



my favourite things

Contemporary deco oyster and latte screen and cabinet in the master bedroom are enhanced with arctic fox fur and handmade lamps from New Orleans.



A treasure from the USA, this coffee table is adorned with 2 million year old fossil stone.



Husband and wife design team Carlo Sambucci and Loraine Chassels.



Grand scale Urn overlaid with gold.



Moody oil on canvas by top Glasgow artist Gerard Burns.



Hemingway's balcony in Key West Florida painted by Leslie Main

We all have our own favourite interior treasures. Some are tiny but can pack the biggest punch while others occupy such a large space in our lives that they are overwhelmingly part of us. Whether old or new, 'favourite things' come in all shapes and sizes and have one thing in common - their owners consider them to be seriously special and can rarely say goodbye.

We asked husband and wife interior design team, Loraine Chassels and Carlo Sambucci, founder of Scotland's thriving interior businesses XS Interiors and EX Showhouse Furniture, what were the 'must haves' in their home.

"Having had an interior design and furniture importing business for over a decade I have had some fabulous pieces come my way" said Loraine, "although many of our favourites go way back in time. It's not so much a 'value' thing but rather what never ceases to inspire us or give us joy year after year, that makes something an interior favourite with us." Here are a few of our all time favourite pieces, pieces that Carlo and I would be happy to have forever.

'In many ways cherished pieces are like old friends, there is a comfortability with the relationship we have with them.'

Loraine and Carlo have selected some fabulous items from their magnificent home, although with so many beautiful and eclectic pieces surrounding them they must have had a very difficult time narrowing it down to show us just a few.

"I've always liked oversized pieces, pieces that make a statement", commented Carlo. "Larger scale items form a major part of Loraine and my interior landscape. I could liken them to trees in a garden, they create the structure, the skeleton from which to build."

The grand scale urn, seen here, is made from porcelain and crafted in the Far East. Overlaid with gold it features a surprisingly contemporary almost random pattern. "I really like this piece", said Loraine. "It forms part of a larger collection that we have. The other pieces in the collection are in different parts of the house and coherently weave a thread from room to room. Although this piece is really rather opulent and stands out, it's colouring is soft white and gold and is actually quite neutral. This allows us to move it into other areas from time to time."

'Six thousand miles away Sylvester Stalone has these fossil stone tables in his home in Miami'

This large American scale coffee table is also a favourite of the couple and has a matching side table and console. "We were lucky to stumble across these", said Carlo. "The table tops are inlaid with two million year old fossil stone cut from the sea bed", added Loraine, "and the intricate carved swag surrounds are fabulously over the top. Six thousand miles away Sylvester Stalone has the same limited edition hand made collection in his home in Miami. There is something very Floridian about the way they look, and we like their grandeur."

Sitting on either side of a huge contemporary oil on canvas from the early 80's, and perched on simple mirrored plinths from Belgium are two beautiful Angels.

"My antique carved wooden, painted and bejewelled Burmese angels have been with me a very long time, and they are a true favourite," said Loraine. "Having the pair is great because I ideally like using them to flank a piece of art or mirror to create wall drama and symmetry. They are so beautiful to look at and give me a feeling of great peace and protection. Of all the things that come and go

in our home and in our interior business I think the Angels are my favourite."

'Whenever we dined there we always chose the table that the art was hung above. It felt like eating at home'

As lovers of art and back in the late 80's Loraine and her husband Carlo became very fond of Glasgow School Of Art artist, Leslie Main. For years Leslie had a high profile and much loved gallery with her brother Michael in Gibson Street, in Glasgow's West End. The pair used to have special get-togethers for friends and collectors and this is where Leslie's magic on canvases got a hold of Loraine and Carlo's attention. "We fell in love with Leslie's work and collected her paintings for years, having many pieces commissioned by her. Our favourite is this vibrant oil painting of Hemmingway's balcony in Key West, Florida" said Loraine.

"A long time ago there was a great restaurant in Bearsden called Octobers that Ferrier Richardson, a then Olympic medal chef, owned and ran with his partner Hugh. Carlo and I loved that place and its decor was way ahead of its time. It was a very minimalist environment - crisp, clean and contemporary. Everything was understated yet magnificent, with fabulous art featured throughout. Leslie had some superb pieces hung there including a very small version of our painting of Hemmingway's balcony. Whenever we dined there we always chose the table that the art was hung above. It felt like eating at home", she laughed.

Loraine and Carlo also rank one of their large Gerard Burns paintings, situated in their hallway, as one of their favourites. "It's just so Glasgow" Carlo commented, "the traditional sandstone buildings, the moody skies, the rain (Carlo pauses), the rain, the umbrellas, the rain!"

'Great pieces are like great people, they move around'

Standing next to the Leslie Main painting you can see an unusual collection of modern matt lacquered furniture and accessories. This elegant and unusual triptych screen has beautiful detail in tones of oyster and latte with hints of metallic. Its style has a flavour of contemporary deco and it is complimented here with a console table and matching porcelain charger on a stand. This collection formed a part of Loraine and Carlo's dining room for many years, but recently was moved to create a bedroom setting. The result was fantastic. "Great pieces are like great people" said Loraine, "they don't stand still". This collection is a great favourite of ours because it is so relaxed and neutral yet unusual. I also really like its versatility and the flexibility in which it can be used."

It all sounds so simple when put that way, but you can see the ability and creative talent this discerning couple have in putting together interiors. They have worked together for builders and developers for years designing and supplying showhouse furniture. In addition their companies supply the TV and Film industries with furniture for their sets, which I imagine is where their sense of drama comes. Carlo and Loraine are passionate about interiors and also have generations of private clients on their books, many listed in the 'who's who'.

Their private design studio in Bearsden is a host to the most incredible cornucopia of modern, contemporary and transitional furniture you could imagine and all available to purchase or hire. Visit www.xsinteriors.com or www.exshowhousefurniture.com for more information or telephone 0141 942 0519 to book an appointment at the design studio.

From an interior point of view, change is something that we all really enjoy and aspire to. However, sometime some things are so very special to us that they simply have to stay. What do you cherish in your home that wild horses couldn't tear you away from? What are your most cherished interior possessions? Jodi MacLean takes a peek through the keyhole at the home of Scotland's leading lights in interior design.

Magnificent antique Burmese carved wooden angels set with jewels.

