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Playful VISION

Harriet Nimmo has brought a whimsical twist to her home's timeless interiors, with the help of interior designer Sapphie Chichester, to create a forever home for her family

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER

ABOVE Lewis & Wood's Papyrus wallpaper in Eau de Nil wraps around the staircase and landings, while low-level panelling has been added for practicality.
RIGHT Above the fireplace, a bold painting, *Table Talk* by Pia Pack, creates a focal point, complemented by an ottoman made by Recoire and covered in Guy Goodfellow Collection's Fez Weave.



Circular seating surrounds the ottoman in the drawing room, including a pair of rattan armchairs with seat and back cushions in Veere Grenney's Folly in Peacock Blue, a Recoire sofa and a frilled armchair upholstered in Feathers by Nicole Fabre Designs. The artworks above the sofa by Rob Unett sing against walls in Paint & Paper Library's Sand III.



"I love to be nosy and see what's on the market," says Harriet Nimmo, who happened to stumble one day upon an advert for an early 20th-century, four-storey townhouse in west London. "We weren't really looking, and rarely do I actually book a viewing to see a property, but I saw this house online and thought it was really special, so I had to take a look." With limited knowledge about the area and community, it was purely a gut feeling that drew her to the house. "By total coincidence, the day after I saw it we found out I was pregnant with our first baby. It was fate," she adds.

While Harriet and her husband, Josh, had been set on staying in the area of London they were currently living in, this property's solid foundations, generous proportions and quality won them over. "It was love at first sight. The bones of the house were very good,

and I found the houses on the market in Notting Hill were very tall and slim, whereas this house was a really lovely wide dimension," she says. Another advantage was the condition. "The previous owner had renovated the house impeccably, with marble fireplaces, York stone paving, oak floors and beautiful corning, which made our job a lot easier."

Owing to these 'good bones', after the purchase was complete, the couple did very little structural work. Minor changes included creating more space in their principal bedroom by removing fitted wardrobes and making room for a superking bed by filling in the fireplace, extending the width of the surround and realigning the corning, as well as transforming what had once been a small study into a dressing room. "Otherwise, the floor plan is very much how it was when we bought it," says Harriet. ▶

ABOVE Harriet stands in the kitchen dining area where banquette seating where Recoire and covered in Rapture & Wright's Delft in Dark Porphyry introduces an element of pattern. Above hangs a delicate floral painting by Kim McCarty. The wall light is from The English House and is topped with a Birdie Fortescue shade.



'With this being our forever family home, we wanted to invest in long-term quality rather than fun, fashionable choices'

ABOVE Pale blue cabinets are complemented by marble worktops for a serene kitchen scheme. A Penny Morrison lamp base topped with a raffia scallop lampshade by Matilda Goad & Co adds an unexpected and playful touch. The blind is made from Enid's Ramble in Volle Plum by Flora Soames.

The couple's previous three-bedroom mews house had been truly maximalist in style, featuring a kaleidoscope of colour including a pink kitchen, orange dressing room and blue bedroom. For this house, they wanted to focus on a new aesthetic, which interior designer Sapphie Chichester has helped them to achieve. "I did up our previous home and it was very much a trial-and-error impulsive process, choosing what I liked at that very moment, and very reflective of the life that we lived," explains Harriet. "With this being our forever family home, we wanted to invest in long-term quality rather than fun, fashionable choices. I wanted to live in a timeless, grown-up house."

Sapphie had met Josh at university and had since become friends with Harriet. "I had admired her previous workplace, Rosanna Bosson, so once I heard she had gone solo, I thought we had to get in touch to see if she was available," explains Harriet. The two women worked closely together, with Harriet sending

inspiration pictures, fabric samples and favoured finishes and details. "Sapphie was brilliant at incorporating and filtering these touches. I love pretty colours and fun interiors, so she did a fabulous job keeping true to my style but also sticking to the brief of classic and timeless."

Another key part of Harriet's vision was creating a feeling of peace. "With a baby on the way and many people saying 'you shouldn't make big choices when you're pregnant!', I thought peace was very much a sensible feeling to build the foundation around," she says. This sense of calmness is cleverly woven through the playful interiors. Blue tones are consistent throughout, from the kitchen cabinets and dining chairs to the twin bedroom, while Lewis & Wood's Papyrus wallpaper in the stairway creates a gentle thread from top to bottom. "The texture and quality of the paper is really beautiful – it's striking without being gauche," she adds. ▶



Lewis & Wood's Blossom wallpaper in Blue/Ginger covers the walls of the dining room, which sits in between the drawing room and kitchen. Colours found in the pattern are picked up in the woodwork, striped pendant light from Millefiori Interiors and dining chairs from Charles Orchard.



In the nursery, Lake August's Nesturtium wallpaper joyfully clashes with the daybed made by Magenta Interiors in Etta Stripe by Chelsea Textiles and curtains in Salvesen Graham's Little Check. The bespoke chest of drawers by Sapphie Chichester is painted in Paint & Paper Library's Chelsea Green and finished with Matilda Good & Co handles.



Hues of blue bring a peaceful atmosphere to the twin bedroom. The headboards, by Taylors Upholstery, are in Soane Britain's Kalamkari Chevron linen in Lapis, while the walls are in Paint & Paper Library's Sobek.



Fundamental to the redecoration was Harriet's treasured collection of art, which now lines the walls, infusing the schemes with personality and life. "I have always collected works which I love and these have moved with me from house to house over the years," she explains. It was this penchant for collecting, combined with her degree in Art History and experience in luxury PR, that led Harriet to found her own art-sourcing company. "I began collecting art from emerging artists, which resulted in building a collection that my friends were interested in. I started to help them collect, seek a wider network of artists and as a result created Modern Muse Art. I began showing art in my old house in Notting Hill, providing a personal experience between collector and artist. With Covid hitting, the business moved predominantly online and now is a combination of the two," she explains. Throughout the redecoration, Harriet worked closely with Sapphie to ensure her collection sits comfortably within the new schemes, ▶

LEFT In the en-suite bathroom, Rapture & Wright's delicate floral wallpaper, May Tree, is paired with tongue-and-groove panelling in Farrow & Ball's Pointing on the lower half for a fresh scheme. The blind in Fermoie's Tented Stripe 002 fabric adds an extra layer of pattern while the cafe curtain offers privacy.



considering the artworks alongside space, fabrics, colourways and furniture. "As a result I feel the interior and the art really complement each other," she adds.

While each space flows effortlessly to the next, there is one room which feels set apart from the rest. "The nursery is very much a representation of my maximalist style. I contemplated going for a more traditional style and I remember our decorator saying 'the baby is going to have funky dreams with this psychedelic wallpaper', which made me laugh," says Harriet. Trailing vines cover the walls and sloped ceiling, while charming details such as the hand-painted table and the sunny colour palette create an enchanting haven. "I had to have a fun and kitsch room in the house, and if you can't do that in a nursery then where can you?" she finishes. ■

ABOVE Two striking portraits by Fiona Gourlay flank a headboard upholstered in Namay Samay's Pattey fabric in the principal bedroom. The striped kilim rug is from Vaughan and the bedside tables are from Arcadia Antiques. **LEFT** In the dressing room, bespoke fitted wardrobes and a built-in window seat maximise the small footprint. The Galaxy wallpaper is by Robert Kime.