

A Week In The Life Of Natasha Hawtrey-Woore

Interior Designer Natasha Hawtrey-Woore designs spaces that help restaurateurs, retailers and innovative companies create outstanding experiences; through design, she seeks to make a positive difference to people's everyday lives – and a dramatic difference to clients' bottom lines!

Her aim is to touch people at the deepest level and she works with creative talent of all disciplines to design spaces that allure, excite and reward all who spend time in them.

MONDAY

Meditation is a great way to start the day and I try to do this as often as I can; it clears the cobwebs and gets the creative juices flowing. After catching up with emails and planning the week ahead, I brief the rest of the team and make calls to check progress on all of our projects.

This week, we are starting work on a new idea for a space that allows people to re-connect with their natural ability to play. We're at the research stage of the project and today I'm immersing myself in the science of play. Studies have shown that play measurably improves health, relationships, educational achievements and corporate innovation so we are excited about the opportunity of creating a space that inspires people to do more of it. ▼



Natasha Hawtrey-Woore





Artist Andy McGregor's seasonal artwork

▲ We create spaces that help our clients tell their stories and make a valuable difference to people's lives, so my time is divided between getting to know my clients' businesses intimately, creative research, and overseeing the development and implementation of our designs.

This afternoon I am re-visiting Eat 17's Walthamstow restaurant, which we only finished last November. For the opening we worked with local artist, Andy McGregor who depicted some Autumn/Winter branches – the idea is that the art installation changes with the seasons, so we're going to discuss the brief for the Spring/Summer piece.



A vibrant orange runner creates energy!

TUESDAY

I'm heading over to a site meeting with my clients Dan O'Connor and Eliza Parkes who specialise in artisan wines and complementary foods. Their new venture is Yardarm, a shop, wine bar and tasting room combined. Our inspiration for the design came from Dan and Eliza's passion for sharing the joy of good wine in a down-to-earth way. We've used cork and wine casing material as the fabric of the space and off-set the wine bottles against black walls to allow the artistry of the wine labels stand out. Part of the brief was to make the space flexible so that tasting events could take place in the wine bar around a large table when required, so we've created a modular system with tables that can be used separately then put together as one large tasting table.

Today we're discussing the brief for the artist who is creating a graphic mural to depict how a good wine feels. Working with artists is a big part of what we do. Some of our best projects have been where we've involved artists in shaping the design as well as in creating focal points in the space.

In the afternoon I meet with a potential client who is interested in our work with colour psychology. Colour has such a direct influence on our mood and energy levels and it can be applied systematically to stimulate different emotional and physical responses. For one client, we painted a vibrant orange runner on the stairs of their creative agency and several of the people who worked there asked for the paint reference. It gave them such a good feeling each day when they came in that they wanted to give their home stairs the same treatment!



WEDNESDAY

We're working on the design for a new boutique cinema that is to be housed within a 1913 picture house. Our design is inspired by the theatrical spirit of movie-going at the time the original cinema was built and our client's brand of laid-back luxury. Our palette of velvet and gilt will be used in a contemporary way to create a 'relax in style' feeling and we're using lighting to make the most of the wonderful plasterwork ceiling and frieze where the original screen was housed. The cinema will be adjacent to the restaurant we designed for the same client and the idea is to link the two and create an 'eat and screen' experience.

The design process itself has been complex



Eat 17's Walthamstow restaurant

because the building has been divided horizontally and the ceiling is arched. This gives us quite a challenge with the screen sizing and seat raking in order to achieve enough headroom while giving the best view of the screen. We've managed to gain an extra row of seating by a front row of loungers, low enough so the seats behind retain a clear view. Our client loves the idea and thinks the loungers will be the first to sell out.

Now that the client's approved inspector has given the design the go-ahead, we're putting the project out to tender and this afternoon I have a series of meetings with contractors to run through the detail of the design.

THURSDAY

We've designed a set of chairs for a residential client and they are now in production at our upholsterer's in East London. The brief was to create cocooning chairs as a foil to the concrete and glass surroundings of our client's space so we have shaped the frame to wrap around the body and made super comfortable upholstery.

I'm going to our upholsterer's today to approve the frames and review leather samples. We're looking for warm tone leather with just the right amount of softness to create the feeling of comfort our clients are after, as well as natural texture and markings to give an individual look to

each chair.

I head to Shoreditch where I'm meeting the client to show them the leather we're proposing. It's a fresh sunny day and so I take the opportunity for a lunchtime open-air swim, which is bracing to say the least.

Energised by my swim, I head back to the studio to meet with our lighting designer and review designs for some of our other current projects. Most of the lighting we use in our projects is bespoke, we find that our clients like this approach because it underlines the unique nature of their spaces.

FRIDAY

I'm up early to run a creative workshop ▼



Most of Natasha's lighting is bespoke (seen here at Eat 17)

▲ with a client. We're developing their design brief for a new craft beer and burger venture and one of the themes we're exploring is urban craft. This is such a rich vein for creativity and one that suggests up-cycling, which we are always very keen on.

I'm going to a lunch-time talk on creative ideation hosted by Soho Works. I love these talks – they always give me a fresh perspective and usually inspire a new idea about a project I'm working on.

After the talk I head back to the studio. This afternoon, we are finishing off drawings for a re-fit in Selfridges for Blink who have an eyebrow care business. They have concessions in all of the high-end department stores and we work with them to develop designs that maintain their brand integrity and pass the rigorous approval processes that these stores have in place.

Fridays are cake days and the local shop does an amazing chocolate orange loaf. I settle down with a slice and a cup of my favourite jasmine tea to check over the drawings before we send them out.

www.hawtreywoore.co.uk



Yardarm will use the artistry of the wine labels in its design