

ART↑ MAGAZINE

ART & ARCHITECTURE IN LONDON



In conversation...

INTERVIEWS WITH LONDON ARCHITECTS, INTERIOR DESIGNERS AND ARTISTS

Photography:
SILENT CITY

VOLUME 1

ARKI Magazine

ART & ARCHITECTURE

LONDON

LETTER FROM THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the first edition of ARKI Magazine – a publication designed specifically to highlight the outstanding art and architecture of London.

Living in a cosmopolitan and multicultural city, where some of the most creative minds in the world reside, we are privileged to have the world at our fingertips. But whilst many magazines often celebrate the art and design of the rest of the world, it means we can easily overlook what is being created on our very doorstep. Behind all the great London works, are amazingly talented people and stories that I, especially love to discover.

The best part is that these are buildings that we can walk down the road and see and artworks we can visit at almost any time.

In this first edition, I've curated a mix of architecture, photography, painting, illustration and interior design from creators whose work I have come across or admired for some time.

The architecture and design section features a very playful, commercial interior in the city, an elegant residential interior in St John's Wood and a beautifully complex mixed-use building in Fitzrovia.

The artists represent a diverse spread of exceptional local talents displaying various styles that could appeal to different artistic tastes. Dividing the sections is a gallery of London Photography – in this issue specifically showing London as we've never experienced it before – an empty city. Lastly, I've also included a small selection of some of my favourite inspiring spaces to work remotely across the city.

At a time when we have been denied access to so much of London's creativity – museums, galleries, art fairs and exhibitions all closed or cancelled – I feel more motivated than ever to create a platform for local artists to showcase their work.

As the city remained in lockdown, this magazine's curation has been an unusual process. I've interviewed all the designers and artists via email, WhatsApp, text message and even Instagram direct message. And despite the fact that I didn't have the chance to interview them face to face, I found their words to be insightful, thought-provoking and frequently rather amusing!

Art has the power to move us, to rejuvenate us and restore our faith. I hope this glimpse into the creative bounty that surrounds us in London, leaves you feeling uplifted and inspired at this time.

If you have any queries on the artists mentioned here, please get in touch with me via email: neil@arkimagazine.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR:
NEIL KENYON

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
AMI LUM

COPYWRITER:
SHANNON CONNOLLY

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

ARCHITECTURE & INTERIORS

In conversation with....

SAMANTHA KOPSCH SAM KOPSCH STUDIO	TUDOR STREET	9
DAVID SIVERSON ORIGINATE ARCHITECTS	LITTLE VENICE	18
BILLY MAVROPOULOS BUREAU DE CHANGE ARCHITECTS	THE INTERLOCK	28

CHAPTER 2

YOUR LONDON

SILENT CITY PHOTOGRAPHY OF A DESERTED CITY	39
WORKING LUNCH SOMEWHERE TO WORK AWAY FROM THE OFFICE	52

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 3

LONDON ART

In conversation with....

ANDREW McINTOSH	58
KATHARINE LE HARDY	64
PATRICK BLOWER	69
MINTY SAINSBURY	78
CHRISTOPHER NOULTON	84

CHAPTER

1

ARCHITECTURE
&
INTERIORS



HANDMADE IN ENGLAND

BESPOKE INDOOR CYCLE STORAGE SOLUTIONS



www.cycab.co.uk | hidemybike@cycab.co.uk

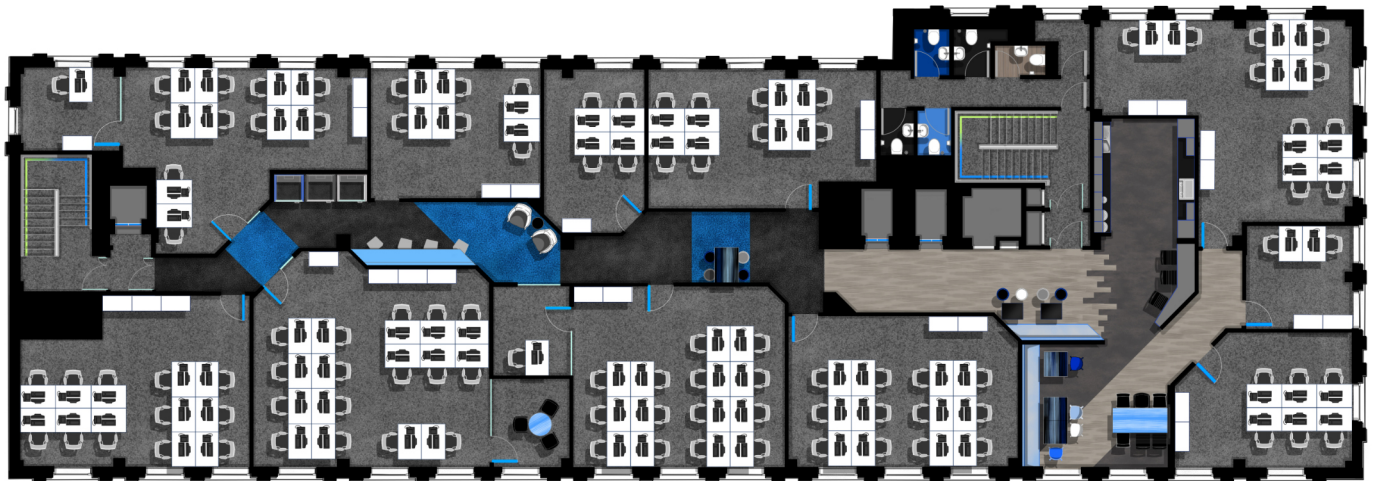
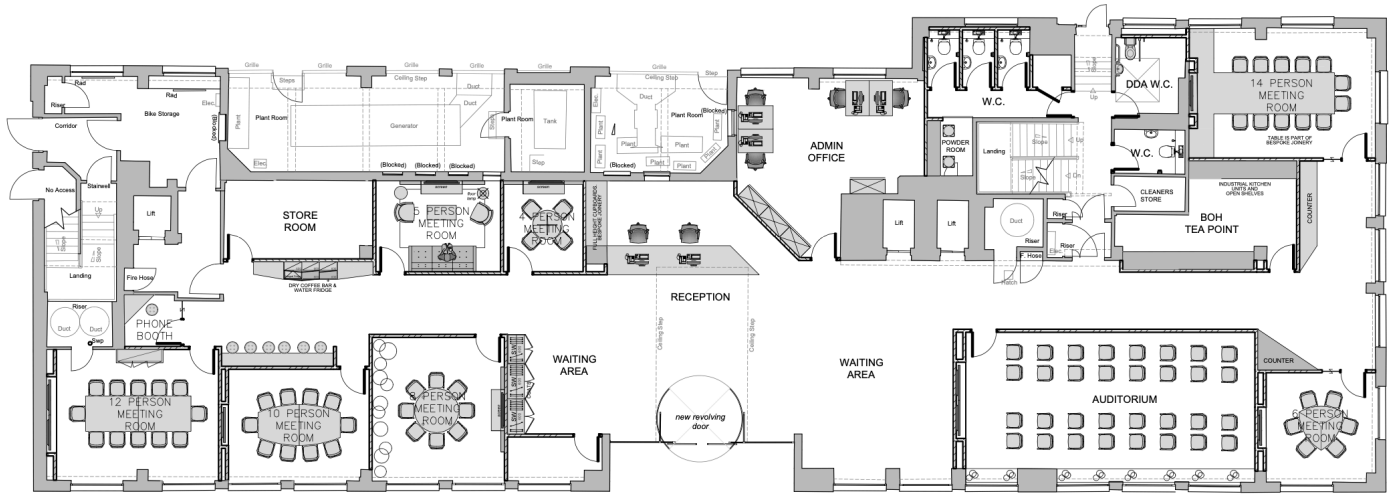
SKS

SAM KOPSCH STUDIO

IN CONVERSATION WITH: SAMANTHA KOPSCH

PHOTOGRAPHY: NEIL KENYON







SKS is a small design studio with big ideas and a portfolio encompassing hotels, homes, and offices in and around London. Sam is also the principal designer for Office Space in Town serviced offices, (pictured), where she creates highly unique workspaces that transport the users into different worlds.

What did you do before you started SKS?

