

MEET THE 'QUEEN OF TAUPE'

British Interior designer Kelly Hoppen can list names such as the Beckhams, Elton John, Garry Rhodes and British Airways amongst her lengthy and illustrious list of clients. In 2009 she was awarded the MBE for her contributions to the field of interior design and is constantly in demand. Having recently launched a capsule furniture collection that will soon be available at Brightwell Interiors, one of only five UK stockists chosen, Places & Faces had the opportunity to ask about her styling ideas.

I understand interior design has been a passion since an early age – how did you get started?

I used to persuade my mother to let me visit homes on the weekends because I longed to glimpse of other peoples' worlds. My father also nurtured my business side, as he ran the biggest clothing company in South Africa and eventually moved to London to expand it. I completed my first job at 17, doing a kitchen for a friend of my fathers. Then my second job was for Guy Edwards, a huge F1 star- so luckily, it just led on from there.

You are famous for your approach to colour. What is your philosophy?

I'm often asked why I use a distinct palette of beiges and neutrals, but I don't think this makes the offering limited. These colours work well in all environments, they can provide a neutral backdrop if someone wants to add colour themselves, or else the neutral palette used in statement items makes them more workable.

What do you think today's home should provide us with?

'Home' is a feeling rather than a look and the definition of that feeling differs from person to person. It's about designing a home that works for the way that you live, the way that you entertain etc and that reflects your values and personality. In every room look to a few key pieces to make an impact. For example, in a living room, the coffee table is key as it is where everything centers from. In the

bedroom, the bed, as it's the largest item, so bed linen and cushions can be fun. Another way is with art: I adore having a star piece in every room, like in my living room, with the crystal chain mail lights that I designed.

How did you get inspired for your new furniture collection?

I was hugely inspired by vintage furniture, I tried to look into my minds eye and design items that I would love to have within my own interior schemes. Pieces that work well alone or with a wider collection.

What are your key pieces in the new collection?

For me I am lusting after the bubble chair and the leather trunk. I love them

What is it about your brand that translates so well for the Brightwell Interiors customer?

I designed an initial 50 pieces, which can be put together in about 800 combinations. I'm not creating this range to make a lot of mini-me's, for me, it's so important that a home should be a sanctuary, so I've created the range to give people a way of creating homes that are entirely theirs. Design has been a passion for me from an early age, and what I have tried to create, based on influences from the East, is a very simple design system that's actually a way of life. My furniture range is there for people to buy one piece, or more, and then put their own identity on it. ■



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