



London brief

by Tanya Duncan, House of Light and Design

Images courtesy of Nicholas Dodd,
Bennetts Associates.



Welcome to the first London brief! My name is Tanya Duncan and I am a South African, loving and living the design world in London. Have you been to an international trade show or exhibition lately? I want to discuss two shows that have recently taken place in distinct design capitals of the world, London and Milan.

Trade shows and exhibitions provide the ideal opportunity to keep up with product and design trends and in Britain we are lucky enough to be able to attend many of them without having to travel too far.

The end of May saw London's focus move to events at Clerkenwell Design Week, which this year returned to the Farmiloe Building on St John's Street. Farmiloe was once the home of Victorian lead and glass merchants and during the design week this charming building and its environs are transformed into an exhibition housing some of the biggest names in the industry.

The current focus is supplier and showroom driven, an experience visitors can have at any time of the year. I would like to see this shift to exhibitions that are a 'once a year for one week only' attraction. It makes sense to invite high profile designers to give us their take on a design theme or a topical subject. And students; it is always interesting to see what they have to offer through their interpretation of a pre-ordained theme. Maybe next year!

Theo, however did catch my eye with a range of fun lighting pieces such as the Sticky Lamp, designed by Chris Kabel and Lampshade, by Lights of London. I really liked the Wire Lighting Collection by Ziglam & Brook, presented by Deadgood.

At Milan's EuroLuce exhibition, Artemide, generally regarded as an icon of Italian style and culture, presented its new Architectural and Nord light collection. I look forward to testing a few of the Nord light collection samples. The use of LED continues and of course the colour temperatures are improving all the time, which means we no longer need to live with cold blue or green when using LEDs; they now offer much more balanced and warmer light.

Watch out for the BlancoWhite series of bright objects. I have discovered light furniture ... ! It transforms our traditional expectation of light sources thanks to the LumiSheet technique, a lighting panel that integrates LEDs directly inside the acrylic support. The combination of high performance white LEDs and 3D V-shape cuts to the acrylic surface provides homogenous lighting to the surface of the panel. Applied to tables, libraries and furnishings designed with a minimalist approach, it allows the furniture to glow without it being apparent where the light is coming from. I like it ... a lot.

Also combining art, elegance, quality and innovation is the new Madame Butterfly Lamps collection by Villari, particularly the majestic chandelier. Santa & Cole collaborating with the Association of Architects of Milan, presented its new indoor lighting products: three families of lamps by Antoni Arola applying LED technology, the definitive edition of the mythical TMC lamp (1961) by Miguel Milá, now celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, and the recent arrivals to the GT family of shades, the colossal GT1500 and the smallest of the Tripode, M3.

If you would like me to find something for you when I am on my travels to trade shows, be in touch on tanya.duncan@house-oflightanddesign.com.

The newly launched Mint Hotel in Amsterdam incorporated Design Heure's Collection Nuage range of pendants, floor-standing and table lamps (Project by Tanya Duncan).