He says My design style is that rooms should look welcoming, unpredictable and unusual but not ostentatious. I aim to create the opposite of any 'fashion' of the moment.

We say Clients return time and again for Christophe's classic interiors, layered with glowing colour and intricate antique textiles, and his natural sense of wit. He's an instinctive designer, not afraid to furnish sparsely and with the occasional current piece if it suits the space.

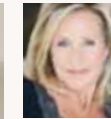
Spend or save? Some expensive items are ultimately cheap: my grandparents' dining chairs covered in late-nineteenth-century velour d'Utrecht are still in one piece.

Contact Christophe Gollut: 020-7370 4101; www.christophegollut.com



ELIZABETH ZESCHIN; BEN OUEENBOROUGH; ROBERT BARBER

LUCAS ALLEN



HELEN GREEN

Background 2012 marks the tenth anniversary of Helen Green's design practice, which she is celebrating with the relaunch of her SW3 showroom. Helen honed her design skills by setting up the interior arm of Northacre, which she ran for seven years, and now works exclusively for high-end residential and commercial clients. She has a team of 25.

Projects Most recently Helen has completed work at The Berkeley in Knightsbridge, the Coral Reef Club in Barbados, a luxury ski chalet in Val d'Isère, and private residences in London, Sussex and Gloucestershire. She has also been working on the interior architecture and interior design of 25 luxury properties across 10 developments in London. Her third furniture collection will be launched at Decorex later this year.

She says My style is elegant and timeless. I aim to create impressive and beautiful spaces while offering complete comfort. I research constantly when travelling, and that helps to inform my design style.

We say Helen weaves film-star glamour, sumptuous fabrics and her sophisticated own-brand furniture into easy-living interiors. She heads a large team but keeps firm hold of the reins.

Favourite luxury detail? I return from every visit to the US loaded with printed linen. I adore the casual chic of the prints.

Contact Helen Green Design: 020-7352 3344; www.helengreendesign.com



VEERE GRENNEY

Background Veere Grenney was a director at Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler and worked at Mary Fox Linton before launching his own highly successful company in 1996. He has a staff of 10 at his SW10 offices and works on both sides of the Atlantic.

Projects The team is currently working on the restoration and decoration of varied projects in the Caribbean; Sweden; Wyoming, Sag Harbor and New York City in the US; and numerous projects in London, including the refurbishment of a large house in Holland Park and a Grade II-listed Philip Webb house in Chelsea.

He says My clients' wishes come first. After that, what matters is comfort, appropriateness, beauty and, of course, a sense of humour.

We say An A-list designer, whose serene interiors are characterised by a subtle palette, a respect for classical proportions and often a daring mix of mid-twentieth-century pieces and period antiques. Veere has a particular skill for complementing important art collections.

Most challenging commission? The installation of a project in Courchevel in a snowstorm. We blocked the main road into the resort with a cherry picker amid lots of very angry skiers.

Contact Veere Grenney Associates: 020-7351 7170; www.veeregrenney.com



GUY GOODFELLOW

Background Guy Goodfellow trained as an architect, and was a director at Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler. He set up his design practice in 2002 and his team of nine includes an architect, a project manager and a landscape gardener. His new showroom and design studio are in Chelsea.

Projects The team is engaged in remodelling a Grade II*-listed Queen Anne house for an international client, the complete restoration of a Devon mansion, the restoration of a Queen Anne hunting lodge in Oxfordshire, a 1910 mansion in Greenwich, Connecticut, a private residence in Jeddah and houses in Notting Hill and Belgravia.

He says Each client is unique and we strive to reflect each personality. Using our strong architectural and historical backgrounds, we reinterpret traditional interiors and are known for 'restrained glamour'.

We say Guy is a popular choice for owners of large period houses needing a twenty-first-century modernisation, and an attention-to-detail designer who prides himself on finding the right craftsman for each job. Bespoke furniture and fabrics are the norm.

Spend or save? Good architectural planning and detail carries the decoration of a house, but to economise, the audio-visual specification can be trimmed.

Contact Guy Goodfellow: 020-7349 0728; www.guygoodfellow.com



RABIH HAGE

Background Rabih Hage studied architecture in Paris and launched his Sloane Avenue design studio and gallery in 2002. He is a talented architect, designer and curator, dedicated to promoting up-and-coming designers. He has a team of eight.

Projects Rabih is responsible for the complete architectural remodelling and interior design of town houses in London and Manhattan, and a penthouse in Beirut. He has recently designed the Radisson Edwardian Guildford Hotel and produced a furniture collection for DuPont Corian for the Milan Furniture Fair.

He says My goal is to disguise highly functional spaces within beautiful, refined aesthetics.

We say Freshly lauded with the Andrew Martin International Interior Designer of the Year Award 2011, Rabih continues to design chic, pared-down interiors, which include contemporary art and modern furniture. He is the thinking client's designer.

Most challenging commission? Devising the front of house at the Radisson Edwardian Guildford Hotel. We had to combine the tastes of all parties and achieve something unique, without losing the original vision.

Contact Rabih Hage: 020-7823 8288; www.rabih-hage.com



STEFA HART

Background Stefa Hart studied fine and decorative arts at the V&A. She launched quietly into interior design in 1989, after decorating the hotel Hambleton Hall, which she co-owns with her husband, Tim Hart. Her team is small, but the service highly personal.

Projects Rutland-based Stefa is working on the interior design for the library of a castle, third-floor bedrooms for Boodle's club in St James's, a fort in Majorca, a farmhouse in Hertfordshire and a flat in Knightsbridge, along with a refresh of the dining room and bar at Hambleton Hall. She has recently finished the renovation of a house in the South of France.

She says I centre my design style around my client. I like to give equal weight to the nature of the house, the client's aspirations and tastes, and my own knowledge and experience to achieve a successful synthesis.

We say Stefa designs beautifully classic, English interiors with the occasional surprise twist, such as a specially commissioned mural. Her loyal following of clients appreciate her low-key approach, attention to detail and super-efficient service.

Most challenging commission? The interior design for an 84-metre yacht.

Contact Hambleton Decorating: 01572-767145; www.hambletondecorating.co.uk



NICKY HASLAM

Background Following early stints working on American *Vogue* and five years as a horse breeder in Arizona, Old Etonian Nicky Haslam set up his SW1 design company N H Design in 1972. His clients have included Rod Stewart and Ringo Starr, and in addition to his international design work, Nicky is a newspaper and magazine columnist, an author and a philanthropist.

Projects Nicky is currently working on projects in London, Barbados, New Orleans, the South of France and a house in the country. He has recently completed projects in London, Moscow and New York, two penthouses in Monte Carlo, and has opened N H Design offices in New Orleans and Toronto, Canada.

He says Never duplicate. Never deceive. Never explode. Always explore.

We say Nicky is a world-class decorator whose exuberant style and high-couture interiors draw in A-list clients, yet he's also a design professional keen to give something back with active charity work.

Spend or save? Never economise on beds and bedlinen. As for saving money, a lot of 'guff' is talked about good sofas, but just make sure that the one you order goes through the doors.

Contact N H Design: 020-7730 0808; www.nh-design.co.uk



SUZY HOODLESS

Background Suzy Hoodless started her design career as interiors editor at *Wallpaper* magazine and then set up her own design consultancy in 2000. As well as residential jobs, she has established a reputation for cutting-edge commercial projects, including the Hoxton Grill in Shoreditch.

Projects Ongoing residential projects include private residences in Holland Park, Belgravia, Kensington and Sussex, as well as an Oxfordshire farmhouse. Current commercial jobs include a members' bar and library in west London, a restaurant interior in Knightsbridge and office spaces for two film studios.

She says Design should enhance your everyday life. Interiors should be uplifting, surprising, unexpected and put a smile on your face. Rooms should be utterly practical and ergonomic and make life easier and more efficient.

We say Suzy brings a stylist's eye to every interior, mixing edgy glamour with unexpected decorative contrasts. She has a particular love of large-scale wallpapers and flashes of bold colour.

Spend or save? Expensive is not necessarily better, but quality is important. Work within the budget and plan carefully. Don't cut corners by using something that is not fit for purpose.

Contact Suzy Hoodless: 020-7221 8844; www.suzyhoodless.com



KELLY HOPPEN

Background In a career spanning over 20 years, Kelly Hoppen has established a global reputation. She has a team of 35 at her Notting Hill interior-design studio and runs a successful design school. Her furniture collection is available in China, Hong Kong, the US, Dubai and Singapore.

Projects Kelly's current residential interior-design projects include a trio of 280-square-metre apartments in Verbier, private homes in Geneva and Moscow, a 2,300-square-metre apartment in Beirut, a 1,850-square-metre house in Hampstead, and a footballer's home on Barbados.

She says My philosophy has always remained the same; I like to create calm environments based on Eastern cultures, and the principles of order and harmony. How people feel in a space is as important as the way it looks. Texture, form, light, sound and smell are imperative for a balanced living space.

We say Kelly Hoppen remains a tour de force in the design world – imbuing luxury homes, developments, yachts and hotels with her trademark East-meets-West style – and a favourite with clients in the worlds of film, sport and fashion.

Favourite luxury detail? Lighting, because it accentuates key features and areas and can impart a luxurious mood.

Contact Kelly Hoppen: 020-7471 3350; www.kellyhoppenretail.com



GAVIN HOUGHTON (new entry)

Background Gavin Houghton worked in fashion, designing menswear, then joined *The World of Interiors* as an editorial stylist. After a stint as an art director at *Vogue* promotions, he teamed up with Stephan Eicker to launch the interior-design company Eicker Houghton. He began his own practice in 2008.

Projects Gavin is working on a Grade I-listed Nash house in Regent's Park, combining modern style with Parisian chic, and the London house of a fashion editor, using graphic wallpapers and strong colour.

He says I like a room to smile. I've been told my work reflects modern Bloomsbury: romantic, with wit and charm. Colour is very important to me. I especially like to rest my eyes on a good green.

We say A charming designer with a strong vision and a fistful of varied decorative looks up his sleeve, not to mention an addiction to finding the perfect decorative antique.

Most challenging commission? Adding warmth to a very modern Norman Foster glass apartment on the river. I designed an extra-long sofa, and teamed it with rustic, wood side tables and bronze vintage lamps.

