

A material world



The extensive overhaul of a classic Victorian house has resulted in a contemporary home full of light and style

Report: Heather Powell Photography: Warren Smith

When Jo and David Smith bought their large turn-of-the-century terraced house in London's Fulham, the space was far from what the couple wanted. Originally a comfortable family home, with some of the property's Victorian features remaining, the house had dark, traditional finishes and lacked natural light and a feeling of space, despite its generous proportions. "We wanted a contemporary design with clean lines and lots of light," recalls Jo.

With the design team at Red Square Creative on board, Jo and David's house went through a major structural renovation that took over 18 months and included basement and ground floor extensions, both with glazed skylights to introduce as much light as possible, a massive central feature staircase, and a narrow etched glass window running the full height of the building from the entrance hall on the ground floor. "Because there is so much glass within the design, the light levels change throughout the day, bringing a completely different atmosphere to the house," says Jo.

At the rear of the reordered ground floor is the expansive informal living room and kitchen. The existing space was demolished to make way for Red Square's new modern extension, into which light floods thanks to the full-height glazed sliding doors leading out to the rear garden, and a large skylight overhead. "We've created a light, bright indoor/outdoor space," says Ros Osberg of Red Square.

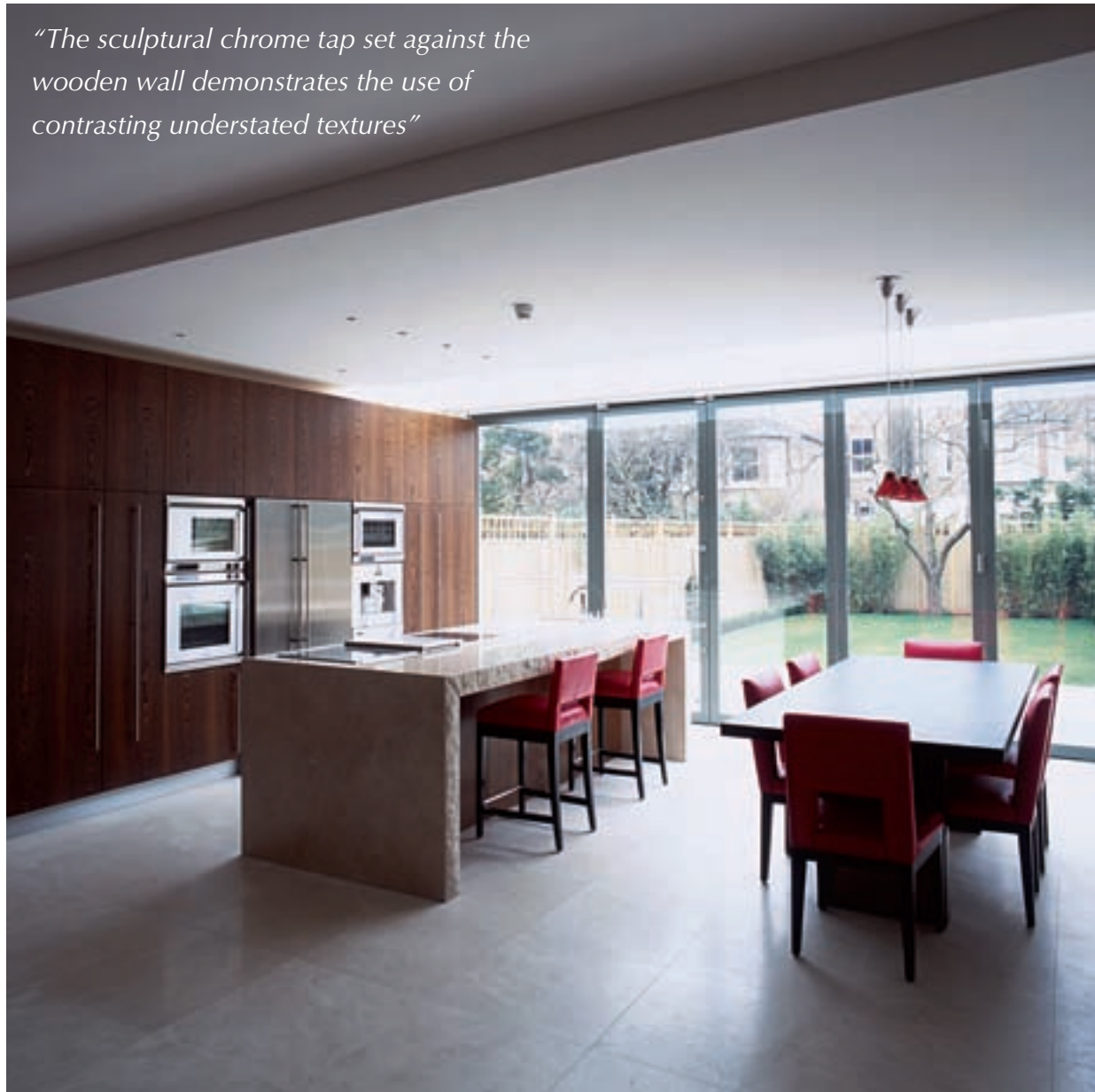
Within this generous space, it was possible to have a number of different zones. At one end are a luxurious leather corner sofa in eye-catching red and a dark wood coffee table that create an informal seating area in which Jo, David and their guests can relax before dinner. Opposite the sofa is a modern fire, recessed into a large storage wall. "The low ribbon 'strip' fire really accentuates the linearity of the whole space," observes Ros.