I was employed full-time as a designer for a London based D&B company, so pretty much exactly what I do now, without all the admin that comes with running a business.

What made you leave the office job and set up on your own?

I wouldn't say I left my 'office job'. I still have an office job, except that office is now in a bright turquoise summer cottage at the bottom of my garden. Before leaving South Africa, I had my own business, so it was a natural progression for me to set up on my own again once I had built strong relationships and a good client base in a

new country.

Having time is important to me and setting up on my own has meant that I get to choose how to spend my hours and days, so if I feel like taking a day off on a Friday (to enjoy some sunshine) and work on the Saturday (when it's raining) instead I can do that.

Serviced offices are frequently quite generic. How did you manage to convince the client that a design-led space was the way forward?

In this specific case it didn't take any convincing at all. SKS have worked alongside OSiT on numerous projects so we have built up a level of trust for what does and doesn't work with a heavily design-led space. On the first projects we







partnered on, there was some work that had to be put in to get the client's buy-in, but we were and still are exceptionally lucky that the client is so open-minded and willing to take risks and let us flex our design muscles.

What inspired the 'happiness' theme for this project?

There were a multitude of reasons, especially with wellness and mental health being such a huge focus now but it started with a small emotion of happiness just within the project team. Most of the team had worked together six years ago and were happy to be able to 'play' together again on this specific building. It started with that, then on our first site visit we all walked into an old meeting room that was called "The Happiness Lab". The room had a makeshift bar and a random disco ball in it and everyone just smiled – and the rest of it just fell into place after that.

What's your favourite room in this office?

You can't ask that!!!! Seriously, I think it changes every time you are in the building. The individual toilet cubicles do however, still make me smile as each and every one is different, so it's a bit like exploring whenever you open a toilet door.

Do you tend to work to a central theme with all your projects?

It really does differ with each client, their specific needs and their overall brief. Each client and business is unique so we try and focus on that. We do try and make sure that each time we create a built environment for one of our clients we have a reason why we design things the way we do. Sometimes a theme works, but other times it doesn't, as the functionality is much more important than the aesthetic.

You are quite an advocate for using colour in your interiors. Does this reflect in your personality too?

I love colour. I design with it, I wear it, my house looks like a rainbow has vomited inside it... so yes, I would say it probably reflects me a little bit. I have a friend who likes to call my personality and my work "Sam Pizzaz!"


How do you feel the current situation (Covid-19) will affect the work environment?

At this point in time it's a bit of a guessing game for all of us. Each business and each building will be affected in different ways. I would say it's less about the actual work environment and more about how we as humans change how we use our workplaces. I don't foresee companies suddenly throwing money at redesigning layouts, but rather looking at the spaces they have and how they can be utilised as

they are while still protecting staff and clients. This may mean staggered work days with more people working remotely or having fewer desks with larger circulation space, but only time will tell.

Do you have any tips for creating a home office?

If at all possible, from my own experience, try and have a space away from your home. If you can get an outside shed, that's ideal. If not, a separate room in the house. Trying to work in your lounge, bedroom or dining room is always going to be tough as you should be able to have a clear mental and physical break between home and work life.

A good, ergonomic chair is essential. Sitting on the sofa with a laptop is terrible for your posture. It encourages you to slump, put your head forward and that's going to put strain on your body. 





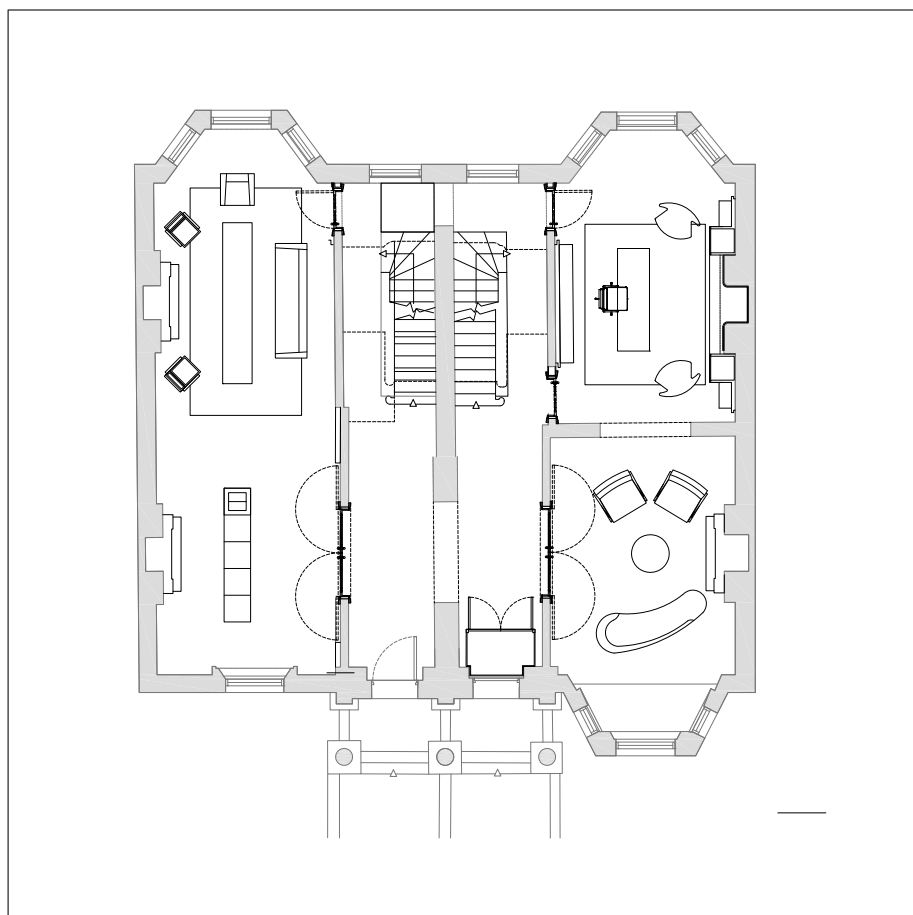


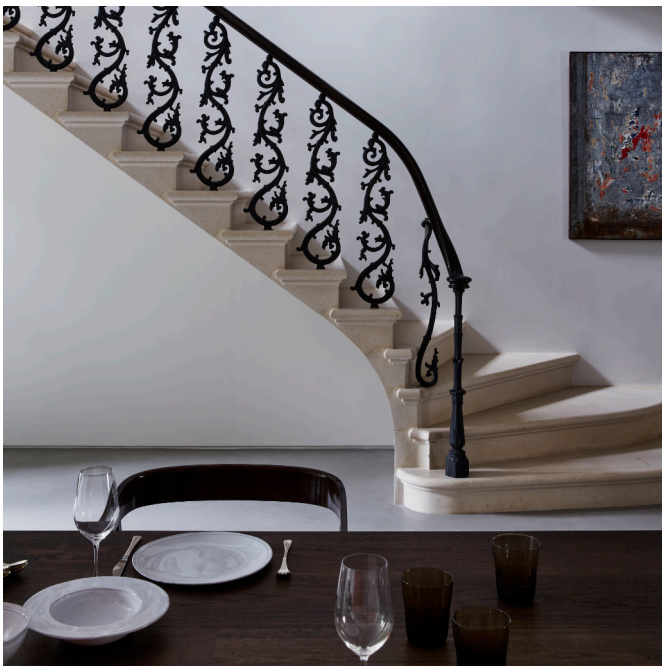
ORIGINATE ARCHITECTS

IN CONVERSATION WITH: DAVID SIVERSON

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN MUNRO







David Siverson is a partner at Originate Architects, a London-based practice working internationally on commercial and residential projects. Some of their previous projects include Burberry's London head office, the event space at the Science Museum as well as stunning, high-end residential properties around the city.

What was your background before Originate?

I'm originally from Canada and did my architecture degree in Nova Scotia on Canada's Eastern coast. I was lucky enough to get my first job with one of Canada's best known architects, Arthur Erickson, which was a transforming experience. The first job was actually a master planning project for Baghdad and the whole team spent three incredible months in Iraq. I always remember what he used to tell the team; 'Don't worry if you think something can't be done. Dream first; we'll figure out how to build it later.' I also worked for Peter Marino in New York on his residential projects where I first came across the term 'luxury minimalism' – where the emphasis is on the spatial elements of a design and using rich materials sparingly. There was a good crossover between the residential and retail teams discovering new and interesting materials.

