

HARPER'S BAZAAR

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THE ART ISSUE

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INTERIORS

SHAPE AND FORM

Meet the interior designer giving a fresh twist to art deco

BY CLAIRE BRAYFORD

THERE IS A 1920S UNDERTONE TO DECORATING RIGHT NOW. IT IS not the roaring *Great Gatsby* pastiche of a decade ago, but an elegant nod to the era's geometric shapes, clean lines and sumptuous textures and colours.

Capturing this aesthetic with a light, modern touch is Linda Boronkay, one of London's most sought-after designers. 'The movement is among the most beautiful I have ever come across,' says the founder of her eponymous multi-award-winning design studio. 'It's like a love letter to craftsmanship – the expensive and extensive use of materials such as lacquer and ebony is so exquisite. I'm salivating just talking about it.'

Born in Budapest to an architect



A detail of the Whiteley apartment



Linda Boronkay in the Designer Collection apartment she created at the Whiteley



The Whiteley apartment featuring a Gergei Erdei screen, a Joe Armitage lamp and Osanna Visconti candle holders

father and antique-collector mother, she first worked as a model, using the job 'as a passport to the world's major cities'. The adventure – which took her to iconic venues such as the Boom Boom Room at the Standard, High Line in Manhattan, Venice's Hotel Danieli and the Tasmania Ballroom in Hong Kong – inspired her to move into the field of interior design.

'Those rooms give you a really strong sense that you're about to have the time of your life,' she reflects. 'I have always tried to create similarly magical worlds.'

While studying for a BA in interior design and technology at university in London, Boronkay won a prestigious award at the British Institute of Interior Design and went on to work with one of the judges, Tom Dixon ('my style superhero'). What followed was a series of stints at studios, including Martin Brudnizki's, before she was snapped up by Soho House to be its design director.

In 2020, she left to set up her own practice in Clerkenwell. Today, she is sprinkling her theatrical magic on spaces ranging from a Paris restaurant and a members' club in Beirut to five-star hotels in Rome and Prague and a private chalet in Switzerland. Recently, she has sensitively revived one of the luxury apartments at Bayswater's art deco dowager the Whiteley. Contemporary pieces – a mirror by Boldizar Senteski in the hallway, a floor lamp by Joe Armitage in the lounge – sit interspersed with vintage furniture and accessories from mid-century masters. 'I think interiors have to empower and be a source of expression, just like clothing,' says the designer. 'Every element speaks volumes about who you are.'

Boronkay's work is known for its cinematic quality, an atmosphere she creates in part by choosing everyday objects that have been elevated to fine art, such as the Osanna Visconti bronze candle holder adorning a table or the hand-painted screen by the former Gucci designer Gergei Erdei. They are the kind of interiors that make you long for 'a room of one's own' to lounge in, perhaps on a velvet sofa, while sipping a martini and wearing a slick of red lipstick.

For more information, visit linda.boronkay.com.

Candle holder, £1,208, Osanna Visconti



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