

A LICENCE TO CREATE

HAVE YOU DESIGNED YOUR OWN FURNITURE PIECES FOR A COLLECTION OR IS THIS SOMETHING YOUR STUDIO IS LOOKING TO DO IN THE FUTURE? THESE DESIGNERS HAVE WITH EXCITING RESULTS

There has been a recent increase in the appetite for designers creating and launching their own furniture and accessory collections within the industry. Driven by their clients' desires for specific pieces, or their own need to craft and create, reflecting their design studio ethos and quest of quality, it is an interesting step to take to stress the value and importance of craftsmanship, and ultimately, control over the design.

Interior Designer Magazine asks a group of designers who have all embarked on their own beautifully crafted collections, to discuss what sent their studio in this direction and how it alters and enhances their work as designers.



Dafto coiffeuse, Tollgard Design Group

FROM MACRO TO MICRO

Staffan Tollgard CO-FOUNDER, TOLLGARD DESIGN GROUP

I have been designing products for mass production for the past seven years. I was actually approached by Contardi, the Italian lighting brand, to see what my appetite was to start designing products for them. This initial request has now grown to a number of lights for them, a rug collection for JAB, an ongoing collection of furniture for Porada and we are working on several projects with a few further brands as well. Most interior designers will have designed a bespoke piece, if not several, for a number of projects, so the idea of designing products is not such a strange idea for us. What changed for me is having to think more about the cost of materials, specific techniques for mass production and making sure each design isn't just fit for one client but for a large clientele.

One of the best architects/designers turned product designer I think is the Dutch Architect Piet Boon whose soft, neutral palette looks fantastic across all types of interior products.

I myself now have a collection of products spanning a few typologies in lighting, rugs and furniture. I love to get a good brief of what a company is after or simply a typology they are missing. Not always the case though and quite often, Filippo Castellani (who designs with me in the studio) and I simply chat about ideas that we've both had and take it from there.

I have loved going from the "macro" of an entire project to the "micro" of the details of a single screwhead on a product. I have also enjoyed the trips to the factories, talking to the makers and craftsmen about the pieces and collaborating on the evolution of them.

Our long-term goal is to have a strong product design division designing for some of the best brands in the world, alongside our own production of Tollgard branded products. That answer questions of living in a creative, collaborative and sustainable way.

www.tollgard.com



PAINT IT WHITE



Alix Lawson FOUNDER, ALIX LAWSON

Our studio style is a blend of Japanese, Scandinavian and Australian aesthetics, focusing on a thoughtful simplicity. When we set up the studio over a year and half ago, we said our ethos was to bring a holistic approach to interiors with what we refer to as 'conscious minimalism'. In the past six months we have seen this blow up into a huge design trend, which we believe will have more longevity than any other. This stripped back refinement is in many ways a rejection to the state of the world, a rejection of the disposable consumer society and a call to simplify our lives. The products we have designed as a studio reflect our design ethos.

We are launching two Interior product companies within the next six months – Paint by Alix Lawson and Alix Lawson Home. Paint by Alix Lawson was inspired by the need to simplify the process of selecting white paint. We have been working with expert British paint manufactures for the last year and have curated the perfect five shades of white.

We've been spending a lot of time in various factories over the last year developing products and testing our paint. Developing paint is such a scientific process, with so many tiny variables affecting the outcome. It requires incredible precision and we have been working with one of the oldest family run paint manufacturers in the UK who live and breathe paint, to curate the collection. Their knowledge and understanding of paint has been passed through many generations making them experts in their field. During the development and testing process, I repainted my entire apartment with our paints to ensure that I was completely satisfied with the quality and coverage of the paint. The idea for Alix Lawson Home came about while sourcing products for projects and not being able to find what we were looking for that were in line with our studio style. The majority of the products in the homewares range were designed for our projects and we now want to be able to offer these items to the public.

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