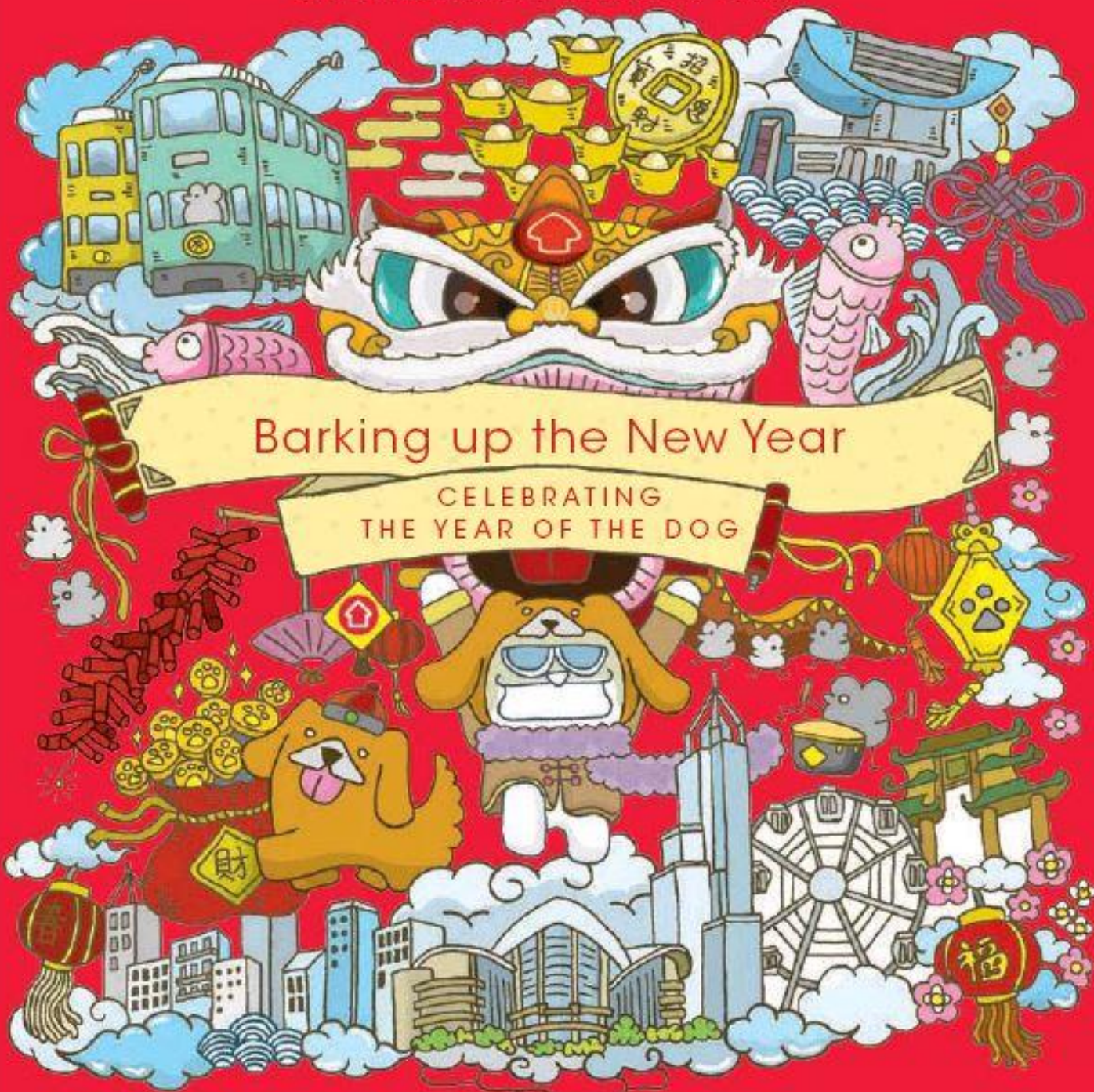


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# THE ADVENTUROUS DESIGNER

## 大冒險家

Sought-after interior designer, Katharine Pooley fills us in on her adventures and why Hong Kong is a land of opportunity.

英國室內設計師Katharine Pooley暢談人生的所見所聞。

BY KATE DAVIES PHOTOS COURTESY OF KATHARINE POOLEY



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As someone who embraces international perspectives and lifestyles, Katharine Pooley could be the epitome of a global citizen. The ultimate expat, she's lived in Scotland, England, France, the Middle East, Hong Kong, Vietnam and Australia. "Design for me is everywhere," she tells me, "design internationally gives you such an opportunity to understand different cultures and see how different people around the world live." Although, the places she's lived are not the only places she's seen.

Twenty years ago, before it was trendy, she travelled up the Amazon and Rwanda to see the gorillas. She's been to places like Oman and Saudi Arabia, climbed the highest mountain in the Antarctic, been to the North Pole and has ridden horses across both the Sahara and Ecuador. She's also been flown around Ethiopia in a bi-plane and travelled to Namibia 25 years ago. "So yes, I love adventure," she says.

