

TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED

With owners who delight in the unusual, this townhouse’s interior designed by Studio Indigo now has more than a touch of the theatrical

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DINING ROOM
A statement India-themed wallpaper makes an eye-catching backdrop for formal entertaining. Early Views of India wallpaper, de Gournay. Abara table and Miti chairs designed by Francis Sultana. Macchina Della Luce D light, Catellani & Smith.



FORMAL SITTING ROOM
Tactile fabrics and textured wallpaper are layered in this sophisticated scheme. La Route de la Soie wallpaper in Beige, Pierre Frey. Cocoon chairs, Marc de Berny. Coffee table, bespoke Studio Indigo design by Decorus. Agate side tables, Tyson London. Light, Wired Custom Lighting.



GUEST ROOM
This large space has a generous seating area. La Route de la Soie wallpaper in Ivoire, Pierre Frey. Coffee table, Porta Romana. Temple Shelf cabinets, Nicholas Haslam; hand-painted and antique lacquered by Susan Ward-Booth. Armchairs, Donghia.



KITCHEN
Wood, stone and glass are combined here in warming hues. Figured Sycamore Veneer cabinets, bespoke design by Studio Indigo; made by MVS. Island in Fantasy Brown granite by MGLW. Light, Bocci. Monsanto floor, Trajan Natural Stone.

The house was very intriguing,' says Studio Indigo's Mike Fisher of the seven-storey townhouse in Kensington that the company were asked to renovate five years ago. 'I was familiar with the property as I had lived opposite it for many years. The previous owners had begun renovating it but a change in circumstances meant they had to put it on the market unfinished. Our client, who has four children, purchased the house with a view to creating a more substantial family home and we were asked what we thought we could do to it. As we had already worked on several properties

in the local area, we knew exactly what improvements to make.' The main challenge that Mike and interior designer Fleur Liversidge faced was the positioning of the principal rooms – whether they should be at the front of the house, which faces north or at the rear. In the end, they decided to orientate the main rooms to the beautiful street at the front. 'What is lovely about the property is that you can stand in the centre of the house and look to the street at the front or you can look through to the garden. Light comes in from front to back,' says Mike. As the house is seven storeys high, the installation of a lift was essential, in addition to the staircase. However,

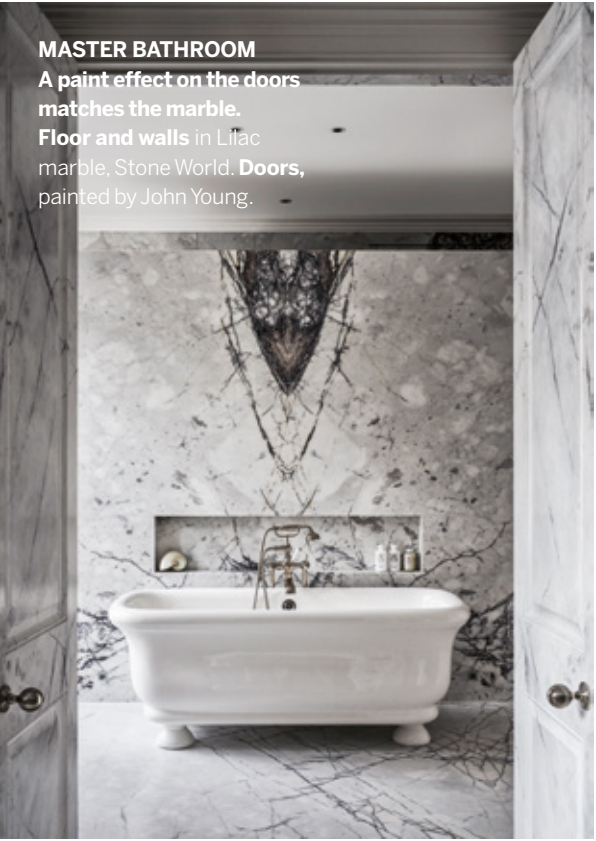
Studio Indigo's plan was to make the staircase a central feature. The original Victorian design was the inspiration but it was made grander, more elegant and less steep. Other major structural work included the building of a double basement to house a swimming pool and a gym. For Mike, the project was about the journey his team went on with the owners. 'I love how sophisticated their taste became,' he says. 'They developed a passion and interest in contemporary art and furniture, and had a desire to seek out the unusual, fascinating and cutting edge.' Mike and Fleur wanted to make the interior interesting and distinct, incorporating colours from an →



MAIN ENTRANCE
The original Victorian design was the inspiration for the new staircase, but Studio Indigo made it grander and less steep. Polished plaster **walls** by Atelier Premiere. Nomad Twilight **runner**, Tim Page Carpets. **Floor**, Moleanos.



CHILD'S BEDROOM
Metallic accessories create a grown-up look. **Bed** upholstered in Opera Butterfly O1 by Lizzo. **Mirror**, Jonathan Adler. **Lamp**, Oka.



MASTER BATHROOM
A paint effect on the doors matches the marble. **Floor and walls** in Lilac marble, Stone World. **Doors**, painted by John Young.

elegant palette. ‘We aimed to make it an inward-looking house with eye-catching furniture and art,’ says Mike. ‘Each room has its own sense of identity and character.’

Inevitably, the kitchen/breakfast room is the heart of the home. ‘We wanted to create something interesting using rich, warm colours, so we incorporated sycamore veneer cabinetry with marble worktops. We love colour – not bright primary colours but more muted tones. We like to use paints by Zoffany and Papers and Paints as the colours look different as the light changes.’

The formal sitting room was very challenging. ‘We restored the original proportions and cornicing. It’s a

north-facing room and we opened it up to the south with two double doors leading into the dining room. The two rooms are meant to be read together so that there’s a sense of living in both spaces,’ says Mike

Silk wallpaper on the sitting room walls introduces reflectivity to make the room appear lighter. For a large family, ensuring there was enough seating was important, so as well as a sofa, there are fabulously tactile sheepskin chairs and a chaise longue in the bay window. A rock crystal chandelier and fascinating pieces of art add to the sense of drama.

Next door, the spectacular dining room with its Sir John Soane arches has bespoke de Gournay wallpaper

with scenes of India. The largely monochromatic design comes to life with unexpected bursts of colour.

‘We chose the glass-topped table to reflect light,’ says Mike. ‘It’s about making a space feel bigger and creating illusions – is what you are seeing real or a reflection?’

‘You can’t be in every room at the same time but you should enjoy the entire house visually – things should draw your eye from one room to the next. We wanted to create an open feel but with the ability to close each room off. There is theatricality in it and practicality, too.’

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INSPIRATION



CHILD'S BEDROOM

The floral canopy injects a fairy-tale feel.

Curtain and **canopy** in (outer fabric) Marisol by Weitzner and (inner fabric) Diva in Hound by Chase Erwin. Cracked silver **bedside table**, Simon Orrell Designs.

Lamp, Oka. **Walls** painted in Polar Bear by Zoffany.