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Is this the coolest new interior design website?

Artisan tree houses and one-of-a kind ceramics are among the treasures available at Giovanna Ticciati's new website, The Artisan Collab



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ow interior designers learn their craft varies hugely. Some take the formal route, through courses at renowned design schools — Sophie Ashby, for instance, went to Parsons in New York before launching her eponymous studio. Others do an apprenticeship — Martin Brudnizki worked his way from David Gill through to David Collins before he became the boss of his Chelsea studio.

Giovanna Ticciati — who has designed the impeccably pared-back, calming interiors of homes from Holland Park to Haslemere in Surrey — was drawn to bringing together beautiful things because she'd been surrounded by them since birth. Both sides of her family were involved in the arts. Her father's lineage could be traced to the great Italian sculptor Girolamo Ticciati, whose work is in the Prado and V&A, and her grandfather, Francesco, had his compositions conducted at the Proms by Sir Henry Wood. On her mother's side, Walter de la Mare was her great-grandfather, and "so that part of our life was very literary".

When she was growing up, "music and the arts were always around," she says.

"My aunts and uncles especially had lovely things — one of my uncles was at

Sotheby's and in charge of Chinese pots. So I'm sure that's where my sensibility

comes from. I just knew I loved being around beautiful things, and creating."

Her shop, in the little Sussex town of Petworth, is dotted with both antiques and one-off creations by artisans from around the world whose aesthetic sensibility aligns with her own. There are giant canvases by the Italian artist Gennaro Avallone, whose layering of materials, textures, colours and gilt makes them look like a cross between embossed leather and hardened antique fabric. On tables sit exquisite vase-like structures in pale clay sprouting delicate "leaves" by the London ceramicist Lucy Whitford. Then there are elegant wooden white sculptures by the Frenchman Benoit Averly and delightfully simple black stoneware pieces by the Japanese sculptor Noe Kuremoto, alongside chunky jewellery designed by the ethical maker Pippa Small and delicate recycled-gold chains by the Somerset jeweller Sia Taylor. And above them all hang lights by Ochre: a trio of female designers whose modern sculptural chandeliers resemble a school of gold and glass tadpoles suspended in space.



Sonnellino chair and stool by Giovanna Ticciati

What the pieces have in common, Ticciati says, is not only that they are inspired by nature, and made by "wonderful, creative, interesting people", but that they are for sale on her new online platform, the Artisan Collab. Ticciati created the platform in 2022, "because I realised that life was short, and I only wanted to work with people you get on with and believed in," she says. "And as you get older, I think, you realise more and more that the focus of life isn't on money. Of course we all need it to buy food and survive. But the day-to-day quality of your life is incredibly important, it's so precious, as are the people around you, the connections. And I wanted to celebrate that by bringing great people, great friends, great design all together."

For those who love handmade, beautifully formed one-off pieces inspired by nature and made with natural materials such as wood, glass, bronze and clay, the Artisan Collab has become a one-stop shop that's far more personal than Etsy and more curated than 1stDibs. While some pieces, such as Gennaro Avallone's works, could set you back £24,000, most are, Ticciati says, "manageable for people like us" — by which she means her and her Danish bread-making husband, Troels Bendix, whose local bakery, Sodt, produces loaves for hotels from the Lanesborough to the Pig.



Tondo by Gennaro Avallone

Since she launched, several public spaces have requested pieces to show in their own exhibitions. Currently, a selection curated by Lily Ackerman of Ackerman Studios is on display at 45 Park Lane hotel in London — ranging from one of her own bronze-cast tables to Lucy Whitford ceramics. The works of the latter, Ticciati says, have been an "extraordinary success". The Londoner won the Artisan Collab's first Rising Creator Fellowship, which funds a less-known but talented maker. Within two weeks of Whitford's pieces going on show on the Artisan Collab, "we'd sold three out of the four, she'd been interviewed by several craft magazines, and the florist Nikki Tibbles from Wild at Heart had been in touch to buy some. So Lucy definitely benefited from the prize."

Even for those who aren't into art or ceramics, there are fun things to buy: for instance, a Jeremy Pitts treehouse. That's because the company is not about only "a sensibility — but also about the richness of life," says Ticciati. "Some things, like a treehouse, you buy purely to enjoy. We make things to enable people to have a nicer time."

theartisancollab.com