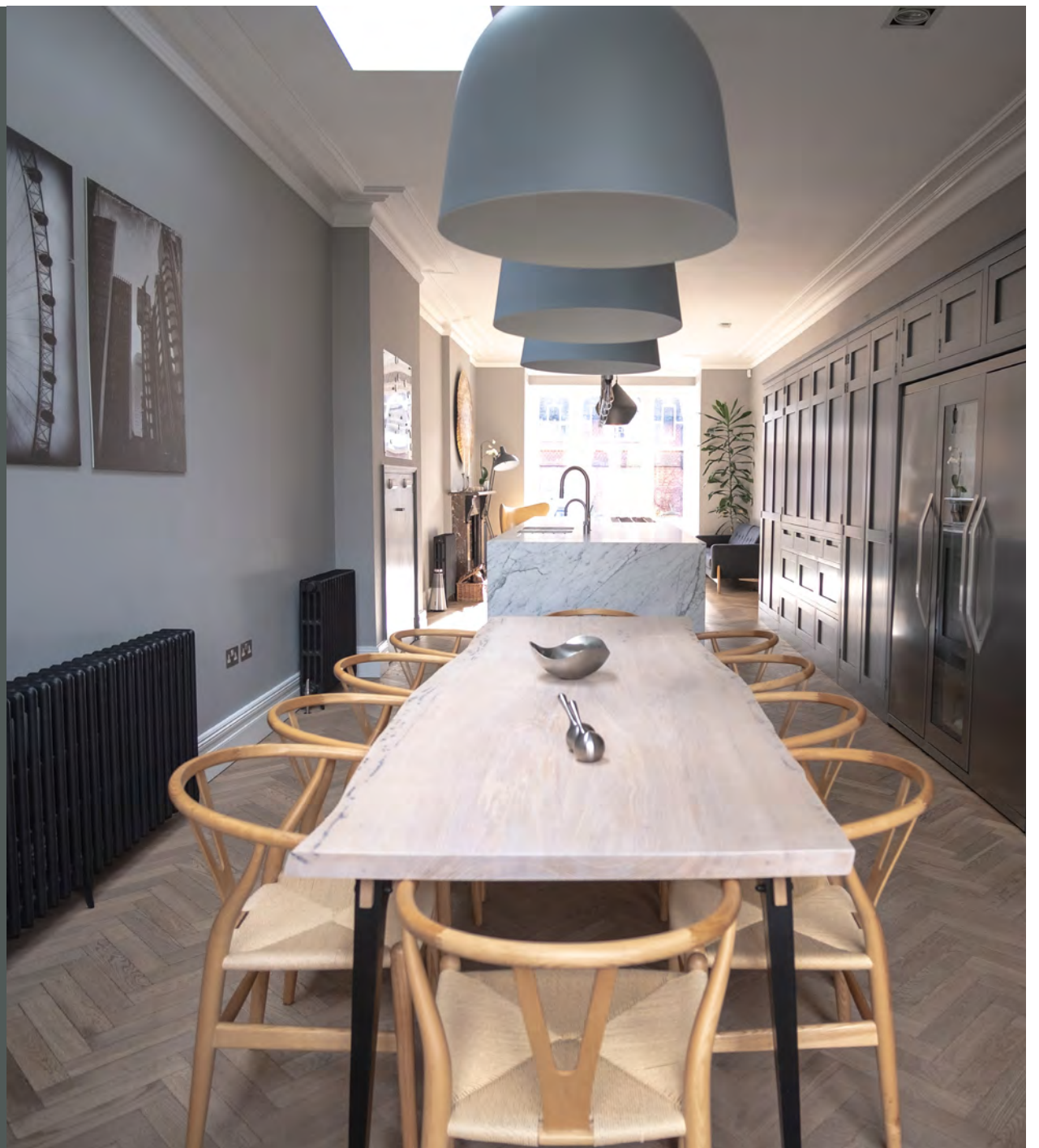


“I’M GREATLY INFLUENCED BY MY EXPERIENCE OF GROWING UP IN DENMARK WHERE THE BUSINESS OF FURNITURE DESIGN IS HUGE”



Photographs by Rikke Mitchell

This month’s SO interiors’ focus turns the spotlight on local business entrepreneur **Rikke Mitchell**, founder of Nordhus Furniture. **Rachael Hale** meets the talented Danish creative who is now based in Tunbridge Wells ahead of her new showroom opening later this month...