Contact Gavin Houghton Design: 020-7737 1316; www.ghoughtondesign.com



MARTIN HULBERT (new entry)

Background Martin Hulbert studied spatial design, and in 2000 joined Fox Linton Associates as design director. Backed by over 25 years' experience, he went on to set up his Chelsea Harbour-based company in 2010.

Projects Martin and his five-strong team are working on a private villa, estate and gardens in Tuscany, and private houses in London and Moscow. Commercial commissions include the redesign of the Phoenicia Hotel, Beirut, and a new pavilion and garden at Barnsley House in the Cotswolds. In London, Martin has just completed the Aromatherapy Associates Boutique & Treatment Rooms. He is also working on a new restaurant in Moscow.

He says My designs are a complex mix of styles, forms, colours and textures. I think of a room in a three-dimensional way to ensure interiors are a perfect fit for clients. I push the design as far as I can, then add an extra layer of detail and magic on top.

We say Martin Hulbert offers an appealing combination for potential clients, as he dares to break boundaries, yet is extremely approachable. His designs are unfailingly elegant and grown-up.

Spend or save? Things seen at a distance ought to look good. Curtains should hang beautifully and be well made, but don't need to be in expensive fabric.

Contact Martin Hulbert Design: 020-7352 5081; www.martinhulbertdesign.com

The H&G 100
leading designers I—K



INTARYA (new entry)
Background Intarya was originally set up in 1994 as Lifestyle Interiors, and the rebranded company now works on residential and commercial projects worldwide. As its newly appointed managing director, Brazilian designer Daniel Kostiuc heads a team of 12 designers and architects. Daniel studied interior architecture at UCLA and has worked on five-star resorts, boutique hotels and private homes.
Projects Intarya's current high-end luxury commissions include a palace in the Middle East, a three-storey residence with a courtyard overlooking Hyde Park, and a two-bedroom pied-à-terre in central London.
They say Designing a home is an intimate process so a consistent hand is essential. We stay true to the clients' brief, while creating something totally individual. Our designs provide quality, comfort and understated luxury.
We say A professional and versatile team, as happy to design traditional country residences as uber-cool city penthouses, with luxury as the watchword. With Daniel at the helm, Intarya is moving into the super-house league.
Favourite luxury detail? The technique of embedding rich fabrics within concrete, and creating beautiful abstract patterns by mixing polished and textural plaster.
Contact Intarya: 020-7349 8020; www.intarya.com



CHESTER JONES
Background Chester Jones trained as an architect, and had a successful career with Colefax and John Fowler, where he ran its interior-design arm. He became a director at Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler, but left in 1990 to set up his own Battersea design studio. Here he works closely with carpet maker Sandy Jones, who designs both for her own clients and to Chester's commissions. Chester's projects are international and he has a team of seven.
Projects Chester is currently designing for a Queen Anne house in Hampstead; a modern house in St John's Wood; a penthouse in Tite Street, Chelsea; a large mid-nineteenth-century house in Hampstead; a holiday home in Provence; and an apartment in Knightsbridge. He is also working on an office project in the West End.
He says My design philosophy could be summed up as 'contextual modernism'. I like to work as much as possible with the buildings as they exist, as well as with my clients.
We say Chester Jones is justifiably one of our most highly respected designers. His interiors are spare and intelligently designed, and he has an encyclopedic knowledge of modern art.
Spend or save? Never economise on thought.
Contact Chester Jones Studio: 020-7498 2717; www.chesterjones.com



LOUISE JONES
Background Louise qualified from the Inchbald School of Design in 1994 and worked for a number of years at one of the UK's leading interior-design companies. She started her Richmond-based company in 2001. She and her highly productive team of seven pride themselves on fostering a happy working relationship with clients.
Projects At the moment, Louise is designing interiors for an estate in Jura, Scotland, a new-build house in Georgia, another new-build in the Cotswolds, and houses in Knightsbridge, St John's Wood and Belgravia. She has recently completed a chalet in Verbier, houses in Regent's Park and an apartment in Mayfair.
She says Our design style varies enormously, depending on the client's brief and the location of the project itself. Working closely with each client, I draw upon my creative experience and knowledge to produce a distinctive and tailored interior.
We say Commissioning Louise Jones is a real treat. She designs with a light touch, turning out pretty rooms in soft colours, yet with a crisp, modern edge and a clear understanding that rooms must work hard for her clients.
Favourite luxury detail? Verre églomisé and decorative wallcoverings.
Contact Louise Jones Interiors: 020-7351 6858; www.louisejonesinteriors.com

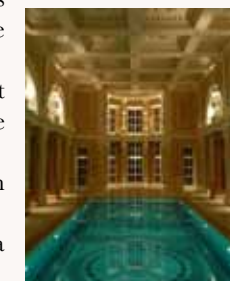


J R DESIGN
Background Jane Ormsby-Gore has classic English style in her blood, having grown up in a series of beautiful houses. She worked first with antiques dealer Christopher Gibbs, and subsequently joined David Mlinaric, where she honed her skills as a designer for 10 years. She set up J R Design in 1998.
Projects With her team of four, Jane is completing the design of Robin Birley's new private members' club, due to open this summer. They are also working on newbuilds in Buckinghamshire and Wiltshire, a village house also in Wiltshire, a Yorkshire castle and four London properties.
She says All houses great and small have a character of their own, infused with the personality of the people living in them. As designers, we are like divining rods, interpreting the varied moods and putting them together.
We say With her knowledge of classic English country-house design, Jane has an instinctive talent for creating tranquil, timeless interiors, yet often surprises clients with her subtle but unusual choice of colour. She loves a dash of pattern, too.
Spend or save? I never economise in the bedroom. We spend a third of our life in bed, so the comfort of the bed is essential.
Contact J R Design: 020-7221 9048; www.jrdesign.org



TESSA KENNEDY
Background Tessa Kennedy has been designing for over four decades, having originally trained with David Mlinaric. She launched Tessa Kennedy Design in 1968 and has a dedicated team of six at her W11 offices. Projects cover a vast range, from yachts and restaurants to casinos and luxurious private homes.
Projects Recent and current commissions include the redesign of two houses, as well as a newbuild mansion, all outside Moscow; the refurbishment of a large residence in Moscow; modern apartments in London; a double-fronted house in Eaton Square; and a ski chalet in Megève.
She says We cater for clients with very diverse requirements. We always aim for comfort and practicality but also love to introduce a touch of the theatrical, bringing together rich and colourful elements.
We say Tessa Kennedy continues to design on a grand scale, turning out opulent, dramatic interiors for her global list of clients. Decorative antiques, exquisite trimmings and tactile fabrics are all trademarks.
Most challenging commission? Creating a palace in Moscow, working with local craftsmen and also shipping in supplies from all over the world.
Contact Tessa Kennedy Design: 020-7221 4546; www.tessa-kennedydesign.com

'We aim for comfort and practicality but love to introduce a touch of the theatrical'



ROBERT KIME
Background Robert Kime started trading in antiques while reading history at Oxford. He went on to become an antiques dealer and is now one of Britain's most respected interior decorators. His Wiltshire-based company and two London shops contain a treasure trove of antiques, alongside his own range of fabrics, wallpapers, furniture and lighting.
Projects Robert and his design team of six have recently completed the renovation and redecoration of a small hotel in north Norfolk called The Gunton Arms, which opened in autumn 2011. He has also finished the renovation and redecoration of a Grade II-listed mansion in Berkshire and a period country house in Provence.
He says My approach is to combine everything suitable that gives a room the feeling of freshness, originality and a more beautiful atmosphere for living.
We say Ever since he decorated Highgrove and Clarence House, Robert Kime's name has been synonymous with the grandest of English country houses, yet his decorating style is subtle, layering muted colours and fine antiques. His own-design fabrics, woven and hand-printed in England, blend in seamlessly.
Most challenging commission? I wouldn't undertake a project unless it were challenging.
Contact Robert Kime: 020-7831 6066; www.robertkime.com



KEECH GREEN
Background Joint partners Graham Green (top) and Michael Keech set up their design practice in 2002. At their Chelsea Harbour offices, there is a newly expanded team of 10, with the focus increasingly on interior architecture. Keech Green won an award for best 50-metre yacht at the 2010 World Superyacht Awards.



Projects Current residential work is focused in London, with houses in St John's Wood and Hampstead and apartments in Mayfair and Holland Park. Graham and Michael are also designing a penthouse in New York and a penthouse in Geneva. Keech Green will launch a range of bespoke furniture later this year.

They say We focus on architectural integrity. Room proportions, chimneypieces, staircases and doors form the framework on to which decorative embellishment is hung. We assess a building's architectural highs and lows before starting.

We say A deeply committed design team, which really does know the meaning of quality. Clients can be confident that Keech Green will go the extra mile for luxury materials, and almost without exception, furniture is bespoke and made in the UK.

Spend or save? We believe it is better not to do something at all than to offer a compromised version.
Contact Keech Green: 020-7351 5701; www.keechgreen.com





CAROLINE LAWSON (new entry)

Background Caroline Lawson has been an interior designer for almost 40 years, having trained with Diana Hanbury. She specialises in the detailed restoration and redecoration of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century country houses, and she has in-house workrooms and upholsterers.

Projects Caroline's current projects include the complete renovation and furnishing of the west wing of a large country house in Derbyshire; bedroom and bathroom schemes for long-standing clients in North Yorkshire; and the complete redecoration of country-house drawing rooms in Shropshire and Staffordshire.

She says I believe in being sympathetic to the architecture of the building. I create timeless, individual and elegant interiors that reflect my clients' needs, lifestyle and budget.

We say Caroline's formidable array of renovation skills and her talent for classical English interiors have earned her a loyal following. She has worked on a clutch of important listed houses, so client privacy is guaranteed.

Most challenging commission? Being part of a team for six years on the restoration of a Grade I, Palladian mansion.

Contact Chelsea Decorators: 020-7351 6578; www.chelseadecorators.com



CHRISTOPHER LEACH (new entry)

Background Christopher Leach was born in Bermuda but educated in the UK. He started his design career working for a London antiques dealer, then established his practice eight years ago. He works solo to deliver a personal service, bringing in architects or project managers as appropriate.

