

habitat

T H E A R T O F L I V I N G



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COHERENT SOLUTIONS

location: London
interior design: Sean Cochrane - Cochrane Design

THIS LONDON-BASED DESIGNER ENJOYS THE CHALLENGE OF BRINGING NEW LIFE TO TIRED HOUSES VIA INNOVATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING; INVOLVING CONTEMPORARY SYSTEMS, FINISHES AND DECORATION. HIS LEVEL OF EXPERTISE IN SUCH PROCEDURES HAS EARNED HIS PRACTICE A NUMBER OF AWARDS. ▶

The custom lighting system is by Lutron Home with Sonas sound AV system run on CAT 6 with HD and some with 3D capability. Chandeliers are all '40s inspired crystal pieces: similar models are available at Hector Finch, London.



The condition of this house, located in a beautiful Georgian square, was poor as it had endured some structural movement, which caused certain problems as the property is protected by a Grade Two listing. This precludes very little alteration to structure and façade, while maintaining that the traditional finishes must be used in any restoration. Yet Cochrane succeeded in creating an interior measuring 250m² on a stand of 220m².

His brief was to meld an eclectic blend of classic

contemporary style with Art Deco influences, whilst retaining the traditional theme and base. Added to this was the necessary integration of many of the client's own art and furniture pieces.

The designer recalls: 'There were a number of issues given that the building is part of a Grade Two listed Georgian square. It could only be restored / improved using the original materials, i.e. old stock bricks and lime plaster.

'The structural movement related to a bomb that had



above: In the guest washroom a Zaha Hadid tap was used along with S&M faux paneling below snakeskin wall paper.

below: The second bathroom is more eclectic but remains a contemporary statement design-wise.



fallen during WW2. The conservation authorities were very reluctant to allow works to the façade and it took three structural engineers' reports, recommendations and several planning applications to convince them. Eventually they had no choice but to grant permission.'

The designer says that his client has quite eccentric taste and a very clear opinion on what she likes, which made his planning of the interior simpler. The result is that while certain areas are personalised, the overall theme of the

property is recognised. Sean Cochrane sought to create a luxurious space in which the client could express her personality.

He says that his inspiration came from 'slightly surreal art and films'. He explains: 'We used classical elements like paneling with silver-leaf inserts, these were warmed with wax and covered with Perspex.'

About the employed colour palette he adds: 'It's largely Sanderson paint with the exception of 'blue black' and 'off

below: As is the case with such narrow, vertical London townhouses, the kitchen adjoins a dining space, which in turn accesses the garden. The glass extension to the patio and garden utilises switchable glass that can be opaque or clear at the click of a button; this was also used in the guest washroom.

opposite: In the kitchen, the designer introduced huge slabs of black white-veined marble to create the island; fixtures here are by Sub-zero and Wolf. Says Cochrane: 'The cabinetry is from Balmain and its lateral lines follow the length of the wall; it's lacquered in satin black, a finish we applied to the thick column paneling, which created a pleasingly restrained effect.'

black' by Farrow and Ball used for the wardrobes and paneling. Sanderson offer a range of less-used colours on a warmer pastel base. This allowed the client a broader colour spectrum that never became heavy or cold.

'Throughout the property we applied an aged white to the ceilings and in the hallways we used the same warm grey to add continuity. This was amplified by only slight variants from the same range of carpeting on all upper floors.'







this page: In two of the bathrooms Sean Cochrane used Bisazza mosaic tiles. In one (left) the purple / blue base was intermittently complemented by genuine silver tiles laid in a circular pattern on walls, floor and ceiling. The main suite (below) was treated with Bisazza rose, a mural placed over an elliptical circular bath. These bathrooms evoke considerable sensuality.



this page: The main bedroom suite is très 'London'. It features slick, contemporary fixtures and fittings as a foil for authentic antiques like the art deco dressing table / drawer unit.



Says Cochrane: 'We needed to create a slightly eccentric but functional home. It had to have quirky elements but also an overall signature that exudes comfort and luxury.'

No doubt, he had to solve a number of problems insofar as building regulations in this crowded yet architecturally conscious city. The result here serves to illustrate how older properties can become effective, contemporary living spaces albeit within a protected traditional shell. ■