Creative Living London

Photographs by Ingrid Rasmussen

Emily Wheeler

Thames & Hudson

This book is dedicated to Rowie,
a true creative.

On the cover *Front* A rich, dark colour scheme adds to the look of elegant sophistication in Graham and Jo Atkins-Hughes' Victorian terraced house in Hackney. *Back, clockwise from top left* Marc Newson and Charlotte Stockdale's warehouse conversion in Victoria; Adriana Natcheva's modern flat in Kensington; a bright and cheerful entrance to a Georgian house in Islington; a groovy, geometric rug adds a contemporary feel to Marianne Cotterill's elegant house in Brondesbury; the crisp, modern exterior of a revamped pianola factory in Kentish Town; vintage suitcases make for an unusual storage solution at a period cottage in Stockwell.

Previous pages In Spitalfields, a historic area of East London, the neighbourhood's period brick buildings share a street corner with the glass-and-steel skyscrapers of the modern city.

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Opposite In Annie Morris and Idris Khan's Islington kitchen, bright-yellow walls form a vivid backdrop to the couple's own artwork.

Page 9 Family photos and everyday objects become a stylish monochrome display in Jo and Kyle Stewart's dining room in Hackney.

Pages 10–11 A view across the rooftops of Shoreditch, taking in the many and varied styles of architecture in East London.

Introduction

London's creative credentials are the envy of the world, and the uniquely quirky, eccentric style and independent spirit of its residents have ensured the city's reputation as the capital of edgy cool. With its renowned fashion and art colleges, a thriving music industry and internationally respected arts institutions, London is home to some of the world's most prominent artists, stylists and designers. How these energetic, talented people turn their creative vision into homes that are beautiful to look at and inspiring to live in is the theme of this book.

Despite its status as a very modern city, much of London's housing stock is centuries old. The transformation of these historic, sometimes industrial spaces into contemporary, design-savvy spaces that cleverly combine old and new (a key trend in London interiors) is a challenge facing today's city dwellers. One of these homes belongs to artistic producer Michael Smythe (p. 200), who lives in a Victorian warehouse in the East London neighbourhood of Shoreditch. His pared-back style respects the integrity of the building's working past, even down to retaining the hundreds of nails in the original floorboards, a reminder of the craftsmen of 120 years ago. In nearby Spitalfields, architect Chris Dyson (p. 180) has made it his mission to restore the area's eighteenth-century houses, which once belonged to immigrant Huguenot silkweavers, but have been abandoned and left to decay in recent decades. After a sympathetic, ten-year restoration, one of these houses is now Chris's own home (another, a few doors down, serves as his office) and, like Michael's studio, is a tribute to craftsmen past and present.

Finding inspiration in the modern city is also key. Jeweller Mawi Keivom (p. 208), who lives

West

Opposite A row of terraced houses in bright pastel colours in Camden.

Following pages London's rich history is reflected in its architecture, both domestic and commercial, including a shopfront for Alice's Antiques in Portobello Road.

Pages 14–15 Just a stone's throw from Covent Garden is Henrietta Street, lined with grand stucco façades.

Stretching from Soho at its bustling heart all the way out to leafy, well-heeled Richmond, West London is where the royal parks, theatres, shops and museums that the city is known for can be found. Traditionally London's wealthier half, businessmen, celebrities and royalty have all made their homes here, avoiding its grimier neighbour to the east. West London is formed of a series of village-like areas, from the winding, cobbled streets of Hampstead in the north, which has been home to successive waves of artists and writers, and a large Jewish community that has been established here for generations, to Clapham and Battersea, south of the river, bounded by Northcote Road and its coffee shops and restaurants on one side and the looming hulk of Battersea Power Station on the other. Down the hill from Hampstead is Camden, which boasts a huge market that is popular with students and is an epicentre of alternative culture, and further south is Regent's Park, with its grand Regency terraces by John Nash, the home of the London Zoo. To the west, Notting Hill's rows of Georgian terraces are now the houses of the fabulously rich, but the area was formerly associated with poverty and was the scene of great social change in the 1970s. Today its local market in Portobello Road is known the world over, famous for its hundreds of vintage and antiques stalls. And there are many more: Brondesbury, Kensington, Victoria, Stockwell, Maida Vale, each with its own distinctive character. The East End may have the edge in hipster desirability, but West London is every bit as diverse, varied and community orientated as its eastern neighbour.



Adriana Natcheva

Architect
Studio flat | Kensington

Right and below Tiles and plaster were removed in the bathroom to reveal the original brickwork. The beams were left exposed to gain additional ceiling height. In the bedroom, heavy canvas was fixed to the ceiling, inspired by antique campaign tents.

Opposite The headboard is made from antique cupboard doors from Josephine Ryan; the canopy above was part of a 1920s changing tent. Vintage suitcases have had their lids removed to create a clever and unusual chest of drawers.





'I remember having a meeting here with a buyer from Liberty, and she asked to use the bathroom. I panicked because there were horrible sea-horse tiles in there, so I took a hammer and chisel to them and these delicious bricks started appearing. We couldn't cover them up again, so we built the bathroom around them.'













Interior designer Jo Wood had only looked at one other property before finding her four-bedroom, white-stucco Regency townhouse near Regent's Park. Having lived in London, New York and Los Angeles with her ex-husband Ronnie Wood, and toured the world with the Rolling Stones, Jo came full circle when she found her new home in an area she had lived in when she first came to London in the 1970s. 'As I walked up the steps to the front door, I knew this was it,' she says. 'It felt like coming home.'