For dinner, guests can relocate to the dark wood dining table with red leather chairs. Three red glass pendant lights above the table create a more intimate mood, while the rest of the space is lit by clean and simple spotlights. ▶

Left: The dining area within the ground floor space is defined by a run of three red glass pendant lights. These can be used to create a more intimate atmosphere over dinner **Right:** A modern fire is recessed into this wall of concealed storage. The dividing lines of the cupboard add to the linear style that was one of the design aims



“The sculptural chrome tap set against the wooden wall demonstrates the use of contrasting understated textures”



“The kitchen space is dominated by a large monolithic central island, which appears to be hewn out of a single block of crema marfil marble,” says Ros. The surface of the stone is polished to match the crema marfil marble flooring used throughout the space, while the edges have been left rough for textural contrast. The island provides the kitchen’s entire work surface, and houses the

hob and sink. “The sculptural chrome tap set against the wooden wall demonstrates the use of contrasting understated textures,” adds Ros. All the kitchen cupboards and appliances are located in a storage wall of bleached wenge wood. The stainless-steel appliances contrast with the warm wood tones, and the doors have been kept simple with long linear stainless-steel handles.

For their master bedroom suite, Jo and David asked Red Square to create something more comfortable and intimate. “Our client wanted a private, luxurious space that appeared feminine and romantic but still had an eclectic and modern feel,” says Ros. Layers of tactile materials, including a light wood floor, silk drapes, metallic wallpaper and fabric wall panels, combine to create an opulent, restful mood.

To balance the romanticism of the bedroom, Red Square made the ensuite bathroom a very architectural space, incorporating a dramatic sunken bath set in a stone-clad platform. To maximise the sense of space, the two stone basins sit on a cantilevered shelf, keeping the floor area clear, and full-height glass screens can be pulled across on a sliding panel to enclose the WC and walk-in shower area. ▶

Q&A: HOMEOWNER

How did you marry your eclectic style with David’s minimalism?

“I’ve brought colour into what could have been a fairly neutral house by using bright fabrics on the furniture and painting feature walls with a touch of orange or red.”

What’s your favourite room?

“We absolutely love the kitchen, which opens up onto the garden. It’s where we spend most of our time.”

