



B U R C H E L L  
I N T E R I O R S

## Profile of Phil Burchell ' From Lighthouses to Lampshades ...'

Phil Burchell isn't your average interior designer. He doesn't tick the suited and booted box, or the ever so trendy box. He isn't bursting with degree certificates or formal qualifications. With his hearty, head-back laugh and contagious sense of humour, it is not surprising to find the route taken into the industry by this self-taught and self-made designer was unconventional. Discovering that his jobs along the way included gardener, pushchair assembler and lighthouse keeper, seems quite in keeping for a designer who devised his own rules on what looked good and what didn't, and ensured his unique talent was not diluted on the journey to becoming a highly respected and admired name in the business.

"I think a love of design has always been in me. It's what makes me tick," observes Phil. "I remember as a child of about eight being taken to the theatre and feeling overwhelmed by the stage sets. I loved their sparkle and colour, and the excitement they seemed to represent compared with everyday life. The sets appeared to come from another world. I think the seeds were sewn then."

Phil's family was not particularly artistic, although one of his grandfathers, who Phil much admired, was a cabinet maker and one time artist. "I grew up in a post war world, when life was pretty ordinary. But somehow my love of art was always in me."

At the age of fourteen, Phil received his first design commission. "A friend's father asked me to decorated his son's bedroom, which I was very happy to do." Other commissions followed, in addition to designing rooms for his parents and relatives. "I just loved doing this. I experimented with different colours, and stripes and patterns, putting various combinations together. I wanted to see how they worked alongside each other."

Shortly after leaving home at sixteen, Phil moved to North Devon, wanting to experience the world around him, and entranced by the beauty of this, at the time, remote part of the country. (Cont. on next page.)

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# BURCHELL

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### Profile of Phil Burchell (cont.)

A string of odd jobs provided an income while he developed his passion for art and design. He knew this was the direction his future career would take, and all his spare time was spent doing architectural drawings, painting, or indeed art in any available form.

In 1982, Phil was ready to set up his own design business and Burchell Interiors was born. Based in Barnstaple, it was soon making a name for itself. Phil's elegant and individual style won widespread praise. His extraordinary eye for design was clear for all to see. Commissions came from London, all around the UK, and overseas. Commercial refurbishments and residential properties, large and small. Clients loved the rich styles, full of character, warmth and elegance, that Phil could create. They admired his skill at transforming a space into whatever they wanted — be it rooms to dance or dine in, rooms for day or night, summer or winter, rooms of excitement or reflection.

As the years have passed, Phil's passion for design has only deepened. "I have a heartfelt belief that all buildings should be inspiring, both inside and out, to all tastes and to all people," he explains. "Good design should also touch the emotions. At the very least it should entertain, make you laugh!

"I guess I have always wanted to bring those first inspiring stage sets that I saw as a child down into the audience of everyday life. I am trying to play a very small part in the ideals that support the qualitative values of civilization. The art of the written, of the painted, of drama, of music, of speech, of dress and of fashion, of sport, of food, of behaviour, of love and loving ... of being... it is all important."

This serious message is of course delivered with the trademark chuckle and smile. Despite his love of laughter and easy going manner, Phil is not a hunter of the limelight or trumpeter of his own successes. What he is though, is a breath of fresh air in the world of design and interiors. And this is a rare quality.

Ends.

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