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IN THE DINING ROOM OF THIS LONDON HOME, THE DECORATING REFERENCES THE HOMEOWNER'S LOVE FOR JEWELLERY DESIGN THROUGH METALLIC PIECES AND LARGE GEM STONES

OPPOSITE PAGE THERE IS A PURPOSEFUL SOFTNESS IN THE FURNISHINGS, IN TERMS OF BOTH COLOUR AND TEXTURE



classic revival

With deft detailing and a tight interior edit, decorator Hubert Zandberg takes us through the rebirth of a London home

AS TOLD TO PIET SMEDY PHOTOGRAPHS SIMON UPTON



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here was no chance for the architecture and the interior design to stand separately, or for one to happen before the other, on this project. That's what this is all really about. The mandate was clear from the start: we had to turn what had been a temporary office, over two floors, into a home for the young, dynamic new homeowner. Our studio worked closely with architect Jan Swanepoel, who we've collaborated with before on a project for the homeowner's family, as the entire

team had to adopt a very architectural approach to make this a success.

The most important challenge, as the apartment is situated on the ground and basement levels, was to get light into the space. Our starting point was the basement level, which is occupied by the bedroom and bathroom, and, more specifically, the light well that illuminates this floor. It was evident that, to achieve a feeling of openness in what is essentially a very contained space, the entire back of the building had to be sliced off and become glass. And then, of course, that brings in very obvious interior architectural challenges because suddenly the light well had to be decorated and designed. The approach to this was of an internal room, which is clear from the strips of white panelling, very much like internal panelling, and the soft green wall. So you see, this really was the crux of the project: every bit of architecture had to link with the interior because every aspect had a very specific function that informed and, actually, guided some part of the interior design. They had to exist cohesively or it would never have worked. Even the outside, which I suppose you could call architectural, had to function as an interior space; in essence it's an 'outside interior' because of the glass wall that blurs that internal-external boundary. It's not as if this apartment has ►



THE ENTRANCE HALL WAS GIVEN A MODERN, MONOCHROME TREATMENT TO COUNTERBALANCE THE PLUSHNESS OF THE LIVING AREAS

OPPOSITE PAGE THE DINING ROOM WAS A TIGHT FIT, TRUE TO HUBERT'S MANDATE TO MAXIMIZE SPACE

THE BEDROOM, ILLUMINATED BY THE LIGHT WELL, IS A STUDY IN PLUSH FABRICS AND ROMANTIC TONES

OPPOSITE PAGE
A MOMENT OF MICRO-DETAILING IN THE BEDROOM THAT GIVES THE SPACE ITS LAYERED EFFECT



landscapes, so that thing of bringing the outside in is a bit of a pointless exercise. It makes sense when you're talking about a project in South Africa and you're sitting on Bantry Bay, but in this particular case there was no outside to bring in, so we had to create it in a way that made it a part of the interior and it was decorated as such.

Another aspect that perfectly expresses that link between the architecture and interiors is the enfilade that we, deliberately and with great effort, created. It's basically four rooms – the bathroom, dressing room, bedroom and the terrace – perfectly lined up so that when you're standing outside you can see yourself in the big mirror in the bathroom and when you're in the bathroom you can see the green wall on the terrace. It creates these magnificent views and further enhances the concept of openness so that you never feel like you're in a basement.

I've always loved the idea of this dramatic effect, it's as if you're walking through an old château. You see, there's an exaggerated perspective that makes the space feel like it's going on forever.

There also had to be a certain level of elegance that was appropriate for someone of a younger age but, at the same time, it had to be timeless. We didn't want it to be too ostentatious, as this would be a bit overbearing, and we wanted it to have a certain level of lightness and, I dare say, fashionability. To this end, we opted for a slightly retro approach. The danger, of course, was making it look a little too 'done', so when it came to the furnishings we needed to bring a plushness to it, a softness that avoided it being cubist. We opted for a lot of metallic, too, which drives that feeling of glamour home when coupled with an old school-LA style. We gave the kitchen and the entrance hall a black-and-white treatment as a way of tying it in and making it neutral in that 'what's not to like' quality that monochrome has. Similarly, the bathroom is serene and contemporary in white marble.

The truth is that everything needed to work because this is a very small home and you don't miss a single element in it. There's no wasted space or corner, every bit had to work visually and practically. I think that makes the apartment look a lot bigger than it actually is. ■ hzinteriors.com

PIERRE FREY
'ROMNEY'
WALLPAPER IN
NATURAL,
R4 543 PER METRE,
MAVROMAC



TOP, FROM LEFT: HERTEX HAUS 'KITE' THROW
IN MINK, R1 000, HERTEX; BESPOKE RUG, POR,
GONSENHAUSERS FINE RUGS; 'UNION STATION'
CUSHION WITH GREY VELVET BACK AND
CHARCOAL PIPING, R930, CÉCILE & BOYD



RAISED
EMBROIDERY
CUSHION COVER,
R659, ZARA HOME;
BELOW: BANDED
AGATE OBJECT,
R3 500, SHF



RIGHT: 'SPUTNIK'
PENDANT, R5 995,
WEYLANDTS;
BELOW: GRAPHIC
CANDLEHOLDER,
R395, LA GRANGE
INTERIORS



FROM FAR LEFT:
ALSTON 'HALSEY'
FABRIC IN MULTI,
R2 156.25 PER METRE,
ROMO SOUTH AFRICA;
LUDWIG MIES VAN
DER ROHE FOR KNOLL
'BRNO' CHAIR,
R38 500, LIMELINE;
RIGHT: WALNUT AND
BRASS TRESTLE TABLE,
FROM R73 500,
WIID DESIGN
For stockists'
details, see page 104



THE GROUND-FLOOR LIVING
ROOM LOOKS DOWN ONTO
THE LIGHT WELL AND THE
DECORATED COURTYARD BELOW