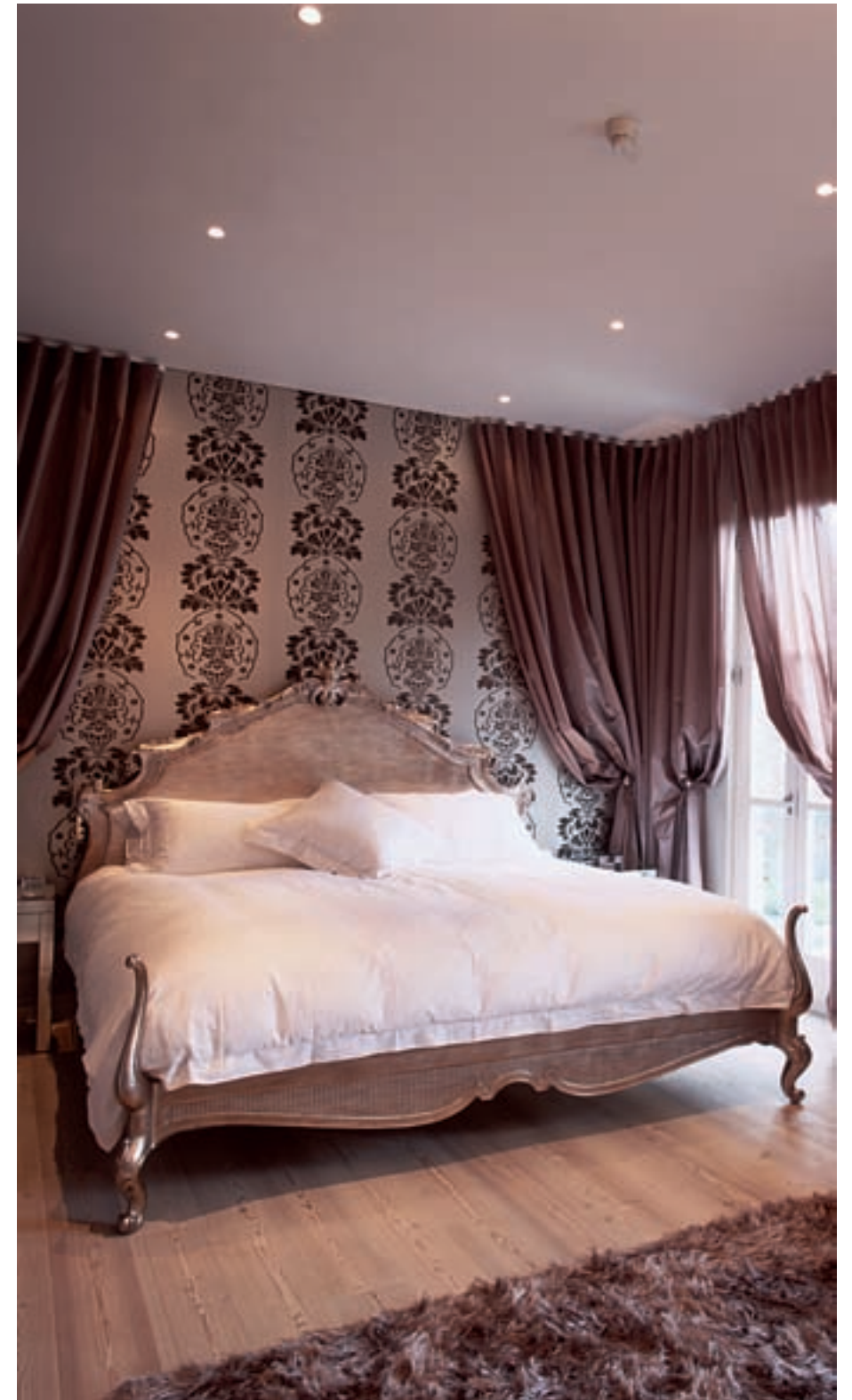
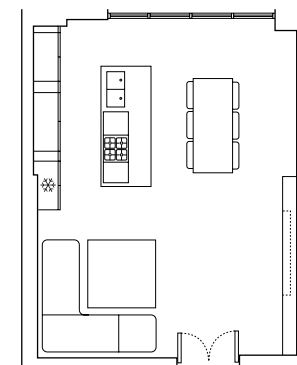
And your favourite feature?

“David was very keen on the technical side of the project, and he loves all the ‘boys’ toys’ we now have, such as the scene-setting lighting and the audiovisual system.”

Are you pleased with the finished result?