Where does the company name come from?

I felt strongly that I didn't want my name on the firm. I wanted it to be obvious that it was a design studio where everyone had a voice since architecture is such a collaborative process.

I also wanted something to stand out from the usual 'studio something' names or a series of initials. The architecture firm of MAKE gave me the idea – I thought it was a brilliant name and chimed with my philosophy. A quick look through the synonym dictionary later...

How big is your team now?

We've always wanted to keep the office fairly small so that we know all the projects and that the clients know they are getting our individual attention. The largest we have been is 10 staff when we were doing the Burberry project and that felt too big. We try to average around 4-5 staff which is manageable and easier to keep the quality level high.

Your latest project in Little Venice has a stunning, clean aesthetic which really highlights design details and creates focal points of the artworks. Can you tell us a bit more about this project?

The art was one of the most important considerations for this project as the client is an avid collector. Right from the start we were doing interior elevations with the art photoshopped in to find the optimal hanging locations and their relation to the design. The property had been badly renovated in the 70's and much of the historic detail had been removed. It was a bold decision to add it back in when pure white walls are the default position for hanging such works; but we think respecting the age of the property is just as important and the contrast worked well.



Storage space in London apartments is such a challenge, yet your designs are minimal, and everything seems to have a place. How do you seem to accommodate storage so effortlessly in this project?

Storage is always difficult, and we have various strategies. Often, in historic properties especially, it is difficult to build in units as these tend to destroy the proportions of the space. Originally, they would have free-standing wardrobes. We tried to carry this idea through by designing all the modern elements as 'insertions' into the space. We used the same materials and made them seem like pieces of furniture. Oftentimes, we would use a continuous LED light strip behind them so that they would look detached from the wall.

The fixtures and fittings have clearly been carefully considered, many of which are artworks in themselves. How do you go about sourcing them?

The client had a very clear idea of what he wanted and was particularly interested in mid-century modern furniture from Brazil. We made suggestions to work with these statement pieces and the 1stdibs.com website proved invaluable for sourcing them.

Did you manage to reuse anything from the original build?

The building had lost a lot of its original fittings, so it was pretty much a complete restoration with a modern twist!

How do you keep up with all the new materials and products coming to market almost constantly?


It's always difficult finding the time! You can feel inundated by how much there is

out there, and it can be overwhelming. We find Pinterest a really good resource and anything that catches our eye, we file away. I think it's important to start with a really strong concept and then search for products that work with it. We do a lot of bespoke joinery and work with joiners to explore interesting techniques such as the wire-brushed, black stained larch we used for Little Venice. Also, going to stone yards and exploring interesting marbles is very inspiring and can totally revise our design if we find a unique sample.

What would be your dream project?

We have been very lucky in the projects that have come our way. I would look at this question in a slightly different way and say it's more of a dream client. It's a truism to say that the best clients make the best projects. If a client says; 'just do what you want', I panic! It's so much better if they come with a clear idea of what they want but are open to how that can be interpreted. I am quite happy to be challenged and pushed.

The question of the moment: How do you see the current situation (Covid-19) affecting interior design in the future?

These are very challenging times, and for offices, I do think it means more flexible working with a lot more being done from home. As we do both office fit-out and residential, we can see it from both sides of the equation. In all our projects we usually incorporate a home office area, even if it's a space we carve out of a staircase landing. I think in the future this will be central to how we look at the design and how certain underused areas like formal dining rooms can be quickly repurposed into an office space with the use of dual-purpose bespoke joinery. 







BESPOKE PROJECTS

UNIQUE GAGGENAU CUSTOMISATION

CUSTOMISE YOUR GAGGENAU APPLIANCES IN A WAY YOU NEVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE

THE ONLY LIMIT IS YOUR IMAGINATION!

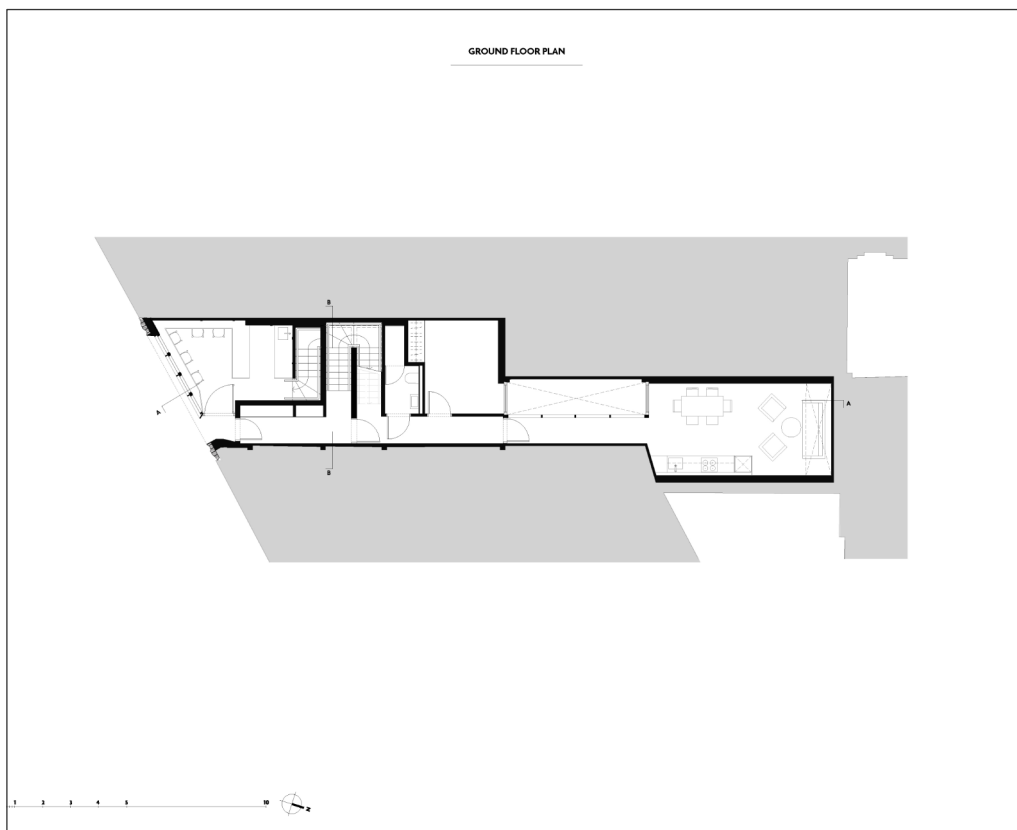
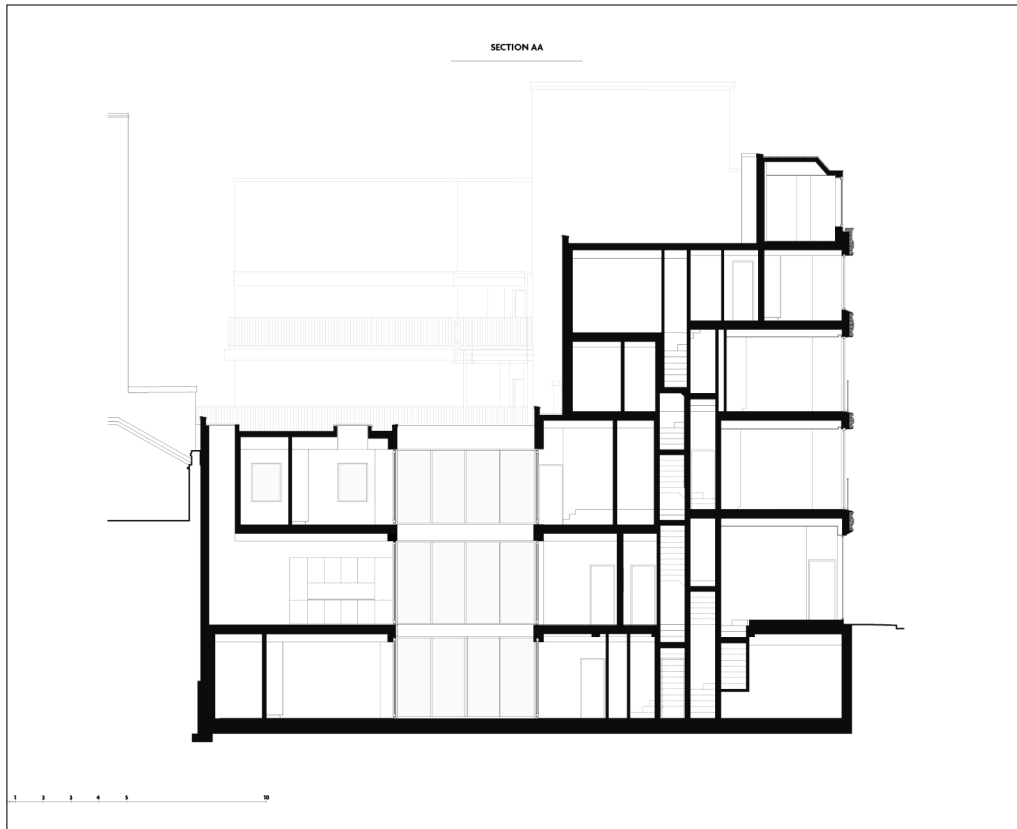
[BESPOKE-PROJECTS.COM](https://bespoke-projects.com)

