

# THE ADDRESS BOOK

*Sim Smith* gathers inspiration from the design hub that is the legendary Oxo Tower...

## 1 BODO SPERLEIN



A bell chimes as I enter this pale grey space. I'm greeted by the clean smell of fresh lilies that I follow to the desk where I am welcomed by one of the studio staff. I have

long admired the fine bone china collections here, their originality, eccentricity and design; handles in the shape of horses legs, small white birds perched on fine golden twigs and teardrop glass pendant lights with delicate white flowers protruding from their surfaces. Bodo Sperlein is a boutique design consultancy whose projects have involved collaborations with the likes of Lladró and Swarovski. The most recent collaboration, however, was the much anticipated collection of tea accessories for Yauatcha Atelier. Using traditional techniques dating back over many centuries, this collection takes its inspiration from the tea plant with subtle details in twig and branch forms adorning tea infusers, tea cup handles and bonbonniere's.

## 2 INNERMOST



It is clear, even by just looking through the large glass frontage of this studio that design is paramount to the brand. Form evidently matters here

with designs taking on unlikely and, some could say, surreal forms. In the centre of the entrance, hanging from the ceiling is a sculptural stainless steel suspension that seems almost orange peel like with a broken spherical outline. This is in fact a light but anyone could easily mistake it for a piece of art. Similarly, the infamous bowler hat lights that have come to be known as Jeeves & Wooster pendants hang nearby with metallic interiors gleaming from their black felt casing. Multifaceted chairs and steel based Origami tables that seem to have been folded from sheets of paper sit in the window enticing passersby to touch. Founded by designers Steve Jones

and Russell Cameron in 1999, Innermost aspires to provide a showcase for new design talent and ten years on the company couldn't be stronger.

## 3 JOSEPH JOSEPH

The first thing I notice is the bright lime-green rubber floor which I follow into the middle of the space. This design hub, complete with in-house designers busying away in front of their computers is home to Joseph Joseph, specialists in contemporary kitchenware and homeware. Thick white shelves showcase brightly coloured, cleverly designed kitchen accessories. Bright yellow lemon juicers that catch unwanted pips, adjustable rolling pins and folding colanders are just some of the pieces that caught my eye. If you're looking for a gift for a domestic goddess or feel you might need a little help when preparing Christmas lunch this year, you know where to go...

## 4 LITTLE + COLLINS



I walk in under tubular lighting set against slate ceiling panels to a high top desk that

seems to operate as a consultation space. There is a table and chairs laid out with samples in the most sumptuous of colours readily on show. Rugs are hung, framed on the walls, making viewing as easy as picking out a poster in an art gallery. I find out that Little + Collins design and manufacture bespoke and limited edition, hand tufted rugs and wall hangings. They offer a tailor made design service, hence the seating area, which can cater for all manner of customer design preferences. Colours are subtle yet powerful with inspiration being drawn from natural sources and landscapes; heathers from the Scottish highlands, cinnabar from lava lands and seaweed and chalk from mineral formations. The delicate interplay of texture sees the pieces taking on both geometric and organic forms, again, inspired by striking landscapes and dramatic scenery. The company take great pride in the production of their work and with all pieces bring produced in UK, Little + Collins are able to oversee the whole manufacturing process from start to finish.

## 5 MICHÈLE OBERDIECK



Michèle Oberdieck specialises in beautiful screen-printed fabrics, textile panels and modern fused glass works for interior and exterior spaces. There is a natural thread that runs

through her work; inspiration drawn from the botanical world. Produced to some degree of abstraction, her designs prove that natural forms needn't be portrayed through traditional depictions. Brightly coloured pieces hang from every surface; printed glass works decorate the walls, with textile prints covering everything from clothes, to cushions and bags, dotted on chairs, floors and rails. There is a distinct feel of a working studio here, an authentic design house. To the rear, a collection of dyes and paints fill old pots of Bonne Maman jam jars with new design ideas pinned to the walls. Michèle produces work for a variety of domestic and commercial clients and can produce bespoke works on request.

## 6 W2



Colour is the first thing that strikes you on entering the studio. Set on a clean white backdrop, bold shades jump out from otherwise

mundane crockery and home wares. Choose from cornflower blue English Heritage mugs and tea towels, black and grey London Transport tea pots and ceramic dog bowls. Founded by designers Jackie and Victoria, the company subscribes to the age old philosophy of 'form follows function'. Where they have triumphed, however, is by making fundamental design fun. I'm sure you've seen the Pantone® range of mugs and giftware...well, that was them. The company also undertakes design commissions for businesses so if you're after some help reinventing your space W2 would definitely be a good place to start.