“There is certainly a wow factor when you enter the property. From the exterior it looks like a very ordinary Victorian semi-detached house, but on the inside it is very contemporary and each room and level tells a different story.”

Left: The new extension includes a wall of full-height sliding doors that lead directly into the back garden. The skylight above runs the width of the house and all the glass allows light to flood into the kitchen. **Right:** Metres of silk drapes on the bedroom walls create a sumptuous sleeping space, and the oversized bed is the height of luxury

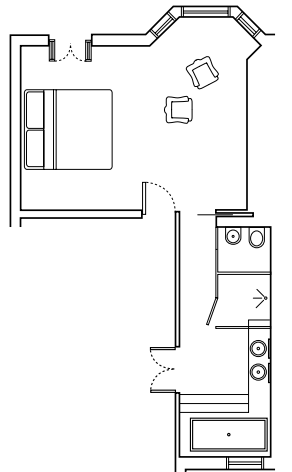




A palette of rich colours has been used, including bronze mosaics, chocolate limestone and natural stone, and again Red Square has played with textures by setting the stone against the mosaics. Surround sound and an LCD television make the whole space perfect for relaxing. "Our house was designed purely for our own needs," says Jo. "We were quite indulgent, taking up a whole floor for our bedroom suite, but we have no regrets about the design and love coming home and spending time here."

Beautiful materials have been used throughout Jo and David's home, and the contrasts created by different surfaces are key to the design's success. The quality of these materials and the care with which they have been combined marries the separate rooms, whether it's the minimal kitchen area, the lavish bedroom or the sensual bathroom. "David and I have very different tastes, so it was a big challenge to agree on the overall style of the house," confesses Jo. "David is very minimalist and I tend to like quirky and modern – but the end result reflects both our personalities." **K&B**

Far left: Red Square Creative has chosen an architectural style for the master bathroom, using simple shapes and a linear design. **Left:** The bathroom leads directly into the walk-in dressing area. The two spaces are divided by a sliding door.





Stone steps lead up to a sunken bath in the master bathroom

COST

A similar kitchen (units, appliances and island unit) would cost in the region of £50,000. A similar bedroom would be around £30,000 and a similar bathroom, around £50,000

CONTACTS

DESIGN
Red Square Creative
(020 7385 8500 or
www.redsquarecreative.com)

KITCHEN
Units and tables Fine Edge
Designs (020 7385 8500)

Appliances Gaggenau
(0870 125 4500 or
www.gaggenau.com)
Marble flooring, island and sink EDM (020 7874 1990)
Barstools Zani, The Dining
Chair Company
(020 7259 0422 or
www.diningchair.co.uk),
covered in Matadero fabric by
Nina Campbell
(020 7225 1011 or
www.ninacampbell.co.uk)
Sofa Fox Linton
(020 7368 7700 or
www.foxlinton.com)
Pendant lights
Mille Nuits, Baccarat
(020 7409 7767 or
www.baccarat.fr)

BEDROOM

Bed Versailles,
And So To Bed
(0808 144 4343 or
www.andsoebed.co.uk)
Beside units Valencia, Next
(0845 600 7000 or
www.next.co.uk)
Flooring Luna Larch,
Element 7
(020 7736 2366 or
www.element7.co.uk)
Drapes Fox Linton,
as before
Rug TouchMe, Stepevi
(020 7376 7574 or
www.stepevi.com)
Wallpaper Designers Guild
(020 7351 5775 or
www.designersguild.com)

Fabric wall panels Fine Edge
Designs, as before

BATHROOM

Taps Bonomi, Alape from
Aquaplus Solutions
(0845 201 1915 or
www.aquaplussolutions.com)
Shower Starck by Hansgrohe
(0870 770 1972 or
www.hansgrohe.co.uk)
WC and basin with integrated pedestal Il Bagno Alessi at
Laufen (01386 422768 or
www.laufen.co.uk)
Mosaic tiles Cipro, Bisazza
(020 8640 7994 or
www.bisazza.com)
Flooring, bath and shelf EDM,
as before



The extension's sliding glass doors allow the line between indoors and outdoors to be blurred, and the basement below has also been extended to include a glass skylight set within the rear terrace