It's this excitement for soaking up culture from around the globe that has fueled her passion for design, giving her a worldly, personal edge that informs her style and sets her apart from counterparts. Her work has been described as 'faultlessly chic' and 'ultra luxurious', and some of her clients are among the super elite, but she says

Katharine Pooley名副其實是一位世界公民，她曾旅居蘇格蘭、英國、法國、中東、香港、越南及澳洲，培養出國際視野，也擁戴多元的生活方式。比起住過的地方，她到過的地方更是多不勝數。她告訴我：「設計是無處不在的，在世界不同地方做設計，讓我有機會了解世上不同文化和民族。」

20年前，還沒有太多人到亞馬遜及盧旺達等地方旅行時，她已經深入這些人跡罕至的地方看大猩猩；她亦曾到訪阿曼及沙地阿拉伯；攀上南極洲最高峰；踏足北極；策馬橫越撒哈拉沙漠及厄瓜多爾；乘坐雙翼飛機環遊埃塞俄比亞；25年前經已遊遍納米比亞，正如她說：「是的，我喜歡冒險。」

旅遊讓她深入了解世界文化，振奮人心之餘，也增添她對設計的熱誠，並從獨有的世界觀及個性，開闢出與別不同的設計風格。有人以「無瑕的典雅」和「極致奢華」來形容她的設計，其顧客都是社會精英，不過她認為自己沒有特定風格。她說：「來找Katharine Pooley的人不是因為我會設計黑色地板或粉紅色椅子，也不是因為我是當代設計主義設計師，我本身也不是。客人來找我，是因為可得到無微不至的服務、卓越的品質、優良的設計，更重要的是過程中充滿歡樂。」

對Pooley來說，室內設計是以客為先，需要真正明白客人的要求。Pooley沒有舉辦過設計，是邊做邊學，她認為要成為



she doesn't have a brand per se. "It's not like, 'let's go to Katharine Pooley because she has black floors or pink chairs or she's contemporary' – I'm not. You come to me because you know you're going to get phenomenal service, great quality, good style and you'll have a laugh along the way."

For Pooley, interior design is all about the client and understanding their brief really well. Although being a successful designer is also about having instincts, she says, "I think you're either born with having a good eye, grow into having a good eye or you like beautiful things – and I think I was born liking beautiful things." Design is not something she officially studied, rather she learnt on the job. However, she does admire other designers, among them Ralph Lauren for his timelessness and Kelly Wearstler for her brave ideas.

When she met her husband and moved to Singapore after 16 years of working in finance in Hong Kong, she did up four properties they bought together, and that gave her a taste of design. So, when they eventually returned to the UK, she built on her travels and opened a boutique selling luxury accessories from around the world. "Before I knew it I had an interior design business!" she laughs.

Now 14 years in the industry, she employs 47 people and offers interior design services

across the residential, commercial and property development spheres as well as home dressing. While based in London, her company also operates out of an international base in Doha, Qatar. "A lot of people ask me, 'how did you get here?', and I just don't know. One day you put on some roller skates and keep skating and you open your eyes and here you are!" She also felt it was a good time to bookmark her career so far with the release of a book filled with some of her projects to date, aptly called, *Journey By Design*.

Today she is working on projects across the world. Last year alone her eponymous company handled 42 including a Formula 2 racetrack and a project in China which had a hotel, a bar and twenty villas. As varied projects go, she's also worked on a castle in the English Home Counties and a party house in Dubai for one client alone.

Right now, she is doing potentially three luxury projects across Hong Kong from Discovery Bay to The Peak. For Pooley, after life as an expat here, she still loves the city and returns twice a year. Friends she met here became family; hiking, biking and running through Hong Kong's lush parkland sated her inner explorer and the Hong Kong people made her feel like everything was possible, from jobs to travel to activities and making things. "Hong Kong," she says, "is a land of opportunity." 📍





一位成功的設計師必要有天賦才能。她說：「審美眼光可以是與生俱來，可以從學習得來，亦可以單憑對美麗事物的熱愛，我想我對美麗事物的追求是與生俱來的。」她也有仰慕的設計師，當中包括Ralph Lauren的經典設計，以及Kely Wearstler的大膽創新。

Pooley在香港金融界工作16年後，認識了現時的丈夫，一同移居新加坡，她設計了四所與丈夫一同購置的物業，令她初嚐設計的滋味。當他們搬回英國後，Pooley以她的旅遊體驗為基礎，開設了一家專賣來自世界各地的高級飾品店，她笑着說：「真想不到就這樣的開展了室內設計事業！」

現時，她入行已有14年，有47名員工，室內設計服務範圍包括住宅、商業空間及物業發展項目，還涉獵家居佈置和零售。她以倫敦為基地，在卡塔爾的多哈開設分公司作為國際基地，她解釋：「不少人問我如何在當地營運？我不知道，就像我穿上了滾軸溜冰鞋不停向前走，一睜開眼，就發現自己身處當地！」她更為自己的事業建立里程碑，出版了一本記錄她部分作品的書《Journey By Design》。

現時她主理的項目遍佈世界各地，單是去年，以她命名的公司處理了42個項目，包括位於中國的二級方程式賽道及酒店，設施包括一家酒吧及20間別墅。另外，她還為一位顧客設計其位於英國市郊的堡壘和位於杜拜的派對屋。

目前，她正在處理三個香港項目，位於愉景灣、山頂等地。Pooley曾在香港生活，對香港情有獨鍾，每年回港兩次，與本地朋友聚會、遠足、騎單車、在翠綠公園跑步，這些活動能滿足她愛發掘新事物的本性，香港人亦令她感到所有事都有可能，從工作到旅遊，以至活動及創作。她說：「香港是個充滿機遇的地方。」📍