



I was born in Italy and grew up there until I was 12 yrs old. My family then moved to the States and I spent most of my life in New York. My career started out in Italian home furnishings. Working for the Italian Government Trade offices I helped Italian artisans to design goods that would appeal to the US market. It was an amazing stepping stone as I travelled to all the European shows with the suppliers to discover new trends, and market Italian products.

Designer Background continued:

I was then recruited by Valentino (the fashion house) to launch their home furnishings division, creating/sourcing Italian luxury home goods for the Valentino global brand, which was an amazing experience. Finally, I took a job with a very large Italian home furnishings importer that sold high end residential luxury goods to the large department stores, top end retail stores, interior designers and royalty. This is where my love for interior design strongly developed as I worked closely with worldwide designers and buyers creating bespoke goods for their clients. I absolutely loved this work and continued for 10 years, before launching my own Interior Design firm, Hamilford Design.

How would you describe your personal interior design style?

My personal design style is more modern elegance, but always comfortable. I take the "less is more" approach and prefer fewer large pieces in a room, it has more of an impact and doesn't confuse the eye. I prefer a neutral palette with a splash of colour, however, I love layering textures and creating depth. I think this is key. I will mix leathers, with bronze metal ware, with linen wallpapers, and a soft lux rug, it's all about the textures!

Where does your design inspiration come from?

I think all designers take inspiration from their surroundings. It could be anything from a very cinematic scene in a movie, or a luxurious hotel

lobby. I consistently photograph anything that inspires me, but I would say most of my inspirations come from going to the European shows where you can see so much diversity in design and colour that I always walk away with a suitcase full of ideas!

In what direction do you feel that design is moving towards in a general sense?

I think that clients are much more knowledgeable about the possibilities of options for interior design due to all the social media. However, I do think that most people still want a comfortable home no matter how luxurious the home furnishings are. It must be "approachable" furniture, to curl up in. I find that clients are still drawn to the neutral colours of taupes and greys as they are so easily workable in any surrounding.

Name five key themes to consider when approaching design in the future:

One: Scale is super important with furniture when designing a house. If you have large headboards, or bookcases, you need to make sure your lamp lighting is tall and bold. I've seen some many interiors where people put small table lamps, for example, on bedside tables, and they just disappear against the background.

Two: Lighting: as everyone probably knows, lighting is key. You can create different moods by just modifying your lighting. Lighting creates depth in a room, so by simply adding some LED lights in a bookcase, you have created a showcase and it becomes a feature.

Three: Technology: There is nothing worst that seeing a load of cables behind a computer, or 5 remote controls etc. Technology helps in eliminating all the extras you may need for the house. With an electric lighting system, you can simplify and minimise the number of remotes you need, and electrical boxes, TV radio equipment etc.

Four: Timeless Design: We try to create a space that lasts for years to come. Even though we may add a special flair, or bright colour to a room, we try to keep the space from not "dating" and keeping it timeless.

Five: I think providing a comfortable house that isn't all dolled up and not realistic to live in with a family is very important. It is easy to get caught up in a piece of furniture that looks stunning, but in the end, if it's not practical, then it'll never be used!

If you could offer one piece of advice when it comes to product design, what would it be?

When choosing products make sure they have longevity and will not date. There are so many trends out there that do not stand the test of time.

How important are The International Design & Architecture Awards as recognition of talent and achievement?

It's great! For Designers, it's like the Oscars of the Design world, so it's an honour to be recognised and an opportunity to show the world our work.

