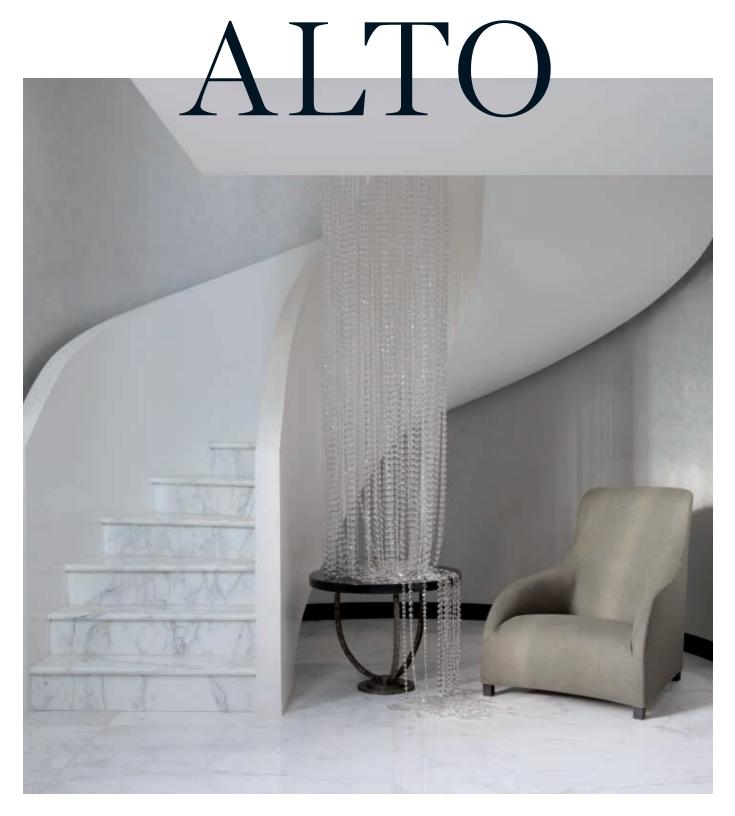
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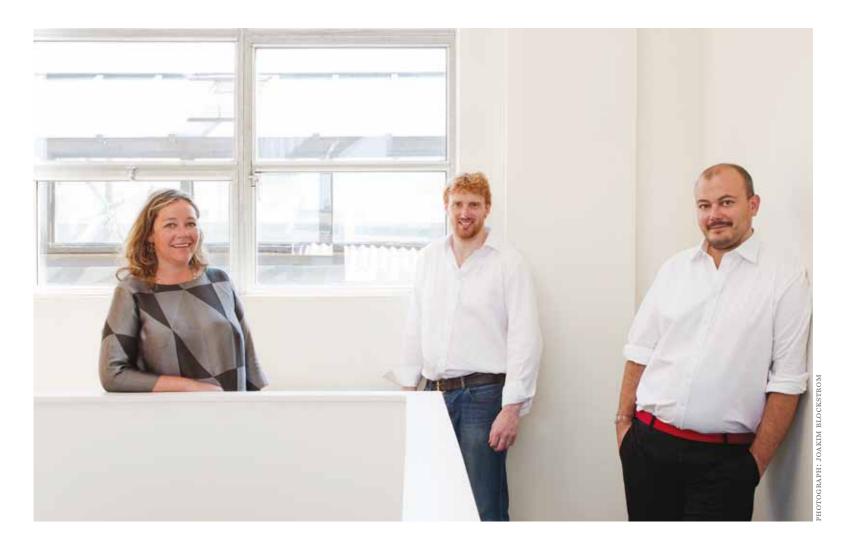


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 $ROBERTO\ MINOTTI'S\ TOP\ 10\ /\ SILVER\ BY\ ASTON\ MARTIN\ /\ WALPOLE\ MAYFAIR\ /\ ART\ OF\ KINETIK$   $ELLE\ MACPHERSON'S\ LAKESIDE\ RETREAT\ /\ BEIJING\ LUXURY\ /\ GROSVENOR\ CRESCENT\ /\ NEUTRAL\ BATHROOMS$   $MODERN\ VILLA\ IN\ KIEV\ /\ CONTEMPORARY\ CHANDELIERS\ /\ PALAZZO\ MARGHERITA\ /\ COLLECTOR'S\ DIARY$ 

