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BRIDGE FOR DESIGN

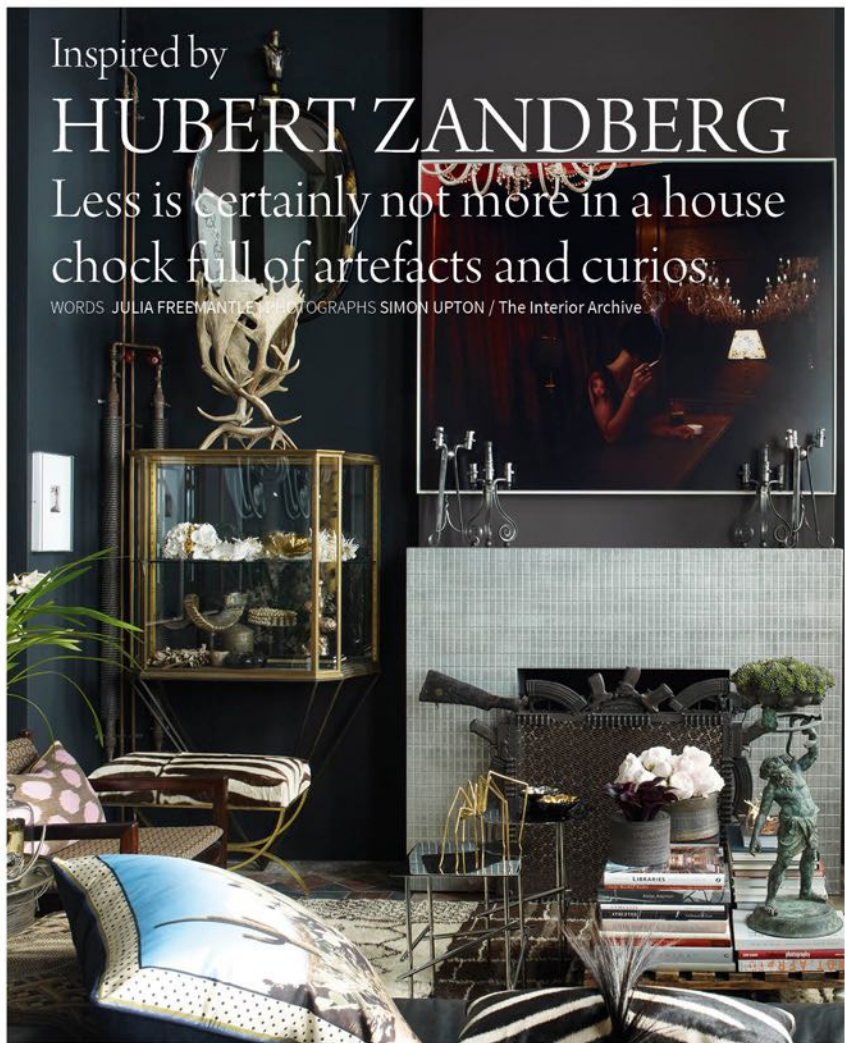
A vibrant interior scene featuring a purple wall, a white geometric wall sculpture, a round table with various objects, and several potted plants. The scene is set in a room with white walls and a white tiled floor. A large, white, geometric wall sculpture is mounted on the purple wall. A round table with a dark top and a gold-colored base holds various objects, including a bowl of fruit, a vase, and a small sculpture. Several potted plants are scattered throughout the room, adding a touch of greenery. The overall aesthetic is modern and eclectic.

THE INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE FOR INTERIOR DESIGNERS

Inspired by HUBERT ZANDBERG

Less is certainly not more in a house chock full of artefacts and curios.

WORDS JULIA FREEMANTLE PHOTOGRAPHS SIMON UPTON / The Interior Archive



South African born designer Hubert Zandberg's glamorous and eclectic London home is a master class in context and combination. Less is more is certainly not a dictum with which designer Hubert Zandberg is familiar. His London home is chock full in a thrilling where-to-look-first kind of way an extravaganza of artefacts, art, curios and curiosities commanding every surface.