Projects Right now, Christopher is working on the interior design for houses in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire, and a property in Chelsea, which has been gutted and rebuilt inside. He is renovating a seventeenth-century house in the Cotswolds for himself, and designing the interiors of Truefitt & Hill barbers in St James's, London.

He says I feel that I've succeeded if an interior

'I feel that I've succeeded if an interior appears to have evolved naturally'

appears to have evolved naturally. It is a hugely enjoyable process to create a house, so it is satisfying to deal with all this for a client and give them something that makes them happy.

We say Christopher has faultless good taste and his delicately beautiful interiors are finished to a perfectionist's standards. Expect a sense of fun and a brilliant eye for decorative pieces.

Spend or save? Get the architecture, joinery, plastering, plumbing and electrics right. If the room looks good naked, this is the best litmus test.

Contact Christopher Leach Design: 07545-834488; www.christopherleach.com



NICK SMITH; JAMES McDONALD; SIMON BROWN; ANDREAS VON EISENDEL



MARION LICHTIG

Background Marion has her roots in fashion, having studied at St Martins School of Art, but she has been running her Hampstead-based interior design practice for over 20 years. She occasionally joins forces with her designer daughter, Olivia Lichtig.

Projects Marion is embarking on a large Arts and Crafts house for a young couple in Maida Vale, as well as a newbuild chalet in Switzerland. She is nearing completion on a Georgian house in London, which has been gutted and given a modern extension.

She says My design style is relaxed. I like a room to look as though it is in the present, while incorporating elements of the past. The right proportions are important. I respect the architecture and don't fight with it.

We say Marion's cool, restrained style incorporates muted colours, natural fabrics and expertly picked decorative antiques. Her easy-going, understated rooms are a breath of fresh air for her busy, and very faithful, clients.

Most challenging commission? A large house in Belgravia, which I gutted for a couple living in LA. It was pre-internet, so they had to place total trust in me, but they loved the result.

Contact Marion Lichtig: 020-8458 6658; www.marionlichtig.com



DOUGLAS MACKIE

Background Douglas Mackie trained at Cambridge University as an architect. He gained experience in New York and London before establishing his interior-design practice in 1995. Many of his commissions involve large-scale renovation and rebuilding.

Projects Douglas is embarking on a large project in the Middle East, encompassing an existing building and associated guest houses. He is also doing the interior detailing and furnishing of three penthouses for British Land in central London and is nearing completion on the renovation of a 1905 house.

He says I aim for balance rather than symmetry. This applies to colour, form, stylistic periods and artwork. Periods and forms can be mixed, but it's the fundamental balance of these elements that makes them work together.

We say Crisp tailoring and a subtle palette are hallmarks of Douglas's polished, sophisticated interiors. He specialises in period restorations, while his immaculately detailed freehand drawings are a delightful bonus for clients.

Most challenging commission? A large Arts and Crafts house in London. Layers of previous changes were stripped back to reveal the essential core of the building.

Contact Douglas Mackie: 020-7937 1051; www.dmackiedesign.com



JOHN MCCALL

Background John trained at the Inchbald School of Design and formed his Berkshire-based company in 1986. He and his staff of four work internationally, but specialise in large, listed historic buildings.

Projects John's current projects span 400 years of architecture, from an early-seventeenth-century house in Gloucestershire and a Queen Anne house in Dorset, to a Georgian house in Berkshire. Houses in London, a finca in Majorca and a chateau in France are also in progress.

He says I like my interiors to mature with my clients. The key to achieving an unself-conscious English look is to keep things fluid by adding and subtracting, upgrading and editing. I like interiors to have space to breathe with an eclectic mix of old and new.

We say A super-efficient designer, constantly in demand for his sensitive handling of listed buildings. John stays true to his stated aim of providing the best of twenty-first-century living within listed historic houses.

Spend or save? Never buy cheap taps. Don't get hung up on matching switches, sockets and handles. Once you move in, nobody will notice.

Contact John McCall: 01635-578007; www.mccalldesign.co.uk



HUGH LESLIE

Background After studying design in his native New Zealand and coming to London in 1987, Hugh Leslie went on to work for John Stefanidis, Mlinaric, Henry and Zervudachi, and Chester Jones. He launched Hugh Leslie Interior Design and Decoration in 2003. He has a team of five, including an architect and a CAD specialist.

Projects Hugh's ongoing projects include a listed eighteenth-century country house in Oxfordshire, the redecoration of a modern apartment in Mayfair, the internal space planning for a 3,660-square-metre newbuild in Wimbledon, and the redecoration and furnishing of a house in Belgravia.

He says Driven by the love of beautiful homes, we relish the opportunity of juxtaposing styles, periods, colours, art and objects to create intriguing interiors beyond our clients' original ideas and expectations.

We say Hugh has a cast-iron design pedigree, so no wonder his clients return time and again. He is a master at weaving bold colour and modern art into beautiful period properties, with a pristine finish every time.

Favourite luxury detail? A work of art, as it conveys warmth and style to any room, as well as saying something about the person who lives there.

Contact Hugh Leslie Interior Design and Decoration: 020-7584 7185; www.hughleslie.com

'We relish the opportunity of juxtaposing styles, periods and colours'



McWHIRTER MORRIS

Background Interior designer Sarah Morris spent 17 years working at Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler, latterly running her own design team there, and James McWhirter is an experienced antiques dealer. They set up their Chelsea-based design company in 2005 and have a team of five. Commissions range from large country houses to city homes, and they work on both sides of the Atlantic.

Projects McWhirter Morris is masterminding the complete renovation of a Georgian rectory in Hampshire, the decoration of three period houses in London, including the purchase of antiques, and, in the US, a house in Connecticut and the renovation of a brownstone in New York.

They say We are adamantly anti-fashion. Our designs are respectful of the building concerned, and always comfortable and eclectic.

We say Sarah's classical design eye and James's specialist antiques knowledge offer clients the best of both worlds. An inspired choice for serious restoration projects, but for smaller jobs, they will add a touch of whimsy, too.

Favourite luxury detail? Using Fortuny fabrics.

Contact McWhirter Morris: 020-7349 2575; www.mcwhirtermorris.com





JOHN MINSHAW

Background A graduate of Camberwell College of Arts, John Minshaw originally studied ceramics before switching to making furniture. He moved into interior design in 1988, when a house that he and his wife had rescued from dereliction was featured in a magazine. He has a dedicated team of four at his central-London office.

Projects John has been designing and building private homes for over 30 years, and is currently working on a newbuild studio in Oxfordshire, a pied-à-terre in South Kensington, a lateral conversion in Bayswater and a town house in Marylebone. Recently completed projects include a complex of barns in Oxfordshire and an eighteenth-century manor house in Hever.

He says We like to pare down to get the structure right and then finish with an eclectic mix of art and antiques from different periods.

We say John Minshaw is an award-winning architectural designer with an unrivalled reputation for creating spare, classical interiors furnished with beautiful antiques. Designed with integrity, his interiors are pure joy.

Spend or save? One should never economise on bathrooms, kitchens or lighting.

Contact John Minshaw Designs: 020-7262 9126; www.johnminshawdesigns.com



MLINARIC, HENRY AND ZERVUDACHI

Background David

Mlinaric established his legendary design practice in 1964 and was joined by Hugh Henry (left) five years later, followed by Tino Zervudachi (right). In 1989, the partnership Mlinaric, Henry and Zervudachi was formed. Today, there are 13-strong design teams in Paris and in London, plus a New York base.

Projects At MHZ, ongoing worldwide commissions include houses in London; chalets in Switzerland; residences in Paris; houses in Greece and Munich; and various properties in Montenegro, Toronto and New York.

They say Our aim is to help our clients create interiors that make them feel as comfortable and connected to their homes as possible, while respecting the geographical and architectural character of each building.

We say With its dynamic, cutting-edge vision and the ability to tailor each interior to bespoke perfection, it's no wonder that well-heeled clients flock to this Rolls-Royce of design studios.

Spend or save? It is dangerous to economise on infrastructure, but not necessary to have complicated wiring systems which get superseded quickly. Spend on good furniture, art or objects.

Contact Mlinaric, Henry and Zervudachi: 020-7730 9072; www.mhzlondon.com



PENNY MORRISON

Background South African-born Penny Morrison has been an interior designer for over 30 years. She works from a Welsh design studio with a staff of four, drawing on a satellite team of builders, architects and upholsterers.

Projects Penny has three Caribbean houses on the go, all part of one estate. She is also masterminding the redecoration of a large country house in Sussex. Penny's own range of hand-printed linens and cottons – distributed in the US, Australia and South Africa – continues to grow, and more designs will be added this year.

She says My style is relaxed and eclectic. I like to use unusual accessories and introduce antique fabrics to avoid a newly decorated look. My strengths are scale – oversize wherever possible – and colour, used as an accent.

We say Penny Morrison's interiors are by turns grand or deliciously pretty, often featuring soothing, airy colours and her own exquisite floral linens. Comfort reigns supreme, so expect top-quality beds and upholstery.

Most challenging commission? A 35-bedroom hotel. There were no plans, every room was different and I had six weeks to come up with designs, get everything made and have it shipped to the Caribbean.

Contact Morrison Interiors: 01547-560460; www.pennymorrison.com



PAOLO MOSCHINO

Background Paolo Moschino is Italian and studied political science in Florence before coming to London. He worked with Nicky Haslam at his shop in Holbein Place, then in 1995 took ownership of it after the business was divided.

Today, he heads up two retail showrooms and an interior-design studio.

Projects Paolo focuses on luxury residential and commercial commissions. This year's projects include the redecoration and interior design of houses in Chelsea and Kensington, a house in Saint-Germain-en-Laye and an apartment in Paris, and newbuild houses in Holland Park and Knightsbridge. He has recently finished apartments in Milan and Athens and houses in London.

He says How people choose to live is a pure form of self-expression. My best work is always the result of a really special client/designer relationship. My job is to create the platform and provide the opportunities to bring the client's personality to life.

We say Paolo Moschino has a flair for turning out strong and crisp interiors, with understated luxury and decorative antiques as the gold standard. This is continental chic at its most accomplished.

Favourite luxury detail? Custom-made bedlinen.

