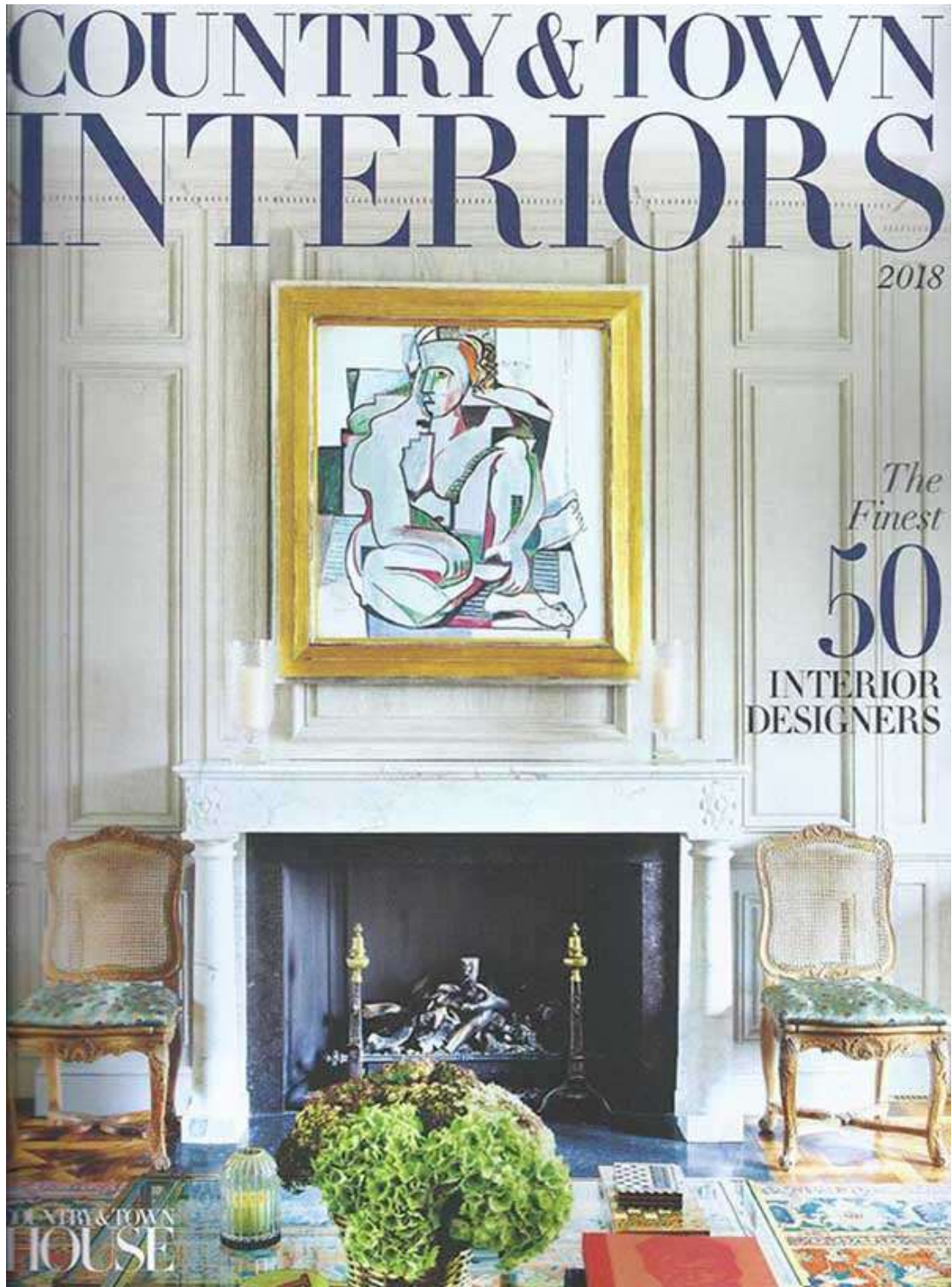


COUNTRY & TOWN INTERIORS

2018

*The
Finest*
50
INTERIOR
DESIGNERS



COUNTRY & TOWN
HOUSE

HUMAN HANDS

As tastemakers with roving eyes for talent, interior designers are responsible for connecting their clients' appetite for highly-crafted, bespoke pieces with expert, British-based makers, finds *Arabella Youens*



Nearly 50 years ago, the Crafts Advisory Committee, later re-named the Crafts Council, was founded to advise the government on the needs of the artist craftsmen and to promote nationwide interest in their wares. Since then, a number of initiatives and platforms have spawned to demonstrate the vast wealth of talent found along the length and breadth of Britain. Today, it's estimated that craft skills make a £3.4bn contribution to the UK economy.

