

# Top Billing

MAY 2011

THE BEST OF THE GOOD LIFE

The read of your life

**LONDON  
TREND  
FORECAST**

DECOR DIRECTION  
FROM THE  
STYLE CAPITAL

UP CLOSE  
AND PERSONAL  
**RYAN REYNOLDS  
KITTY SPENCER**

**WIN!**  
R100 000  
LUXURY  
BREAK IN THE  
MOTHER  
CITY

**HOMEGROWN  
DESIGN TALENT**  
10 TOP LOOKS BY  
SOME OF SA'S TOP  
FASHION DESIGNERS

**BATHROOM  
BONANZA**  
» YOUR BEST  
BATHROOMS  
UNCOVERED

» EASY BATHROOM  
MAKEOVER FOR YOU

**COOL BY  
CONTRAST**  
NEW YORK MEETS  
CAPE TOWN: UPPER  
EASTSIDE STYLE

**SUMMER COOKING**  
DAZZLE WITH CRAYFISH, SPROUTS & ICE CREAM

**WIN!** R150 000 STATE-OF-THE-ART AXOR STARCK SHOWER

R24.95 (incl Vat)  
Other countries R21-88

Namibia NS21-88

10011



9 771811 515007



A key objective was to establish integration of the entire interior space that unfolds over five storeys, thus ensuring optimum and regular use of all areas. The vertical projection of the double-volume library is a unifying element, encouraging a flow between the lower- and ground-floor levels.

To retain its integrity, the facade of the semi-detached Victorian building was carefully restored using 100-year-old stock bricks.

# PRESENT *period*

WORDS **NATALIE BORUVKA**  
PHOTOGRAPHS **SUPPLIED**  
PRODUCTION **COLIN O'MARA DAVIS**

Passion and sensitivity transformed this Victorian semi-detached into a showcase of decor trends and the latest in styling

## DECOR

In an age that strives to exceed in all that is new and improved, it is immensely reassuring to discover individuals who focus on sustaining the value of what we already have in our possession. In the case of London-based designer Sean Cochrane, not only does he preserve the period integrity of the homes he refurbishes but, through scrupulous adherence to stylistic elements and manipulation of enveloping space, he renders inspiring transformations that enable a structure of immeasurable historic worth to stand proud within the 21st century.

63 The Chase, a Victorian terrace on the cusp of Clapham Common's verdant green in the southwest of London, illustrates the scope of Sean's vision and the lengths to which he and his team of specialist contractors will go to restore a building's rightful splendour. Penetrating through a layer of more than a century's worth of dirt, the first stage was for the facade's original brickwork to be repaired – a meticulous matching-making process involving specially sourced 100-year-old stock bricks.

Once mercilessly sub divided into three spiritless apartments, Sean then undertook the arduous process of obtaining all the necessary

planning permissions that would allow him to structurally reconfigure its interior.

'A major consideration with this type of property,' says Sean, 'is to make sure the client ends up using all the space on a regular basis. If you have the good fortune to be able to buy a large home then surely you should live in all of it.'

A deft, space-enhancing technique was employed to ensure that none of the five floors of the 3 100-square-foot family home would go ignored. It involved the removal of a rear section of the first floor and relocation of the staircase to the back, made possible when the domestic sprinkler system (a mandatory requirement for ground – and first-floor spaces), was installed. The resulting shaft, defined by a monumental library, establishes a liberating volume that effectively integrates both floors. Accessing the staircase means traversing the entire length of each floor – a strategy that cunningly promotes the daily usage that Sean intended.

When it came to specification of the





**OPPOSITE** The building fronts a road that leads directly to Clapham Common, an 89-hectare green belt in the south of London. **THIS PAGE** The base palette that runs through the home includes a colour called Joa's White on the walls and Stony Ground on the wall panelling, with a steely charcoal providing intermittent contrast on furniture and fittings. Sean's love of all things beautiful is evident in the living room with accessories and furniture playing off against luxurious velvet fabrics and elegant ornamental mouldings.