Contact Paolo Moschino for Nicholas Haslam: 020-7730 8623; www.nicholashaslam.com

LUCAS ALLEN; NICK POPE; ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL; TIM BEDDOU



GABHAN O'KEEFFE

Background Gabhan O'Keeffe, who originally trained in decorative arts at Christie's, before a stint at antiques dealer O F Wilson, launched his architectural and interior-design practice over 20 years ago, and works globally. At his Knightsbridge offices there is a design team of 15. For most projects they will design and manufacture a limited-edition range of textiles, furniture, rugs and objects.

Projects In the last year Gabhan has worked on a mixture of newbuilds that he has designed, and renovations. Projects in Moscow, St Petersburg and Ekaterinburg in Russia have included a newbuild in a forested setting, and he has also worked on a commission in Siberia, waterside villas in the south of France, and private houses in London.

He says We create interiors of the highest quality and luxury, tailored to suit our clients' requirements. Our use of colour, unusual materials and rare, luxurious finishes underpins our reputation for esoteric fantasy.

We say Gabhan's unique interiors are exuberant and stimulating, delivered with painstaking craftsmanship. He's not for the faint-hearted, but clients will be taken to new creative territories, with landscaping, scents, and sounds all providing inspiration for his designs.

Spend or save? The secret is never to compromise or economise.

Contact Gabhan O'Keeffe: 020-7259 5658; e-mail: info@gabhanokeeffe.com

'We create interiors of the highest quality and luxury, tailored to suit our clients'



GUY OLIVER

Background After studying history of architecture at Edinburgh University, Guy Oliver worked with Michael Inchbald and at Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler, before joining the design practice David Laws Design. He assumed ownership in 2002.

Projects Guy's current projects include the redecoration of The French Salon and The Drawing Room at Claridge's, a new library and dining room at The Princeton Club of New York, and a private apartment in Paris. He is also working on a New York apartment and a newbuild country house in Sussex.

He says Design is a dialogue, a process of creating solutions that are constantly refined during the course of a project. Appropriateness, timelessness and comfort all matter.

We say Ongoing commitments with clients such as Claridge's and The Connaught confirm Guy's pedigree as a serious designer with an encyclopedic knowledge of period design. Formal, grand decorating is his forte.

Most challenging commission? The redecoration of Claridge's ballroom for an event connected with the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. Textiles, metalwork and cabinetry were handmade to my designs and three teams worked round the clock to install them.

Contact Oliver Laws: 020-7437 8487; www.oliverlaws.com



COLIN ORCHARD

Background Colin Orchard worked and trained at Colefax and Fowler, and now his eponymous design practice is in its twenty-first year. He has a staff of three at his Chelsea base and is busily engaged with commissions on both sides of the Atlantic.

Projects Colin has embarked on the major renovation and interior design of two lakeside apartments in Chicago, and a lakeside house 30 miles out of Chicago, all 'old, wonderful buildings of great importance'. He is also doing the total renovation of a classic Belgravia town house with modern architectural additions.

He says My philosophy is to make my client comfortable and relaxed in my presence and with my ideas. I aim to listen to them, never impose my stamp and forget the prima-donna approach.

We say Loyal to his classical training, Colin is a master of traditional, grand country-house style, but not averse to the occasional modern twist. He'll happily fuse contemporary art with formal pieces for an eclectic mood.

Spend or save? Never economise on the structural work and finishes. A big budget does not always guarantee good design. Be inventive and mix old with new, expensive with inexpensive, eclectic with pure.

Contact Colin Orchard and Company: 020-7351 5501; e-mail: info@colinorchard.com



CAROLINE PATERSON

Background Caroline Paterson began her design career working in the furniture department at Christie's, then spent six years as an assistant to Chester Jones at Colefax and Fowler. She established her Lots Road design practice in 1987, and runs a super-efficient team of seven.

Projects Caroline is working on diverse projects, including a villa in Corfu, the fitting out of a yacht in Turkey and the decoration of a chalet in Val d'Isère. She is also masterminding the interior design for a house in Chester Square, a very modern property in Kent and a shooting lodge in Scotland.

She says It is so important to enthuse clients with the whole thought process from the beginning of the design journey and to maintain that enthusiasm until the end.

We say Caroline tackles traditional and modern projects with equal vigour and prides herself on delivering a supremely professional service. Clients can expect first-class advice on buying and sourcing art and antiques.

Most challenging commission? A Moscow apartment in a pre-Revolution building. We are simultaneously replacing architectural details and adding necessities such as air conditioning, imperative for the fluctuating temperatures in Russia.

Contact Caroline Paterson Interiors: 020-7352 9652; www.carolinepatersoninteriors.co.uk



STEVEN PAYNE AT MAISON AD

Background This year, Steven Payne celebrates 26 years in design. He started off working with leading hotel designer Frank Solano, then joined John Stefanidis. He established his interior-architecture and design consultancy, Maison AD, in 1989, and has just moved to new offices in Kensington. He is also a consultant for the property industry.

Projects The Maison AD team is working on the long-term refurbishment of a Mayfair home, the design for a family home in Twickenham, a Middle Eastern embassy in Mayfair, interior architectural consultancy work in Paris, a 650-square-metre family residence in Houston, and an oceanfront home in South Carolina.

He says I offer interior design and architecture that is appealing to the senses and functional. I achieve this with rigorous planning and research. Clients often tell me that they discover new details as they live in their new spaces.

We say A focused designer with the chutzpah to push design boundaries, happy to undertake large-scale international projects. His modern-classic interiors demonstrate an understanding of both architecture and the living space.

Favourite luxury detail? Beautiful bathrooms, designed to rival five-star hotel standards.

Contact Maison AD: 020-7384 1335; www.maisonad.com



PRIVATE LIVES

Background Annabel Hall is the powerhouse behind Private Lives, the interior-design company that she launched in 1981. At her appointment-only Surrey design studio she has a design staff of 10.

Projects Ongoing commissions include a country house in Surrey, involving the total redesign of ground- and first-floor layouts, a mews house in Knightsbridge, the redesign of a small country house in Surrey, and refurbishing the interior of a classic yacht. She has just completed a private villa in the grounds of the Four Seasons Resort Marrakesh.

She says I interpret and build on the unique personal nature of each client, hence the name Private Lives. Talent, versatility and discretion are my hallmarks. A design for one house is never repeated in another.

We say Clients are reassured not just by Annabel's 40 years' experience, but by her ability to offer myriad styles, from classic elegance to opulent glamour. She delivers a friendly, personal service.

Spend or save? Never economise on attention to detail and the perfection of finishes. Insist on the best artists, craftsmen and tradesmen, because the success of a project depends on how those specialists accomplish your vision.

Contact Private Lives: 01252-850527; www.privatelives.co.uk

The H&G 100 leading designers **R—R**



MICHAEL REEVES

Background Michael Reeves opened his first London showroom in 1994, and four years later won the prestigious Andrew Martin International Interior Designer of the Year Award. Michael designs his own furniture and rug collections, and has a new Pimlico showroom.

Projects Michael is doing the interior design for a double-fronted Knightsbridge house, a town house in Chelsea Square, a duplex penthouse in Notting Hill, and the linking of two town houses in Docklands. The team is designing show apartments in China, a ski chalet in Megève and a house on Mustique.

He says The space of each project dictates the flow and internal layout to me; I like there to be as much interconnection between rooms as possible. The design and content is a question of scale and balance and knowing when to stop adding detail and objects.

We say Michael's signature neutral palette results in subtly glamorous rooms, often teamed with his own clean-lined furniture designs. Deep buttoning, luxurious textiles and expertly chosen art are trademarks.

Most challenging commission? I enjoy a challenge, but if the client finds it difficult to make decisions and will not listen to the designer, problems can ensue.

Contact Michael Reeves Associates: 020-7730 3009; www.michaelreevesassociates.co.uk



RUI RIBEIRO (new entry)

Background Rui Ribeiro was born in Angola and grew up in Portugal, then moved to London to study interior design in 1992. After working for the architectural firm Gensler & Associates, where he concentrated on corporate clients, he joined Jonathan Reed's company in 2003. He launched his eponymous practice, focusing on residential projects, in 2008.

Projects Rui's list of current commissions includes the renovation and furnishing of a pied-à-terre in Sloane Street, the restoration of a Grade I-listed apartment at the Albany in Piccadilly, the redecoration and furnishing of a Chelsea apartment, the redecoration of a sixteenth-century home in West Sussex and a Surrey barn conversion.

He says I respond to the location and architecture of a home. A client's lifestyle and interests should also be carefully considered and reflected as soon as one enters the front door.

We say Rui has a purist's attention to detail and creates crisp, masculine, yet deeply comfortable interiors. His clients are rewarded with something that's unique, and a genuinely collaborative design relationship.

Favourite luxury detail? The chance to commission a piece of furniture or artwork for a room by a great artist or designer.

Contact Rui Ribeiro: 07717-055442; www.ruiribeirointeriors.com



CAROLINE RIDDELL

Background After studying fine art at City & Guilds, Caroline Riddell trained as a milliner before switching to interior design. She worked in product development with Colefax and Fowler, then in 1999 set up an interior-design business with Rebecca Nicolle. She launched her own west-London practice four years ago.

Projects Caroline's current focus is a fourteenth-century castle in Umbria: she has spent a year restoring it alongside a Florentine architectural firm. She is also working on a flat in Holland Park, a town house in Knightsbridge and a Georgian hall in Suffolk, which she is carefully transforming into a family home.

She says With each of my clients I like to establish what is important to them and reflect that in the design. I feel that this defines my style, a modern approach to a traditional background.

We say Caroline offers busy clients the complete package, delivering warm, sympathetically designed interiors perfect for modern living, and is happy to source antiques and art. Clients stay in close touch for extra snippets of advice.

Spend or save? Never economise on lighting and chimneypieces and always leave a budget for art.

Contact Caroline Riddell Interiors: 020-8743 4817; www.carolineriddellinteriors.co.uk



RIENTS (new entry)

Background Rients Bruinsma studied interior architecture in Maastricht, then worked in Paris and for the architect Peter Marino in New York, before settling in London. After a brief spell with John Stefanidis, he launched his practice in 2003, and offers a full architectural and interior-design service, including custom furniture and soft furnishings.