More than a century after the Arts and Crafts movement was founded, there is, among those who appreciate fine art and design, an increasing appetite for a return to the principles that the movement embraced: to turn the home into a work of art. As champions of decorative skills and artisanal crafts, interior designers have long been at the helm of supporting this. Chief among them is the Earl of Snowdon, who, for over 30 years, has showcased bespoke furniture, interiors, collectable pieces and accessories made by a network of master craftsmen in Linley, his Pimlico Road showroom.

Dubbed 'interior couture' by one evangelist, artisan-led solutions are important because they guarantee stand-out and esoteric results for their clients. Decorative artist Hughie Turner is one such talent. His skills in 'faux finishes', that is marbling, wood graining and his signature 'linen finish', is an art that was last popular in the 70s and early 80s but is currently witnessing something of a revival today – with the right clients. 'People are increasingly appreciating how boring flat paint is. Our role isn't to create something showy, it's about adding a bit of elegance and life to walls – fabrics, papers and pictures do the rest in a room,' he says.

For Nick Crean, who chairs the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust – the charity that champions excellence in British craftsmanship – craftsmanship is what gives a space its personality and character. 'Next time you are admiring someone's home,' he says, 'look at all the architectural details, the fireplaces and the architraves, the rugs, the furniture, the cushions and even the colour of the walls. Just as craftsmanship has defined Britain's cultural heritage over centuries, so it defines a home and the lives of those that live in it.'



ON THE COVER
A London town house,
interiors by Paolo Moschino
for Nicholas Haslam.
Photograph by Simon Upton

25 **HUMAN HANDS** Craft has taken its rightful crown as the king of bespoke luxury. *Antella Youens* talks to the designers who couldn't live without commissioning craftsmen for their interiors projects

29 **THE FINEST 50 INTERIOR DESIGNERS** The defining list of the names you need in your little black book of design

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◀ FIONA BARRATT-CAMPBELL

Designer decorator Fiona Barratt-Campbell is known for her particular passion for contemporary ceramics which she likes to use in projects to give them 'a pulse and a heartbeat'. Her Pimlico Road store, FBC London, shows off a range of decorative pieces by ceramicists Tessa Eastman, Jane Towers and Zsolt Jozsef Simon, among others.

She credits her childhood in the wilds of Northumberland for bestowing her with a love and respect for British heritage and craftsmanship. 'But it's also in my DNA. My grandfather, property developer Sir Lawrie Barratt, founded one of the largest residential property development companies in the UK in 1958 and continues to be my greatest inspiration.'

The textures, shapes, colour and structure of the landscape of Northumberland, alongside the quiet affinity with clay and the processes that ceramicists use, led her to work with ceramics artists from the very start of FBC London. 'As a designer, I believe it's crucial to nurture and mentor young emerging talent as much as possible,' she adds. While the industry continues to grow and becomes ever more competitive with designers under pressure to develop bigger and more elaborate works than ever before, it's important, however, not to get side-tracked by trends and focus instead on skill and timelessness. For Fiona, ceramics and accessories are a 'fusion of artisanal couture - where passion, innovation and skill meld to reveal the intrinsic beauty of a material through handcraftsmanship'. ■

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THE FINEST 50 INTERIOR DESIGNERS



FIONA BARRATT-CAMPBELL

Neutral palettes layered with texture to create interest: that's Fiona Barratt-Campbell's style in a nutshell. 'I like

to use lots of different surfaces: reclaimed wood, polished concrete, cast metals, woven leather... Then I add colour through accessories and antiques, particularly 20th century pieces,' says Fiona, who launched Fiona Barratt Interiors in 2006 and snagged Richard Branson's lodge in Verbier as her first commission. A recent full-scale residential redevelopment in Moscow, which involved turning a concrete shell into a family apartment, was kitted out with a bespoke contemporary FBC London kitchen and contrasting old-world silk rugs and a curated art collection. Right now, she has 16 projects on the go, from a Georgian terrace to a waterfront penthouse apartment. fionabarrattinteriors.com



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