

BALANCING ACT

Designer Sidika Owen was tasked with creating living spaces that beautifully blend classic features with modernist pieces

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM | PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER



KITCHEN - DINER

Blue-black cabinetry ties in with the dark frames of the glazing. An island incorporating banquette seating makes creative use of the space available.

Cabinetry, Studio Sidika. Snaregade table by Menu, £1,347; Harbour chairs by Menu, £270 each, all Finnish Design Shop. Banquette in Fjord in Poivre, £171.60m, Lelièvre





STAIRCASE

Perfecting the design of the staircase to the lower ground level proved to be one of the greatest challenges for the studio. Yuvari flatweave rug (also seen below), £2,240 for a 185x275cm size, A Rum Fellow



FAMILY ROOM

An internal window keeps light flowing throughout different spaces. Tray table in Warm Grey, £229, Hay



HOME TRUTHS

DESIGNER Sidika Owen, founder of interior architecture and design practice Studio Sidika (studiosidika.com)

HOUSE A large family home in west London

WORK Three flats were knocked into one dwelling and the layout was reconfigured to create a spacious family home. New decorating schemes were created throughout the property



SITTING ROOM
Reinstated period detailing creates the perfect backdrop for classic design. CH25 lounge chairs, from £2,863 each, Carl Hansen & Son. Float walnut bookshelf by Wewood, £3,271, Heal's. Mobil 100 pendant light by Pholc, £695, The Conran Shop. *Imaginary Cities* artwork by Joost van den Bergh

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT? I was introduced to my clients, a young family of four, by their project manager when the building works were already underway. Our small studio had to work hard to produce the interior architecture and design package for a 225-square-metre townhouse in less than 10 weeks! We collaborated with the architectural practice Mens et Manus on construction details such as the staircase leading to the lower-ground level.

WHAT WERE THE BIGGEST PRIORITIES FOR THE HOMEOWNERS? The house had been divided into three flats and the clients were reinstating it as a family home, so the first priority was to ensure that the floor plan was conducive to their busy lifestyle. Having grown up in Gibraltar and Portugal, the

owners were also keen to maximise the amount of natural light coming into the house. They obtained planning permission for a double-height window at the rear and we oversaw its design, choreographing the interiors to ensure we achieved maximum dramatic effect. On the upper-ground level, we introduced a Crittall fire door which serves to pull light into the entrance and announce the kitchen and dining spaces. As you walk through the door, you are drenched in natural light and your eye is drawn to the outside view of the terrace.

WHAT WAS THE HOMEOWNERS' BRIEF FOR THE INTERIORS? This was the first house the clients had purchased as a family, and they wanted the schemes to feel elegant and sophisticated yet open and airy. They were keen to reinstate the

BEDROOM

Bedside tables from the 1960s team beautifully with the mid-century styling of the armchair.

Bespoke bed, Studio Sidika. Cushions in Kumasi in Honey, £81m, Larsen at Colefax and Fowler. Bouclé armchair, £455; bouclé pouffe, £290, both Six The Residence



Victorian architectural details, such as the cornicing, herringbone flooring and wooden panelling, all of which had been removed by previous insensitive interventions. They also wished to add a more contemporary layer to the schemes in the form of the contemporary windows and modernist furniture.

WHICH SPACES WERE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO THE HOMEOWNERS? The kitchen-diner is the real hub of the home and the clients loved our idea of integrating the kitchen island with a long dining banquette so that we optimised the space. They also requested a smart living room and a more relaxed family room, a set-up we encourage whenever space allows. We turned up the volume in terms of design features in the living room, with a bespoke fireplace in Arabescato

marble, a brass chandelier and Hans J Wegner lounge chairs, while on the lower ground floor we designed a chic family room with furniture and finishes that are less formal and a little edgier.

HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE COLOUR SCHEME? The palette is very classic to enhance the period backdrop to the modernist decor. We used various shades of grey from Farrow & Ball such as Ammonite, Cornforth White, Purbeck Stone, Wevet and Railings. To these neutrals we then added some khaki greens and coral pinks, which lend warmth to the schemes.

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE? The deadline for producing the drawings and schedules was incredibly tight but we were helped in this project by clients who were very collaborative and communicative. 25



BEDROOM

Coral tones add warmth to the gentle shades of stone and grey. Try Ruffle bed in Baking Tin clever vintage linen, £1,555 for a king size, Loaf. Forsa table lamp, £19, Ikea



STUDY

Bespoke fitted storage keeps the room clutter-free. Bespoke cabinetry, Studio Sidika. EA 108 office chair, from £1,830, Vitra



BATHROOM

The shower screen picks up on the glazing seen elsewhere. Design 8 hinged shower door and side panel, from £1,104, Crosswater



CHILD'S BEDROOM

The neutral backdrop is enhanced with accessories that will evolve over time. Dorset bed, £99, Noa & Nani. Try the teepee tent and floor mat, £119, Fun with Mum

DESIGN INSPIRATION

'We took our cue from Parisian apartments from the Haussmann era and the way they combine a timeless backdrop with classic mid-century pieces'