## DECOR

interior finishes, a chief concern was to maintain the spatial momentum. To this end, colour selection played a vital role. A pale oatmeal called Stony Ground and the intriguingly named Joa's White secure walls and wood panelling, while a steely charcoal blue (evident on principal items of furniture and fittings) offers flashes of striking value countenance. Ultimately, it is in the judicious compilation of furnishing and accessories that the defining concept sees fruition – the seamless blend of Victorian architecture with contemporary open-plan living.

As if restoring the exterior, remodelling the interior and specifying all of the interior finishes did not prove a sufficiently challenging task, Sean also directed the design and manufacture of almost every item of furniture (from the double-volume joinery to the bed bases and upholstered headboards), under the auspices of his furniture company, Qualitas.

'Good design is a blessing and to be able to bring certain objects and materials together in a well-presented, pleasing manner is my key objective,' he enthuses. It does seem that truly nothing has fallen short of his consideration. A silky velveteen fabric on the sofas has been chosen for the way in which it will help reflect the daylight. The drab functionality of a door makes way for surprising pizzazz in the form of a luxury, upholstered finish. Even those elements concealed (such as drawers) have been clad with an embossed padding.

Interestingly, this multi-disciplinary approach is a tendency that has highlighted Sean's colourful professional path, a journey that has seen him stride the catwalks, nurture trees back to health and champion the world of competitive kickboxing. With a clientele that includes the likes of Dame Helen Mirren, it goes to show that experience really does count for a whole lot. **TB**

*cochrandedesign.com, qualitasdesign.com*



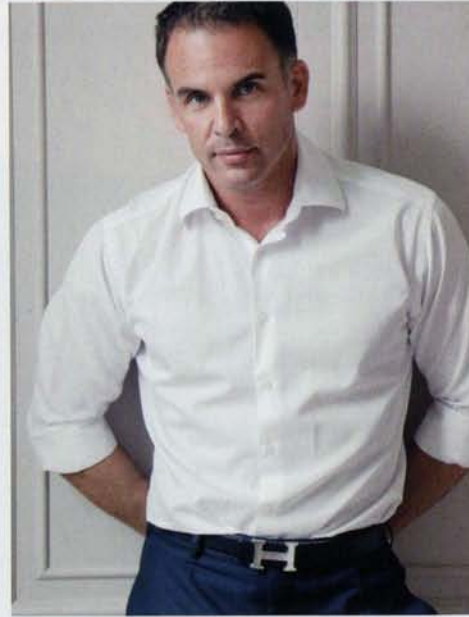
**THIS PAGE, TOP** Classical and contemporary have been combined, respecting the integrity of the structure and establishing a current identity.

**RIGHT** A resourceful tactic was the removal of a rear section of the ground floor, allowing for a double-volume space to be created. This encourages maximum use of the living room, which has to be traversed in order to access the kitchen from the stairs.

**OPPOSITE** The lady's master suite bathroom and dressing room, inspired by Claridges Hotel, is finished in marble and includes a striking wood-burning fireplace.







**THIS PAGE**

The children's rooms are themes of English Colonial and Alice in Wonderland. In the guest suite, the bathroom is kept crisp and dramatic with simple, contrasting values. The occasional lounge area in the master-suite has a recessed feature grid to give architectural definition where the chaise, plush pile rug and elegant fireplace surround express effortless luxury.

**OPPOSITE**

The home is a showcase for Sean's furniture range, Qualitas, with every item – from the sofas to the padded drawer inserts – custom-designed and manufactured. The main suite features a padded headboard, bed and side tables from the collection.

