

INTERIORS

Steinway's limited edition chandelier is part of a growing trend for statement lighting, reports Victoria Brzezinski

For many pianists a Steinway is the last word in grand piano design. Now the 166-year-old piano-maker has launched a limited-edition chandelier designed specially to be hung above its Steinway grand.

The Haara chandelier is a collaboration with Cameron Design House, a lighting company based in northwest London, and is made up of cylindrical lanterns of glass and polished brass and is finished with Steinway's lyre logo. It costs £56,000 and will be limited to ten pieces, made to order in Cameron's workshop.

"It evokes the natural beauty of a weeping willow falling from the ceiling," says Ian Cameron, the creative director of Cameron Design House. "The organic and delicate structure of the Haara adds grandeur to a room, complementing a beautiful musical instrument."

Charu Gandhi, the founder of Elicyon, a luxury interior design company, says that there's a growing trend for people to want statement lighting in their homes — the more unique, the better. "A chandelier is more than just a light fitting, it is a piece of art," Gandhi says.

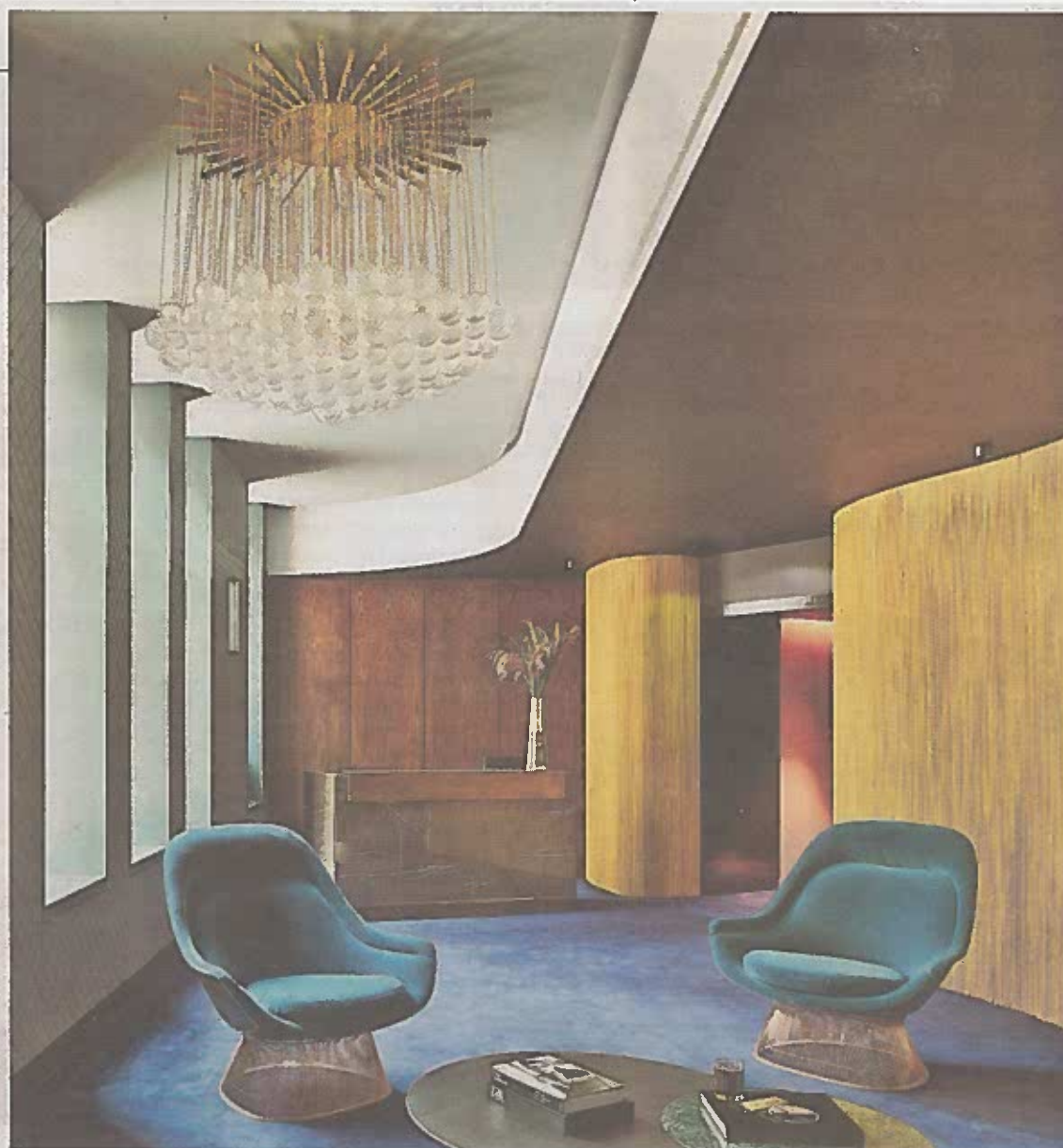
Designs are moving on from traditional pieces made of hand-cut crystal to those made of hand-blown glass, rock crystals, ceramics and metals. For a project in Mumbai, Gandhi designed a chandelier made of individual sheets of parchment — like Post-it notes — within a concentric circle, which added a textural element to the design. In large homes and penthouses Gandhi will often use several chandeliers to create separate zones within an open space. "The repetition gives a sense of fluidity," she says.