The house's history is almost as quirky as its contents, no doubt part of why it appealed to Zandberg, whose passion for the provenance of pieces has informed his singular style. Split over five levels, it was once the canal-keeper's house, the lower levels storing hay, horses and coaches. But, oddly enough, its most recent incarnation before the designer moved in was as a motorbike workshop. 'The house has been many different things, so it seemed to welcome all my disparate objects, and even invite them,' says Zandberg.

The designer's South African heritage is immediately apparent. 'It's a cliché but the truth is you can't grow up in the Karoo and not be affected by it. It's always prevalent in my work,' he says. For him it has two sides – the bright Africa of gold sun and sand, and bold tribal colour, and its spare, monochromatic counterpart – sun-bleached bones, quills, horns.

Despite an affinity with the past, Zandberg is also about reconciling it with the present and his London life has given these long-held pieces a

LEFT: A rare pair of original Tommy Parzinger mirrors flanks a photograph by Hannah Starkey on one side of the living room

TOP: Interior designer and collector Hubert Zandberg beneath a picture by Andrea Buttnar in his London home



THIS PAGE: The master bedroom is dominated by a Zandberg-designed four-poster bed and includes a spectacular Zulu skirt amongst the objects displayed around the walls.

FACING PAGE: The living room doubles as an entrance hall and is filled with artworks by Berie Bergado, Peter Hugo, Francis Bacon and Rachel Whiteread. The shelf sculpture is designed by Bruno Pinado and the cushions are made from vintage scarves by Paul Smith. Against the dark blue walls of a windowless basement area leading off the kitchen/dining area a collection of tribal art and finds of nature is displayed: chairs, a Fortuny light fixture and a wall of local stone.



Eurocentric swing and new context which adds an element of edginess. 'I feel that by showing the artefacts and art not as separate concepts, it gives the effect relevance. My friend, designer Inca Waddell, described it as Pitt Rivers Museum meets the Tate Modern' he says.

Foremost a collector, then a designer, the higgledy ungallery space, as he calls it, was found to house his collections rather than they being acquired to fill it. 'For some it may be overwhelming but for me the dialogue of all these objects is actually strangely calming. It's a concept rather than clutter,' he says.

The dialogue is one of culture and colour, life and death, heritage and humour, and art. In curating the rooms, Zandberg found that pieces acquired further meaning, a process he finds fascinating. 'The spaces evolve organically and sometimes when I stand back and look at a scene again, I see symbolism I didn't ever intend, but that must have been in the back of my mind,' he muses. He's referring in particular to a tableau of objects in a guestroom, where a Madonna under a cloche sits alongside a tiny army tank. 'The reference to religion and war isn't lost on me it shows you how powerful the subconscious is,' he says.

In the master bedroom pops of yellow are an incongruous accent in a predominantly black space underpinned by religious symbolism and imagery that borders on the macabre skulls, snakes, crucifixes. Zandberg's skill is in the mix, the colourful ikat cushions and oversized pop art pulling it back from the edge.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A glass cloche filled with miniature skulls prefaces a wall of artwork in the master bedroom. A pair of display cases filled with artefacts flank a hippo skull and a section of whale's backbone. A modern artwork dominates one wall of the master bedroom



TOP: The guest bedroom is located at the top of the house and features a Zandberg-designed four-poster bed

LEFT: The decorative theme of the black and white bathroom is reinforced with photographs by George Dureau and drawings by a variety of young artists

Zandberg has also played on the idea of light and dark, with certain rooms engineered to function better as night-time spaces. The main reception room trickily situated in that you enter it straight off the street — is almost a public space and so has been conceptualised as such.

'I decided that rather than fight the room's characteristics, I should hand it over to that purpose,' he says. The result is ultra-glamorous gold accents, midnight-blue walls and moody contemporary art give it the mystique of a sexy nightclub rather than a run-of-the-mill living room. Conversely, the study one floor down is a sunny, rustic, almost safari feeling space, whose savannah-inspired palette of browns and tan and a photograph by Anne Hardy of lush foliage are a door to another world. 'It's ethnic but also Modernist,' he says of the evocative space that sees a Brazilian rosewood desk nonchalantly paired with bunches of African heads and a tribal-pattern rug.

These seemingly effortless and yet complex combinations offer insight into Zandberg's world, a fascinating playground of challenging imagery, rich symbolism and charming, playful irreverence.



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