BUREAU DE CHANGE ARCHITECTS

IN CONVERSATION WITH: BILLY MAVROPOULOS

PHOTOGRAPHY: NEIL KENYON





Tell us a bit about BDC Architects?

We are a 10 strong team of architects and designers based in East London. The practice was set up about seven years ago and since then we have worked on a wide range of residential, commercial and cultural projects in the UK, the US and Greece.

Where does the name, 'Bureau de Change' come from?

We came up with that name one night we were in Shanghai for the 2010 Expo. We were out with friends and we had just started thinking that we would like to set up a practice at some point in time. We quite liked the idea of calling it a bureau instead of a studio or atelier and that quickly led to 'bureau de change'. The name is a fun take on the actual bureau de change where people go to exchange money as it could also mean 'the office of change'. Little did we know at the time that for the first couple of years we'd regularly be receiving calls from people asking about exchange rates and other currency related issues.

I have often marvelled at the complexity of the brickwork on the Interlock in Fitzrovia. How do you even begin a project like this?

Our methodology is consistent in all of our projects. We look at the history, the context and content of the site and the building and try to weave them all together in as much of a seamless way as possible. We want our buildings and spaces to be embedded in the surrounding fabric but to also stand out at the same time – which is a sensitive balance to achieve.

In this case, we studied the area extensively and looked into its urban and social dynamics from the 1700's up until today. The key things that were consistent was the use of brick as the primary material making the buildings, the streets, the underground vaults and the fact that the area has been consistently occupied by craftsmen, designers, makers and creatives. Combining the two was what gave birth to what almost feels like a handcrafted brick building that seems old and new at the same time.

Did the client approach you wanting something vastly different or did you propose the idea to them?

The client's ambition and commitment were key in this project. They wanted to create something that was different, new and challenging but also create a building that wasn't 'shouting'. They believed in the project and the team and supported us through to the end. A building like this would never have happened without a client that believed in the value of design.

What influences or inspires your designs?

We get inspired by many things – the city around us, our travels, the work of other designers, artists and architects. We tend to look at a lot of historical references too. As making is so central to our design process we tend to gravitate towards objects and buildings (usually) of an older time, when every detail mattered independent of time and cost and craftsmen took pride in mastering their crafts.

Was designing and creating this facade as complicated as it looks?

The short answer is yes. The long answer: It took months of intense work to design and develop it. We drew every single one of the 5,000 bricks in 3D. There were months of coordination with Forterra (the amazing brick manufacturer that produced the bricks). Every brick has to work on its own but then also with the respective brick above and below it that are different shapes. This introduced many challenges – how much bricks







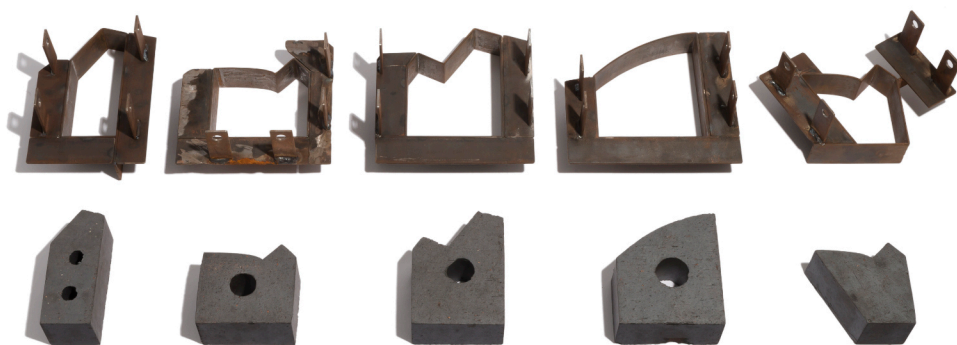
could protrude; what parts of them could be exposed to the elements; how they would remain structurally sound; how to avoid having the central holes in the clay visible, etc. Then we had to check the brick fabrication, make mockups and finally make sure that all bricks were numbered and grouped in boxes so the installers could put them up in the fastest, most efficient way.

Did the builders see the plans and immediately hate you?

Surprisingly not. Irvine Whitlock who installed the facade got on board with the idea quite quickly and their team on-site was amazing. They took our drawings (we made plans of every layer of bricks from the ground up, had all the bricks coded and numbered for them) and they just did it. No mistakes, no inaccuracies, no delays... nothing. There was something wonderful and fulfilling about the way they worked. They took pride in it. They didn't just want it to be right, they wanted it to be great. It was an absolute pleasure working with them.

The level of detail in your projects is quite remarkable. You seem to get involved in projects which create timeless focal points. Almost artworks in themselves. Do you have certain criteria you look for when tendering for projects or do clients approach you for your style?

Nowadays clients come to us because they have seen our work and they want something interesting, different, personal which is great. We have clients that are interesting and interested. They understand our work and their input only makes it better.






How has the current situation affected your working dynamic?

Surprisingly, we have adjusted to the situation and have made it work (so far). We thought that working from home would pose a great challenge as it limits the physical interaction with the team and the work. We can't print, make models, sketch on drawings and most importantly, we can't do it all with our team in the same space, around the same table. Interestingly, we have found other ways to make up for that and with everyone working from home we have found that the energy levels and creativity have increased. People want to be more involved and they use the design work as an outlet, so we have had some really nice work coming out of the studio during this time.

Do you think the future living and working environment will be affected by the current situation (Covid-19)?

Definitely. We are already looking at how we can predict and incorporate the potential lifestyle changes in our designs. The current situation will change the way we operate in our houses and what we expect from them. Same for our offices but also beyond that - the way we experience culture, art, how we socialise and also how we use outside space. Very interesting shifts are about to happen, and they will most definitely affect architecture and design in various ways.

What would be your dream project to work on?

I don't think we have a dream project as such. We enjoy challenging the 'expectation' one has of any space, building or function, I think we want to get our hands on as many different typologies as possible. We are currently working on private houses, residential developments, offices, hotels and installations – they are all special in some way and they all inform each other so I think the dream is just to keep adding to the mix. 





3v

Architectural Hardware Ltd.



Design • Consult • Deliver

www.3vahl.com | 01344 623 600 | enquiries@3vahl.com

CHAPTER 2

YOUR LONDON

SILENT CITY

Photography of a socially distant city









are
what

mile















MARKET

ERECTED

LUC'S

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS

PIZZAEXPRESS



Back to Business...

Home Grown, the sister club to Home House situated just moments away on Great Cumberland Place in the heart of Marylebone, brings together a community of entrepreneurs, investors and those with a passion for business from all sectors ranging from fashion to finance.

Reopening its doors on the 6th July, Home Grown will welcome its community home, reviving serendipity, surprise and networking opportunities that many have missed in recent months of lockdown.

At Home Grown we provide entrepreneurial pioneers with unique resources to enhance the value in their businesses and unlock their potential...

A beautiful space for BIG Ideas....