Jo grew up in a creative household, and interior design came naturally to her. Her father was an architectural model-maker, her mother collected doll's houses, and her brother is the artist Paul Karslake. 'I remember my father making beautiful little houses with tiny rooms, and when I was nine and we moved into an old vicarage, my mother's life was all about doing it up,' she recalls. Years later, as soon as she saw this house, Jo knew what her vision for the interiors would be. 'I wanted plaster walls, bare floorboards, lace at the windows and lots of black,' she says. 'It was a blank canvas, and I wanted to make it look like I had been here a long time, not as though it had been newly decorated.'

Guided by her passion for vintage, Jo often buys furniture and accessories at the Paris flea markets, and the result is what she calls 'a cross between rock 'n' roll and Marie Antoinette.' It is a glamorous, bohemian home, dotted about with family photographs and filled with colour and

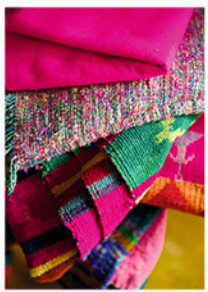
Above For the kitchen, Jo chose a range cooker and freestanding units to create a cosy space for entertaining. In the sitting room, a plush purple sofa adds warmth and colour.

Opposite Jo loved the texture of the bare plaster walls in the first-floor sitting room and decided to leave them as they were, adding French antiques to create a romantic look.







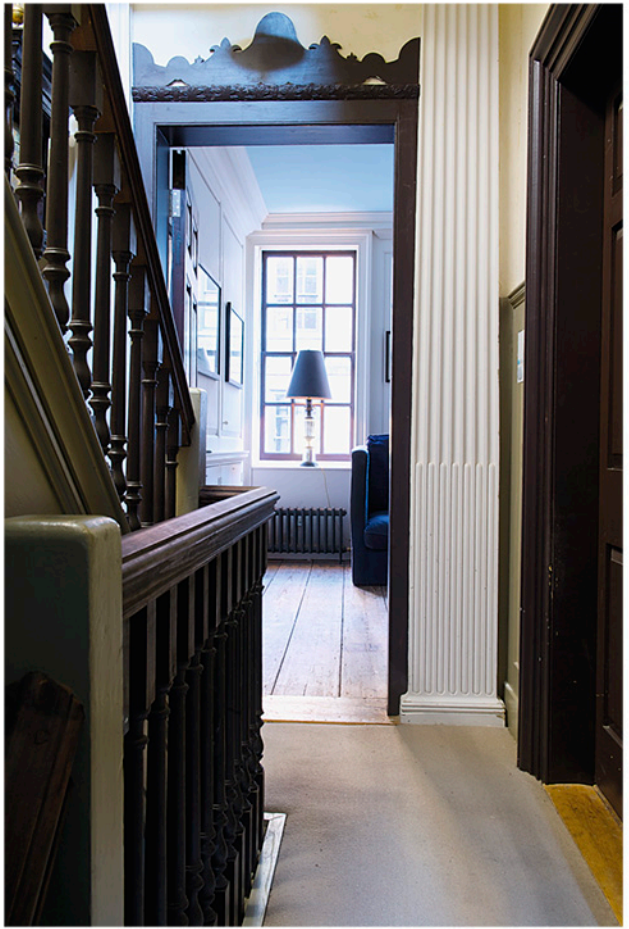




Above and right Pippa often takes her inspiration from the colours and shapes found in nature, as seen in this handmade peacock-shaped pendant, and keeps her collections of precious stones, shells and other objects in baskets and custom-built drawers.

Opposite Bright turquoise and lavender have replaced the black colour scheme of the formerly masculine kitchen.



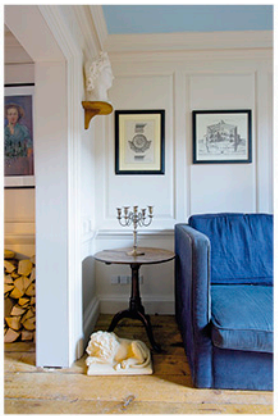


Opposite In the first-floor hall, which looks through to the sitting room, Chris added eighteenth-century pillars and a door surround from Lassco. The flooring is from Solid Floor.

Below The panelling in the sitting room and the downstairs dining room was designed to be in keeping with the house's eighteenth-century origins.

from Solid Floor (see Eelke Jan Bles; p. 242) sits in front of the simple four-poster bed. The drawing room on the first floor is a comfortable space, in which period elements such as wood panelling, polished floorboards and chandeliers sit alongside modern furniture designs by Matthew Hilton. The room is kept devoid of clutter, with books and television hidden cleverly concealed by panelling or within the chimney breast. In the ground-floor reception room, two alcoves sit on either side of the central fireplace – one original to the period, sourced from architectural salvage firm Lassco, and the other a modern re-creation, painstakingly copied by Chris's carpenter.

The extraordinary thing about Chris's work is that each building he renovates feels as though it has always been that way, such is his sensitivity to period style and attention to detail. His own kitchen, however, is unashamedly modern, while the garden, designed by landscape architect Luis Buitrago, boasts a metal walkway and huge New Zealand ferns. It is this harmonious juxtaposition of old and new that makes this restoration so successful.















Above and right Many of the items in David's collection were given to him by artists he regularly commissions.

Opposite The house is full of humorous details, from the statue of a dog in the sitting room to the faux fruit in a bowl in the kitchen.

Following pages A French day bed is the focal point in the romantic bedroom; above hangs an antique corona from Rosemary Conquest Antiques.

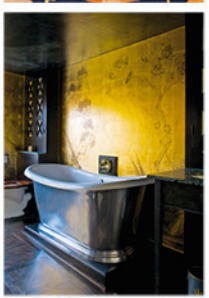













2. MILLINERY