



Culture club

STRIKING THE BALANCE BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT, CULTURAL EXPRESSION IS ONE OF THIS YEAR'S GOLDEN THREADS AT WOW!HOUSE, FINDS TALLULAH RUSHAYA

As the acclaimed WOW!house returns this June to Design Centre Chelsea Harbour (dch.co.uk), award-winning designers are pulling out all the interior stops. For its fifth edition, running from 2 June to 2 July 2026, the showhouse once again transforms into a vibrant celebration of creativity, where leading talents collaborate with premier brands to craft immersive full-scale rooms.

This year features a particularly strong thread of reimagining British heritage and tradition through a fresh contemporary lens. While deeply rooted in classic British interior and architectural styles, from country-house elegance to eclectic layering, the rooms feel convivial and characterful. The series of spaces that honour Britishness while confidently redefining it for today is just one of the many ideas visitors can look forward to.

Garden Folly Facade BY DARREN PRICE OF ADAM ARCHITECTURE FOR HECTOR FINCH

adamarchitecture.com; hectorfinch.com
Inspired by the theatrical sensibilities of architects such as Sir John Soane and Vanbrugh, Darren Price has designed a facade full of surprise and emotional depth. Using proportion, light and shadow to heighten the experience, he draws on the tradition of garden follies, playful, romantic structures often set slightly apart from the main house. “The ambition is to create something which feels classical but is softened by atmosphere,” says Price. The

space invites guests to slow down and step into another world. The ambience is warm, intimate, and gently mysterious, evoking dusk in a garden, with low, filtered light and a soft, draped, canopy-like presence. “It’s not about loud spectacle,” he notes, “but about creating charm, depth, and a little magic.”

Lighting takes centre stage as a core architectural element rather than a mere accessory. In close collaboration with British lighting designer Hector Finch, the fixtures are seamlessly integrated to shape mood, reveal form, soften edges, and bring the space to life. “What inspires me about Hector Finch is the depth of the collection and the way its lighting creates atmosphere without shouting,” explains Price. “The pieces have real presence, yet they never dominate.”

Equally vital is the partnership with Romo. Its fabrics become an essential part of the architectural language. “Romo helps curate the entire atmosphere through texture, tone,

and layering,” he says. “The fabrics filter light, introduce movement, soften hard forms, and create that beautiful tension between structure and softness, allowing the facade to breathe and feel alive.”

Benjamin Moore Minhwa Salon

BY YOUNG HUH

benjaminmoorepaint.co.uk; younghuh.com

“Rooms that tell a story and give visitors a sense of discovery are always the most fascinating,” says New York-based interior designer Young Huh. For her collaboration with Benjamin Moore Paints, Huh has created the Minhwa Salon, drawing inspiration from her Korean heritage and traditional folk art.

“Minhwa” meaning “painting of the people”, emerged during the Joseon Dynasty, offering a glimpse into everyday Korean life. Huh also found inspiration in Vienna’s Schönbrunn Palace, particularly its opulent Millions Room adorned with Indo-Persian miniatures. “I wanted to create an experience defined by colour and joy,” she explains. Vivid Benjamin Moore shades, including Citron 2024-30 and Magenta 2077-10, bring the concept to life through bold colour blocking. “My favourite design feature is certainly the way Young has harnessed a gloss-paint finish, elevating the sense of luxury,” comments Helen Shaw, director of marketing (international) at Benjamin Moore, who is looking forward to guests seeing the juxtapositions for themselves.



SCENE SETTER
DARREN PRICE,
DIRECTOR OF ADAM
ARCHITECTURE



JOY DIVISION
INTERIOR DESIGNER
YOUNG HUH

PHOTOGRAPHS: CAT GARCIA; SIMBARASHE CHA

ROOM ROMANCER
INTERIOR DESIGNER
ENASS MAHMOUD



Garden Folly Room
BY STUDIO ENASS

studioenass.com

Transporting visitors into a jewel-box escape, Studio Enass reinterprets the romantic spirit of an 18th century room with bold, eclectic flair. Founded by Enass Mahmoud, the studio is known for its expressive use of pattern, texture, and colour.

“My Garden Folly room is deeply inspired by my north and east African heritage alongside my British upbringing – it’s very much a dialogue between the two,” she says. Red takes centre stage for its powerful cultural symbolism. “In Sudanese culture, red is often associated with celebration and is frequently worn by women,” Enass explains. Glossy greens complement the reds, while thoughtful details, such as Samuel & Sons’ Margaux bead-fringe on the coffee table and a shell-framed doorway created with artist Linda Fenwick, add delightful layers.



THE SPECIAL
RELATIONSHIP
INTERIOR DESIGNER
MAX ROLLITT WITH
SCHUMACHER CEO
PETER TOUMA

Schumacher Dining Room
BY MAX ROLLITT

schumacher.com; maxrollitt.com

The 125-year-old American fabric house Schumacher has teamed up with master of English country-house style Max Rollitt to create a dining room brimming with warmth and contemporary joy.

Rather than an overly formal space, Max has reimagined an elegant 18th century dining room bathed in the golden glow of late-afternoon light, with candles lit in anticipation of guests. Drawing on Schumacher’s rich historical archive, he masterfully balances tradition and modernity. “Even a century ago, they were never afraid to embrace the new, the bold, and the interesting,” he notes. “Lighting will be key to creating that atmosphere,” adds Edward Rollitt, who is assisting.

Schumacher’s exceptional fabrics run throughout the scheme. Stand-out elements include the luxurious terracotta Gavotte Brocatelle damask on the walls (one of Max’s favourite elements), a textural silk-and-wool Otta tablecloth, and dramatic bottle-green Atlas Wool Texture curtains that frame the entrance. Antique chairs are upholstered in refined Venetian blue Lange linen, while cushions feature the charming Sandoway Vine print. Signature Max Rollitt pieces, including the Wing armchair and Seymour window seat, take centre stage alongside several new bespoke designs making their in-situ debut.

The result is a dining room that feels joyfully inherited, rather than merely designed – exuberant, characterful, and quintessentially British. As Peter Touma, CEO of Schumacher International, reflects, “the most exciting part was seeing Max and Ed push the boundaries of Schumacher, showing how this American brand can create a room with a distinctly British sensibility.”





Turnell & Gigon Group Drawing Room

BY ALBION NORD

albion-nord.com; turnellandgigon.com

A symbol of enduring elegance, the reimagined drawing room by interior designers Albion Nord is an ode to the Georgian and Regency eras. Particularly inspired by the octagonal drawing rooms, Albion Nord see them as more than ‘decorative gestures’. The octagonal form is rooted in Enlightenment thinking, reflecting the ideas of balance and order that inform Albion Nord’s design ethos. “While much of our design language is rooted in classicism, it is the marriage of old and new - antiques alongside contemporary pieces – that brings a sense of quiet excitement to a historically informed space,” explains Ottalie Stride, founder and director of Albion Nord.

Textiles lie at the heart of the room. The walls are wrapped in the hand-blocked Tital fabric in teal by Filling Spaces, the first time the design has been used at such a scale. Working closely with the craftspeople at Turnell & Gigon’s historic mill, Les Passementeries de Île-de-France, Albion Nord commissioned a bespoke cornice trim and layered passementerie details that add a subtle theatrical touch to the room.

Further custom elements include a new bespoke ottoman designed by Albion Nord, paired with a specially developed abstract Afghan-weave rug by Tim Page Carpets. The alcoves feature hand-painted finishes created in collaboration with Benjamin Moore and artist Lottie Radford, while a striking domed rooflight, realised with Barr Group, floods the space with natural light and enhances the sense of volume. **L**