Projects Fresh from completing an apartment in Hamburg, a penthouse apartment in Regent's Park and an apartment at One Hyde Park, Rients's team of four is now busily working on a family home in Knightsbridge, a palazzo in Italy, an apartment in central Lisbon, and an office reception in the West End.

He says Interiors should be personal and the client's own items must take centre stage. A designer has been successful if the interior radiates harmony, comfort and personality.

We say A rising star in the design world, now justly enjoying an exciting range of commissions. Rients's international design experience, combined with his love of discreet luxury, delivers chic modern interiors with a twist.

Favourite luxury detail? A basin carved out of a solid block of marble or stone, and leather-clad handrails with beautiful stitching.

Contact Rients: 020-7608 2900; www.rients.com

ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL, JAMES McDONALD, ANTHONY CONWELL



MAX ROLLITT

Background Max Rollitt is that hybrid breed: an interior decorator, antiques dealer and maker of bespoke furniture. He trained as a furniture designer and maker, then in 1993 relaunched the family business as Max Rollitt. His design studio and furniture showroom are near Winchester.

Projects Max has just put the finishing touches to a full renovation of a flat in London. Right now, he is working on the redecoration of a Grade II-listed country house in Sussex, consulting on furniture, carpets and artwork. He has recently completed a London town house, a country estate in Ashdown Forest and a cottage in Cornwall.

He says Most of my work is in period houses and clients come to me for my understanding of scale, ornament and antiques. It is my job to create a friendly, elegant and joyful environment: informality in a formal setting. My style is layered, comfortable and elegant.

We say With his solid background in furniture, and an artistic eye, Max combines decorative antiques with gloriously apt fabrics, often in surprising colours. His interiors are timeless with a subtle hint of modernity.

Favourite luxury detail? Silk velvet, even if just for piping a cushion.

Contact Max Rollitt: 01962-738800; www.maxrollitt.com



STEPHEN RYAN

Background Stephen Ryan studied interior design at the Inchbald School of Design, and became chief designer at David Hicks, before launching his Holland Park showroom in 1993. He keeps his team small, in order to deliver tailored designs, but his work is international in style and execution.

Projects As well as a newbuild villa in Oman and the complete renovation of a large Victorian house in Clapham, Stephen is working on an extension and the complete remodelling of a Belsize Park Sixties-style house, a large development in Kensington, and a mansion flat in Earls Court.

He says My personal style is 'classic contemporary'. I like to use antiques against a modern background and vice versa. We are happy working in both modern and traditional genres and are able to provide either to suit each client's requirements.

We say Stephen is renowned for his love of symmetry, theatricality and exotic texture. His interiors are glamorous and always provoking.

Most challenging commission? We often undertake work abroad, sometimes in remote places. The computerised transfer of drawings and e-mail makes this process incredibly successful.

Contact Stephen Ryan Design & Decoration: 020-7243 0864; www.stephenryandesign.com

'I like to use antiques against a modern background and vice versa'



CHARLES RUTHERFOOD

Background Charles Rutherford studied architecture at Cambridge, and interiors at Kingston. He launched his multidisciplinary practice in 1984, and combines new architectural work with the restructuring of houses, as well as furniture design.

Projects Charles is working on the design of new extensions to an 1840s villa in St John's Wood. He has just finished a two-storey penthouse in Drury Lane and is currently completing a house and garden in Knightsbridge and houses in Chelsea and Clapham.

He says The purpose of my work is to enhance the enjoyment of each moment by creating beautiful surroundings. Function is the crucial baseline, because unless the brief is met in a practical way, aesthetics alone will not suffice.

We say Charles is the thinking client's designer, devising beautiful spare interiors with a mix of modern furniture and eighteenth-century pieces. As the new chairman of the Society of Garden Designers, he's a hot ticket for garden design, too.

Spend or save? Don't compromise – find the best solution to meet the budget. Spend on lighting and the things you touch every day, for example switches and handles, and save money with simple flat colour on the walls.

Contact Charles Rutherford: 020-7627 0182; www.charlesrutherford.net



JOHN HAMMOND; HEINER ORTH



DIANA SIEFF

Background Diana Sieff has no formal training but plunged into interior design after a friend admired her own home, and commissioned her to do his farmhouse. Seventeen years on, her business still thrives on personal recommendations. She has a team of two at her SW1 office.

Projects Diana is enthusiastically working on a Mediterranean seaside house, mixing modern design and mid-twentieth-century furniture, as well as the 'clean design' for a large Georgian house in Oxfordshire, using decorative antiques and wallpaper. She's also doing a beautiful double-fronted seven-bedroom house, adding an extra floor and dugout basement.

She says My philosophy of design is never to follow fashion and to love what you put into your home. The most important thing for me is that my clients are happy with my design and that their house reflects their personality.

We say Diana's interiors are chic, crisp and decorative, and she is as happy doing simple and rustic as she is doing grand and classical. A relaxed designer who believes in gentle hand-holding and making the process fun.

Favourite luxury detail? Art, antiques, and a pantry so that you can do away with eye-level kitchen cupboards.

Contact Sieff Interiors: 020-7730 7706; www.sieff.co.uk



EMMA SIMS HILDITCH (new entry)

Background Wiltshire-based Emma Sims Hilditch has a background in film production and spent several years training with Ridley Scott. She established the Sims Hilditch interior-design studio in 1995, where she works with a team six strong. She offers a comprehensive design service, specialising in kitchen and bathroom design, as well as bespoke furniture.

Projects Right now, Emma is designing the interior of 'one of the finest Regency villas in Bath', a newbuild house in Hertfordshire, and a beautiful Grade II-listed Jacobean country house in Buckingham. The full refurbishment of a Victorian town house in London, a barn conversion in Warwickshire and a newbuild house in Devon complete the list.

She says We design classic contemporary interiors with an elegant, understated feel, focusing on quality, function and form. We pride ourselves on our approachable but professional service and as a result many clients return time and again.

We say A charming, word-of-mouth designer for whom nothing is too much trouble. Emma's immaculately tailored interiors incorporate cool, fresh English colours, pretty florals when appropriate, and a palpable tranquillity.

Most challenging commission? Completing a high-end turnkey apartment in Knightsbridge with an eight-week turnaround.

Contact Sims Hilditch: 01249-783087; www.simshilditch.com



MARK SMITH

Background Mark Smith started off in fashion retail before retraining at Chelsea College of Art & Design. He subsequently worked for Terence Conran, William Yeoward and John Minshaw and set up Smithcreative in 2000. He has just moved to a new design studio in Lots Road.

Projects Mark is collaborating with a US designer on an apartment in St James's. He's also doing the refurbishment of a 400-square-metre house in South Kensington, the newbuild construction of a modern wing for a Victorian house on the Kent coast, and the refurbishment of the Smallbone of Devizes showroom in Knightsbridge.

He says Where necessary, I restore the architecture. If the bones of a building are good, furnishing is easier. I prefer not to be constrained by one 'look'. When the proportions of furniture, lighting and pictures are correct, it's rewarding to mix different periods.

We say Mark is justifiably in demand by those in search of modern English interiors with a colourful twist. The look is confident, the tailoring crisp, and he's a whizz with unexpected graphic pattern.

Spend or save? I encourage clients to put as much into the 'services' of the building as budget allows. Good floors are also important.

Contact Smith Creative: 020-7352 9103; www.smithcreative.net





SOANE BRITAIN

Background Lulu Lytle co-founded the Pimlico-based Soane Britain with Christopher Hodson in 1997. She originally studied Egyptology at University College, London, and Christopher is an antiques dealer. The showroom displays architecturally inspired furniture, lighting and artefacts.

Projects At Soane Britain, the list of commissions is small but perfectly formed. Currently, Lulu and her team of three are furnishing and decorating two London houses – one Georgian, one Victorian – and are in the latter stages of planning the interior architecture of a Victorian family home. Soane Fabrics, which produces textiles based on antique designs, handmade in the UK, was launched in 2011.

She says Reconciling old with new drives our designs. We try to create visual depth and atmosphere with an emphasis on quality of craftsmanship.

We say Lulu's love of British-made furniture and her expert knowledge of antiques results in beautiful, classic interiors, with generosity of proportion a style hallmark. The new Soane fabrics range is a triumph.

Spend or save? Economising on upholstery never pays in the long run. I like to think that really good upholstery will outlive you and need never be replaced. Comfort is paramount.

Contact Soane Britain: 020-7730 6400; www.soane.com



MARIA SPEAKE

Background After studying architecture at Glasgow School of Art, Maria Speake set up Retrouvius in 1993 with her husband, Adam Hills, focusing on salvaged architectural antiques. She undertakes interior-design projects at their Kensal Green studio and continues to explore the possibilities of salvage.

Projects Right now Maria is working on the replacement of a Sixties wing for a set of former nineteenth-century artists' studios in north London. She's also doing the complete remodel of a five-storey town house in Primrose Hill, a listed family house in Hampstead, the interior reconfiguration of a rectory for musicians in Dorset, the interior for a newbuild Highgate house, and a members' club in Soho.

She says Projects are like love affairs: you get to know clients intimately and may be more ambitious than they dare to be. The materials we source generate a starting point, but their limitations also provoke original design solutions. We tackle buildings from a diverse range of dates, so we are always learning.

We say Maria's inventive design eye and her passion for robust salvaged materials result in creative, yet deeply comfortable interiors. She's versatile, turning out modern retro or traditional English in equal measure, and also great fun.

Favourite luxury detail? Bespoke corning.

Contact Retrouvius Design: 020-8960 6060; www.retrovius.com



HENRIETTA SPENCER-CHURCHILL

Background Henrietta Spencer-Churchill trained at The Inchbald School of Design and worked with Diana Hanbury, then established her interior-design company, Woodstock Designs, in 1981. There is a shop and office in Woodstock, plus a subsidiary Fulham studio, with four designers in each.

Projects Henrietta is working on the refurbishment of a Grade II-listed house in Holland Park, the decoration of a Regency house in Gloucestershire and the major refurbishment of a house in Jersey.

She says I look at each project as an individual challenge, and treat each one differently, as the style of the house and the requirements of clients can be so varied.

We say Henrietta is a powerhouse: she pursues her interior design, lecture tours and books with equal devotion and energy. She's also a practical, hands-on designer, and the fount of all knowledge for classic country-house design.

