

PURE THEATRE

A DESIGNER OPTS FOR HIGH DRAMA IN HER NORTHUMBERLAND HOME



While her thriving design studio, high-profile clientele – her first design project was Richard Branson’s luxury lodge in Verbier – and contemporary furniture showroom, FBC London, allow Fiona Barratt-Campbell little down time, when she does head home, it’s to Northumberland. Brought up in Newcastle, Fiona loves the big skies and gritty landscape of the north east. She and her husband, Sol, and their three children live in a Grade II listed Georgian mansion that has only been previously occupied by two families throughout its 300-year history.

‘We had to do everything but the roof, which made things easier in a way because I could plan the exact layout I wanted,’ she says. ‘I put the kitchen at the back of the house so it opens directly into the garden.’ It gets little sun but instead of opting for the obvious light, bright colours, Fiona chose to emphasise the moodiness with brushed stainless steel, dark oak and granite.

Open the cupboards and dark aubergine greets the eye, while

HANDLE IT

Fiona commissioned a local Tyne metal worker to make the draw handles on the cabinets. They are stamped with the name of the house and date



10cm-thick worktops ooze luxury. ‘It was a brave choice,’ Fiona admits, ‘but I think the result is very glamorous.’

With a dark palette, lighting had to be carefully considered. ‘We needed to create the theatre within the space,’ she explains. Fiona designed hanging lights – a deceptively simple framework of bulbs on steel plates. ‘I don’t like lampshades in a cooking environment.’ She also designed shelves in the wall cabinets with a 3cm gap at the back so that bulbs embedded in the top gradually filter light down through each shelf. Gauzy linen on the inside of cupboard doors add additional softness.

Fiona loves to cook and wanted a fully functioning kitchen that also served as a social hub for the family. ‘We have an excellent butcher nearby and our own vegetable garden,’ she says. The ingredients all come deliciously together on a La Cornue range cooker, which combines style with functionality. Much like Fiona’s own philosophy ☐

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LIGHTING

The simple design of bulbs on a metal frame adds to the industrial look

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