The Grade II Listed Townhouses, with interiors by Russell Sage Studio, feature seven business lounges, pitching and meeting rooms, a vast function space, premium dining and entertaining facilities, 35 bespoke bedrooms together with an enriched calendar of both virtual and in-house events that support both personal and professional development and the continued growth of networks.

Discover one of Marylebone's best-kept secrets for yourself. Visit us at homegrownclub.co.uk or contact us membership@homegrownclub.co.uk



WORKING LUNCH

Now more than ever, we understand the benefits of remote working. As we move deeper into this realm, we will no doubt see more people making use of serviced offices available to work from that offer temporary, contract or remote offices and meeting rooms, the flexibility of which is brilliant in today's economy – but even those could be perceived as ‘too much’.

I've been a remote worker for some time and as such, am always on the lookout for spaces in London that have decent wifi and excellent coffee.

I often work and take meetings in independent coffee shops, restaurants, and hotels, however being in one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world means that I can choose to spend time in spaces that inspire and delight me – spaces where you can be surrounded by art, by stark minimalism, by functional design or even just an incredible city view.

Here is a selection of some of my favourite city locations to work remotely, meet clients or simply sit and enjoy a good coffee and some inspiration.



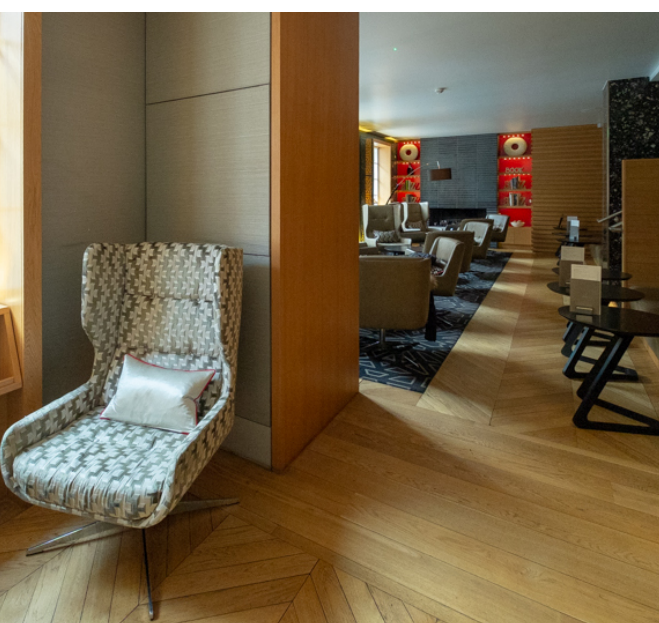
LONDON EDITION

10 BERNERS ST, FITZROVIA, LONDON, W1T 3NP



BFI - SOUTHBANK

BELVEDERE RD, SOUTH BANK, LONDON, SE1 8XT



APEX TEMPLE COURT

1-2, SERJEANT'S INN, TEMPLE, LONDON, EC4Y 1AG



THE CORINTHIA

WHITEHALL PL, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, SW1A 2BD

CHAPTER

3

LONDON
ART

ANDREW
McINTOSH



Ra! 250cm x 170cm



Perseus 48.3cm × 53.3 cm



Andromeda 48.3cm × 53.3 cm

You're from Scotland originally? What brought you to London?

I felt frustrated and a bit constrained by my career in Scotland. I was really hacking around trying to make ends meet doing commissions of anything whilst pushing my romantic landscapes without much success. I guess I realised that galleries were not going to be weighing in on them. So, time to change. Move and change.

Do you miss the peace and quiet?

Not really, I'm quite happy adapting to different environments. I find London exciting.

Did you always want to be an artist?

No, I was pretty sure I wanted to play basketball, but not that well equipped in reaching that goal. I've always been a dreamer though, so painting that place, somewhere else, seemed like a decent option.

Your work seems to focus on a fantastical perspective of an almost gloomy reality. Is that accurate?

No, I see it as a chance for hope. People occasionally react strongly towards the gloomy and also strongly the other way.

How would you describe your style?

My style is based on being exceptionally insecure about my skill, so I work extraordinarily hard to get anywhere then might destroy it and find something interesting so I can paint it again. Each layer can provide a history and then sometimes miraculously I've got a decent painting. In a style mixing romanticism, magical realism and surrealism.

You often create completely contrasting worlds within a single painting. A beautifully detailed landscape with a caravan, which has a whole other world inside the caravan. Scale and perspective are not related in any way to the rest of the work. How do you decide which worlds you bring together?

It changes with each painting. Sometimes the composition is easy, falling into place without much conscious thought. They are mostly instinctual but occasionally a massive battle.

Speaking of caravans, they feature in quite a few of your works. Do you have a thing for caravans?

No, I wanted to paint a large building but didn't know how to open up a large range of rooms. So, I thought I'll have to start with a small building. Going forward, the friendly shape of the caravan allowed a wider range of eerie and dour landscapes that were enlightened by the contoured presence.

Where do the ideas for your works come from?

Nowadays I take aspects that I like forward or try to improve on aspects that could be better. The big idea changes at a better pace without pushing it too much.

Finally, if you could own any three works of art, what would they be?

Tower of Babel by Pieter Brueghel

Garden of Earthly Delights by Bosch

The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere by Grant Wood





Modern Life is Rubbish 150cm x 90cm



The Machine 110cm x 80cm

KATHARINE
LE HARDY



A Little Less Slip 95cm x 95cm



Jet stream Reason 90cm x 90cm

In conversation with.... KATHARINE LE HARDY

Was art a big part of your life growing up?

Yes, I was always destined to be creative. Art and music were very much encouraged in my household growing up. Even when it came to career choices, for which I am very grateful.

When did you realise you wanted to be an artist?

I think I always knew. I didn't really ever consider anything else.

Your current work tends to focus on architecture deconstructed, however, your older work was seemingly more focused on landscapes of nature. Quite contrasting subject matters. Why the change?

I'm always influenced by my surroundings like most artists. When I first moved to London, I continued painting landscapes as I was probably subconsciously yearning for rural life, but increasingly I was drawn to structure and the documentation of urban life. It became my new normal.

Most people would walk past a building site and not think twice about it, yet you seem to see beauty in it. How did this come about?

Firstly, I like a challenge! I feel that, if I can manage to find the beauty in decay then I've achieved something. There is beauty in almost anything, you just need to stop and look. Translating that to a canvas is where the challenge lies. I also increasingly feel the need to document the change in the city I live in. I'm not trying to make a comment about regeneration, I just want to capture what went before.

How do you find the art world at the moment?

There is a good appetite for art at the moment. People are taking great pleasure in art of all forms and it's lovely to see.

If you could have any three artworks in your house, what would you choose?

There are many I'd choose differently perhaps now however these artists shaped me in the early days, therefore I think they are most important.

Lucien Freud - Reflection (self portrait)

Diebenkorn - Cityscape #1

Jenny Saville - Torso





Loyal Honcho 120cm x 100cm

PATRICK
BLOWER



Searching for the French Coast 103cm x 106cm

In conversation with.... **PATRICK BLOWER**

Patrick Blower is best known as a political cartoonist for the Daily Telegraph but has contributed to a variety of publications over the years including the Sunday Times, Private Eye, Guardian, and the Evening Standard. What you may not know, is that Patrick is also a brilliant artist whose works are in quite stark contrast to his political perspectives which you see in the newspaper.

You were born in Brussels. When and why did you come to the UK?

My father, although British, speaks French and was a young architect on-site at the British pavilion at the Brussels Expo in 1958 where he met my Belgian mother. Shortly after they married and I was born, they emigrated to Minneapolis but decided the USA wasn't for them, so returned to the UK where myself, and my siblings, grew up.

You've just moved studios from Waterloo to Kingston. Why the change?

Nine years in one place is enough. Change is intrinsically good. Dora Maar quipped that when Picasso wanted to change his style, he changed his women. I apply the same methodology but with studio spaces, not wives. It's just as invigorating but emotionally and financially less painful.

How did you get into political cartoons and when did you realise it could be a career?