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Their self-proclaimed 'punkish attitude toward luxury' has helped the team at Waldo Works inject personality into the luxury high-end market, and their clients, from home owners to fashion brands, are loving the inspired results / By Elizabeth Choppin

## Waldo Works

Waldo Works comprises (left to right) Sasha von Meister, Andrew Treverton and founder Tom Bartlett

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The dwellings of Knightsbridge and Mayfair may be awash in a sea of beige and taupe, but not if Waldo Works has had anything to do with it. Since launching in 2000, the London design practice has built a reputation for vibrant, conceptual interiors; its projects – from the new personal shopping area at Selfridges to penthouses on Park Lane – are an assault on the monotony of so many high-end schemes. Wit and a quirky sense of Britishness are their tools.

"I suppose we have a slightly punkish attitude toward luxury that gives some real personality and opinion," says founder Tom Bartlett. Having cut his teeth on residential projects, the architect got his big break more than 10 years ago when he was approached by rock heiress Jade Jagger, then creative director of Garrard, to do the jewellery brand's flagship store. This led to a decade of plum jobs for some of Britain's most iconic brands and a clutch of residential clients around the world.

Soon after starting the practice, Bartlett joined forces with current partners Sasha von Meister, who heads up the interiors side of the business, and Andrew Treverton, who leads the architecture side. Together they have developed Waldo Works' unique style: a mishmash of traditional and modern materials, experimentation, refined detailing and a healthy dose of cheek. "Luxury for luxury's sake is slightly tasteless," Bartlett says. "Part of our work is about being humorous, because... a little irony never hurts."

To that end, when the trendy darlings of British fashion, PPQ, asked Waldo Works to fit out their flagship store in London based on the theme 'Margaret Thatcher modernism', the concept combined wit and refinement. The team took cues from the patterns on the Iron Lady's signature scarves, the textured material used in 1980s radiator covers, and back-garden conservatories, to create a retail space that is at once luxurious and slightly irreverent.

"I suppose we've carved out a bit of a niche for ourselves in the commercial side of things, but it's British brands that have always come to us to look at how they want to explore their physical environments," Bartlett says. "They approach us because of our background in high-end residential [projects] and the detailing that involves, which translates very easily to luxury, commercial interiors." >

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OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: Waldo Works' design for New Street Square restaurant in London references Adolf Loos' American Bar in Vienna; The team's residential projects, including this Park Lane penthouse, express the same idiosyncratic approach as their commercial work; Perspex meets hand-painted wallpaper in the Park Lane project's bedroom







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OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: The revamp of Selfridges' VIP dressing suite was inspired by style icons and included a reception area; the Grace Jones dressing room; a library for browsing fashion books; and the Lanvin dressing room Fashion brands, such as Temperley,
Cutler & Gross and Smythson have all had
the Waldo Works treatment. More recently,
a project for Selfridges involved revamping
the luxury department store's 465 sq m
personal shopping area, which opened five
years ago but was due for a new concept
and visual identity. "We decided we needed
to do something idiosyncratic, so it became
a place that had personality rather than
a corporate blandness. I think that's one
reason people come to us," says Bartlett.

Based on the theme 'iconic woman', each VIP dressing room was inspired by strong women in history or art – from fierce pop goddess Grace Jones, to legendary 1920s decorator Syrie Maugham, to Gustav Klimt's portrait of Viennese doyenne Fritza Riedler. Each room has its own personality, but the whole is tied together with colour that bleeds into a sumptuous communal space. Here, customers can lounge in the bar, library and 'drawing room', and look at gorgeous knick-knacks and framed photography that Waldo Works fished out of Selfridges' basement archive.

"It's a more rarefied personal shopping experience that respects the kind of clients going in there, but hopefully opens their view," von Meister says. "You don't feel like you're in the shop floor, and you shouldn't."

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Similarly, Waldo Works' residential interiors aren't afflicted with that impersonal museum feeling found in some conventional, high-end developments. The practice's designs – from penthouses and stately homes to island villas – are luxurious yet cozy, with a twist. "It's still people-orientated no matter what the setting is," von Meister says.

"You'd be surprised how much synergy there is between residential and commercial," says Bartlett. "I would never say that a residential client is interested in their own brand, but maybe there is some truth in that. We do help people to express themselves – that's our job across all of it. We try to make stories that ring true about a brand, or a person, or a family, and turn those stories into physical space." With a playful wink, of course.

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