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## DRAWING ROOM

*Mike created an extra-wide doorway between this room and the dining room to enhance the classically composed space.*

**For a similar Ziegler carpet,** try Shahbaz Afridi, 020 7351 9818, shahbazafri.com.

**French chairs** gilded by N Tocci, 020 8960 4826, luciotozzi@yahoo.co.uk.

# Sweeping statement

Carefully considered art and antiques evoke a sense of splendour in the period home of architect Mike Fisher

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**DINING ROOM**

*The mirror and fireplace were designed to align, while golden hues create a convivial atmosphere.*

**Bespoke chairs**, Parsons Table, 020 7352 7444, [theparsonstablecompany.com](http://theparsonstablecompany.com). **Chairs in Ecorse**, £590m, Alton Brooke, 020 7376 7008, [alton-brooke.co.uk](http://alton-brooke.co.uk). **Similar chandelier**, from £3,780, Matthew Upham, 020 7731 4444, [moraandupham.com](http://moraandupham.com).



Interior designer and architect Mike Fisher is a man of great enthusiasms and a can-do approach. He has collected art and antiques since childhood, is mad about classical architecture – Sir John Soane being a particular favourite – and is a strong believer in “giving houses their personality back; you first have to unlock it, find out their character”.

His west London home is testament to his design philosophy. “It’s typical of the kind of thing I get to do,” he says. “When I came here, the house was unloved – the rooms were badly chopped up. It was built in an age when there was an upstairs and downstairs mentality, so it was always two houses, and it had been added to over the years. I improved it by changing the layout and manipulating the light and the architectural detailing.”

At his interior design business, Studio Indigo, Mike is often called upon



to refurbish large London houses, many of which suffer from the same upstairs-downstairs division. Presented with this challenge, he reintegrates the space. "I usually do it by working on the staircase – and if you can introduce top lighting so much the better." His own staircase extends from the ground to the third floor (where there is indeed a skylight) and its smart balusters were inspired by those in the Sir John Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London.

The staircase walls have been rounded into what Mike describes as cigar-shaped curves; their plaster is so highly polished you want to stroke it. Other Soane-inspired touches (and there are many) include detailing on the fireplaces, flat reeding on the skirting and door panels, neo-classical-style cornices and dining room cabinets modelled on those in Soane's library – all adapted by Mike to work in his house.

He wanted "to celebrate the generosity of space" in the main rooms of his home, so employed what he refers to as "the usual tricks" to great effect. Extra-tall double doors and large mirrors all help to increase the



## LIVING-DINING ROOM

*To create a seamless flow in this basement area, Mike raised the floor and lowered that of the adjoining kitchen so both were on the same level.*

**French limestone floor.** Porta A, from £139sq m, Stone Age, 020 7384 9090, estone.co.uk. **Chairs in Ottoman** Strie 4157, £115m, J Robert Scott, 020 7376 4705, jrobertscott.com.

**Black head vases,** £1,500 each, Oriel Harwood at Francis Sultana, 020 7589 5946, francissultana.com.

sense of space. Finally, Mike used paint and fabric to draw the eye to the fine architectural details throughout, and to create a cohesive look.

Mike believes that the structure of a house has to work before its decoration can be tackled, and nowhere is this approach more evident than in the alterations he made to the lower ground floor. Here, a well-ordered, spacious black and white kitchen and informal dining-cum-living room lead on to the garden.

"The idea for the kitchen fell into place in five minutes," Mike reveals. Its floor was a foot higher than that of the adjoining room, while access to the garden was up several stairs but, by levelling the floors of both rooms, you can now step straight outside. He lined the living room walls with fabric, for a cosy feel, and put in a stone floor throughout, because "it's important to be consistent".

While the basement rooms are more informal, his ground floor drawing room is wonderfully imposing, with high ceilings and large windows – those overlooking the garden were put in by him. It

is furnished with chandeliers, gilded bergère chairs and other antiques; internally, it opens on to the opulent dining room. Mike designed the drawing room around its carpet, a magnificent Ziegler that took carpet dealer Shahbaz Afridi years to find.

Mike's passion for art is evident all round this room. A painting of a studio by Ken Howard covers much of one wall, while most of the smaller portraits and still lifes – intense and classically influenced – are by Diarmuid Kelly. Elsewhere, you will find such delights as a collection of 18th-century prints of fireworks and pieces by silversmith Hester Bateman (1708-94), while the guest cloakroom houses a collection of ceramics by Anne Gordon. Scattered throughout the house are flamboyant works by Oriel Harwood: neo-Baroque mirrors and a host of dramatic heads, including a Medusa in the dressing room.

"I collect and I collect and I collect," Mike says and, unlike many in his profession, he holds on to his finds. "Each piece has memories and, while memories do fade, the objects remind me of happy times." ■



## GUEST BEDROOM

*Good reading lights beside the bed are typically practical touches which Mike incorporated into all the bedrooms.*

**Mattone green lamps** 80025, £2,203 each, Donghia, 020 7823 3456, donghia.com. **Headboard in** Bamboo in Damson/Stone, £60m, Nicholas Haslam, 020 7730 8623, nicholashaslam.com. **Cushion in** Surin 179719, £124m, Jim Thompson at Fox Linton, 020 7368 7700, foxlinton.com.



## BATHROOM

*This compact room off the dressing room demonstrates that elegance and practicality can co-exist even in a restricted space.*

**Serpentine double basin** (excluding taps), £5,464. Water Monopoly, 020 7624 2636. [watermonopoly.com](http://watermonopoly.com). **White coral mirror**, £5,500, Oriol Harwood at Francis Sultana, 020 7589 5946, [francissultana.com](http://francissultana.com). **Floor**, Namibian Cream marble, from £350/sq m, H&L Marble, 020 8903 5811, [nlmarble.co.uk](http://nlmarble.co.uk).