Drawing has always been my default setting. Whether as a kid scribbling on the skirting boards of our house, or caricaturing the teachers through school, I had an easy facility. Later, I'd become obsessed with New York and went to live there, painting and drawing in between menial jobs. It was Williamsburg in 1982, a really bombed-out time and space. The place was crammed with young artists. Peter Schuyff had a studio next door, and I shared an apartment with Adam Fuss for a while. The work of these artists, even then, was amazingly resolved and I realised my own painting was lost. By contrast, however, the cartoony drawings I was doing just flowed out of me and I got some commissions. When I returned home, I went back on the dole and resumed painting until I hit a brick wall. My paintings were neurotic, I was sick of being stuck inside my own head and even sicker of having no money.

I put the brushes away and picked up the pen and ink, got a portfolio together, rented a desk space on Carnaby St, banged on every door in London, and forged a career as an illustrator and cartoonist, taking every job that came my way. Within ten years, I'd become the political cartoonist of the Evening Standard.

I was blown away by your work when I first walked into your studio. At which stage I had no idea you were a political cartoonist by day. Absolutely stunning seascapes and I wanted all of them. Do you have a passion for the ocean?

The limitless mutability of water amazes me, and it nowhere has such a range as in the ocean; it changes according to the light, the currents, the wind, what moves through it and the land mass it meets. It can be the most docile, soothing and seductive of the elements but also the most terrifying. My wife and I do long coastal walks, so we get to do a lot of looking. I try to draw the sea in front of me but am always frustrated with the outcome. I think it can only be drawn from memory because in the time that it takes for the eye to move from subject to paper and back again in order to make the next mark, the subject has mutated into something else.

Your style of painting is a completely different style to your political cartoons. Is this intentional?

Two points: with regards to subject matter, I'm very consciously trying to achieve something different in my paintings. My cartoons are full of people and are of the moment. They stand or



Ave of Utopias I



Ave of Utopias II

fail on their clarity and have to be instantly 'gettable'. My paintings, by contrast, are largely devoid of the human figure and, hopefully, they transcend the moment and the political affairs of men. Standing by a cliff, witnessing the implacable power of nature as boiling waves lash the rocks, knowing this drama will play out into eternity long after our species has wiped itself out, is a comfort, paradoxically.

Secondly, is the matter of how I make the paintings. My cartoon drawing is rapid, fluid and gestural and I don't want to duplicate this in my paintings. When I paint a seascape, I don't want it to be an approximation, it has to have exactitude. When I paint a wave, it has to be a specific wave, not just any wave I could've made up in my head. In order to achieve this, I've rejected the gestural for a more mechanical way of painting. I'm not going into the process that I've developed for achieving this but it's slow, it's restrained, and I get immense pleasure from seeing my image build up so that up close, the marks look random and abstract but at a distance they are resolved into a recognisable form.

Some of your previous work includes an almost dystopian perspective of cities, yet beautifully portrayed. What is the story behind this series?

Since coming to London to study, I've only ever lived here and in New York. The urban environment is what I am. The man-made, straight lines, geometry, systems, tunnels, machines, buildings. These are things of mathematical harmony, yet cities often seem on the verge of chaos or advanced entropy. I like doing these spontaneous drawings or paintings using gestural marks that hover between abstraction and representation. My problem with them is that I never know when they're complete and could endlessly add another mark here or eliminate one there. This is where they start to get obsessive and neurotic.

Who or what inspires you?

Getting up early after a good night's sleep, rolling up my sleeves and getting to work.

Artists are generally quite independent souls as you're in the studio alone a lot. How is the current situation (Covid-19) affecting you? Or is it?

I was living a kind of lockdown life long before the coronavirus came along. Studio solitude, home, family and lots of walking. Although our studios have been closed for the duration, I've brought some materials back home and have turned the spare bedroom back into a studio which I'm sharing with my student son and furloughed daughter who are doing creative stuff too. I'm doing some smaller acrylic paintings and still enjoying the slowing down of time. Constraints can be turned to advantage. Meanwhile, the whole house rattles because my wife is downstairs on her turbo bike furiously cycling about 100 miles in our kitchen. And my older son who is living in Madrid and who's been living through a really draconian lockdown, zooms us regularly. We've a good life and I acknowledge my good fortune.

How do you see your work evolving?

Difficult one. For now, I'm sticking with monochrome blue seascapes but I'd like to introduce some colour and other forms of nature into my work. During the lockdown I've been walking in





The Unseen Copy



Richmond Park a lot and drawing and photographing some spectral dead, oak tree trunks. They stand alone, silvery white against the impossibly blue skies and the vivid yellow/green grass. I want to avoid metaphors in my painting at all costs, so these trees don't represent anything, I just like the forms.

Finally, if you could have three pieces of art on your walls (anything) what would you choose?

Vermeer - View of Delft. When I finally saw this in the Mauritshuis in The Hague, I got a visceral thrill. The apparently artless collection of characters in the foreground just has me endlessly wondering what they're talking about. The city skyline is broadly in shadow so the rooftops behind that have escaped the cloud cover, shimmer with an intense orange. Vermeer captures the still, silvery glassiness of water broken in places by the lightest of breezes, that makes you think this is an exact moment in time, not an approximation.

Picasso - Family of Saltimbanques. Another painting that had my stomach in butterflies as I rounded the corner in the gallery in Washington to see it for the first (and only) time. A big painting suffusing a wonderfully enigmatic atmosphere. It withholds its meaning to the last.

Neil Welliver - Birches (2005) Closer to abstraction than nature painting, it's the hyperreal colour and the decisiveness of the marks that draws me. Whilst capturing the luminosity of his beloved Maine in winter, Welliver's picture has a ruthless reductivity and elimination of the extraneous. It's hard to deduce this from the image alone, but Welliver created his studio paintings in the most methodical of ways by beginning at the top left of the painting and working his way down, without revision or repainting, to the bottom right at which point the painting was declared finished. I like that; proper work ethic like digging a trench from A to B.



