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Enlightened: Jo's design for a London apartment, featuring the Bolle pendant light by Italian designers Gallotti & Radice

5 New design CLASSICS

These modern pieces are sure to be timeless classics, writes top interior designer JO HAMILTON

1 LIGHTING I've used pieces from Italian designer Gallotti & Radice (gallottiradice.it) in quite a few of my designs. In particular, their Bolle pendant light (*pictured main*), by Massimo Castagna, is simply beautiful. It comes in four- or six-bulb options. While they are the same design, the slightly greater drama of the larger one means it is my pick of the two.

Each of the six transparent spheres are hand-blown glass, which means they have a soft, slightly irregular texture. The brass is hand-burnished, again leaving it with a naturally dappled and irregular finish. The sense that it really has been made lovingly and delicately by hand is palpable. It stands at a proud 128cm tall, so it's a dramatic piece but its light frame prevents it from becoming overbearing. One of the many schemes I have used it at was this one (*left*) — it was in the dining area of an apartment in London and I placed an antiqued-effect mirror next to it that almost doubled the effect.

2 DINING CHAIR The Stay Dining Chair, from SE, is by Slovenian product- and interior designer Nika Zupanc (nikazupanc.com), who graduated with distinction from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana in the year 2000. It really is incredible to think she designed this chair in 2015 — it feels like it's been with us forever! This is partly because it achieves a timeless feel so easily.

It's got 1950s' glamour, romance and hints of Art Deco. It's also got simple, gentle lines and curves that give off a wonderful fluid feel. It is lightweight and practical, and can travel — it's not just a show piece. This chair does what good design should: take something and add to it to create something wholly new and exciting. If you look at the Bentwood chair I mentioned earlier next to the Stay chair you'll see the similarities, but also just how different the newer chair is.

3 SOFA Some design classics lead the way, but there are also those that have evolved from others and become iconic in their own right. I'm a big fan of Stuart Scott's furniture (stuartscott.co.uk). He has a lovely aesthetic and appreciation for shape and texture. His work feels considered and agonised-over in the quest for perfection.

His Tux three-seater sofa is a contemporary interpretation of the classic Chesterfield. The deep buttoning and tailored detailing give this piece a rich and luxurious polish, while the wool upholstery finish, relaxes, calms and softens. And

PICTURE: DAVID BUTLER

Take a look at any number of classic design lists and there will be certain pieces that crop up time and again — just as surely as there are other pieces that will not make an appearance. On the one hand this is testament to the objectivity of good design, while at the same time it brings home how beauty is also often in the eye of the beholder.

Chairs are always popular in design lists and there's any number of choices that would rightfully be described as classic. There's the Barcelona Chair, by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich, for example; the 'LCW' Eames Molded Plywood Lounge Chair by Charles and Ray Eames; and the beautifully simple Bentwood chair by Michael Thonet. Another is the 2002 Louis Ghost chair by Philippe Starck, who designed it in tribute to the

French baroque era. According to manufacturer Kartell, it has become "the most widely selling design chair in the world" — although they don't say what they mean by a "design chair".

It has been hailed an "icon" but should it? What is a true design icon and what makes it a classic piece?

A design classic is an original, industrially-manufactured furniture piece, with a timeless quality. It is beautifully constructed from the highest quality materials and is often the source of inspiration and influence for other innovative pieces.

Our homes are full of classics, such as Hans J Wegner dining chairs and G-Plan sideboards, but what are the design classics of tomorrow? The future is anyone's guess, of course, but there are some breathtaking options today for our future generations to choose from — and here are my top picks.



actually, his use of wool is interesting in itself because it is a beautiful fabric to upholster in but is often overlooked. It looks and feels beautiful and makes a really great base for other layered textures, such as cushions in velvets, linens, cottons etc.

4 SIDE TABLE

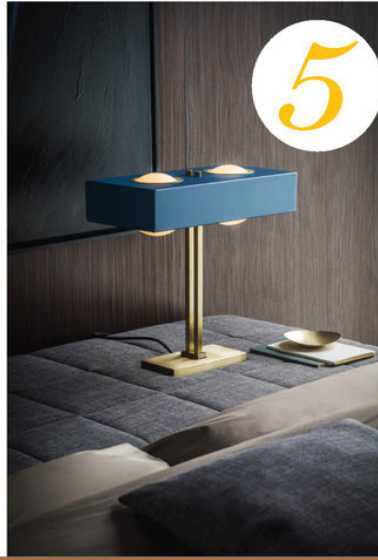
Key qualities of design classics are that they are practical and that they fit in anywhere, and the simple geometric shapes in this aptly-named Knockout collection from Danish design outfit Friends and Founders (friendsfounders.com) means they can sit alone in the background or would work as more of a feature when set as a group.

The tables are made from materials that are classic in themselves: solid marble and metal, in green, black, white. Marble finishes are back and they're here to stay. The simple sculptural shapes are like pieces of art and your eyes just linger on them — so you know that something is going right in terms of the interior design. While they are simple in shape and design, they are no less striking for it, but to really bring them to life, set them against a contrasting wall and they will stand out.

5 LAMP

Just like chairs, there is an abundance of lamps to choose from when it comes to design classics. If you're considering table lamps for instance, it's hard to get away from the 75 Mini by Sir Kenneth Grange. If you're looking at standard lamps, then Arco by Achille Castiglioni will always be one to contend with.

To bring us up to more modern times,



though, we've got the work of Bert Frank (bertfrank.co.uk), which was set up in 2013 and since then has won numerous awards for its mid-century-inspired lighting that is very much of today. Their Kernel lamp comes in both a table and standard lamp version, and is a typical piece of theirs with its beautifully balanced design, sharp angular lines and masculine edge that evokes dark-panelled studies and smoky billiard rooms. It clearly has that lovely mid-century influence, but equally displays a clean, contemporary edge. The hardness of the glass globes is softened by the shape and the opal finish, which casts a warm light.

Bert Frank designs all seem to have a weighty, solid feel and most of their pieces come in brass. This is exactly the case for the Kernel lamp, where the metallic base is in a warm tone, thereby softening the piece. The fact it has different colour choices for the shades means you have the option of making it more of a statement piece.

The Kernel may be my favourite, however I can't resist mentioning another of their beautiful lamps, the Colt table lamp. One of the newer additions to the Bert Frank collection, it just screams class and elegance.

Jo Hamilton is an ambassador for House 2018, the high-end interiors event run by INM, publishers of the Irish Independent. She will be appearing on the Inspiration Stage at Dublin's RDS from May 25-27. See house-event.ie

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