Most challenging commission? A very large newbuild house in Scotland. Every room was designed from scratch, including plasterwork, panelling and wall finishes.

Contact Spencer-Churchill Designs: 020-7731 8399; www.spencerchurchilldesigns.com



'I look at each project as an individual challenge, and treat each one differently'



JOHN STEFANIDIS

Background John Stefanidis is a world-renowned interior designer. He established his architecture and interior-design practice from a studio in Chelsea in 1967, and has continued to specialise in high-end residential properties and hotels across the globe.

Projects Recent and current projects include a house in Toronto, an historic house in Istanbul on the Bosphorus, a penthouse in Athens, a house in Kensington, a grand private house in St Petersburg, a lodge in the Scottish Highlands, and a Gothic guest house on an historic estate in Bedfordshire.

He says My approach to design is based on a fundamental understanding of architecture and scale, and placing importance on light and colour. I prefer things to be simple, classical and unaffected. Every room should include little details of comfort.

We say Four decades on, John is still one of the design greats, with a distinctive eye for bold colour and pattern. Whether designing a cottage or a country house, he makes each one feel like a haven.

Most challenging commission? Every commission is challenging: a hotel, a house by the sea or one in the mountains all require different approaches. Each project should lift your heart; this promises well for its future.

Contact John Stefanidis: 020-7622 4294; www.johnstefanidis.com



SARAH STEWART-SMITH (new entry)

Background Sarah Stewart-Smith has been an interiors writer for 20 years, but kick-started her interior-design career eight years ago, when she was asked to work on a large country-house project in Wiltshire. She is the sole designer, drawing on a pool of like-minded collaborators when appropriate.

Projects Sarah's current projects include the interior design for a Wimbledon town house, the complete refurbishment of a house in Wales, and the project management and interior design for the conversion of a Cotswold piggery into a guest house.

She says I like to listen, think and understand so that the process of the design meets everyone's expectations. The originality and joys of a house are a direct result of this process. My style has a grown-up, light-hearted elegance with the odd curve ball thrown in to mix things up.

We say Now enjoying a successful new strand of her career, Sarah creates beautiful, sparsely styled interiors. Clients can expect a muted palette, carefully chosen decorative antiques and a no-rules approach.

Spend or save? Good organisation and not changing your mind saves money. I never compromise on comfort, particularly with beds and sofas.

Contact Sarah Stewart-Smith: 07733-328691; www.sarahstewartsmith.com



JANINE STONE (new entry)

Background Janine Stone trained as a professional make-up artist, but in 1987 followed her love of interiors and opened an interior-design shop. Today, her eponymous company has grown to a vast team of 50, split between offices in Manchester and London.

Projects Janine Stone specialises in large-scale residential projects. Right now, she's working on the construction of a mews property in Kensington with a two-storey basement and the complete refurbishment of penthouses in Grosvenor Square, Holland Park and Kensington. She's also masterminding the development of a significant country estate in Oxfordshire, comprising a 152-acre site and a 3,250-square-metre main house, and the refurbishment of a Grade II-listed mews house in Mayfair.

She says The challenge is to create something that is lasting. Our projects are centred in authenticity, with strong historic references and sensitivity to the architecture and surroundings.

We say A highly professional team offering the complete package, from initial concept to complete construction, so clients can relax. At its helm, Janine offers a personal, colourful vision with a sensitive commitment to detail.

Favourite luxury detail? The sumptuous look and feel of a silk- and wool-blend carpet. It takes colour beautifully and feels luxurious to the touch.

Contact Janine Stone: 020-7349 8888; www.janinestone.com



STUDIO REED

Background Jonathan Reed worked for Hackett and Polo Ralph Lauren in Paris, then in 1993, he co-founded Reed Boyd, a retail consultancy and interior-design studio. In 1996, he established Studio Reed, an architectural and interior-design practice, and has a team of architects, interior designers, project managers and furnishing specialists 40 strong.

Projects In line with Jonathan's ambition to become ever more specialised, his commissions are select. Current jobs include the design of a private beach spa and retreat in the Middle East, and the renovation and extension of a Grade I-listed Lutyens house in the Home Counties.

He says I take an intensely personal approach to design. It should express the character of the client, as well as showcasing the talents of the craftspeople who are involved in creating the spaces the client will inherit.

'The design should express the character of the client'

We say Jonathan's tasteful interiors, characterised by a muted palette and crisp tailoring, continue to delight high-profile, international clients. For those in pursuit of the ultimate bespoke interior, he's your man.

Spend or save? Never economise on the quality of the basic services and infrastructure of a house, nor the finishes and materials. Question the real need for extravagance.

Contact Studio Reed: 020-7565 0066; studio@studioreed.com



THE STUDIO AT HARRODS (new entry)

Background Since the arrival of interior designer Sara Cosgrove, The Studio at Harrods has expanded. A graduate of Trinity College Dublin, Sarah studied interior design at KLC School of Design, then worked by turns for Allegra Hicks, Helen Green and Candy & Candy. She runs a dedicated team of 26.

Projects Fresh from completing a Surrey family mansion, a country cottage in Kent, and a luxury three-bedroom apartment in Knightsbridge, Sara and her team are devising a barn conversion in the Cotswolds 'to create a little bit of LA in the English countryside', a glamorous apartment in Holland Park, and a modern family home near Richmond Park.

She says My goal is to achieve functional luxury. I approach every interior from the client's perspective and this is what keeps my design work interesting. There is no painting by numbers at The Studio.

We say From their specially commissioned design studio, this sparky new team is well-versed in myriad design looks, from Scottish baronial to minimalist, skilfully guided by Sara and her perfectionist eye.

Spend or save? Hiring the experts will cost in the short term but pays huge dividends in the long term.

Contact The Studio at Harrods: 020-7225 5926; www.thestudioatharrods.com



FRANCIS SULTANA (new entry)

Background Variousy described as a curator, designer, interior decorator and collector, Maltese-born Francis Sultana spent 10 years as creative director of David Gill Galleries. He set up his own business in 2009 and creates elegant, modern furniture and interiors. At his Fulham Road showroom, he has a team of six. He'll frequently commission established artists as part of a scheme.

Projects 2012 is proving a busy year, with Francis working on a newbuild apartment in St Moritz, a town house in Monaco, a newbuild apartment in Tel Aviv, and a pied-à-terre and an apartment at The Lancasters. He has now launched his second furniture collection.

He says My design style is based on an historical understanding of twentieth-century design, bringing in modern design to create a sophisticated, elegant fusion that expresses the client's personality and lifestyle.

We say Francis is a refreshing new talent, and with his background in modern art, his interiors bristle with dynamic colour and large-scale, bespoke furniture. A very cool designer with an international bias.

Most challenging commission? Taking a large amount of bespoke furniture to a fortified mansion on a Greek island, using only strong men and donkey power to install.

Contact Francis Sultana: 020-7589 5946; www.francissultana.com



TAYLOR HOWES

Background Karen Howes worked for an art dealer, then diversified into PR and property before co-founding Taylor Howes with Gail Taylor in 1991. They won the Andrew Martin International Interior Designer of the Year award in 2006. In 2011 Karen took over as sole director, and heads a design team of '16 and growing'.

Projects Karen's commissions include a church conversion in Knightsbridge, a selection of stucco-fronted houses in Notting Hill, South Kensington and Knightsbridge, and 'the largest private residence in London'.

She says Our relationship with clients is always more important than the project itself. We build strong relationships and many clients return again and again. Our style is glamorous and practical.

We say Now at the helm of this fantastically successful, well-respected design team, Karen continues to design superchic interiors. Finishes are luxurious and the scale is grand, with the occasional pop of striking colour.

Spend or save? We never compromise on joinery: the devil is in the detail and we ensure it works both aesthetically and practically. Make savings on large quantities of fabric for curtains or sofas and use an expensive fabric on a feature chair.

Contact Taylor Howes: 020-7349 9017; www.taylorhowes.co.uk



PHILIPPA THORP

Background It is 25 years since Philippa Thorp established her now award-winning design practice, Thorp Design. Her Belgravia practice offers a comprehensive service, from interior design to architecture, landscape gardening to bespoke joinery. There is a team of 12 architects and designers.

Projects Philippa works internationally and her recent and current projects include the design, construction and decoration of a holiday house in the Hamptons, the refurbishment of villas in Phuket and Cap Ferrat, plus a country manor house in Hampshire, and the redesign and decoration of a Chelsea town house.

She says Functionality and practicality are paramount. We strive to create intelligent design solutions that answer the client's brief. We are relentless in our pursuit of perfection, passionate about exceptional craftsmanship and actively seek to use British-made products.

We say Clients come to Thorp Design knowing that they will get 100 per cent attention and flawless interiors across classic and modern styles. Philippa leads from the front, priding herself on clever lateral thinking and faultless budget control.

Most challenging commission? A corkscrew staircase for a small Chelsea town house. Everyone thought it was impossible but we managed it and the result was beautiful.

Contact Thorp Design: 020-7731 6887; www.thorp.co.uk



TODHUNTER EARLE

Background Emily Todhunter (left) founded Todhunter Earle in 1988, with Kate Earle joining as her partner in 1998. The practice works on projects internationally and has a dedicated team of 16. In 2011, they won the International Superyacht Society award for Best Superyacht Interior Design.

Projects Right now, they are working on the renovation of a chalet in Verbier; 60 rooms for a 'large, romantic, moated, historic country house' in the Malvern Hills; the renovation of a country house in Berkshire; plus London houses in Chester Square, Phillimore Gardens and Hampstead; and a newbuild house in Hampshire.

They say We have a happy, practical approach to interior design. We make hundreds of decisions a day and some shapes, styles or colours just feel right for certain projects. Our approach, while unpretentious, is to create rooms that feel wonderful and are beautiful.

We say An incredibly successful design team with the experience to take on large-scale projects, delivering superbly detailed, elegant interiors. Emily and Kate run a collaborative partnership, with the ethos that 'a happy job is a good job.'

Spend or save? It is an expensive mistake to bring in an interior designer too late.

Contact Todhunter Earle Interiors: 020-7349 9999; www.todhunterearle.com

'Our approach, while unpretentious, is to create rooms that feel wonderful and are beautiful'



STAFFAN TOLLGARD

Background After a brief spell working in the film industry, Sweden-born Staffan Tollgard studied interior design at the Inchbald School of Design, topped off with a postgraduate diploma in architectural interior design. He launched his company in 2005, and has a team of 14. In 2010 he started a design studio in the Algarve.

