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ON TREND | STATEMENT LIGHTING

Bring crystals into your home – through sculptural, handcrafted designs

Words by Giselle Au-Nhien Nguyen

According to Christopher Boots, statement lighting is to the home what jewellery is to a person. “The same way that we style ourselves when we wake up, a home is an expression of your personality,” the Melbourne-based industrial designer says. “You get it ready like you would a person – that’s how I see lighting.”

Boots cut his teeth in the business working with lighting legend Geoffrey Mance, then launched his own brand in 2011, with high-end residential clients all over the world, from the USA to the UK, France, Switzerland and beyond.

What’s particularly unique about Boots’s work is the use of natural crystals and stones, inspired by his lifelong love of nature. “My mum would take me on nature walks and really encouraged me to look at the really interesting things that were there,” he says. “I had a really serious fixation hobby about rocks, and then growing up doing design, I was like, ‘What happens if I put them together?’”

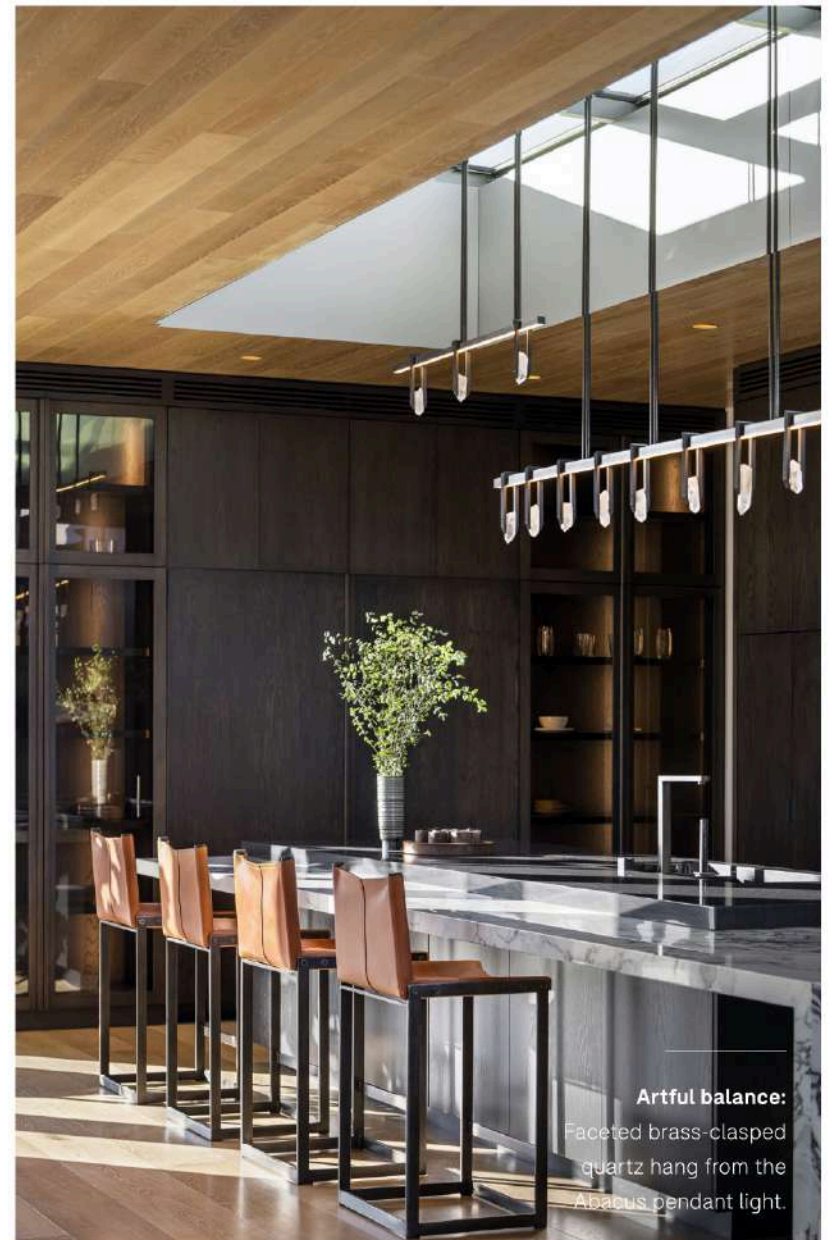
Working mostly with quartz, Boots creates striking, geometric lighting structures for the home, each entirely handcrafted in his Melbourne studio where he blends function with form. He sources natural materials from suppliers overseas, largely Brazil, and all his pieces are custom-made to order. “It’s like when you go get a suit tailored, you get measured up with your particular fabric,” he explains. “You will work with people that are making this pretty much from scratch, and that’s where we’re really unique in the market.”

Statement lighting doesn’t have to be big and flashy – Boots has noticed that many of his clients prefer what he refers to as “little moments”, capitalising on elegance and the element of the unexpected. “They love those little surprise bits in a powder room, somewhere on the way, on the stairwell,” he says. “There’s a real trend with subdued little things ... that little piece of luxury.”

On the other hand, some prefer impressive, large-scale lights, like a memorable commission that involved a six-metre structure entirely encrusted in an intense deep-blue lapis lazuli. Another special commission was for a restored 17th-century farmhouse in the south of France, with lights installed down the stairwell. “It was quite contemporary in relation to this 300-plus-year-old place, but it was so perfectly tuned,” Boots recalls.

When it comes to designing lighting, it’s all about finding out what makes the client tick and how they’d like their home to feel. “That’s part of the process of discovering what someone is really after ... What vibe are you setting? That’s pretty much what lighting does,” the designer says. “Your home is your sanctuary, a place to feel comfort, spend time with loved ones, and a place to restore – that’s how I see this work.”

After all, crystals are known for their healing properties, and while Boots admits he’s not a “woo-woo” kind of person, there’s something true in that for him, too. That synergy with nature and spirituality drives his work: “A bit of nature in your house, in your home, that’s really an opportunity to remember how important the natural world is.”



Artful balance: Faceted brass-clasped quartz hang from the Abacus pendant light.

ANNETTE ENGLISH



Diamond ring: Clear crystal quartz form a striking and graceful entry hall.

MATT MCQUIGGAN



Architectural jewellery: Clustered stalactite-like fixtures decorate a stairwell.

NIC GOSSAGE