

# Inside man

By *Jermaine Gallacher*

Step away from the garish light of bare bulbs and take the plunge with a statement lampshade

**A**s I was climbing the purple gloss-painted stairs to inspect my latest interiors project, I surveyed a gloriously colourful, audaciously maximal scene. The dining room was ahead of me and I walked in to check on the blue rag-painted ceiling and walls, the fabulous curly whirly table we had resprayed with lilac lacquer in the centre. And, hanging above it on a Routemaster-red cord, a football-sized bare filament bulb. That was certainly not on the moodboard.

To be honest, the digital nomad 'anywhere in the world can be your office so let's make everywhere look like an office' international coffee shop aesthetic has never been on any moodboard I've been associated with. And yet nowadays bare bulbs are no longer confined to hostage takers' basements or student squats. No, you see the same undressed



lightbulbs hanging off statement cords everywhere you go. Like a room full of naked bodies, at first it's interesting to see all the constituent parts and how they are put together but, in almost all instances, the ambience will be improved if you put some damn clothes on.

The good news if you don't know what to wear is that lampshades come in almost every colour, shape and size, so much so that choosing the right one can be daunting.

If you're feeling bold, come down to my Borough showroom where I'm the exclusive stockist of **F Taylor Colantonio's** brushstroke lanterns, starting at £350.

Made from hand-painted PVC woven strips, these artfully coloured shades give off a flattering glow which, let's face it, we could all do with.

I also currently have the hots for **Viola Lanari's** mirror shades. Available in three colour ways from £105, they will add instant



**Get the glow:** Viola Lanari's mirror shades and, top right, F Taylor Colantonio's brushstroke lantern

glamour to any room. For ultimate impact, my favourite is the royal purple. Taking a leaf out of an even more regal book, Prince Charles's favourite interior designer, **Robert Kime**, makes pleated silk shades that add class to any room. They don't come cheap; prices start at £345, but some things are worth it and these won't go out of style.

An all-time classic that you won't need to save for is the paper shade, originally designed by Japanese-

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American sculptor **Isamu Noguchi**, the subject of a recent exhibition at the Barbican. It is based on traditional Japanese bamboo and paper lanterns and has become an icon of 20th century design; I challenge you to find someone who hasn't had one at least once in their life. The plain white shades give off a nice, diffuse light but I have been known to jazz them up with a bit of paint. I've found versions online for as little as £1.60, so don't be afraid to try something bold.

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