

Charu Gandhi

38-year-old architect and founder of Elicyon Ltd, a design studio based in south London, Charu has designed and decorated homes, flats and offices for clients all over the world. As a British woman of Indian descent, she's also got the second culture attitude of many of our readers.

"I am a bit of a global nomad," she confesses, "with projects in Dubai, Shanghai and Mumbai. I do have firm roots in London where my studio and family are based and my connection to India remains

very much intact. 'Citizen of the world' is such an interesting term: to me it describes a global outlook, viewing our planet holistically, but also suggests that you have a strong grounding and roots in your heritage."

When designing, Charu not only takes into account her clients' tastes, but also their cultural background, as well as using her talent to add subtle design elements from the art and architecture of all the places she's visited.

"The threat of potential loss of local culture, craft and preservation of tradition is one of the down sides of globalism," she explains. "But this can be counterbalanced by people creating a cross pollination that ensures these local traditions thrive. To be a good designer, you need to have an innate interest in people and the way that they live or aspire to live their lives in their next home." ■

"I believe that *true change* and *growth* as a race will only come about when we view our planet as one large, living *organism*.