Oz Lancaster, the founder of OS Designs, an interior design company, made a 10m-long chandelier to fit a villa in Manchester. It was the pièce de résistance of the 9,000 sq ft property. "We created a bespoke four-storey Swarovski crystal chandelier cascading through the middle of a marble staircase," Lancaster says. It was made out of crystal glass leaves and round crystals, inspired by pearls, and weighed more than 400kg.

According to Vicky Charles, the interior designer used by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex for the renovation of Frogmore Cottage, a chandelier brings decoration and polish to even the simplest of rooms.

"Adding a chandelier is a lovely contrast — a piece of precious jewellery hanging in the room," she says. The Juliana chandelier (£1,850) from Soho Home, the interiors brand from the Soho House chain of members' clubs, is one example. Made from rose-tinted Murano glass, it has dozens of hand-blown, scalloped glass tubular sections and hangs in Dumbo House in New York.

"Favoured by popes, rock stars and royalty, Murano glass is widely regarded as the finest in the world because of its ability to take on infinite shapes and colours without losing its shine or finesse," says Siobhan Farley, the design director at Soho Home. "Nothing much



Switch on to some grand illuminations

has changed in the 1,500 years since the industry first developed in Venice."

A vintage 1970s Murano chandelier is also the focal point of the lobby of Chapter House, a development from Londonewcastle in Covent Garden, central London, which comprises 40 apartments starting at £995,000. Trilby Gordon, the head of design at Londonewcastle, sourced the piece from a dealer in Berlin. "I chose it because the glass balls are suspended by chains, in keeping with the chains hanging from the walls in the lobby area," she says. "There's nothing sexier than the right lighting and this chandelier pulls everything together while making that wow statement. There needs to be hierarchy within a space and too many stars in one room can create needless drama, so this was our centrepiece and we kept the rest of the room pretty bare, except for two Knoll lounge chairs and a coffee table."

Newer designs are making the most of technology. "By using LED lighting, we've been able to create light options we couldn't have achieved before," says Claire Anstey, the lighting buyer for Heal's, a furniture retailer. "The art deco-inspired Chicago chandelier [£399] demonstrates this beautifully; tiny LEDs are hidden at the top of fluted glass droppers, with the light gently dispersed through the linear pieces of glass, emitting a soft and diffused glow."



The limited edition Haara chandelier, £56,000, from Steinway and Cameron Design House. Top: a vintage 1970s Murano glass chandelier in Londonewcastle's Chapter House development in Covent Garden, central London

Last month a Lalique chandelier created by the interior designer Pierre-Yves Rochon won the lighting piece category at the Interior Design Awards. The contemporary piece takes inspiration from René Lalique lighting designs of the 1930s, but uses modern LEDs. "Crowns of light are adorned with slender and elegant crystal candles," says Frederick Fischer, the managing director of Lalique UK. "The Perles chandelier comes to life when lit in a shining canopy from beneath. The latest LED technology is married with classic design, neoclassical accents and a Grand Siècle [17th-century France] flair bringing a touch of French elegance to any interior scheme."

Where to buy a chandelier

Gandhi recommends the Masterpiece art fair, the website 1stDibs and vintage markets. Before buying, she says: "Go to see it in person — what does it look like from the side, from below? It's important to see what it looks like with the lights off. Consider the quantity of the light and supplement with downlights if it doesn't provide enough. They are a statement piece so they can also make the wrong statement. And choose one that is easy to look after and replace."



Tastemakers Staffan Tollgard

Swedish-born Staffan Tollgard, 47, never intended to become a designer. It was his wife, Monique, who persuaded him to pursue his interest. While renovating their first home together, she encouraged him to enrol at the Inchbald School of Design. The couple set up Tollgard Design Group 15 years ago and it has grown into a bustling interior design practice, with three London showrooms, and a contract sales and product design division. Their present projects include a listed apartment in Copenhagen and the offices of a tech company in Paddington, central London.

The Tollgards live in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, with their sons Leo and Elliot.

► **What is your biggest source of design inspiration?** Problems of living. Whenever I can't find something, I design it.

► **Chintz or minimalism?** Minimalism, but not cold.

► **What is your design essential?** Art. It must not be an afterthought.

► **Your favourite interior design quick fix?** A plastered wall or wallpaper

► **Your prediction for the next big interior design trend?** Maximalism is almost saturating us. Could minimalism be coming back? A chrome and black 1980s version?

► **The design pitfall to avoid?** A blanket of down lights in every room.

► **If you could live in anyone's house whose would it be and why?** Many moons ago, I went to a party in [the Japanese fashion designer] Kenzo's house in Paris. It is an East meets West architectural marvel in the centre of the city, with a Koi pond.

► **When decorating what do you splurge on?** Lighting.

► **What would you save on?** Art doesn't necessarily have to be expensive. It just has to speak to you.

► **The best piece of design advice you have received?** A friend of ours that worked for a legendary hotelier demanded that his designers lie down on the beds so that they could see the room just as a client would. Before handing the house back to the client we make sure that we see it through their eyes.

► **What is your favourite thing about your home?** Our wood-burning stove.

Victoria Brzezinski
Tollgard Design Group will host a pop-up showroom at Chelsea Harbour Design Centre throughout autumn

