

Sam McNally

Design director of architectural design and development studio Echlin, London

How would you describe your interior style?

Our style is more of an ethos and a set of principles than a specific aesthetic direction. We look at every project individually and think about what is best for that space or site, but at the heart, it's about people, their experience and their well-being. Alongside this we look to reinterpret the classic principles of British design and craftsmanship in a more contemporary and innovative way, hoping to challenge the perception of what a 'British' space might look like. We draw inspiration from the UK's rich heritage and creativity, but also generations of incredible talent from around the world that have come here to study, work and make.

Can you comment on your use of Deirdre Dyson's *Falling Leaves* rug as a feature piece?

We'd been admirers of Deirdre's work for a while, and particularly the way she draws inspiration from nature; so when we had a project so close to Kensington Gardens and with such a strong architectural connection to the outside, we thought a collaboration was in order. Taking Deirdre's *Falling Leaves* design and working on a bespoke version was a real pleasure and certainly enhanced the 'sanctuary in the city' atmosphere at the heart of the concept for our Leverton House project.



05 Echlin co-founders Sam McNally and Mark O'Callaghan

06 Interior by Echlin featuring Deirdre Dyson's *Falling Leaves* rug

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What qualities are you looking for in the rugs you choose?

Throughout our interior spaces we are always looking at materiality so rugs are a big part of this. We like to play with perceptions in order to create interest so look to use patterns, textures and surfaces that you might not expect. With rugs we're looking at luxurious quality, the ability to zone off areas with colour or texture, we like directional patterns that draw you in to spaces, and also the reflective qualities of silk that give that slight shimmer enhancing the light quality.

What rug companies do you source from or admire?

Deirdre Dyson for the art-like quality and the inspirations from nature, Colbourns for the luxurious feel and contemporary abstract designs, Floor Story for the creativity and variation, and Crucial Trading for their natural materials and range of sisals. We also design our own rugs which we have hand-tufted in Scotland.

Do you ever use rugs or textiles on the wall as art or hangings?

At our upcoming mews project in Knightsbridge the client has requested a large tapestry for the living area, inspired by London's green spaces. www.echlinlondon.com

Sasha Bikoff

Interior designer, Sasha Bikoff New York, New York City

The photo below (09) is from a contemporary take on a 1980s Miami-style mansion in Bridgehampton, New York. Unlike so many homes in the Hamptons (which feel cold and impersonal), this space was fun and beachy. I designed the space for my mother—a Persian woman from Tehran, Iran, who loved to entertain. Before purchasing one piece of furniture or decor, I had to settle on a certain feel for the space: tropical energy that conjured a heady mix of the 1960s and carnival. One of the defining features of the home is its bold moments of bright colour against an all-white background.

I wanted to there to be an element of reflection in the living room, which is why the thirty fruit sketches, the coloured rug and the window panels all share the same perfectly ordered and symmetrical grid-like quality. With the white sofa

07 Photo: Genevieve Garrupio



07 Sasha Bikoff at Kips Bay, New York

08 Hudson Valley interior by Sasha Bikoff

09 Bridgehampton interior by Sasha Bikoff

and relatively neutral walls, I wanted to bring in a colourful element closer to the ground, which is where the rainbow carpet and bright coffee tables come in.

On the second-floor landing, I opted for several of my own hand-painted art pieces (I studied fine arts and art history at George Washington University and The American University in Paris) along with two reupholstered seating options and an Ultrafragola mirror. The lime-green rug with pink, yellow and white bordering frames is the highlight of this small space. I don't like the look of an all-white space with small pops of colour here and there, rather, I prefer for every piece to boast lots of colour and pattern to really add to the personality of the space. Having a more neutral rug would have completely toned down the feel of the space, whereas the bright-green brings it to life.

The project to the right (08) is the home of a young Manhattan couple that wanted a weekend refuge that wasn't the Hamptons, so they landed on this home in Hudson Valley. I wanted the space to feel like a reflection of the couple: young, fashion-forward and edgy, so I included lots of dark

08 Photo: Patrick Cline



Photo: Nicole Cohen



dishes, heavy stone fireplaces and exaggerated moulding. This house is on the Hudson River, which you see from every room. It's serene and tranquil, so the design had to reflect that. My first purchase was the rug that depicts a stylised streambed in tones of black, grey and white—a fitting anchor for the molten-lava-rock coffee tables that sit on top of it. The rug is so special because, although it was the first piece I purchased, it ties together the rest of the room.

www.sashabikoff.com

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