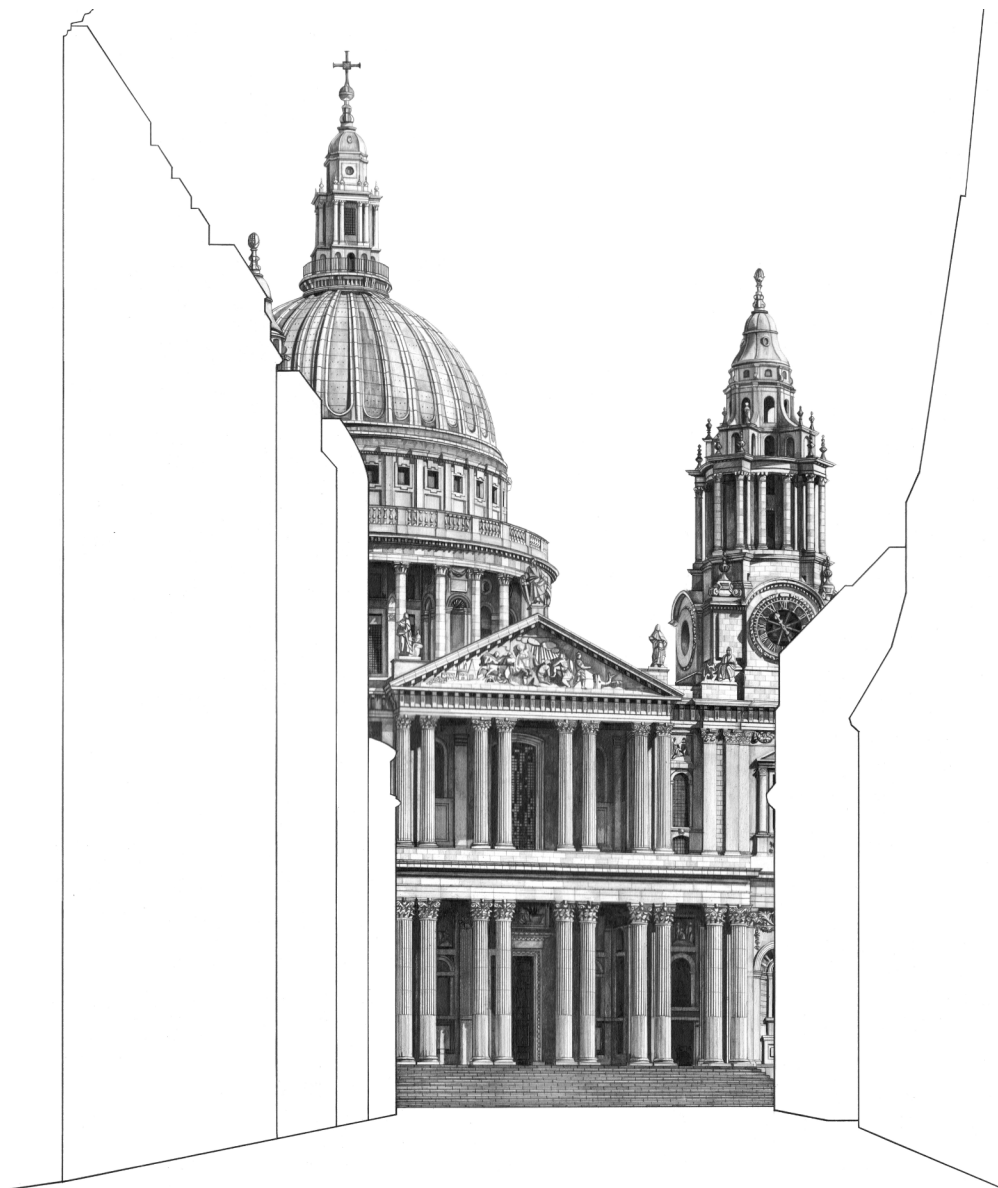


Desert Approach 185cm x 100cm



Atlantic Crossing

MINTY
SAINSBURY



St. Pauls Cathedral No. 7 43cm x 63cm

When did you move from Scotland to London?

I've been living in London for seven years, which has gone incredibly quickly. I moved down South to go to University in Cambridge in 2010 so it has been a long time since I left Scotland.

Your drawings are so intricate, yet you balance negative space so effectively which makes them almost minimal. Can you tell me more about your style?

I guess this style of depicting a street view came about because I wanted to focus the viewers eye on one particular building to appreciate all the detail and complexities in that one facade. To do this, I chose to leave the context blank and remove all the clutter and distractions from shop signs, advertisements, bus stops and cars in order to look solely at the architecture.

I wonder if this way of looking at a street might have come from studying architecture where I spent a lot of time model making. Often for a project I would make a site model with all the existing buildings and landscape made in a monochrome coloured card and the new proposed building made from another material which would make it stand out from its surrounding. In this way you are showing the building in context so you can understand the height of the

neighbouring buildings and the street width but focusing predominantly on just one building. This method of representing a building or idea might have influenced how I then chose to draw.

Having studied architecture, you clearly have a passion for the built environment. Where did this love come from?

I often wonder this as I grew up in a very small village in Scotland surrounded by woods and mountains and very little architecture! From a young age I really loved historic buildings and in particular houses, I used to make scrapbooks of cut out images from magazines and newspaper property advertisements. It's hard to know how these things come about but I think I've always been really impressed by architecture.

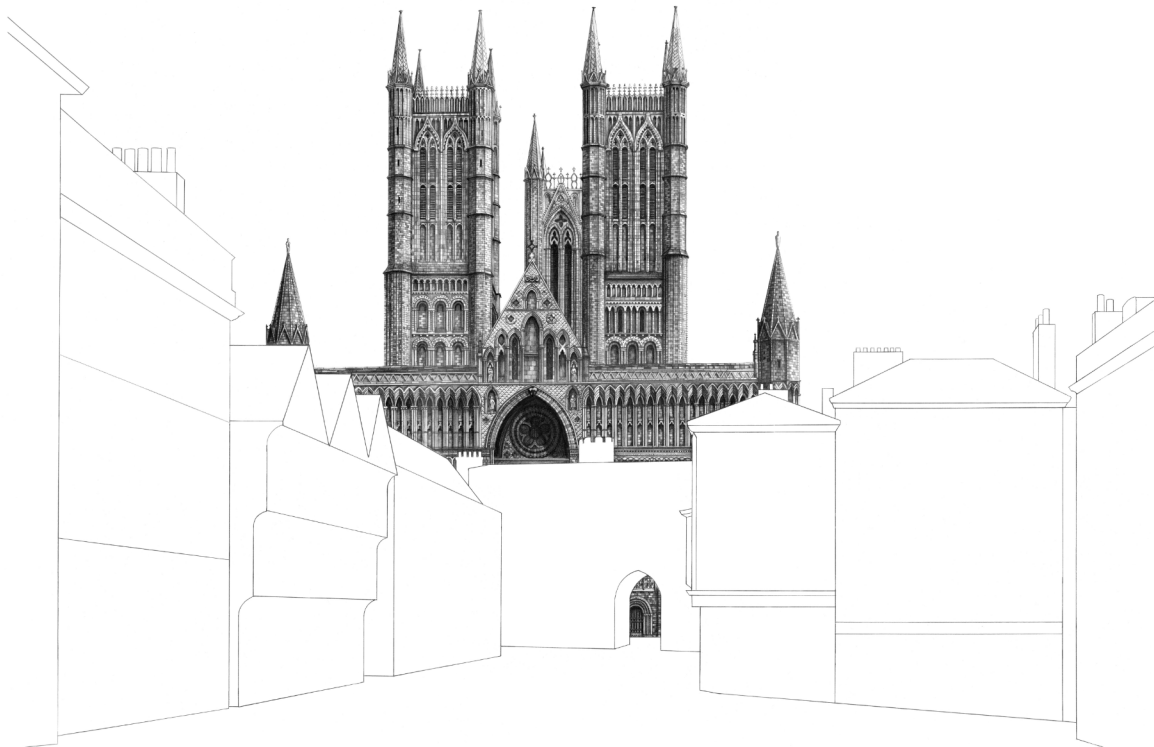
Would you say, you're less interested in modern structures?

No, I love modern architecture! Honestly, I didn't know very much about contemporary architecture when I started at university, but I grew to really enjoy designing and appreciating modern buildings. I spend a lot of time traveling to sketch and photograph historic buildings for drawings, but I also make trips specifically to go see modern buildings too. I love drawing older and highly detailed





San Salute Venice



Lincoln Cathedral



buildings whereas with contemporary architecture I prefer minimalist uncluttered designs which probably don't lend themselves so well to my drawing style.

Do you have a list of structures you intend to draw or do you tend to see a building and then want to draw it?

There are lots of things on my drawing list. Often on a trip I might see 30 buildings that I want to draw but I just don't have the time. I went to New York a few years ago and there are so many buildings I saw on that trip that I'd love to finally draw.

Would you ever want to get back to architecture and design your own projects?

Yes, definitely! I love what I'm doing at the moment as an artist, but I've not lost the love for design. (We probably won't be retiring till we're 75 so there's plenty of time to experiment right!)

Very true! Has the current lockdown situation affected you and your work much?

I normally work in a shared artist's studio in Soho, I've had to move my work home for the time being. Luckily, I think my work is quite portable, I just need paper and pencils and some space for my drawing board. This year there have been a number of exhibitions which have been cancelled due to gallery closures. I have work in an exhibition which was due to open just as lockdown begun and ends in a week so sadly no one has managed to actually attend the show. I think the economic impact of Coronavirus is bound to have an effect on many artists in the coming months.

What do you do when you're not drawing?