DESIGNER  
**SWAG**



🏠 Baroque console  
R11 995 Weylandts



🏠 Padded screen  
R1 900 @home

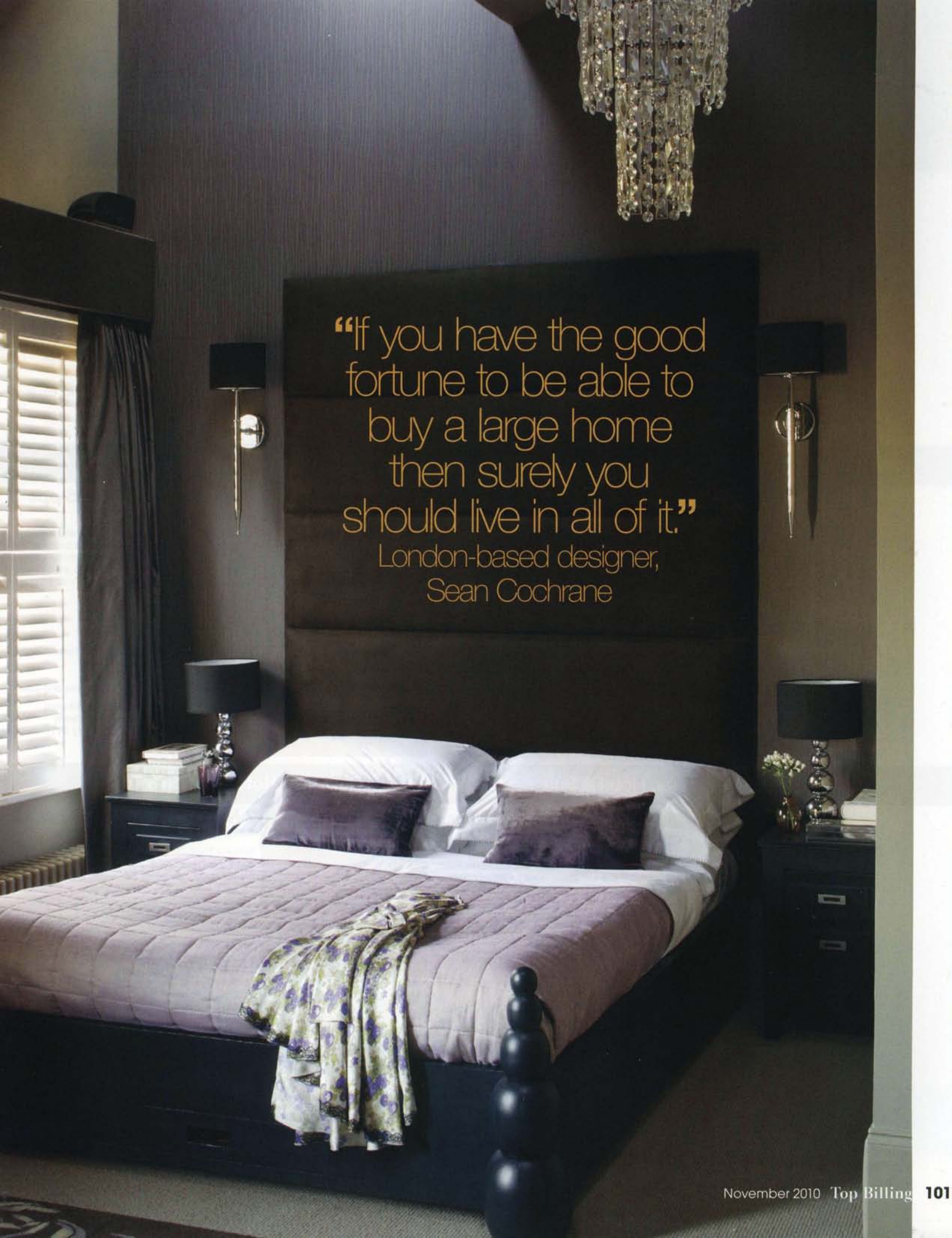
🏠 Silver lamp base  
R399 Satin Duck  
Egg shade R299  
Loads of Living



🏠 Plum Illusion  
P3-C1-3  
Plascon



🏠 Hunt armchair R9 717  
excl Vat, excluding fabric, Okha



“If you have the good fortune to be able to buy a large home then surely you should live in all of it.”

London-based designer,  
Sean Cochrane