Projects Staffan's ongoing projects include the complete renovation of a 465-square-metre house in Wilton Place and the renovation of an eighteenth-century property on the outskirts of Windsor Great Park. Current projects include a boutique hotel in St Albans; a Notting Hill town house; and several family homes in the Algarve.

He says I like to engage without provoking, be bold without being brash. My style is modern but with a respect for history.

We say Staffan's flair for fusing modern furniture and art into chic, tailored interiors has made him a favourite with design-conscious families. Beautiful bespoke joinery is a given.

Spend or save? Save money on art and accessories. Properly framed photography, especially large-format or well-sourced archive pieces, is as inspiring as expensive artworks.

Contact Staffan Tollgard Design Group: 020-7575 3185; www.tollgard.co.uk



JONATHAN TUCKEY (new entry)

Background Jonathan Tuckey established his own practice in 1999, having trained in interior architecture at Kingston University and then worked at David Chipperfield Architects. There is a tight-knit team of nine architects and interior designers at his W10 base, and he specialises in remodelling old buildings for modern uses.

Projects Currently, the team is working on the architecture and interior design of a castle in Germany; a chalet in the Swiss Alps; four houses in London; a beach house in Costa Rica; a cottage in the Peak District; and an arts centre in Folkestone.

He says A passion for working with existing buildings drives all our projects. We relish uncovering exciting uses for unloved spaces and enjoy juxtaposing new elements with original features. Our projects are spatially interesting, and the space is what truly stands the test of time.

We say Jonathan's twin skills as architect and interior designer result in clean-lined, refreshing interiors, perfectly pitched for modern living. These are exhilarating yet simple spaces, designed to endure.

Spend or save? Get the design right and the need for luxurious and elaborate fittings can be scaled back without compromising the project.

Contact Jonathan Tuckey Design: 020-8960 1909; www.jonathantuckey.com





TURNER POCOCK (new entry)

Background Turner Pocock was established by Bunny Turner (left) and Emma Pocock in 2007. Bunny studied at The Courtauld and worked as a Mayfair art dealer, while Emma studied fashion and textiles before training at the KLC School of Design.

Projects Turner Pocock's projects for 2012 include the overhaul of a stucco-fronted terrace in SW3, working alongside Charles Doe Architects; the remodelling of a listed house in SW7 with a dramatic glass 'bridge'; the decoration of a family home in SW10; and a newbuild house in Kent.

They say We have no house style, preferring to work with the building and the client's brief to create a home that suits their taste and lifestyle. But we do like to mix antique and new furniture, and emphasise colour and pattern in an interior.

We say A dynamic design team with a firm handle on a variety of styles, from grown-up classic to funkier urban looks. Expect expert advice on displaying art and sophisticated, offbeat colour choices.

Most challenging commission? The design and installation of a flat in Bahrain within three months. This involved much arm-twisting of suppliers and changes of design to meet the shipping date.

Contact Turner Pocock: 020-3463 2390; www.turnerpocock.co.uk



'I love minimal, open, comfortable, spacious interiors with texture and atmosphere'



ROSE UNIACKE

Background After training as a furniture restorer and gilder and running her own restoration business, Rose Uniacke switched to antiques, establishing a reputation for sourcing interesting eighteenth- to twentieth-century furniture. At her Pimlico Road showroom and studio, she takes on select interior-design commissions, and sells an eclectic mix of antiques, plus her bespoke range of highly covetable furniture, lighting and accessories.

Projects Rose works on commercial and residential properties. Currently in progress are the flagship offices, in a Georgian property, for a large commercial brand; the renovation of a large classical house and a mews house, both in London; and a renovation/decoration project in France.

She says I love minimal, open, comfortable, spacious interiors with texture and atmosphere that feel welcoming, yet have some edge. I believe in staying true to the context of a building in design, and like to mix furniture from different periods.

We say Rose's trademark interiors are cool and quietly glamorous, laced with quality materials such as linen, marble and cashmere, and expertly chosen decorative antiques. Here is a thoughtful designer with the confidence to let a house 'breathe'.

Favourite luxury detail? Cashmere blankets and silver goblets.

Contact Rose Uniacke: 020-7730 7050; www.roseuniacke.com



CHRISTOPHER VANE PERCY

Background This year, Christopher Vane Percy celebrates 50 years in interior design. He started his career with Asprey, then formed CVP Designs in 1971. He sits on the board of the British Institute of Interior Design as the heritage and environment director, and in 2010 was presented with The Garrick Medal, to celebrate his 14-year restoration of the Garrick Club interiors.

Projects Christopher is completing the decoration and soft furnishings for a large town house in Chelsea and working on a Nash cottage in Regent's Park. He is also 'totally reorganising' furniture and paintings, and doing the redecoration, for a late-Georgian Gothic country house in Staffordshire, and restoring a sixteenth-century manor house in Suffolk.

He says I believe in making other people's dreams come true.

We say Christopher remains an A-list designer with a host of repeat clients, and a spectacularly detailed knowledge of design. A safe pair of hands for the restoration of grand country houses, with a delightfully down-to-earth approach.

Spend or save? One should never economise on architectural design and layout. It is better to knock it all down and start again. You can always sit on an orange box.

Contact CVP Designs: 020-8960 9026; www.cvpdesigns.com



'I aim to provide simplicity and comfort'



PIERS VON WESTENHOLZ

Background Piers von Westenholz is best known as a first-class antiques dealer, but he discreetly undertakes a handful of interior-design projects each year. He started decorating in the late Sixties alongside David Mlinaric, and went on to run several antiques shops, including two with Robert Kime. His current Pimlico Road shop, Westenholz Antiques, specialises in antique decorative furniture and lighting. He has a team of three.

Projects Piers is currently working on and renovating a country estate in Buckinghamshire and a manor house in Gloucestershire. He is also decorating Dumfries House, a Grade I-listed stately home in Scotland; a flat in Paris; and an apartment in New York.

He says The most important thing to remember is that it is the client's house and they must be happy with the result. I therefore aim to provide simplicity and comfort.

We say Piers's unrivalled knowledge of antiques underpins every interior he designs. Clients come to him for his discretion, his sensitive understanding of classic country style and an occasional flash of English eccentricity.

Favourite luxury detail? Fireplaces that work, and real log fires with a club fender.

Contact Westenholz Antiques: 020-7824 8090; www.westenholz.co.uk



SERENA WILLIAMS-ELLIS

Background Propelled by a passion for antiques, Serena Williams-Ellis began her career at Christie's, then set up her own antiques business, supplying designers in New York. Her interior-design services evolved as clients increasingly asked her for decorating advice. At her Cumbria studio, all designs and drawings of architectural details are done 'in house'.

Projects Serena is embarking on the total refurbishment of an eighteenth-century coaching inn in Scotland; the refurbishment of a large house in Notting Hill; phase two of the redesign and refurbishment of a Georgian house in Ireland; the redesign and build of a Scottish lodge; and phase one of the refurbishment of a Grade I-listed house.

She says We have an ethos of strong interactive links with our clients. For me, the architectural elements of a building are key and if they don't exist, I create them. My projects are practical yet with a touch of whimsy.

We say This super-efficient designer is going from strength to strength, turning out breezy, classic English interiors with comfort at their heart. She commissions bespoke fabrics for every project.

Favourite luxury detail? Hand-blocked wallpaper from a small factory in France, using designs from the nineteenth century but in bespoke colours.

Contact Serena Williams-Ellis: 01768-898073; office@serenawilliamsellistd.co.uk



GRANT WHITE

Background South Africa-born Grant White has been an interior designer for 20 years and founded his practice 12 years ago. At his Parsons Green studio, he works closely with associate designer Arabella Randall, and has four staff. A genuinely globetrotting designer, Grant has decorated everything from private houses and restaurants to a nightclub and superyachts.

Projects Grant's current residential projects include a house in Campden Hill Square; a shooting estate in Hampshire; a large modern house in Chelsea; an Eaton Square apartment, and a traditional town house in SW3; plus a project in the Hamptons. He has just completed the refurbishment of a Mayfair hotel, and restaurants in Dubai, Beirut, the Netherlands and England.

He says I believe that a house should reflect the owner's personality, so that it is as unique, interesting and multifaceted as the individual.

We say Clients come to Grant for his chameleon-like ability to create different looks, from classic English country to slick city penthouse styles. His interiors are polished, sophisticated and frequently colourful, layered with luxurious textiles.

Most challenging commission? The complete renovation of a 120-bedroom hotel, without it ever closing.

Contact Grant White Design: 020-7736 5858; www.grantwhitedesign.com





JOANNA WOOD

Background Award-winning Joanna Wood has built her international reputation over 25 years. Based in Belgravia, the practice has grown to be one of London's largest residential interior-design companies, working across the private residential and the property investment market. She has a super-slick team of 15 designers.

Projects Joanna Trading is currently undertaking 'one of the biggest restoration projects in the south-east of England'. Other commissions on the go include a country house in Cambridge; an apartment in Paris; a guest flat in New York; and a palace in the Middle East.

She says I believe that interiors should be comfortable and practical as well as beautiful, and should be unique to the individual and their personal style.

We say Highly respected in the design world, Joanna's crisp take on classic English style exudes poise and quality. Her well-trained team are fully geared up for large commissions, and aim to combine practicality with visual excitement.

Spend or save? Spend money on getting the bones of a building right, as this is something that you can't go back and change. It is better to complete a project slowly, using the best quality that you can afford.

Contact Joanna Trading: 020-7730 0693; www.joannatrading.com



MELISSA WYNDHAM

Background Melissa Wyndham modestly says she is 'largely self-taught'. Nevertheless, after 25 years she is recognised as one of the UK's top interior designers, and has worked on some of Britain's most beautiful houses, including Petworth House and Glamis Castle.

Projects Melissa's team of four are working on a range of projects, from a bespoke man's dressing room in a Kensington town house to a turret bedroom in a Sussex castle. Melissa is also designing a rectory in Berkshire, a town house in Chelsea and a family house in Kensington.

