



DESIGN STORIES

FRANCES AND DOMINIC BROMLEY, SCABETTI
SCABETTI WAS FOUNDED BY DOMINIC BROMLEY IN 1999. HAVING STUDIED INDUSTRIAL DESIGN AND THEN WORKED FOR A DESIGN CONSULTANCY, DOMINIC FOUND HIMSELF DRAWN TOWARDS THE WORLDS OF SCULPTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN. AND SO, SCABETTI WAS BORN. FRANCES BROMLEY (ALSO A GRADUATE OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN) BECAME MUCH MORE INVOLVED A FEW YEARS LATER AND SCABETTI IS NOW HEADED BY THE HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAM.

WHAT DOES SCABETTI REPRESENT AS A DESIGN STUDIO?

Scabetti approaches projects with the heart of an artist and the mind of a designer. In other words, we strive to come up with an artistic piece appropriate to the setting, but use our years of experience in design to realise the final work.

HOW DO YOU CONTINUE TO INNOVATE IN THE LIGHTING, SCULPTURE AND INTERIOR ACCESSORIES SECTORS?

It's hard not to get influenced by all the great design around currently, but we've always tried to not bow down to current trends, and explore our own ideas. It may sound narcissistic, but we're quite often inspired by aspects of our own work and try to then develop those elements that may have come about accidentally. This is actually how much of our work comes about.

WHAT HAS BEEN SCABETTI'S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE?

Probably Shoal No.8, a 12m tall and 12m wide suspended sculpture of stainless steel fish that we created for the Fisketorvet Shopping Mall in Copenhagen. This was a challenging project on so many levels, from getting initial concepts approved to engineering such an unusual form, to physically installing a piece of that scale. The final result, however, was so worth all the time and energy.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR SCABETTI AS A BUSINESS?

There's probably no single big challenge, but like many small businesses we struggle with never having enough time to achieve all the things we want to achieve. We have a sketch book full of ideas, but never seem to have the time to develop them into real things! Working with other makers locally (part of our business ethos) can throw up a whole set of additional problems too. But then, nobody said it was going to be easy...!

“ I have always loved the fluid sculptural lines of Scabetti's sculptures, especially 'Shoal' which I have in my families Devon located beach house. The soft matt bone china fish disperse layers of light and shadow beautifully and seem to glow from within as if truly alive.”

Katharine Pooley

HOW DO YOU REMAIN COMPETITIVE, WITHOUT SACRIFICING YOUR EMPHASIS ON CRAFTSMANSHIP AND QUALITY?

Our background in product design and other industries means that we're constantly checking

if we're making our work in the most efficient way and to the best quality. We love production methods and try to incorporate this into our work as much as possible to keep our prices competitive.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SCABETTI?

We're very excited about a ceiling mounted bone china light collection we're currently developing, based on the installation we did at Bristol Airport last year. And, despite it being over 10 years now since we first created Shoal, we still see so many directions we can take it in the coming years.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SCABETTI ON YOUR 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY, WHAT DOES THE STUDIO ASPIRE TO LOOK LIKE IN 20 YEARS TIME?

We love the variety of what we do now, whether it's developing our own smaller scale work or working on bigger projects. In 20 years time, we'd love to have built up our own collection further, still be invited to collaborate on exciting projects and perhaps move into other areas of art and design.

www.scabetti.co.uk



INTERIOR DESIGNER MAGAZINE TAKES A LOOK THROUGH THE DOORS OF SOME OF THE UK'S BEST SHOWROOMS. O&A LONDON HAS TEAMED UP WITH THIBAUT VAN RENNE TO CREATE THE CHICEST OF SHOWROOMS. WORDS BY JADE TILLEY.

I always get a sense of pure joy when I hear about collaborations in the industry. I really believe that the very essence of what we do begins and ends in powerful collaborations and creative partnerships that make the design sector so brilliantly special.

