design centre
LONDON
THE JOURNAL
VOLUME II
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INSPIRATION | INSIGHTS | PEOPLE | PLACES
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ONES TO WATCH

Fresh talent is always a joy to discover. Be inspired by design practices with a dynamic spirit and an imaginative approach: here are just a few of them, in their own words

Photo: Stephan Julliard

Photo: Gilles Uzan

SOPHIE DRIES

Founding her practice in Paris in 2014, Sophie Dries is an alumna of the studios of Pierre Yovanovitch and Christian Liaigre, an impeccable pedigree that has driven her detailed, bespoke approach.

What inspires you?
I am always drawn to a certain type of designer. Architects such as Alvar Aalto, Frank Lloyd Wright and Carlo Scarpa had a desire to build a world within their spaces: they designed and planned every meticulous detail to reflect their vision. I fell in love with this ideal form of architecture: every aspect of the spaces that I strive to design have reason and vision embedded within them.

What do you obsess over in your work?
Materiality as a means of transcending and infusing an individual's day-to-day living with a sense of fantastic wonder. I want to bring a little magic back into the everyday, especially now that home is becoming ever more critical to the human experience.

What's your latest discovery at Design Centre?
I absolutely adored the projects by The Nanz Company. But after going to the show, I fell more in love with the works of Lelièvre, Tollgård, Zimmer + Rohde and Pierre Frey.

EADIE & CROLE

With offices in Hampshire and Battersea, Sophie Eadie and Fi Crole set up their studio in early 2019. Their mutual love of modern and timeless interiors comes through in their prestigious residential projects.

Photo: Carrie Lees

What are you known for?
Understanding clients' aspirations and guiding them through their projects to create their dream. We love attention to detail – that extra bit of contrast binding or trimming makes all the difference! Not to mention adding bespoke elements such as furniture and joinery to a project.

Is there any business advice you wish you'd known when you started out?
Understand the detail, and the time it takes to achieve, and make sure this is clear to the client from the outset.

What do you obsess over in your work?
We get so excited at the beginning of a job when we get the plans and can start working out how the space will work and flow best. We are also totally obsessed about creating bespoke pieces and love all the detail that goes into creating original joinery.

What's your latest discovery at the Design Centre?
As regular visitors we always love seeing the launch of new products and fabrics but our go to are Tissus d'Hélène, Julian Chichester, Turnell & Gigon, Tim Page and Paolo Moschino at Nicholas Haslam Ltd.

Photo: Patrick Williamson

STEPHENSON WRIGHT

Natalie Stephenson and Juliette Wright met while working at Helen Green Design and came together to launch their own design business in 2013. Their complementary talents have seen them work on everything from London townhouses to The Mayfair Chippy, a posh fish-and-chip restaurant.

What have you become known for?
For listening to our clients, for our humour and being real, and for our new behind-the-scenes vlog on IGTV, which has taken us in a rather fun direction of showing our true selves on a daily basis. We have become well-known for working on large-scale projects built from the ground up, right from the bare bones of the property.

What's the thread that runs through every scheme, regardless of the aesthetic?
It's all about knowing what the ingredients of an interior are that really make the big difference in the long run – for us it's lighting, textured wallpaper, a balance of beautiful hues and an unexpected twist.

Is there any business advice you wish you'd known when you started out?
Trust your instincts, network your socks off and believe in yourself.

What's your latest discovery at the Design Centre?
Artisans of Devizes' book-matched marble-effect porcelain brought us to the Design Centre just a few weeks ago – it's now looking stunning on a bathroom wall in one of our Surrey projects.

FETTLE

Andy Goodwin and Tom Parker co-founded Fettle in 2013. It has studios in Shoreditch, London and Playa Vista, Los Angeles, and has a strong focus on hospitality design that is striking, eclectic and functional.

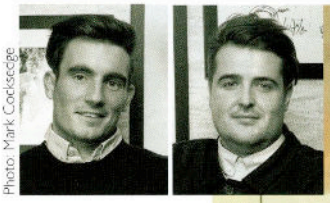

Photo: Mark Cocksedge

What inspires you?
We take inspiration from a variety of sources, but typically it is focused on the building within which we are working. We look at its location and the history of the area, as well as the specific offering that our clients are looking to develop – for example, we are currently working on a very high-end supper club concept in Beverly Hills that draws inspiration from 1940s Chinese cinema, in particular the rich colours, ornate fretwork, and deep lacquers.

What do you obsess over in your work?
We are fascinated by hospitality projects that operate seamlessly on a functional level, whether that's on a large scale, like the space planning of a hotel working perfectly and as efficiently as possible, or the ergonomics of various pieces of furniture. A lot of what drives us as a company is learning from our very experienced client base and refining or reworking a lot of the functional and operational aspects of the various types of spaces we design.

Is there any business advice you wish you'd known when you started out?
Know where you want to go and figure out the steps to get there. Appreciate every opportunity and what it is that makes you unique as a company or brand.

What's your latest discovery at the Design Centre?
Most of our favourite fabric houses and wallpaper suppliers come through Chelsea Harbour. We are really impressed with the latest range from Gaston y Daniela, and Cole & Son features prominently in a number of our projects.

Photo: The Hoxton & Heiko Prigge