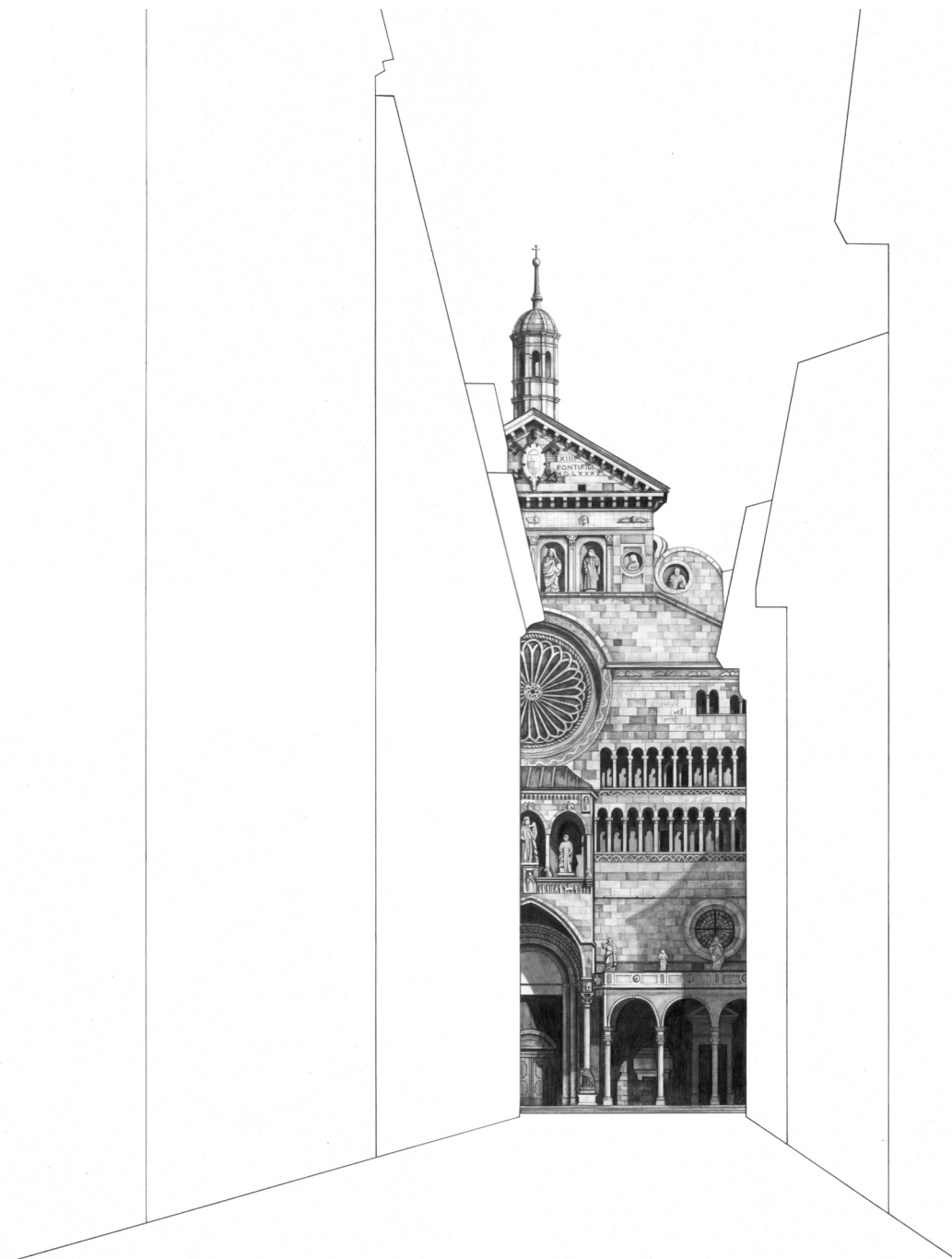
Like every millennial in London I've gotten really into my indoor plants and propagating in the last few years. I started out with three but worryingly I think I probably have closer to 60. I'm now gifting plants to any friend who shows even the slightest interest in my gardening pastime. Other pastimes include European travel, comedy and music gigs, podcasts, reading, walking, quizzing, coffee, debriefing on film and TV, yoga, running, cooking and photography.

And finally, if you could have three pieces of art on your walls (anything) what would you choose?

I'd go for a snowy impressionist painting, perhaps because we're being spoilt by the sunny weather right now, *The Magpie* by Monet.

Also something architectural but still keeping with the impressionists, one of Alfred Sisley's paintings - *The Church at Moret in the Morning Sun*.

And lastly, to throw in a bit of colour, *The Window* by Pierre Bonard.



Cremona Cathedral

All images © Minty Sainsbury 2020



CHRISTOPHER
NOULTON



Silent voice miniature landscape

In conversation with.... CHRISTOPHER NOULTON

You have a truly incredible portfolio of work. From working on album covers for The Police, The Cure and Roxy Music, to building the miniature sets and characters for the first two series of Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends. And all of this was before you became a painter.

How have you managed to remain relatively anonymous in a world of instant media?

I guess that's because I have been working hard on my paintings over the past few years, building up a body of work that I am happy with both conceptually and technically before putting it out there. I'm now with the James Freeman Gallery in London and have had two exhibitions with them; Another Country and Ages of Innocence, so my work is at last getting the exposure I want both in the gallery and online.

Your paintings have followed a similar nostalgic theme and tone over the years. Can you tell me more about this?

Looking back, I have always been obsessed with made worlds and the way they reflect our real world. For many years I helped to realise fictional worlds for others both in film and television productions, and this naturally led me to want to make a world of my own, some place back in time which I can visit whenever I want. As the author L. P. Hartley wrote in the opening lines from *The Go-Between*; "The past is another country... they do things differently there." I have always loved the fantastic concept that that line conjures up, well to me anyway, that the past still exists in some parallel real time, and to visit that place as a time traveler, I guess would be incredible. I use painting as a form of time travel hence my paintings are anchored in that past narrative. In addition, I'm also on a quest to find the fairytale in the everyday and the poetic in the mundane.

Does one painting inspire the next?

Yes, absolutely so. Take the topiarist in the background of *The Cutters* for example. I spent several weeks on that painting and so had plenty of time to ponder on who he was. That led to a new piece called *Lucky Gilchrist* (the name I gave him) which allowed me to explore his backstory in more detail. Another example would be *The Sentinels*. I first painted the girl in that painting for a piece titled; *I am Still in Touch With Your Presence Dear*. She is seen visiting her ancestral home, an Art Deco mansion that I feature often in my work. I became intrigued by her story and so this subsequently led to a third piece called; *The Paper Wedding*, where we see more of these strange paper chain children at play as well as her mother and father rendered in paper on their wedding day.

You tend to have recurring themes in your work, almost like they all come together to tell a story. Is there a whole narrative at play?

I guess there are several narratives at play in this fictional village of mine, all running alongside each other, just like in the real world. Having said that, although each picture is a standalone piece, when hung side by side you can see quite clearly that the characters are all interconnected in some way. Aerial views are also a common theme I seem to return to. I have always been interested in seeing the world from above. The aerial view





Army of Me



landscapes I paint are inspired by my years of working as a special effects model maker in the film industry, where most days I could be found walking across a miniature landscape, staring down at the tiny people and streets I'd made. There is a visual silence in these paintings if that makes sense. We are up so high that we can only just hear the distant drone of the cars and people beneath.

Are you busy with any new works at the moment?

Yes, I have several paintings underway. They all feature the cutter girls, busy making full size paper doppelgangers of the villagers who have mysteriously disappeared. I knew aspects of this Coronavirus lockdown would find their way into the work in some way or another. It's been so strange driving through London's eerily deserted streets on my way to my studio recently. All of the characters that I used to see are no longer there.

Your whole world seems to be one of creating. What do you do when you're not creating?

I'm sure I'm not alone in saying that I find the creative part of one's mind never really switches off. Your radar is always switched on for new ideas that can feed into a painting. Either that or you are chewing over a problem you are having with a work in progress. Live music and Guinness do help provide a distraction though. I love nothing more than gigging with friends.



The Cutters

Finally, if you could own any three works of art, what would they be?

Stanley Spencer's *The Resurrection*, Cookham (1924-1927). I have often fantasised about a scene like this happening on the old council estate I grew up on. All the old faces coming back from the dead. Stirring stuff.

Marc Chagall's *The Birthday* (1915). This totally captures the feeling of being in love. It features Chagall and Bella, the painter's soon-to-be bride levitating as if the little room they are in can no longer contain them or their love for each other.

Any one of Grayson Perry's pots featured in his *The Charms of Lincolnshire* exhibition from 2006. They were made to sit alongside the Victorian era artefacts he borrowed from the Lincoln Museum that had a strong emotional charge for him.

For a detailed overview of Christopher's paintings and work for television and film go to www.christophernoulton.co.uk His book *No Thro Ro* can also be purchased on his website.



The Sentinels



Voice of the Beehive

All paintings and photographs © Christopher Noulton 2020





HANDMADE IN ENGLAND

BESPOKE INDOOR CYCLE STORAGE SOLUTIONS



www.cycab.co.uk | hidemybike@cycab.co.uk

