

UK & Europe



Perth ex-pat Emma Phillips has worked in the creative industries for more than 16 years and is now based in London, with an eye on design.

The UK economy is showing signs of recovery, house price increases still dominate the headlines, and high-end retailers reported bumper Christmas sales: is the UK out of the red? Emotionally yes, fiscally not quite. But as in the post-war years, Brits just like to get on with it, and the big trend this year is austerity fatigue. Londoners are sick to death of the political in-fighting when it comes to the economic crisis, so are putting their heads in the sand and spending big on (full-priced) luxury fashion, designer products, high spec renovations, art, and dining out aplenty. And, no discounts please (it makes us feel cheap!).

UNLIMITED APPEAL ▶

For years, the London-based artist/designer Michael Anastassiades worked in very limited quantities creating editions of quality crafted pieces and small runs. Then, in 2007, he set up an 'unlimited' company to increase availability of his objects, working with specialist workshops to fabricate his designs. The studio now has a wonderful back catalogue of highly sculptural lights, vases and vessels for sale, while Michael continues to work on private commissions and exhibitions. His latest release is the beautifully simple Tip of the Tongue pedestal table light, which features a spherical hand-blown milk glass lamp balancing on the edge of a polished brass base. £780 (\$1480) from twentytwentyone.com, or visit michaelanastassiades.com.



Michael Anastassiades' Mirror glasses and Tip of the Tongue lamp (right).

Photography Ben Murphy



Casa Pezo, as designed by Chilean studio Pezo Von Ellrichshausen.

Photography © Cristobel Palma

◀ SOLO PROJECTS

Solo Houses is an ambitious property development project that will give ten architects carte blanche to express their creativity freely, with budget the only parameter. The brainchild of developer Christian Bourdais, the ten holiday homes are being built in the Matarraña region of southern Catalonia (known as Spanish Tuscany, two hours south of Barcelona) and will be designed by some of the world's most avant-garde architects including MOS, Didier Faustino, Sou Fujimoto and Studio Mumbai. Casa Pezo, the first house to be completed (and sold) was designed by Chilean studio Pezo Von Ellrichshausen. It's a meticulously symmetrical structure – part pagoda, part observation deck – consisting of an elevated sequence of rooms set around a roofless courtyard which houses the swimming pool. The main living areas have uninterrupted views of the expansive vista. solo-houses.com.



A TOUCH OF GLASS

As one of Britain's last glassblowing studios, Rothschild and Bickers creates stunning hand-designed lighting in a quest to keep the dying craft alive. "Every piece that we create, whether it's a commission or something from our signature collection, is an original," explains Victoria Rothschild. "Each one is free-blown and comes with its own tiny irregularities." The studio uses processes and tools much the same as those used when the craft first originated (around 50BC in the Middle East). As well as commissions for hotels, restaurants, retail and residential interiors, Rothschild and Bickers has a range of signature products including the Arts and Crafts-inspired Flora Pendant, the mid-century Retro Light, and the new, vintage-inspired, colourful Pick-n-Mix Collection (as seen here). From £295 (\$560) at rothschildbickers.com.



◀ DESIGN BIBLE

London-based celebrity designer Kelly Hoppen has, over the past 37 years, become not just a household name, but a very big brand within the world of interiors. With a host of A-list clients including the Beckhams, Gwyneth Paltrow and Anthony Hopkins, the 'Kelly Hoppen look' is widely recognised around the world. She's devoted to making her design ethos accessible to the masses and shares her knowledge via a number of channels including a design school, television programmes (she's currently on *Dragon's Den*), books, an online store and product ranges, an app, and – naturally – through her interior design commissions, which she does all over the world. Her latest publication, *Kelly Hoppen Design Masterclass*, is her definitive home-decorating guide. Alongside beautiful photographs and room schemes of her recent interior projects, Kelly offers inspiration and guidance on all aspects of design including scale, colour, texture, furniture, art and lighting, as well as practical professional tips on budgeting, briefing tradespeople, and project management. Available from kellyhoppen.com for £25 (\$47.50), the book will be out in Australia by late 2014.



ART OF STONE

Recently heralded as one of the “ten artists you should be collecting now” (by *Culture24*), Richard Stone is having his moment. The London-based artist’s works materialise in many forms, from sculpture, painting and installations through to site-specific interventions. Described as elegantly restrained, they oscillate in scale from intimate to monumental. Themes of self, place, absence and transience are recurrent, while existing materials and found objects are intrinsic: a Renaissance-like figure is engulfed and defaced in thick wax, for example, while the details of a romantic landscape have been erased to reveal a desolate place. Stone is currently in Italy on a three-month scholarship and residency to experiment with bronze under the tutelage of a master craftsman, while also working towards his first solo exhibition at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery in London, where he is now represented. richardstoneprojects.com, artecogallery.com.

Narcissus and the Ground by Richard Stone. Antique spelter, wood, wax. Image courtesy Original&theCopy.



Photography Craig Sheppard

EXTEND AND FLOW

A Victorian terraced house in De Beauvoir Town, East London has been sensitively refurbished and boldly extended by Scott Architects. The extraordinary sculptural addition to the rear of the house features curved lines clad in solid timber, limestone flooring, exposed brickwork walls and restored Baltic pine floorboards. The interior works as a series of fluid spaces housing a new kitchen, dining room and bedroom, with curvy lines leading onto a deck and garden that gently sweeps over the new space as a green roof of wildflowers, grasses and plants. scottarch.co.uk.



▲ Essential Quality

Les nécessaires d'Hermès is an eight-piece furniture collection created for the luxury maison Hermès by the French industrial designer Philippe Nigro (above). Based on the French word ‘nécessaires’, meaning ‘essential’, each piece, from compact benches, small stools, stackable tables and decorative screens, is unexpectedly and cleverly multifunctional. Manufactured according to the high-quality traditions of cabinet making and upholstery, Nigro’s designs combine craftsmanship with exquisite materials, such as Canaletto walnut wood in warm shades, brushed steel, leather and, naturally, Hermès’ beautiful fabrics. lesailles.hermes.com.



Noble and Wood’s Cloud console.

▲ NOBLE INTENTIONS

Designer Paul Blease founded Noble and Wood based upon his family history, a legacy of integrity, and love for well-made products. His ethos is crafted modernism, which is achieved by combining rich materials and modern manufacturing processes with traditional hand-crafted techniques. Paul’s debut collection features a quirky streamlined Cloud Console, £1050 (\$1995), and the elegant Loop Mirror, £145 (\$275). nobleandwood.com.

Photography Mercedes Jaen Ruiz (Philippe Nigro)

▼ GOING BUMPER IN THE NIGHT

“Most people I know have at some point in their lives slept on a mattress on the floor,” states designer Marc Newson. “So I thought it would be nice to design a bed that would encourage people like me to replace their faithful mattress with a beautiful bed.” Newson’s Bumper Bed is a fun and stylish engineered reinvention of this ubiquitous sleeping setup. Upholstered in leather, the top lip sits flush with the mattress and a second wraps around the bed at floor level, with a belt running between the two. The sides are deep enough to be used as seats. “It was a very playful, conceptual exercise, akin to turning one’s bed into a boxing ring or a massive life raft,” says Newson. Available in white, dove or chocolate, with either a tone-on-tone or orange inner belt, from French contemporary art and furniture gallery Domeau & Pérès. Although not limited edition, each bed is signed and numbered. Price on application. domeauperes.com.



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