Rikke Mitchell’s a very busy lady. She’s recently rebranded her construction business, Baltic Star Build, launched a bespoke furniture making business, designed a range of tables and is now opening a showroom in Langton Green. Here she tells us how it happened and reveals how you can be one of the first to see the new showroom.

How Did Nordhus Furniture Begin?

It’s actually due to my construction firm’s clients. I’m always being asked, ‘Can you just...make me a table, design my kitchen, build me a bookcase, fit some wardrobes, create a bed’. It just evolved. At first, we made pieces on site but in 2017 I took over a tiny workshop in

Horsham. We soon outgrew that and in August last year we moved to a much larger space in Langton Green. It’s been so successful that in March I launched Nordhus Furniture as a separate entity and now have three full-time craftsmen working for me.

What makes Nordhus Furniture special?

Everything we make is handmade by talented craftsman, using solid wood sourced mainly from great local family company JW Timber. There are no limits to what a client can have. If we can help you imagine it, we can definitely create it.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

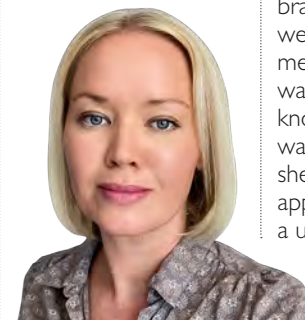
I’m greatly influenced by my experience of growing up in

Denmark where the business of furniture design is huge. Fritz Hanson and Arne Jacobsen are still big influences. I may not make things that look like theirs but whenever I listen to a client and design something unique for them, I always have in the back of my mind the Danish approach to working with natural materials and solid timber.

What’s your typical working day like?

It usually starts before I leave home because there are always deliveries and queries to attend to. The workshop opens just before 8am and we shut off production at 4pm. Now my children are older, Erik is 9 and Isla 11, it’s easier to fit around their school day and I usually start working again once they’ve gone to

“I always have in the back of my mind the Danish approach to working with natural materials and solid timber”



bed. I like to design in the evening because I don’t like to be disrupted once I’m in the ‘zone’ and when I’m doing it, I don’t want to stop.

What inspired you to launch your own table-based range of furniture?

It’s very exciting. It’s been a long time coming but this range was inspired by a special walnut and brass inlaid console table. When I went to visit my client, she said to me, ‘I want a console table and I want it to be this big, but I don’t know what I want.’ I thought she was going to show me a picture she liked but it soon became apparent she wanted me to design a unique piece for her. And, when I talked, and listened to her, it became clear what she wanted.

“I like to design in the evening because I don’t like to be disrupted once I’m in the ‘zone’”

She has a big lounge with fretwork-patterned wood panelling and an inherited piece of walnut furniture she wanted the console table to match. She also likes brass accents, so I went away and created a design based on what she’d told me. It was a little nerve-wracking when I sent the design to her, but she immediately emailed back to say, ‘Yes that’s exactly what I wanted!’

After that I just couldn’t stop designing tables. So now we’ve launched a range of consoles, dining and bedside tables, desks and, hopefully very soon, metal inlaid coffee tables. There are lots of options and some of the first pieces are on display in our new showroom.



When does the showroom open and how can people come and see it?

It’s opening on Wednesday September 16 and my guys have been working really hard to get it ready. It’s not very big so we had to be creative with its design, but it showcases our work and craftsmanship perfectly. Anna’s Family Kitchen will be running two canape demonstrations and tasting sessions, and free kitchen and furniture advice and design will be available. It’s going to be great and tickets are available via our Facebook page.

How to get in touch with Rikke
www.nordhus.co.uk
Insta – nordhus_furniture
FB – nordhusfurniture

Showroom opening event link
– <https://www.facebook.com/events/883740572034914/>

WHY I LOVE TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Rikke Mitchell

It’s the elegance of the place. The Georgian and Victorian buildings nestled in amongst beautiful parkland, and the people are so friendly.

Favourite Place to eat:
 We love The Hare in Langton Green. It’s amazing and for those who are gluten free, like me, or coeliac, they have a massive menu.

Favourite Shop:
 It has to be Brewers Decorator Centre on North Farm Road.

Favourite family day out?
 My son is obsessed with Clip N Climb in Tonbridge and both kids love Mr Mulligan’s Dino Golf. I’ve also just started wild swimming at Haysden Lake due to a dare. It’s cold and tastes of duck but it’s quite good fun. I’ll be going back.

