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PHOTOGRAPH: LUCAS ALLEN



# TWO-WAY TRAFFIC

Hatta Byng talks to seven designers who work in Britain and the States, and discovers the extent to which their styles have been affected by a powerful design symbiosis between the two countries



Interior designers are now as jet set as their clients. They are chosen for their name, style or approach; where they happen to be based can be entirely irrelevant.

Talk to virtually any well-known British designer and you will find they have done, or are doing, projects in the States – right now, for instance, Christopher Hodson (of Soane) is furnishing the penthouse of the tallest building in North America – Calatrava's Chicago Spire. Likewise, American designers are crossing the Atlantic, not least Sills Huniford, who were flown in to design the lobby of the recently revamped Connaught hotel in Mayfair.

How does this transatlantic crossing affect their style? Here, English designers living or working (or both) in the States, and American designers living or undertaking projects in London, discuss the cross-pollination of ideas and influences on their work.

Currently, as much as 40 per cent of Veere's work is in New York, including a large town house in the Upper East Side – where he is pictured – a glamorous apartment in Fifth Avenue, another in the Meatpacking District, and a big loft in SoHo, as well as several houses in the Hamptons. His clients for these, he says, 'are young and tend to move in the same circle of friends'; some are based in London, others in the States, but each project 'demands very different things'.

'Architecturally, working in the States is heaven,' says Veere. 'The Americans built wonderful apartments in the Thirties that are fantastic to work in: rooms are beautifully proportioned and connect well, and there are good back-of-house areas. They're what I call "Vogue Regency", with lovely Georgian windows, black-and-white-marble and parquet floors – all of which I love. Americans also build houses,' he adds, 'and there is nothing more exciting than starting from scratch.' New York-based architects Leroy Street Studio are a key part of each project – 'It's very much a collaborative process.'

Veere's six-weekly trips stateside – for site visits – are sacrosanct, and while there he usually takes a shopping trip. He starts early in the morning and visits all his favourite dealers – Gerald Bland, DeLorenzo 1950, Magen H Gallery, C J Peters and Liz O'Brien – mainly for mid-century furniture. 'I mix things up – I'll buy pieces for London in New York and for New York in Paris.'  
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