She says An interior must be comfortable. When a room is done really beautifully it will also be timeless. A project should respect the architectural integrity of the building, and be interesting. Craftsmanship, quality and simplicity are key.

We say A highly knowledgeable designer with an innate understanding of grand English houses, and an ability to meld modern art or furniture with classical style.

Most challenging commission? The private apartments at Longleat House. Some rooms had bright, modern murals while others had original hand-painted Chinese wallpaper. It was a challenge to devise a scheme that worked for both while meeting the needs of a young family.

Contact Melissa Wyndham: 020-7352 2874; www.melissawyndham.com



HUBERT ZANDBERG INTERIORS

Background South Africa-born Hubert Zandberg has worked in the interior- and retail-design fields for over 18 years, latterly as creative director at Champion Zandberg. He launched his own practice in 2002, and his design team of 10 has recently expanded into larger premises at Portobello Dock.

Projects Current commissions include town houses and apartments in London; the renovation of farmhouses near Bath; the design and refurbishment of a penthouse in Germany; an old colonial house in Hong Kong; a ski lodge in Lebanon; and hotel apartments in Paris.

He says Our design style is underpinned by my passion for collecting. This curatorial approach results in an eclectic range of styles, objects and colours. We aim to enrich this approach by a harmonious understanding of the style of the client and natural interaction with the location.

We say A firm favourite with a global clientele, earning third and fourth repeat commissions. By his own admission, Hubert's projects are varied, from a minimalist town house to an historic hotel. He brings a finely tuned stylist's eye to accessorising.

Spend or save? Hire the best staff you can afford, as this ensures that the property is maintained as the designer intended.

Contact Hubert Zandberg Interiors: 020-8962 2776; www.hzinteriors.com

Plus THE 10 LEADING AMERICAN DESIGNERS



Jeffrey Bilhuber

Jeffrey Bilhuber's confident articulation of all-American style keeps him firmly in the design limelight, where he delivers his modern twist on classic looks with aplomb. Despite his A-list clientele, including Anna Wintour, he is a 'real people' designer, keen to develop personal environments as well as highly decorative spaces. Since the Eighties, Jeffrey has worked his magic across the US and Europe: his latest venture, City Club Hotel, is a boutique hotel in New York. www.bilhuber.com



MURIEL BRANDOLINI

With a French/Vietnamese background and an innate love of art and sculpture, Muriel Brandolini creates interiors that are infused with contrasting influences. A former fashion stylist, today she is a visionary decorator whose tantalisingly colourful and exuberant schemes make her the toast of New York's design scene. Right now she is working on town houses and penthouses across the US. Her own-brand fabrics and design accessories are further strings to her bow. www.murielbrandolini.com



Robert Couturier

The internationally respected Robert Couturier works on grand-scale properties across the US, Europe, South America and Russia. He studied interior architecture and environmental design in his native Paris, and launched his New York practice in 1986: a palace in Azerbaijan, town houses in Manhattan and London, and villas in France are all ongoing projects. His superbly tasteful style has, at its core, an appreciation of architecture and how clients like to live. www.robertcouturier.com



STEVEN GAMBREL

Trained as an architect, Steven Gambrel established his buzzy New York design studio in 1996, and is currently working on projects in Manhattan, the Hamptons, Zurich and Hong Kong. Clients flock to Steven and his team for their tailored, polished interiors, characterised by chic off-beat colours, a sophisticated fusion of vintage and bespoke furniture, and his sensitivity for vernacular architecture. A designer with exquisite taste, he is now in the design super-league. www.srgambrel.com



Heiberg Cummings Design

Run by William Cummings (top) and Bernt Heiberg, Heiberg Cummings Design operates from twin offices in New York and Oslo, having launched in Norway in 1990. With its muted colours, crisp lines and relaxed aesthetic, the designers' signature style is laid-back and luxurious. Right now, they are busy with commissions in Martha's Vineyard, the Hamptons and Manhattan, and houses in Norway. A book celebrating their work is out this autumn. www.hcd3.com



SANDRA NUNNERLEY

New Zealander Sandra Nunnerley trained as an architect at Sydney University and studied fine art in Europe before launching her New York practice in 1988. Her traditional, timeless interiors are elegance personified, characterised by subtle colours, perfectly pitched artworks and a certain cool tranquillity. Right now, she is designing a ski chalet in Colorado, a house in Lyford Cay, Bahamas and a private compound in New Zealand. www.nunnerley.com



Miles Redd

Miles Redd's eclectic interiors are laced with whimsy and full-on colour, influenced, in part, by his having studied film at New York University. After a spell with the decorator Bunny Williams, Miles launched his own firm in 1998, and his close-knit team is currently renovating houses in Houston and Lyford Cay, and working on multiple projects in New York. For cosy glamour, one-off decorative wall treatments and a sense of fantasy, look no further. www.milesredd.com



JOHN SALADINO

Award-winning designer John Saladino is internationally celebrated for his impeccable taste, artistic vision and grand-scale designs. John is riding high in a design career spanning 40 years, with a team of 25 at his New York firm, plus a flourishing furniture line. A Kuwaiti palace, a Palladian house in Palm Beach, and private residences from California to New York are among current projects. This is world-class design at its very best. www.saladinostyle.com



Michael S Smith

Michael S Smith has a starry client list, and was also appointed by Barack Obama to the Committee for the Preservation of the White House. Ever since launching his California studio in 1990, award-winning Michael has stayed true to his style, which he describes as a blend of European tradition and US modernism. Right now he is working on houses in London, the Bahamas, Hawaii and New York, and has an LA flagship store for his signature fabric and furniture lines. www.michaelsmithinc.com



STUDIO SOFIELD

Trained as an architect, William Sofield founded his practice expressly aiming to integrate multiple design disciplines. His sumptuous yet modern interiors, with a strong intellectual focus, have earned him commissions with the likes of Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent. He's currently working on stores for Tom Ford, a furniture collection for McGuire, and homes in California, London and Seoul. For the design cognoscenti, he's the designer of choice. www.studiosofield.com □

Plus THE 10 LEADING FRENCH DESIGNERS



JEAN-LOUIS DENIOT

Rising star Jean-Louis Deniot studied at the Ecole Camondo in Paris and launched his studio in 2000. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of the decorative arts and mixes styles provocatively, resulting in immaculately detailed, visually eclectic interiors. Newly finished is the Hôtel Thérèse in Paris, and residential projects include a duplex in London, an apartment in Chicago, and houses in Corsica, Tahiti and India. He has designed a chic furniture line, too.

www.deniot.com



Joseph Dirand

Celebrated for his trademark monochromatic schemes and minimalist detailing within classic architecture, Joseph Dirand had a meteoric rise after launching his architectural practice in 1999. In 2001, his design for the fashion house Balmain propelled him into the international limelight and recent projects include designs in Cairo, Beirut and Tel Aviv, plus residences in Paris and New York. He's the architect of the moment, whose talent for fusing beauty with functionality is spot on.

www.josephdirand.com



JACQUES GARCIA

With his passion for history and flamboyant style, Jacques Garcia is one of the greats of French interior design. He was the designer behind the groundbreaking Hôtel Costes in Paris, and works for wealthy private clients all over the world. Now at the pinnacle of his career, he is renovating the decorative arts galleries at the Louvre, refurbishing the rooms at the Palace of Versailles, and recently completed the Selman Hotel in Marrakesh.

00-33-1 42 974 870



Gilles & Boissier

The uber-cool design team Patrick Gilles and Dorothée Boissier met while working at Christian Liaigre. Since they launched their practice in 2004, their exquisitely chic, tailored interiors featuring sleek lines and muted colours have been the talk of the town: the self-styled art directors won the Designer de l'Année 2011 award at Maison & Objet. Recent commissions include hotels and restaurants in the US, houses in France and a villa on Lake Como.

www.gillesetboissier.com



JACQUES GRANGE

In a career spanning more than 40 years, Jacques Grange has established a reputation for designing elegant interiors with a strong appreciation of volume and space. His knowledge of the decorative arts has won him many wealthy clients in the US, but he works on significant projects in Marrakesh, the South of France and Paris, too. His sophisticated interiors may include the odd surprise element, such as modern designs from Ron Arad or Vladimir Kagan.

00-33-1 55 807 540



India Mahdavi

India Mahdavi trained as an architect at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, then worked with Christian Liaigre. She opened her studio in 1999, followed by two Paris showrooms, home to her highly original furniture and accessories range. India's bold style is characterised by fluid silhouettes, bright colours and whimsical detailing. She has recently designed the Monte Carlo Beach Hotel and has residential projects in England, the US and the South of France.

www.india-mahdavi.com



FREDERIC MECHICHE

Since completing his first project in 1970, Frédéric Méchiche has been constantly in demand and enjoys forging long-lasting relationships with his international clients. He has designed everything from jets and castles to yachts, but takes a chameleon-like attitude to interiors, experimenting with new looks for every commission. Colours are bold, lines graphic, and the look confident and modern. He's brilliant with art collections, too.

00-33-1 42 787 828



Chahan Minassian

Described variously as an antiques dealer, interior architect and gallery owner, Chahan Minassian studied interior design in Paris and became creative director for Europe at Ralph Lauren. He launched in 1993, and his striking, sophisticated interiors display a love of space, a passion for opulent materials and a muted palette. He's knowledgeable on art and fine antiques, and has galleries in Paris and LA, plus his own exquisitely detailed furniture line.

www.chahan.com



ALBERTO PINTO

In 2010, Alberto Pinto celebrated four decades in design. At his Paris headquarters he has a team of 60 designers working on projects worldwide, including yachts and jets. Clients are treated to exceptional craftsmanship and luxurious finishes, yet despite the inevitable grandeur of scale, every Pinto interior exudes intimacy and comfort. Alongside his line of furniture and decorative accessories, he has published eight books showcasing his work.

www.albertopinto.com



Pierre Yovanovitch

Pierre Yovanovitch worked with Pierre Cardin before setting up his interior architecture agency in 2001. He likes to focus on contemporary spaces, and to juxtapose a minimal interior with twentieth-century pieces. Current commissions include a town house, apartments and a hotel in Paris, and villas in the South of France. Pierre's interiors display his passion for expert craftsmanship, and his talent for capturing light is breathtaking.

www.pierreyovanovitch.com □