

KATHERINE RICHARDS DESIGN



This image is an outdoor metal sculpture. Below: 'BELLA' Part of the new collection of limited-edition lamps & detail

Chatting to Katherine Richards about her work is inspiring and uplifting, her naturally informal but passionate way of describing her feelings about design, refreshing.

"I came to interior design 20 years ago, having been a London theatre stage designer where we believed that anything is possible. Briefs can be lifted from the page as though they were a script. The designers task is to consider the most interesting and imaginative way of delivering the directors' (clients') dream. It's such fun gaining knowledge of how the inhabitants of the stage use their space", she waves her arms about as if living the experience right there.

"It's not so much a service (what a boring word)," she goes on "but an exciting collaboration into which we both (client and me) invest. In order for me to deliver the best for them, I have to be completely emotionally and artistically invested too. I was a creative beast long before I was a business woman so every project I work on is an imaginative journey. I'm often hands on, playing with colour,

shape and texture. I break so called rules, throw curve balls (gently) to see how my clients will react to a new way of thinking and I love watching their excitement grow as they see our ideas played out.

The candid way in which she speaks is so refreshing and I am struck by her fearlessness. "Frankly, I don't see the point of a client employing a designer if they can't take you on a journey of exploration, fun and excitement! Surely the most important factor is for you to be introduced to new ideas, ones you might never have considered on your own. That's the beauty of the 'service! Our homes are one of the most important elements in our lives, so it's critical that we aim to create the

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most perfect environment in which to raise our children, live with our partners and friends"

Katherine runs her business efficiently like most good quality interior designers, employing a team of experienced trades and craftspeople and can deliver anything from the reupholstery of a favourite old chair to building an entire house.

What sets her apart perhaps is her bespoke work. Welcoming commissions, she has created amazing outdoor sculptural seating, patterns on exterior walls, unique shelving designs tailored to her clients taste and requirements, beautiful hand-woven rugs and most recently a stunning range of table lamps unlike anything I have seen before. They are large, theatrical and fantastically detailed. Katherine sculpted them and after the casting process, she applies gold leaf. The team she chose to help deliver these pieces are renowned in their own field of expertise which shows in the finish of the product.

"I'm particularly excited about my range of lamps. It's a new venture for KR. I spent all of last year creating them and launched them at Boodles in New Bond Street. Already the Saatchi Gallery selected one to show on the Saatchi Screen which was a fantastic endorsement."

As we sit in Katherine's small studio in Hove, East Sussex, I am struck by the amount of colour surrounding me and how comfortable I feel there. She is running several projects so the place is full of sampling, architects' drawings, rugs pieces, a bursting library of fabric books and photos of completed works.

The walls are covered with working schemes, trimmings and wallpapers. It feels like a joyful work space with a thoroughly professional edge. Clearly, they are working for discerning clients and whilst she is informal and fun, she takes her work very seriously which is admirable. ■

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SAATCHI GALLERY

Selected by the Saatchi Gallery to be shown on the Saatchi Screen.

'CUENCA' selected by Saatchi Part of the new collection of limited-edition lamps