When powerhouse designers work together I silently exclaim 'HOORAY' (so as not to scare my desk neighbours) and when suppliers and product designers share resources, be they far flung workshops or gifted artisans, I am always so excited to see what delights they might produce. Back in March O&A London and Thibault Van Renne revealed their beautiful new showroom at Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, a glorious gallery style space that oozes appeal and projects a very sophisticated design experience. O&A London has combined the talents of its lead designers, Anna Agapova and Oleg Klodt, with the deep luxury pile of Thibault Van

Renne's sumptuous collections, to create a new showroom that has a sense of harmony and power, as directed by the designs within. Taking a step back before we dive straight into the showroom, O&A London was launched in response to the amount of requests that Anna and Oleg received for bespoke pieces at Oleg Klodt Architecture & Design. The desire for furniture designs straight from the duo's sketchbooks was becoming more and more common-place, so much so that they decided that O&A London was the sensible next step in their design journey. Having a solid base in Moscow, with a flagship showroom and a clientele that knows and craves for the brand, Anna and Oleg started to evolve their design story and O&A London now stands as the perfect platform for showcasing the stunning lighting and statement furniture that combines the beauty and elegance of the Art Deco period, with the strength and architectural prowess that Oleg

Klodt is so known for. Anna Klepikova, Head of the Interior Design at O&A London, was there to meet me at the showroom during my visit. The space, perched on the third floor of the North dome, perfectly encapsulates what O&A London and Thibault Van Renne represent, it is seductively dark and moody with a deep connection to nature and materiality, which combine in such a way to create luxurious designs with timeless appeal. As the showroom itself is angled on a corner, it has an unusual entrance feel, like opening up into a portal, presenting treasures inside. The first piece to grab my attention is the orb-like lighting installation, reflecting off the mirrored wall, the Meissa light is all consuming and bold in the way it is suspended from the ceiling. There was some discussion during the design process as to where to sit this piece, as it has all the dramatic qualities of a staircase light installation, but, without suspending it from one of the DCCH



domes itself, the designers elected to place it at the front of the showroom, and it really does draw you in.

The walls and ceilings are painted in a dark and evocative shade, almost a petrol blue, with spotlights coming down to accent the hanging rugs and pieces of furniture that have been sparsely used but perfectly positioned. A cast bronze console table sits against a TVR rug backdrop, throwing down the sharp contrast of unforgiving metal with the deep pile of a Thibault Van Renne rug. The console, NEKKAR looks at home next to TVR's signature rug display, the huge bed/platform that draws you over to leaf through the rugs like the pages of a book. I am assured the pairing of the console and bed unit are a happy coincidence, but one that works so

well in this showroom space.

All around the periphery of the showroom, walls are clad in wallcoverings and sheathed in TVR's rug collection, light bouncing off the delicate use of metallic tones and inviting you in to touch and experience the layered artistry that goes into each and every piece in the showroom. We then move inward to the central, immovable star of the show, a sofa, ANILAM, that encapsulates part Anna and part Oleg in balance. It is masculine and overtly powerful, with its metal frame and solid back panel, but is softened by a gentle use of fabric and accessorised with cushions from Anna's fabric collection. Anna Agapova is a lover of fabrics and it is her work that has brought another dimension to Oleg Klodt Architecture & Design and then to O&A



London. Each fabric and wallcovering collection has a beauty and serenity that balances the tough metals and solid materials of the furniture collections. From waves off a cliff edge to Scottish heather, mollusks, pyramids and the picturesque highland landscape, Anna takes inspiration from her travels and the qualities of the natural environment, fusing a richness of fabric with the gentle natural forms of a shell or Celtic design. O&A London continues its passion for collaboration in its work with the brands and makers that it pairs with to ensure the very best quality. If they need to source materials from Chile, that's where they go. If they need to centralise production in Italy, that's what they do. Holland & Sherry, the London fabric house,

works with O&A London to bring designs to life in another collaboration that marks their passion for UK based design.

The launch of the showroom arrived only a month before the team jetted off to Salone del Mobile, so this Spring has been a hectic and demanding time for the designers, but so worth it. Thibault Van Renne and O&A London presented a collaborative stand in Milan, in their now signature gallery style and the response during the exhibition was phenomenal. As Anna Klepikova takes me through every facet of the showroom and what the designers have been doing of late, you can see that the passion and enthusiasm for the designs is infectious and this is why the team is seeing so much success for the brands.

The new artistic space is the result of conceptual re-examining of the retail idea. The designers have succeeded in creating a stylish interior, which reflects and reinforces the principles of the TVR's brand, telling the brand's story and creating an immersive customer experience. Oleg and Anna have beautifully complemented the space with the O&A London collection of furniture, in which they combined the cultural traditions of different countries and eras while using ultra-modern materials and utilising the latest technology, making sure the areas are all infused with one another and intertwined. I advise you to take a moment to visit the space.

stroll quietly around the showroom and enjoy the atmosphere created by these power house brands.

O&A London and Thibaut Van Renne

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