

Modern-day classics

There has never been a better time to mix old pieces with new furniture, says **Fiona Applegarth** of Sable

Trend predictions for interiors for the coming year are that we will be concentrating on making our homes more individual, customising our furnishings and making them warm and welcoming havens to combat the uncertainties of the outside world.

The economic climate has affected many people's attitude to how they furnish their home. The desire is to create a retreat to something more familiar and personal. There is a tendency nowadays to want to invest more in single pieces, or those that are more defined by their design, quality, practicality and longevity.

Although the issue of functionality, as well as originality, is vital, the main justification for an investment is that it should be individual. One-off pieces have had a huge resurgence in popularity. They should be unlike anything else you (or your friends) might find elsewhere, and become an important focal point in the home.

Classical furniture, with innovative design and a contemporary mood, are now more in demand. With this and the ever-enduring interest in the modern glamour style of decorating, means that many furniture manufacturing companies are specialising in sophisticated design-led furniture with a difference.

Such furniture is produced by the company whose pieces are portrayed in the image on the page opposite. I'm going to keep his identity a secret for now, but you can find out more by visiting my shop in Thames Ditton and see one of his iconic pieces.

So highly regarded is their internationally renowned designer, that he is to accept the prestigious 2011 Design Icon Award in Las

Vegas. His ability to create unique and signature designs has brought him world-wide acclaim. His work not only adorns the walls of numerous luxury hotels and resorts around the globe, but also the homes of many discerning Hollywood celebrities.

The key to his success is his blend of classical, glamorous lines with traditional craftsmanship that will endure for years to

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come. It is a mistake to assume that classic means old and historical, and applied only to things of a certain age.

Classic, as far as interiors are concerned, means timeless and trendless design, contemporary or modern but never incorporating current fads. Contemporary design can be classic design, but the emphasis needs to be placed on basic principles and good quality. Classic design is also all about proportion and how the furniture relates to the layout and overall concept of the room.

It can be luxurious, but luxury is not about the obvious anymore, but a more tailored way of living. A desire for simplicity. The two oval-backed chairs in dark wood finish are graceful, feminine and perfectly proportioned.

So are the two mirrors and cabinet. They are star pieces which catch your eye, are pleasing to look at every time you enter the room, and create something really special to behold.

There are many other outstanding gems belonging to the enormous collection, with choices for almost any room in the home. The furniture designer uses scale as an effective way of introducing drama into each creation. The furniture is not just about functionality – it is about form and proportion.

Pieces are created and valued for their sculptural quality and the way in which they interact with one another, creating theatre which can otherwise be difficult to achieve.

There has never been a better time to mix old with new furniture, blending them with more contemporary pieces. Do not be afraid to mix antique style and modern furniture. Play with shape and scale. Mixing a curved piece with a straight one is an effective way of introducing drama into a space. Often spaces with little or no architectural features or elements can be uninspiring and it is, therefore, often essential to find ways of introducing a wow factor.

With its stylistic trademarks of cool glamour and timeless quality, such furniture is a celebration of modern-day design blended with age-old craftsmanship. These days that can often be difficult to find. ●

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